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The Buloke Times

Est. 1875

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For the Shire of Buloke, and the districts of Birchip, Charlton, Donald, St. Arnaud, Watchem and Wycheproof

At BCG Trial Review Day...

Focus on Fleabane

Farmers will gain valuable insights into summer weed control with a particular focus on fleabane at BCG's members-only Trials Review Day on February 21, where BCG Research Agronomist Angus Butterfield and ICAN Rural Senior Consultant Mark Congreve will present the latest research and practical management strategies.

Flaxleaf fleabane (*Conyza bonariensis*) is characterised by a deep taproot system, prolific seed production, and resistance to common herbicides making it a challenging weed for farmers across Australia. Recent BCG research has focused on evaluating product combinations and rates for double-knock strategies.

"Fleabane becomes increasingly difficult to manage once it matures, and there's no one-size-fits-all solution for total control. The most successful growers are those who take a planned approach, using a double-knock strategy and targeting the plants when they're young to stay ahead of the problem," says Butterfield.

Near Birchip

Angus Butterfield undertook two trials researching the weed near Birchip, in the summer of 2023-24, focussing on double-knock control. The first trial investigated the effectiveness of different first pass options and the second trial, second pass treatments.

Complementing BCG's local research, Mark Congreve will bring 40 years' experience working with weeds and herbicides, including 15 years of practical field experience with fleabane in northern regions of Australia.

"Weeds change farming systems," he says. "There is no one strategy for controlling fleabane, but simple



• Angus Butterfield

practices such as getting on top of it early and getting the product into the plant under the right spray conditions results in most effective control.

Autumn Germination

"In northern parts of Australia, we are seeing an autumn germination, and the

plants sit under the crop throughout the growing season until spring, when they grow rapidly with the increased sunlight and warmer conditions. Growers should consider the age of the plant relative to its root size when devising their control strategy."



• Mark Congreve

Mark is developing an integrated management manual for fleabane which is planned to be released later in 2025.

Full trial results and recommendations will be presented at BCG's Trials Review Day at the Birchip Community Leisure Centre

on Friday, February 21. Trials Review Day is a strictly members'-only event. Members are encouraged to RSVP on the BCG website.

Become a BCG member today at bcg.org.au or contact the BCG office on (03) 5492 2787.

Paramedics Appeal to Victorians . . . Never Leave Kids in Hot Cars

(From Ambulance Victoria)

Ambulance Victoria (AV) is reminding the community that hot cars can be life threatening, as call-outs for people trapped in parked vehicles remain alarmingly high.

This summer, AV paramedics have already responded to more than 230 reports of people locked in cars, highlighting the ongoing danger as temperatures soared across the state.

From, December 1, 2023, to November 30, 2024, paramedics were called to a total of 1,211 cases.

AV Director Regional and Clinical Operations, Steve Doyle, said "though the data suggests cases have reduced over the last 12 months, the number of call-outs during hot weather is deeply concerning.

"We are urging Victorians to never leave kids or elderly people in parked cars, even on mild days.

"The temperature inside a vehicle can double and become deadly within minutes.

"It is particularly dangerous for children to be left inside vehicles, as a child's

body temperature rises three to five times faster than an adult."

Thankfully, of the 1,211 call-outs over the past year, paramedics treated 134 patients at the scene, and only one patient required transport to hospital.

Complacency

Steve emphasised this is no time for complacency.

"We're asking parents and carers to always take children and elderly people with them whenever they get out of the car," he said.

"We know that children can often become accidentally locked in cars.

"We encourage parents and carers to make sure keys are kept with them and to be alert while loading family members in and out of vehicles.

"Accidents happen, and if someone does get locked in a vehicle, call Triple Zero (000)."



Calls

Triple Zero Victoria Executive Director Emergency Communications Services Michael Fawcett said between December to February each year, the emergency call-taking and dispatch service receives an average of more than 480 calls from people reporting children left in hot cars.

"Last summer, Triple Zero (000) calls from the suburbs of Pakenham, Melton, Hoppers Crossing, Craigieburn

and Dandenong were most common," Michael said.

"These incidents are still happening too frequently across the state.

"Don't hesitate to call Triple Zero (000) if you see a child in a car on a warm day because temperatures can become dangerously high very quickly."

Heat

Steve said high temperatures increase the risk of serious heat-related illnesses, such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Tragically, heat stroke is fatal in up to 80 per cent of cases, yet it is entirely preventable.

"Most at risk of heat stroke are elderly people, young children, and those with medical conditions; however, heat and heat-related illnesses can affect anybody, especially if you're not prepared or haven't taken preventative action," Steve said.

"Heat stroke is a life-threatening emergency. If you or someone else is experiencing symptoms such as confusion,

seizures, collapsing, or loss of consciousness, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

"To reduce the risk of heat-related illnesses, stay hydrated by drinking water throughout the day, wear a hat and sunscreen, and avoid being outside during the hottest time of the day, if possible."

Be Alert

Paramedics are also urging Victorians to be alert around water as crowds continue to flock to pools, beaches and inland waterways to escape the heat.

Steve said it is important Victorians take steps to keep themselves and loved ones safe.

"Read the signs around waterways and beaches to familiarise yourself with the dangers, and remember that drownings can occur in familiar locations," he said.

"Be alert whether you're planning to enter the water or not, and always keep watch on children in and around the water.

"Never swim alone, let people know where you're

going and don't swim after drinking alcohol."

Free Help

This summer, if you need urgent healthcare, but it's not life-threatening, you can help to save paramedics for emergencies by seeking free help in three ways:

- Walk into an Urgent Care Clinic, open late and on weekends.

- Video call with Virtual Emergency Care 24/7.

- Phone 1300 60 60 24 for Nurse-on-Call 24/7.

Learn more at urgentcare.vic.gov.au. If you are in a life-threatening situation and need emergency care now, call Triple Zero (000) or visit your nearest emergency department.

How to Beat the Heat and Stay Safe This Summer:

- Stay hydrated by drinking water regularly throughout the day.

- Supervise children and keep an eye on friends around bodies of water.

- Keep cool by using air conditioning and fans whenever possible.

• Continued on page 2.

Letter to the Editor

Proposed Wind Factory

(The Editor, "The Times")
Dear Editor.— On Monday the 3rd of February, we and some of our neighbours around the Curyo district received letters from Cubico, an international investment company that specialises in renewable energy projects. These generic looking letters were addressed to the "Resident/Business Owner" and contained information regarding a proposed wind factory at Curyo; notably labelled "Curyo Wind Farm".

Whilst this proposed factory wasn't news to us, it was a shock to receive this letter in the mail. This generic letter is our first point of contact with a company which claims to work with communities to ensure the relationship is mutually beneficial and positive. The wording of these letters implies that the proposed factory is a foregone conclusion. Before this point, there has been no consultation.

These letters are not consultation. The lack of care and interest in us is evident through the absence of our names on the envelopes.

If you wanted to do business with someone or wanted to have a positive and productive relationship with someone, wouldn't you take the time to learn their name and personalise even the most basic of correspondence? Wouldn't you actively consult them if you were planning to construct something which

will impact both their businesses and lives?

Those of us who received these letters are to neighbour this proposed wind factory. When we heard rumours and asked questions, we were brushed off. Our dream, to live on our farm, to work hard on our farm and to raise our children on our farm, is being taken from us. We are beyond disheartened. The words to describe how we feel don't exist.

Cubico claim in their promotional material that they communicate in an open and transparent way. We have been blindsided. Nothing good comes out of secret and sneaky dealings. We have been kept in the dark for way too long and the expectation seems to be that we will cop it on the chin, live with it and, if offered, accept compensation. No amount of money can cover the price of shattered hopes and dreams.

Cubico state on their website that "the local community around Curyo plays a crucial role in the region's economy, which is based on agriculture". Our farming areas are "known for... broadacre cropping including wheat, barley and canola". On this point, and this point alone, we agree with Cubico. Why then, are we allowing these turbines and battery energy storage systems to pollute our arable and productive countryside? Our farms feed people globally. We produce a mass

amount of grain per year and this needs to be protected to ensure both national and global food security well into the future.

Cubico predicts that there will be 300 jobs during Curyo's construction phase and 20 permanent jobs post-construction. We'd like to know how, beyond an initial hit, this benefits our community. Once the construction phase has ceased, it's back to normal programming. This won't bring families to our community. If anything, the presence of this factory and all it entails will drive young families away. As for the 20 permanent jobs; for whom and where? Is it an opportunity for members of our community? We've been told by representatives for other wind factory companies that the permanent jobs can be done remotely. There is nothing to say that these permanent roles must be filled by people who will live amongst us.

When talking money, Cubico say they put back into the community. We'd like to know how this happens and what financial gain there is for our community beyond some bakery and café purchases during construction.

The paltry amounts that get dribbled about as part of

the "community fund", if the same as like-companies, is nothing to get excited about. Our community doesn't need money tainted with our blood handed to it; it needs families to stay in the area to sustain itself and to grow. Our community needs families to continue providing support to local businesses, the school, day care/kinder and the sporting clubs. This won't happen if our environment becomes industrialised.

Families don't want to raise children amongst turbines or battery storage systems.

Our farm and our beautiful children are our legacy. Farmers give up precious time with their families to work the land. Farming is not simply a job to us. Farming is a way of life. It is a way of life that has been passed down to us and it is one that we would love to offer our children and grandchildren.

Tom and Maddy Rumbold
Address Supplied

Please note: Some letters to the Editor on this subject are threatening to go beyond this newspaper's legal scope. For the present time, at least, no further correspondence will be accepted on this topic.



• *Make your choice!*

The Joy of Sharing Stories

[From Birchip Neighbourhood House]

At Birchip Neighbourhood House, we believe that books have the power to connect, inspire, and encourage interesting conversations.

Our Book Swap initiative is more than just an exchange of reading material—it's a celebration of storytelling and community spirit. And the best part? All we ask is that you take more books than you bring, and you write your name inside the front cover!

Whether you're a lifelong bookworm or a casual reader, the Book Swap offers an ever-changing selection of genres and authors to explore. By taking more books home, you can dive into stories you might never have discovered otherwise.

Unique Way
Books have a unique way of bringing people together. When you participate in the Book Swap, you become part of a community of readers who share their favourite stories and discoveries. Write your name in the book and pass it on and see who else shares your favourite stories to foster a sense of belonging and connection in Birchip.

The Book Swap is a fantastic way to nurture a love for reading in both adults and children and it is also important in our bid to promote sustainability. By reusing and recycling books through our swap, we can all contribute to a more sustainable environment. Instead of letting books gather dust on shelves or end up in landfill, they will find new homes and new readers.

Diverse Range
One of the most exciting aspects of the Book Swap is the chance to step out of your reading comfort zone. With a diverse range of books available, from mystery novels to biographies, you can explore new genres and authors without any cost.

The Book Swap is a free resource, making it accessible to everyone in the community. By encouraging participants to take more books than they bring, we ensure that no one feels limited in their choices, promoting literacy and the joy of reading for people of all ages.

Open to Everyone
The Book Swap at Birchip Neighbourhood House is open to everyone, and participation is simple. Bring a book or books you've already enjoyed and swap it for a book or books on the bookshelf. But please take more books than you brought and write your name inside the front cover.

Come visit Birchip Neighbourhood House in the Old Shamrock Hotel at 77 Cumming Avenue, have a coffee and a chat, and be part of this wonderful initiative. Taking more books than you bring ensures you have plenty of options to choose from and reading the names inside the cover gives you a conversation starter when you see the other readers in the pub or the supermarket.

Happy reading!

Never Leave Kids in Hot Cars

• Continued from page 1.

• Wear a hat and sunscreen and avoid being outside during the hottest time of day.

Heat can cause illnesses such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat stroke is fatal in up to 80 per cent of cases but is entirely preventable.

Those most at risk are elderly people, young children and those with medical conditions.

Heat stroke is a life-threatening emergency. If you or someone else is experiencing symptoms such as confusion, seizures, collapsing or loss of consciousness, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

Data

Annual comparative AV data on people left in vehicles (December 1, 2023 – November 30, 2024):

Paramedics were called to 1,211 cases of people locked in cars from December 1, 2023 to November 30, 2024. This is compared to 1,240 cases from December 1, 2022 to November 30, 2023.

Most of the call-outs were in the summer months. 36.2 per cent – or 396 cases – were between December 1, 2023 and February 28, 2024.

December 2023 had the most cases (135), dropping to 60 cases in July 2024.

There were 120 cases in October and 117 in November 2024.

Thankfully, treatment is most often not required. Of the 1,211 call-outs, paramedics treated 134 patients at the scene and transported one patient to hospital.

Children below the age of 13 (including newborns, preschoolers, toddlers and school-aged children) represent 87.5 per cent of cases reported.

Toddlers aged 1 to 3 make up the most cases – 58.3 per cent.

For children under 13, 12 p.m. (midday) and 3 p.m. were the busiest times of the day for locked in car call-outs.

Summer 2024-25 AV data on people left in vehicles:

Paramedics were called to 127 cases of people locked in vehicles in December 2024. 21 of those patients were treated at the scene, two were transported to hospital.

This summer, paramedics have already responded to more than 230 cases of people locked in vehicles (December 1, 2024 – January 30, 2025). 28 of those patients were treated at the scene, four were transported to hospital.

Heat health resources are available in multiple languages on the Ambulance Victoria website: ambulance.vic.gov.au/translated-resources/

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Charlton Lions Park Another Step Forward

The Lions Park now has a new concrete path running through it as part of the on-going Charlton Lions Club Project to take the park from a vacant block of ground to a community park that the town can be proud of.

The Charlton Lions president John Headon was full of praise about the recent work done by Randal Perry at the Lions Park.

“The quality of the work, the exposed aggregate finish and the fabulous visual impact the work has had on the park is exceptional,” he said.

The club started this project back in 2016, planting over 120 native shrubs along the boundary of the property. “Then came a viewing platform, more garden beds, new tables and chair sets, concrete garden edging, the Sir John Monash Tribute Garden, and more recently, concrete steps to the viewing platform and an irrigation system. Progress has been pretty much geared to the availability of grants and the club’s ability to raise funds.

Grant

“The club is extremely grateful to Regional Development Victoria and their Tiny Town Grant Program which provided the grant of \$17,885 to make the path a possibility, together with local funds raised by the club of \$5,536 allowed the path to be built. It could not have happened without the grant.”

If you are new to town and are wondering where the Lions Park is located, it is up the hill on the corner of View and Currie streets, the site of the old water tower, which was designed and built by Sir John Monash in late 1913/14.

Non-Lions’ Help

“John was also full of praise for the help the club has received from non-Lion members of the community

during this process; people like Wes and Kye Jenkyn, Randal Perry, Aaron Watts, Andrew Watts, David Cossar, the Charlton Forum and Neighbourhood House and of course, for all the grants we have received from the Community Bank and other Government Departments, it’s been a real joy ride, the club is extremely grateful for this support and is very proud of its achievements” he said.

The Future

When asked about the future John indicated that the Club had a number of plans to pursue – the playground equipment promised by the Shire, the possibility of sails over the viewing platform and tables and is also considering some garden art made by our budding local garden art specialists.”



• Pathway through Lions Park.

Letters to the Editor

Thank You

(The Editor, “The Times”) Dear Editor.– May I, through your paper, thank all involved with the Australia Day presentations, it would not be a great day without these people involved:

- Helen Amos, for her tireless organization.
- Guest speaker, Tony Phillips.
- Our great MC, Lisa Woods.
- Jade Benham, for presenting the awards.
- Sam and Karen Goldsmith, for the sound system.
- Danny Forrest and Cooper Anderson, for the cricket match.

These people all volunteer their time. Without them the day would not go ahead. Also the ever reliable Lions Club, thank you all.

Donald 2000 also wishes to give a big thank you to the Donald Men’s Shed. We asked for a Christmas tree, and what a tree we got (at

night), very special. They are a great band of men.

Thank you John McConville and Keith Brusnahan, the girls for the Christmas promo, the girls for putting Christmas decorations around town, Jumbo for the removal of the Christmas baubles and a very special thank you to Trent Grant and Wayne Morris for their great help, without these people Donald wouldn’t look so good at Christmas. We are very lucky to have them in Donald, nothing is too hard.

Thank you so much
Donald 2000 Committee.

Vandalism

(The Editor, “The Times”) Dear Editor.– The recent vandalism of the Mildura War Memorial in Henderson Park is an appalling act of disrespect that has rightfully drawn strong condemnation from community members.

War memorials are sacred places of reflection, honouring those who made the ultimate

sacrifice for our country. Desecrating such a site – especially in the wake of Australia Day, an unrelated event – only underscores the ignorance of those responsible. Regardless of motive, there is no justification for such an act.

This memorial stands in tribute to those who fought and died for our nation. Defacing it is not only disrespectful but deeply hurtful to veterans, their families, and all Australians who cherish our history.

Such actions not only dishonour the memory of our fallen but also undermine the unity and respect that these memorials symbolise. We can only hope those responsible are caught and, perhaps, as part of their punishment, they should be required to undertake a history lesson.

Our community must stand together to protect and respect these sites.

Jade Benham, MP.



• Gentle water exercise classes.

After an Eventful 2024...

Charlton Neighbourhood House Looks to Future

The Charlton Neighbourhood House has hit the ground running for 2025 with many successful activities already being hosted, and plenty more exciting programs coming soon.

It is first worth recognizing the success of one of their 2024 events which won both the Charlton and Buloke Shire Event of the Year at the recent Australia Day ceremonies.

With leadership by Bronwyn Fisher, The Blue Tree Project highlights to our community and visitors the message of mental health and suicide awareness. The support from the Shire, schools, health sector and broader community ensured the important project was a worthy winner.

Popular Programs

Popular programs have returned to the Charlton Pool

such as Gentle Water Exercise and Early Morning Swimming, while the Lino Cut workshop was a great success with many terrific artworks being produced.

Upcoming art-themed workshops include watercolours, weaving, photography and recycled baskets.

Regular activities such as Book Club, Storytime, Table for 12, Yarning Group, children’s Jazz dance classes, Carers Group as well as support for the FLO Café all continue. Contact the Charlton Neighbourhood House for further details or to reserve your place.



• Lino artwork .



• Lino artwork.

DEATH
BAYLES (Davison).—
 Marion Hazel
 Passed away peacefully
 in Donald on the
 February 4, 2025,
 Aged 76 yrs.

Dearly loved wife of Brian
 for 51 years and loving
 mother and mother-in-law
 to Sarah & Brett; Rebecca
 & Chris; Joanne & Ben;
 and Andrew. Treasured
 Granny of Thomas; Steph,
 Emma; Frankie, Edie and
 Maggie-Mae.

*A life well lived & now
 resting peacefully.*

DEATH
BAYLES.— Marion
 Much loved older sister to
 Robert Davison (dec.) and
 sister-in-law to Janette.
 Loved aunt of Adam, Ben,
 Kate, Emma and their
 families.

*Loved and remembered
 always.*

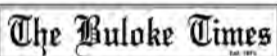
DEATH
BAYLES.— Marion
 February 4, 2025
 The editor and staff of the
 "Buloke Times" were sad-
 dened to hear of the pass-
 ing of Marion.

Many a happy time has
 been spent with Marion
 over the years as part
 of the "Times" family. We
 offer our deepest con-
 dolences to Brian, Sarah,
 Rebecca, Joanne and
 Andrew.

At rest.

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DEATH
BAYLES (Davison).—
 Marion
 February 4, 2025

It is with heavy hearts
 that we say goodbye to
 Marion, a lifelong member
 of the Donald Hockey
 Club and a true force of
 nature.

As a player, parent, exec-
 utive, sponsor, life mem-
 ber and supporter, her
 boundless commitment to
 the club has left a lasting
 legacy.

She will be deeply missed,
 but we know she's now
 keeping goal on a higher
 field.

Rest in peace.

DEATH
COATS.— John

The students, parents,
 staff and school council of
 Donald High School are
 deeply saddened by the
 passing of John, who was
 a past School Council
 President and long-time
 supporter of our school.

Our sincere condolences to
 John's immediate and ex-
 tended families at this sad
 time.

DEATH
FOOTT.—
 Michael J.

Thanks for the
 opportunity.

Thanks for teaching me
 work ethic.

Thanks for everything.

And the only thing we did-
 n't agree on, you thought
 eating and sleeping were
 just habits, and you could
 do without them. And I
 thought a little bit of each
 helped.

—Pug.

FUNERAL
BAYLES.—

A service of celebration for
 Marion's life will be held
 in St. Andrews Uniting
 Church, Donald TODAY,
 Friday, February 7 at 11
 a.m..

A private burial will be
 held.

KELL FUNERALS
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THANK YOU

Many thanks from Tom and
 Maddy Rumbold to the
 CFA crews from Beulah,
 Reedy Dam, Birchip and
 Curyo for helping put out
 our lightning fire on Tues-
 day, February 4. Special
 thanks to the Slim Rymer
 and the Bennett family.



DONALD HOCKEY CLUB

A.G.M.

WED, FEBRUARY 26

7.30 p.m.

@ ANDERSON

BLUE ROOM

**All positions for
 2025 open**

*The club welcomes all
 existing players and
 families.*

Nominations to be
 emailed by February 25
 to [donaldhockey@
 outlook.com](mailto:donaldhockey@

 outlook.com)

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"Times" Classifieds

Phone Donald 5497 1222, Birchip 5492 2735 Email admin@buloketimes.com

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Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467 suicidecallbackservice.org.au	headspace: 1800 650 890 headspace.org.au	Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal lifeinmindaustralia.com.au
Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636 beyondblue.org.au/forums	ReachOut: ReachOut.com	SANE: 1800 187 263 (10am-10pm) online forums: saneforums.org
MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978 mensline.org.au	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au or 13 92 76	
StandBy Support After Suicide 1300 727 247	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au	Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au



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To apply please visit the V/Line careers page at: <https://corporate.vline.com.au/Careers/Working-at-vline>

Take Precautions Amid Rise in Crime

RACV and Neighbourhood Watch Victoria are working together to improve the security of Victorian farms and regional properties following a rise in crime, with the regional areas of Latrobe, Mildura, Ararat and Horsham among the top five highest Local Government Areas for criminal incidents and recorded offences.

RACV and Neighbourhood Watch Victoria's *How safe is my farm* online quiz – an Australian-first initiative developed with Victoria Police – helps Victorian farmers identify what they can do to reduce the risk of crime on their properties.

According to the Victorian Crime Statistics Agency, the regional areas of Latrobe, Mildura and Ararat were in

the top five areas for criminal incident rates (per 100,000 estimated resident population) in the year ending June 30, 2024:

1. Ararat 9,345.7 incidents, up 25.8%.
2. Latrobe 11,578.8 incidents, up 9.8%.
3. Yarra 11,045.1 incidents, up 8.5%.
4. Melbourne 15,115.9 incidents, up 5.4%.

5. Mildura 10,330.1 incidents, up 4.2%.

Regional areas of Latrobe, Mildura and Horsham were also in the top five areas for recorded offence rates (per 100,000 estimated resident population):

1. Melbourne 20,827.5 offences, up 7.0%.
2. Latrobe 15,979.7 offences, up 7.0%.
3. Yarra 13,543.6 offences, up 4.9%.
4. Mildura 13,883.4 offences, up 2.6%.
5. Horsham 12,989.3 offences, down 2.0%.

RACV's General Manager Home, Bill Bloodworth, said it was concerning to see many regional areas in these statistics.

"We encourage all Victorians to complete Neighbourhood Watch Victoria's *How safe is my farm* quiz to identify practical steps to reduce the risk of crime on their properties," he said.

"*How safe is my farm* works by giving Victorians a tool to audit their property, find vulnerabilities that may exist and suggests prevention measures that can improve safety and security.

"The free online tool asks a series of easy-to-answer questions about the farm set-up and security arrangements. The tool then presents users with a personalised report on their farm's safety.

New Data

Neighbourhood Watch Victoria Chief Executive Officer Bambi Gordon said the new data reinforced the need for farmers to show vigilance and to take the right precautions.

According to the Victorian Crime Statistics Agency, there

were 2380 crimes committed on Victorian farms – up from 2125 from the previous year. Of those crimes, 1453 were theft, 431 were burglary and there were 343 instances of property damage.

"We know that farm crime can be a serious issue for Victorians. It can be costly, disruptive and mentally exhausting to one of our hardest-working communities," Ms Gordon said.

"Crime is opportunistic and we can remove that opportunity by keeping an eye on each other, reporting crimes and suspicious behaviour when we see it, and using preventative security measures," said Ms Gordon.

"Times have changed. But on the upside, we know that theft is often opportunistic, so if we can remove the opportunity, we can prevent crime from occurring."

Proactive Steps

Farmers are urged to take proactive steps in securing their properties. Simple measures such as installing proper lighting, securing gates, and utilising surveillance cameras can significantly deter potential criminal activity.

To help regional Victorians improve security on their property, Neighbourhood Watch Victoria is offering large signage with 'This property is protected by Neighbourhood Watch' to the first 50 people who complete the *How Safe Is My Place* quiz. Terms and conditions apply.

To use the tool and find out more, visit howsafeismyplace.com.au/farm/

For more information about RACV Farm Insurance, visit racv.com.au/insurance/business-insurance/farms.

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CASE I I



• RACV and Neighbourhood Watch farm crime prevention.

Fewer Police, Court Delays and Criminals Walking Free

The latest Report on Government Services (ROGS) published recently has exposed the Victorian Government's failure to keep Victorians safe, with crime rising while police funding is cut, court backlogs worsen, and criminals are left on the streets instead of behind bars.

The report paints a grim picture of a justice system under strain, showing:

- A 17.97 per cent increase in road deaths, directly linked to Labor's decision to cut spending on roads and policing.

- Real per capita police expenditure has dropped by 4 per cent, from \$655 to \$629.67, despite rising crime rates, leaving police stretched thinner than ever.

- Victoria has recorded the second-lowest growth in police funding nationally, with an average annual increase of just 1.1 per cent since 2019-20, far behind other states.

- The number of judicial officers has declined, despite

a 19.2 per cent increase in case backlogs, meaning victims are waiting longer for justice while courts struggle to cope.

- Victoria has the lowest prison bed utilisation rate in the country, with prison capacity going unused while offenders remain on the streets.

At Risk

Shadow Minister for Police, David Southwick, said Labor's cuts to policing and failure to get criminals off the streets were putting Victorians at risk.

"Victoria is spending less on policing while crime is rising. Instead of putting criminals behind bars, Labor is cutting resources and leaving

police underfunded and courts overwhelmed," he said.

"Under Labor, fewer police are on the beat, the courts are backed up, and prison beds are sitting empty while offenders roam free.

"Victoria has the lowest prison bed utilisation rate in the country. That means while The Government lets prison beds sit empty, criminals are out on our streets committing more crimes."

Shadow Attorney-General, Michael O'Brien said Labor's mismanagement of the justice system is failing victims.

"Justice delayed is justice denied. A 19.2 per cent increase in the case backlog means victims are waiting longer for justice while criminals exploit a slow and broken system.

"The court system is in crisis, but instead of fixing the problem, the Government has let the number of judicial officers decline, making delays even worse."

"The Liberal and Nationals have repeatedly called for stronger policing, greater judicial resources, and tougher sentencing to ensure criminals are taken off the streets and victims receive justice."



Police Beat



Buloke

Motorcycle theft: Over the months of November/December, a 2021 Yamaha blue TTR motorcycle was taken from a rural property on Hogan's Road, Dooboobetic.

Burglary: Between 10 p.m. on Thursday the 30th of January and 7 a.m. the following day, offenders have forced entry to sheds at a sporting complex in Woods Street, Donald. Tools were stolen.

Gannawarra

Burglary: During the month of December, the victim reported diesel had been taken from a tractor parked at his property on Macorna South Road, Macorna.

Vehicle theft: During the month of January, the victim reported that a white 2001 Ford transit van was stolen from a property on Bartel Road, Mystic Park, rego ending in ...2BD.

Swan Hill

Deception: On Thursday the 7th of November, the victim saw a caravan for sale posted online. After paying a \$2000 deposit, the seller ceased contact. The matter was reported via the Australian Government cyber crime reporting website. This is being investigated by local detectives.

Theft from motor vehicle:

Between 4 p.m. Friday the 31st of January and 8 a.m. the following day, offenders have gained entry to a vehicle parked in Dunstone Street, Swan Hill, and stolen a wallet. Between 8 p.m. Saturday February the 1st and 10 a.m. the following day, a wallet has been stolen from a vehicle parked in Donnington Street, Swan Hill. During that same period, a vehicle parked in Lock Drive was also targeted, with a wallet stolen. In all cases the cards contained in the wallets were used to purchase a variety of items.

Burglary: At 11.30 a.m. on Friday the 31st of January, a person has entered the rear of a business in Campbell Street, Swan Hill, without permission; they were found by staff and decamped.

Burglary: In the early hours of Wednesday the 29th of January, offenders have gained entry to a home in Pye Street, Swan Hill, whilst the victim was sleeping. A wallet was reported stolen from the address and cards used to make purchases.

Burglary: Between 6 p.m. on Saturday the 25th of January and 1 p.m. the following day, offenders have gained access to a shed at the rear of a property in Chapman Street, Swan Hill, and removed a

lawn mower and pressure washer. These items were found on the rear lawn.

Wilful damage: Between 5 p.m. on Saturday the 25th of January and midday the following day, offenders have thrown rocks towards the Pioneer Settlement in Swan Hill, causing damage to 2 windows.

Deception: In November last year, the victim was looking to purchase a car. He found a car listed on a legitimate online site. He paid a deposit and waited for an email to provide bank details for the balance. He received an email and transferred about \$90,000. He did not realise that the email had been intercepted and bank details changed. He was contacted by the seller to advise they had not received the funds.

Robinvale

Fireworks: Over the January 28th & 29th, Robinvale police were made aware of several incidents of fireworks being set off. They were able to find the source of fireworks and interviewed those responsible. The offenders advised that they had been celebrating Chinese New Year and were not aware that fireworks were illegal. Unused fireworks were located and seized by police. Briefs of evidence are being prepared.



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Victorians Paying More for Less Fire Protection

Victorians are paying more and getting far less amid an alarming and dangerous drop in volunteer firefighter numbers.

A new report reveals volunteer firefighter numbers are down more than 20 per cent on the total when Labor came to power in 2014.

Victoria has just 28,906 operational CFA volunteers – less than half New South Wales' volunteer force of 67,569.

In another embarrassing blow, Victorians are paying double for firefighting

services compared to 10 years ago.

Shadow Minister for Emergency Services, Danny O'Brien, said Labor has disre-

spected volunteers and gutted the Country Fire Authority.

"We are less safe with less firefighters and it is costing us more," Mr O'Brien said.

"While the CFA has lost its autonomy and volunteers are driving around in 30-year-old trucks, we are paying double what we were.

"We are seeing more and more money going into Fire Rescue Victoria without a commensurate improvement in response times."

Mr O'Brien said the comparison with New South Wales was particularly damning.

"It is hard to comprehend we can have less than half the number of volunteers New South Wales does, when it is not remotely compatible with our respective populations," he said.

"Volunteers are the backbone of firefighting. They are the ones that turn out, particularly in rural and regional areas."

The financial hit will only get worse with the State Government pushing ahead



• **Danny O'Brien.**

with a decision to replace the Fire Services Property Levy with a new Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund from July 1.

"For the first time, we are going to be paying a levy for core government services like Triple Zero and Emergency Management Victoria and that is because Labor can't manage money and can't manage our fire services," Mr O'Brien said.

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Welcome to New Class of Preps

Birchip P-12 School welcomed its newest class of Preps for 2025 last Friday. The eleven students, with a mixture of excitement and nerves, joined a composite class with some year one students.

The new Prep students were warmly welcomed into the classroom by their teacher, Mrs Emonson, and began their new routines. A new Prep student, Thomas McLoughlan (5), said that he enjoyed “playing football on the oval when it was hot”, and Sylvie Hemley (5) said that she “had a lot of fun with the other kids”.

The school also welcomed two new staff members. Ron Cooper, a previous parent at the school is the new Engineering teacher. Ron has worked in Birchip since 2003 as the workshop manager at O’Connors and more recently at Greg’s Digging attending to maintenance of vehicles and moving equipment. Ron has a



passion for cars, country music and loves to visit his grown-up children in Geelong.

Olivia Carrison has worked at the Birchip P-12 School previously in Education Support and is rejoining the staff again after taking time off for her second child. Olivia has worked for five years in the disability sector having 1:1 client sessions, as well as working in group homes. She is excited to be back as part of the team.



• 2025 Prep Class: back row left to right, Darcy Cullen, Thomas McLoughlan, Darcy Ferrier, Sonny Sheridan, Charlie Noonan, Kahu Taiwhanga. Front row, Taka Norton, Billie McLoughlan, Macie Bennett, Sylvie Hemley.

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Making Sure All Women Get the Care They Need

The Victorian Government will deliver a free virtual women’s health clinic – making it easier for Victorian women to access services like endometriosis and pelvic pain care, menstrual health, cervical screening, menopause care, breast health care and abortion.

Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas this week announced the new clinic will launch before the middle of year in partnership with community health organisation EACH – and it will offer free, expert medical advice, treatment and care for a range of women’s health needs.

Led by specialist nurses, it will reduce barriers to care, including for women in regional and remote Victoria where access to services like contraception and abortion is hard due to distance from major towns.

The service is more important than ever – barriers and

delays in accessing care can have detrimental impacts on a woman’s health, their quality of life and the ability to participate in school and employment.

Available via telehealth or online, it will deliver an initial health assessment and some treatment, while patients can also be connected with a GP or get referred to a relevant health practitioner as close to home as possible.

In addition to treating immediate health needs, referrals can also be made to various mental health and wellbeing, alcohol and other

drugs, and family violence community support services.

It comes as the Government’s Mobile Women’s Health Clinic van officially hits the road, currently operating in Edenhope in Victoria’s west until February 14, before heading to Daylesford from February 17-28.

Operated by BreastScreen Victoria, the van is making free healthcare more accessible for all women and girls in rural and regional parts of Victoria including a focus on improved access to care for First Nations women.

It will deliver a variety of women’s health services, including sexual and reproductive health advice, clinical services and referrals for medical abortion (MTO), contraception, and referrals to other necessary specialists.

All services will be delivered by an experienced nurse or nurse practitioner who will work to build connections with women, their community and local health services.

Both the mobile and virtual clinics are part of the landmark \$153 million women’s health package transforming the way women’s healthcare is delivered in Victoria.

Year Under Way at St Joseph's

At St Joseph's School staff have warmly welcomed the students and their families for the 2025 school year. It was wonderful to see the smiling faces as students flowed through the gate on Tuesday morning!

The school is thrilled to have welcomed five new Foundation students and six new families. Foundation students Tessa, Wyatt, William, Ethena and Sophia, together with Franklin in Grade 2, Yazmin in Grade 5 and Daniel in Grade 6 have joined the school community.

Ms Katie Brown, teaching in the Junior Room reports that the Foundation students have settled in like old hands – well done! Students and staff will celebrate the beginning of the school year with an opening Mass, under the theme of "Belonging", today (Friday), February 7, at 10:15 a.m..

Parents, extended family,

parishioners, friends and interested community members are all warmly invited to attend. Mass will be followed by morning tea in the school's multi-purpose room.

Weeks two and three of the term will be spent completing the swimming program, focusing on water familiarisation, water safety and some stroke development skills. The program will culminate in a swimming sports carnival on Friday, February 14, where all students will be able to demonstrate what they have learnt, along with some novelty relays and activities.

Again, all interested members of the school community are most welcome to attend

and cheer the students along!

St. Joseph's dedicated staff continue their professional learning in Structured Literacy, implementing the new Victorian Mathematics Curriculum and commencing their learning to introduce AUSLAN as an additional Language Curriculum. Who knows where they get their energy from?

Looking forward into Term One the school will celebrate Feast Day on March 19, have school photos taken, will celebrate Harmony Day and the older students will journey to Boort for the Hot Shots Tennis tournament. It is exciting share a fantastic 2025 with you all!



• 2025 Prep class with teacher, Miss Anderson. Left to right: Percy Jane-Higgins, Valentina Harris, Toby Nunn, Eden Pettifer, Buckley MacDonald, Marley Cockrell and Jaxon Watson.



• St. Joseph's newest Foundation students, affectionately known as "Little Joey's", left to right, Sophia Sait, William Donaldson, Tessa Wright, Ethena Getley and Wyatt Steenhuis.

Their Next Big Step

Donald Primary School has welcomed seven wonderful new prep students in 2025.

They have settled in well and are enjoying their new school journey with teacher Miss Teagan Anderson.

In the first few days they have bonded with their new buddies and kicked off their swimming sessions.

The school has also welcomed new teacher Ms Tanya McCulloch into its grade 3/4 class and are looking forward to the 2025 school year.

CHURCH NOTICES

UNITING CHURCH (North Central Living Waters Cluster)

Donald, 10 a.m., with Jan Flett
Next Birchip and Wycheproof Services, 10 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 16
Contact Number: 5497 1033

ANGLICAN "Parish of Charlton-Donald"

Enquiries: Rev'd Judi Bird
0435 593 359

Friday, February 14
St. Paul's, Birchip, 5 p.m.

Sunday, February 16
St. Martin's, Charlton, 9 a.m.
St. George's, Donald, 11 a.m.
Holy Trinity, W'burn, 3 p.m.

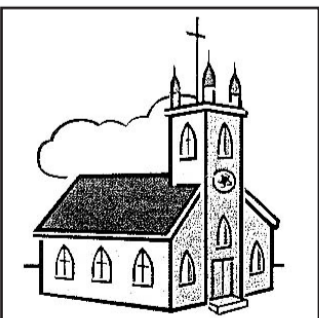
DISTRICT CATHOLIC CHURCHES

"East Wimmera Parish"

Birchip 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream in)
Boort 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream in)
Banyena No Mass
Charlton 8.30 a.m.
Donald (Sat.) 7.00 p.m.
St. Arnaud 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream out to churches
without Mass)
Wycheproof 10.30 a.m.
(Livestream in)

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Snakes Alive!

Recently I was tending the garden in our back yard when suddenly I heard a rustle in the grass and then a swift slithering sound.

A 1.3-metre long eastern brown snake came into view very rapidly and then disappeared into the thicker vegetation of our fernery.

It's a reminder that at this time of the year when the days are long and warm that snakes and other reptiles are very much alive and well! We need to beware and keep our eyes open.

Why?

On another occasion I came across a more co-operative eastern brown snake, which allowed me to photograph its flicking tongue. A valid question has one asking, "Why does a snake flicker its tongue?"

A little research informed me that its flicking tongue allows the snake to "taste" the air and so discern both potential prey and danger.

Observing the snake's flicking forked tongue reminded me of the old idiom "speaking with a forked tongue" – meaning telling lies or being deceptive.

There is a well known story of an employee of Henry Heinz who spoke with a "forked tongue" on one occasion. Henry Heinz had become the well known manufacturer of Heinz canned food. From small beginnings, rapid growth occurred and by 1919 he was

employing over 6000 people in 25 factories.

Under his good leadership the company was noted for its honesty and fairness in dealing with both producers of food products and its workforce as it worked to pioneer safe and sanitary food preparation, which was to benefit the whole world.

One day Mr Heinz was walking around his factory when he observed a young man who worked for him. This young worker's responsibility was to weigh the fruit and vegetables brought in by the farmers. "Lots of fruit today, Mr Heinz," said the young man. "Fine," said Mr Heinz. "Keep up the good work".

Mr Heinz moved on but soon became aware the young man followed him and had something more to say. He said, "You know, I have a quick eye and a quick hand, so when I weigh the produce the farmers bring in, I can slip a few extra kilos for you that the farmer will not know about. That will help your profits!"

A little while later the young man was called to Mr Heinz's office. Mr Heinz gave him his pay packet and told him he had been given the sack.



• Bruce Stewart

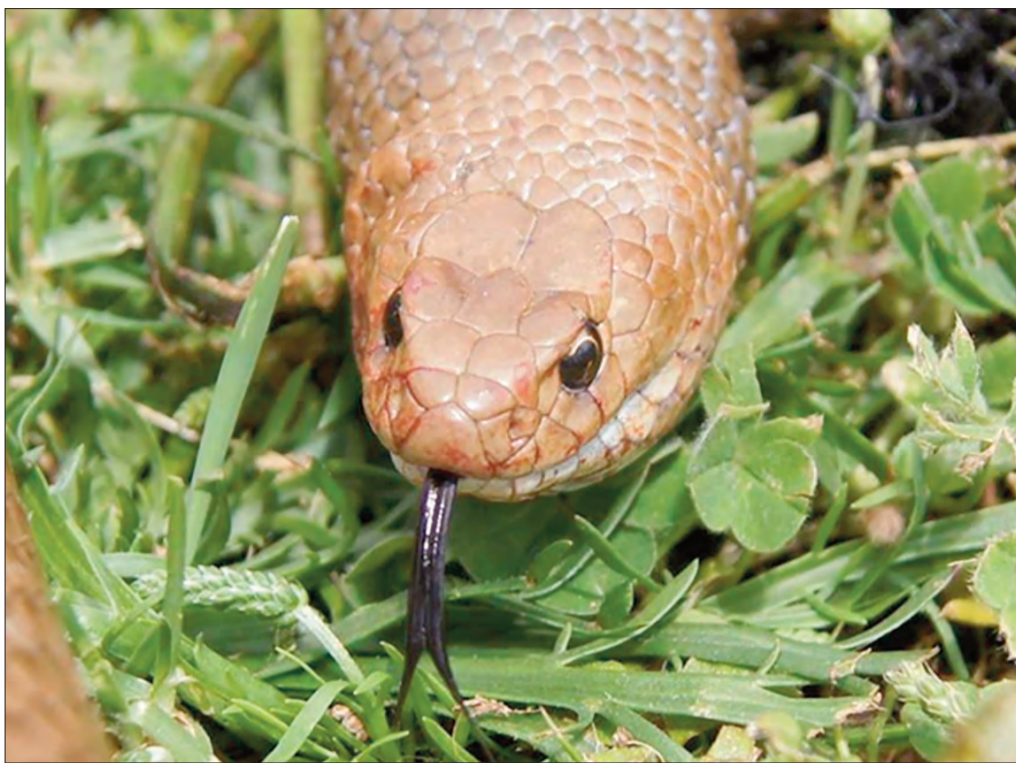
"But I was helping you make money," the man objected.

Mr Heinz countered, "You were robbing the farmers who were selling me fruit and you were robbing me of something more precious than money. I am an honest man".

Mr Heinz laid his hand on the young man's shoulder and said to him, "There is only one right way to weigh; always be honest. Always do the right thing to the other person and to yourself." The young man's plans for deception were not appreciated.

Deception

This reminds us of a story about deception in the Bible where Satan used the serpent to deceive Adam and Eve in the garden. The woman said, "The serpent deceived me and I ate" (Genesis 3:13). Adam



• On one occasion I came across a more co-operative Eastern brown snake which allowed me to photograph its flicking tongue. A valid question has one asking, "Why does a snake flicker its tongue?"

and Eve chose to disobey their Creator, as we all have at different times (Romans 3:23). The consequences of sin and deception on planet earth have been horrific – death, disease, broken relationships, suffering and even the creation itself is damaged. Thankfully Jesus came on a

rescue mission to planet earth to deal with the problem of sin and deception.

The Bible reminds us of Jesus's sacrificial death on the cross providing the means of reconciliation between God who is holy and people who are sinful. In response we need to confess our wrongdoing,

repent and receive Jesus as Saviour and Lord.

So be reminded not to speak with a "forked tongue", and watch out you don't step on a snake because they are very much alive and active at this time of the year!

Bruce Stewart.

Impacts of Floods, Droughts and Fires: Long-Term Solutions Vital

[From the National Rural Health Alliance and CAHA]

In the wake of devastating floods in Northern Queensland and bushfires in Victoria, rural communities in these regions are grappling with significant health impacts that will have long-term consequences.

Extreme weather events, occurring more frequently due to climate change, exacerbate food insecurity, spread vector-borne diseases, and cause outbreaks among animals, which in turn increase stress among rural farmers and jeopardise their livelihoods.

"We urge swift action and co-ordinated efforts to support these communities that are already challenged with lack of healthcare access, both in the immediate aftermath and in the years to come," said Susi Tegen, Chief Executive of the National Rural Health Alliance.

Evacuation

The flooding in Northern Queensland has submerged agricultural land and forced residents to evacuate, causing physical damage and triggering a rise in waterborne diseases, mental health issues, and respiratory conditions. Rural communities face heightened risks of infections as a result.

The Climate and Health Alliance (CAHA) calls for a focus on resourcing primary care, particularly in driving long-term preparedness and resilience of health services to meet climate and health risks. Rural communities in particular will benefit from this,

where climate impacts are already being felt substantially.

"Health professionals are valued members of rural communities and have to balance the personal impacts of fire and flood with the increases in demand for care services at work," said Michelle Isles, CEO of the Climate and Health Alliance.

"Health professionals are not currently equipped to deal with the frequency and scale of climate change events. In recent weeks we have observed hospital admissions rise and health services unable to evacuate from fire zones, adding to mounting pressure. Education and training can help and should be resourced and rolled out alongside ensuring adequate staffing levels, addressing burnout, and providing mental health support for health professionals."

Funding

Ms Tegen added: "We join the Climate and Health Alliance in advocating for funding of the National Health and Climate Strategy to mitigate climate impacts on health professionals, rural communities and their livelihoods. We also call for the establishment of a National Rural Health Strategy with rural health funding that would incorporate poli-

cies and initiatives to mitigate and address the impacts of disastrous weather patterns on the health and wellbeing of rural Australians.

"We call for immediate and ongoing support for rural communities and urge both state and federal governments to collaborate in bolstering resources for medical and health services, ensuring that rural populations are better prepared during extreme weather events.

"Long-term measures, including increased investment in climate change adaptation strategies, are essential to support our rural populations, who contribute significantly to Australia's economy."



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With Prices Starting Under \$30,000... 300,000 EVs on Aussie Roads

[From Electric Vehicle Council]

Australian drivers have put more than 300,000 electric vehicles on the road, signalling a shift toward cleaner, more affordable transport, the Electric Vehicle Council said.

Analysis of EVC and public data shows that of the electric vehicles that have been sold in Australia, about 248,000 are battery electric and about 53,500 are plug-in hybrids.

While the EV sales data stretches back to 2011, the majority of these vehicles have been hitting Australian roads since 2021. This highlights the recent surge in adoption due to cheaper EVs, more charging infrastructure and greater awareness of the environmental benefits of EVs.

Achievement

Electric Vehicle Council CEO Julie Delvecchio said reaching 300,000 sales of BEVs and PHEVs was an exciting achievement for Australia.

"With 300,000 electric vehicles on Australian roads – and counting – we're seeing a significant shift in how Australians choose to drive," Ms Delvecchio said.

"Just a few years ago, electric vehicles were an emerging option in Australia, with a

limited selection of models at expensive prices. But today, EVs are a serious consideration for many drivers and a familiar sight on roads nationwide. Today, Australians have access to more than 120 EV car models, over 220 variants, and a wider range of affordable options starting at under \$30,000, with even more choices and competitive pricing on the horizon.

Switch

"During this cost-of-living crunch that is hurting so many of us, hundreds of thousands of Australian households have switched to electric vehicles to save thousands of dollars annually on running costs. Battery electric cars are estimated to save you up to \$3,000 every year on fuel and maintenance costs.

"EVs are not only saving Australians money, they are improving everyone's quality of life. More electric vehicles mean quieter streets and cleaner air in our communities. And let's not forget – EVs are fun to drive with

great handling and faster acceleration than petrol cars!

"The 300,000 EVs zipping around Australia are being driven by people from all walks of life: families ferrying kids around the suburbs, tradies going about their jobs, holiday-makers taking driving holidays across the country. With such a wide variety of models available today, EVs are meeting the needs of people living in the inner city, the outer suburbs and regional Australia.

Scratch

"Most of the EVs in Australia today have hit our roads within the past few years – a remarkable feat considering we started from scratch. Nearly one in ten new cars sold in Australia are now electric vehicles. In the past week alone, Australia has made strides in supporting EV uptake: WA has completed the country's longest electric charging highway, and the Tasmanian government has introduced \$20,000 grants for small businesses to purchase electric delivery vans.

"We know we're far from mission accomplished – there's still much more work to be done to drive wider EV adoption – but Australia is heading in the right direction. To boost momentum, we need to build on the current FBT policies, support more charging infrastructure and focus on light commercial vehicles to make it even easier for more Australians to transition to cleaner, cost-effective driving."

Tyrrell Bowls Finals Positions Decided

Birchip Maroons entered the final round of Tyrrell pennant just outside the top four. They travelled to Woomelang and knew a win would most likely get them a finals berth, and after a couple of tight contests they secured that much needed win.

In other games Sea Lake put an end to Quamby's finals dream while Birchip Grey had a solid win over Berriwillock to cement their spot.

Birchip Maroons v. Woomelang, Division 1

Andrew Lee, Tony Doran, Darren Barker and Peter Gould came up against Brad Stynes's team. The game was tight early but the Maroons gradually snuck away to a sixteen shot lead. To their credit Woomelang had three big ends and narrowed the margin. The Maroons surged again and took the match by thirteen shots (28-15).

Kevin and Joe Reid, "Waffle" Grogan and Glen Trollope

took on Viv Mitchell's foursome. The match was tight from start to finish, with no one ever in control. The lead changed numerous times, and it all came down to the last end which saw Woomelang grab three shots and the win, 22-20.

The final Division One match had Wayne Clark, Greg Martin, "Sauce" Hogan and Rhonda Cooper up against Graham Symes's mob. This was also a very tight game from the start. Scores were level after the nineteenth end, and it was from this point that the Maroons strung four winning ends together which enabled them to eventually win by eight shots. (28-20).

Overall the Maroons won 76-57 and gained 10 match points.

Division 2

Ray Barr, Jim Petrie and Errol Bindi played one bowler short against Matt White and his team. Even with two less bowls per end the Birchip team was able keep its noses in front, but after the break Woomelang snuck ahead and won (29-22).

Kelvin Hagley took the helm for the final game of the day. He was ably assisted by Brad Ryan, Glen Hogan and Lesley Whitling. They came up against Darrell Boxall's team. With Hagley calling the shots the Maroons were al-

ways in control of the game and finally won 26-16.

Overall, the Maroons won (55-38) in their first win for the year.

Birchip Grey v. Berriwillock

Players had an early start to avoid the hot weather in Birchip, where Grey welcomed their Berriwillock neighbours in what turned out to be a hard-fought battle. Eventually Division 1 got the chocolates, and Grey also had a solid victory in Division 2.

Division 2

Congratulations to Carolyn Reid's rink who had a 55/21 victory that included an eight. Well done Carolyn and the boys. In the other Division 2 game Peg Hogan came away with a 28/17 victory which helped Division 2 to win a spot in the finals. They will

play Berriwillock again, at Sea Lake tomorrow.

Division 1

After a slow start the Grey army fought back slowly to gain an overall victory. Richard Hadrick's rink was on their knees until picking up a 7 on the 10th end to get back in the game and come out winners 28/19.

"Frogga", "Carty", Jennifer Blainey and Mick Spicer were sailing along well until the wheels fell off and after leading 16/8 finally went down 18/27. Des Ryan continued his great form leading his rink to a 26/16 win. The win solidified top spot for the Grey team and they will now meet Sea Lake at Quambatook tomorrow.

With the finals starting this coming Saturday, the club wishes all participants the

best of luck with hopefully success coming the Greys' way at season's end.

A big thank you to everybody at the Birchip Bowling Club for your tireless work during the season to help make our club the great club that it is.

"Let's raise the shields again"

"You Gotta Be Up"

Tyrell Finals

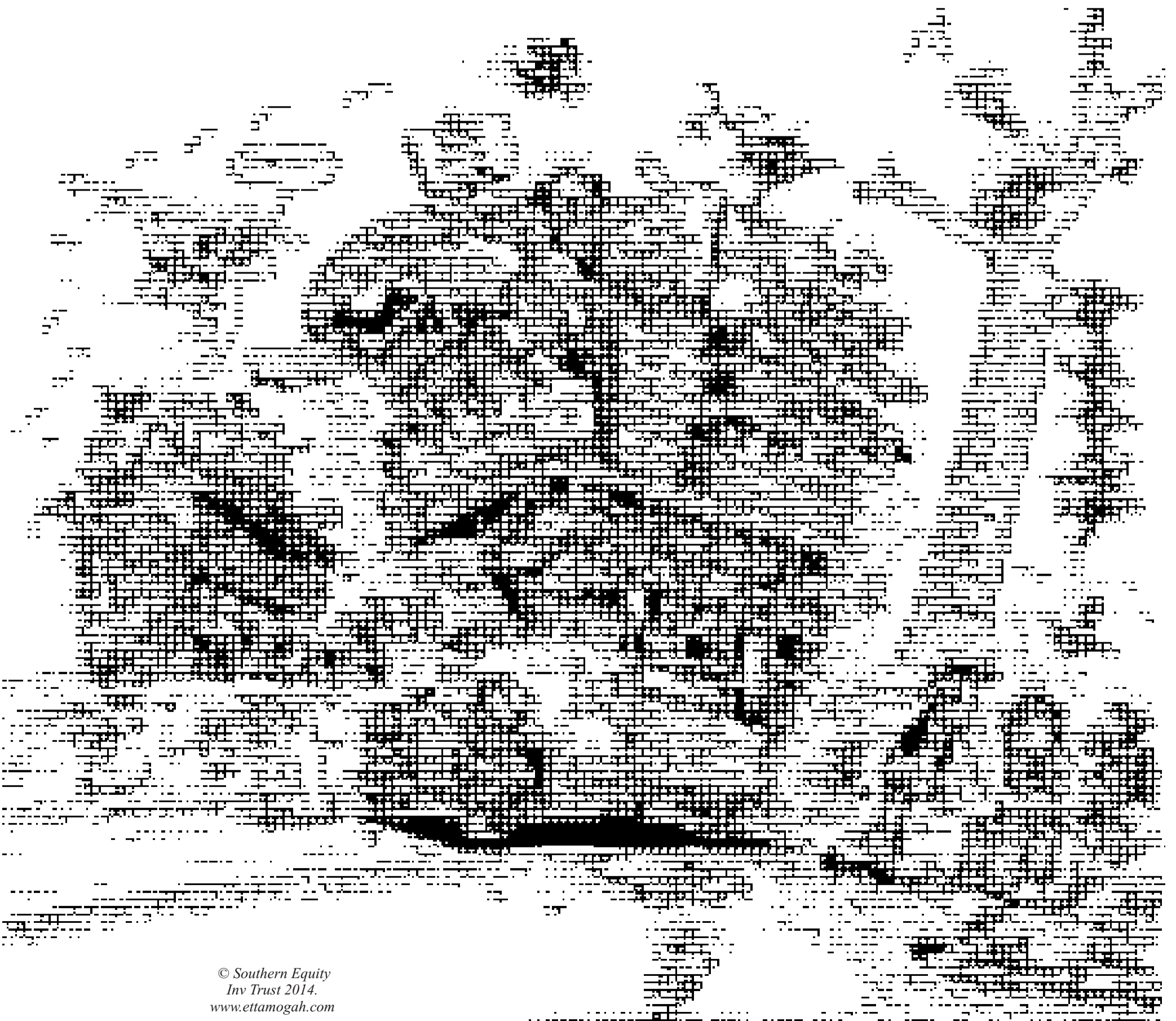
Division 1. First Semi: Birchip Maroons v Berriwillock at Sea Lake.

Second Semi: Birchip Grey v Sea Lake at Quambatook.

Division 2. First Semi: Birchip Grey v Berriwillock at Sea Lake.

Second Semi: Quamby v Sea Lake at Quambatook.

The Ettamogah Pub Mob



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www.ettamogah.com

"I can't understand it mate... th' air conditioning is working perfectly... we've had all th' windows open fer two thousand miles... you've got th' only non smokin' seat on th' bus & still you're complaining!"

Bring on the Finals

North Central Playing Area's midweek pennant competition is primed for what promises to be a very interesting finals series, with semi-finals between Wycheproof and Donald Golf and Wedderburn and St. Arnaud to be contested next Tuesday at a venue to be announced.

In hot conditions that taxed the fitness and concentration of all bowlers, Wycheproof, Donald Golf and Wedderburn enter the business end of the season on the back of confidence boosting wins over St. Arnaud Country Club, St. Arnaud and Boort respectively, while St. Arnaud will be looking to regroup and rebound strongly in its cut throat semi..

Ladder leader Wycheproof certainly didn't have it all its own way against the eighth placed St. Arnaud Country Club, with the final margin being just 3 shots in Wyche.'s favour, and 10 points to 2.

Rob Grylls was Wycheproof's biggest winner, by 5 shots over Patricia Goode, while Donald Denney snuck home by 1 against Rhonda Pole.

Des Moulday finished the season on a high, and secured 2 points for Country Club, when his rink edged out Dale Groves by 2 shots.

Boort failed in its last-ditch bid to secure a finals berth when Wedderburn proved too strong, winning all three rinks by a combined margin of 32 shots.

Alan Jackson's quartet romped home by 24 shots over Laurie Maxted, while Laurie Witham secured a 4-shot win over Thelma Moresi, and Neale Holt guided his lot to a 4-shot victory over John Gibson.

Donald Golf banked all 12 points against the visiting St. Arnaud, with Peter Hibberd shading Lloyd Goddard by 6 shots, Geoff Rigby carrying the day against Allan Welsh by 13, and Shane O'Shea accounting for Phil McRae by 10.

In a heat affected contest, Charlton won out against host Donald by a margin of 10 points to 2.

Ken North gave Charlton a decisive edge when he outscored Beryl Milne by 16

shots, and Lynne Southwell prevailed by 4 shots over Margaret Quick.

Lindy Morgan skipped Donald's only winning rink, securing a 6-shot victory over Kevin Willey.

Details:

St. Arnaud Country Club 61-2 lost to Wycheproof 65-10.

Steve Atkinson, Colleen Bond, Amanda Marland, Patricia Goode (s) 21 lost to Lorraine Milburn, Shirley McKenna, Des Nicholls, Rob Grylls (s) 26.

Faye Rodger, Leigh Abbott, Paul Mullins, Des Moulday (s) 19 d. Cheryl Rayes, Lynette Nicholls, Alan Jones, Dale Groves (s) 17.

Dianne Fullarton, Yvonne Templar, Heather Esmore, Rhonda Pole (s) 21 lost to Carol Jones, Vince Grant, Jeannie Grylls, Donald Denney (s) 22.

Boort 50-0 lost to Wedderburn 82-12.

Lynn Carrall, Tania Noles, Dorothy Gibson, John Gibson (s) 18 lost to Helen Stephenson, Joan Murnane, Ruth Hall, Neale Holt (s) 22.

Gillian Tweddle, Phyl Baker, Craig Newsome, Laurie Maxted (s) 11 lost to Lance Standfield, Judy Matthews, Sandra Steel, Alan Jackson (s) 35.

Yvonne Cashen, Pam Gould, Joan Earl, Thelma Moresi (s) 21 lost to Robina Little, Sandra Standfield, Amy Roberts, Laurie Witham (s) 25.

Donald Golf 85-12 d. St. Arnaud 56-0.

Corazon Stopps, Shirley Evans, Robert Reseigh, Shane O'Shea (s) 30 d. Andrea Tyler, Dianne Ostarcevic, Marie Hufer, Phil McRae (s) 20.

Sue Donnellon, Enid Brasier, Brenda Dixon, Peter Hibberd (s) 24 d. Heather Stevenson, Margaret McIntyre, Laurence Goodwin, Lloyd Goddard (s) 18.

Colleen Raynes, Marilyn Frank, Joyce Hollis, Geoff Rigby (s) 31 d. Anne McNally, Margaret McRae, Paul Micallef, Allan Welsh (s) 18.

Donald 33-2 lost to Charlton 47-10.

Joan Wood, Marion McEwen, Brenda Brennan, Beryl Milne (s) 8 lost to Jeff Cox, Doug Gretgrix, Dale McCallum, Ken North (s) 24.

Deborah Knight, Jim Meyer, Marg Kelly, Lindy Morgan (s) 14 d. Gary Bateson, Eily Rosewall, John Headon, Kevin Willey (s) 8.

Kay Wyllie, Alison McEwen, Ev Adams, Margaret Quick (s) 11 lost to Richard Porter, Wendy Laffin, Michael O'Brien, Lynne Southwell (s) 15.



• St. Arnaud bowler Anne McNally delivers her bowl. Anne has completed a good year playing mid-week pennant.



• Donald Golf bowler Colleen Raynes concentrates on her delivery. Colleen has only started using the bowling arm this season.



• Donald Golf Ladies Champion Marilyn Frank delivers her bowl. In the foreground is St. Arnaud skipper Phil McRae and Golf's Shane O'Shea.



**AMBULANCE
PHONE NO.
000**

Birchip Pennant Teams

Division One

Birchip Grey to play Sea Lake at Quambatook.

Second semi-final, February 8, 2025.

K. Donnellon, B. Hogan, R. Bragg, R. Haddrick (s)

L. Scott, N. Noonan, O. Reid, D. Ryan (s)

J. Blainey, M. Spicer, G. Cartwright, M. Bowen (s)

Division Two

Birchip Grey to play Berriwillock at Sea Lake.

First semi-final, February 8, 2025.

L. Blair, S. Fraser, M. Connelly, P. Hogan (s)

G. Smith, P. Bragg, R. Ince, C. Reid (s)

Meet at bowling club 11.30 a.m.. Afternoon tea please.

Division One

Birchip Maroon to play Berriwillock, at Sea Lake. First semi-final, February 8, 2025.

R. Cooper, M. Hogan, G. Martin, W. Clark (s)

P. Gould, D. Barker, T. Doran, A. Lee (s)

G. Trollope, T. Grogan, J. Reid, K. Reid (s). Meet at bowling club 11.45 a.m.. Afternoon tea please.

MIDWEEK PENNANT BOWLS

Positions of Teams, after round 14

	P	W	L	D	Bye	F	A	SD	%	Pts
Wycheproof	14	12	2	0	0	1085	845	240	128	133
Donald Golf	14	11	3	0	0	1043	860	183	121	120
Wedderburn	14	8	6	0	0	1086	857	229	127	104
St. Arnaud	14	7	7	0	0	842	947	-105	89	81
Boort	14	6	8	0	0	863	993	-130	87	74
Charlton	14	6	8	0	0	834	870	-36	96	71
Donald	14	3	10	1	0	828	990	-162	84	50
St. Arnaud Country Club	14	2	11	1	0	854	1073	-219	79	39

Marnoo Cricket Reunion Coming Up

Marnoo Cricket Club is seeking interested former cricket legends to attend a Saturday lunch reunion at Marnoo Tavern on Friday, February 22, 2025.

There are several attending who played in the 1964/1965 premier season, and some former players from 1974/1975.

These lads would like to compare notes with the 1999/2000 players.

As additional entertainment, Marnoo is hosting Birchip vying for a finals spot.

Anyone interested can contact Chris Marshall 0408 723 320 or email chrisso.marsh@gmail.com



• 1974/75 Premiers Team.



• 1999/2000 D.C.A. Premiers Team: back, Hayden McLennan, Tim Nisbet, Andrew Newall, Dwain Duxson, Armand Duxson, Derek Cameron, Brylie Cameron. Front, Ben Duxson, Dan Douglas, Phil Reading (Captain), Greg Wickham, Scott Wickham, Andrew Nisbet, Darcy Cameron.

Two Cricket Hat-Tricks

(By Chris Graetz, "Wimmera Mallee News")

Charlton's Elliott Fitzpatrick and Watchem's Austin Dean took hat-tricks in the Wimmera Mallee Cricket Association "B" grade competition, with Fitzpatrick securing his with the first three balls of the game against St Mary's.

Fitzpatrick's hat-trick was one to remember, with St Mary's batsmen Jacob Thomas, Riley Adams and Aiden Keys losing their stumps through accurate bowling at Charlton Park.

Fitzpatrick, 18, was thrilled with his hat-trick, the first of his young career, and said the celebration was huge.

"The ball was swinging a little bit, and there was seam movement, and I just focused on putting down three good balls," he said.

"I was thinking about putting the ball in the same spot on the hat-trick ball.

"When the ball hit the stumps, the celebration took the wind out of me as it was a hot day."

St Mary's was bowled out for 40 with Sean Smith scoring 16. Fitzpatrick finished with figures of 3/5 (3), while Patrick Soulsby joined in on the action, taking 3/9 (4).

Earlier in the day, Charlton won the toss, batted and scored 4/301. Billy Sexton was the top scorer with 79, with handy contributions from Patrick Soulsby, 63, and Hugh Sait, 45. Sujeesh Mohanan Sreekala played a memorable cameo, hitting 46 off 21 balls, including five sixes.

Lincoln Westerland, 2/42 (7), and Matt Hartnett, 2/40 (5), were St Mary's best bowlers.

Fitzpatrick is now leading the competition with 20 wickets at an impressive average of 7.2. Last season, he took nine wickets after missing some of the season due to a broken wrist.

With Charlton on top of the ladder, Fitzpatrick hopes it will be their year after losing last year's grand final to Donald-Jeffcott.

"We have been up the top for most of the season, and we have struggled to get over the line in finals, so we are hoping this year will be different," Fitzpatrick said.

Austin Dean had a blistering innings and took six wickets. He secured his hat-trick in Watchem's loss to Donald-Jeffcott at the Watchem

Cricket Ground. After winning the toss and batting, Donald-Jeffcott was bowled out for 284 after 38 overs.

Sam Postlethwaite top scored with 74, and Andrew Bayles chipped in with 62. Dean's hat-trick victims were Kalon Green, caught by Daniel Slater, Jake Needs, bowled, and Jacob Donnellon, trapped in front for L.B.W..

Watchem was bowled out in the 38th over for 173. Ty Colbert led the way with 71, opening the batting, with Jam Borden scoring 30.

Ryan Bath was the pick of the Donald-Jeffcott bowlers, taking 5/29 (7).

In the other match, the Southern Mallee Giants secured a solid 47-run win over Birchip at the Birchip Recreation Reserve.

The Giants finished at 5/185 after their 40 overs, led by Dale Shannon with 87 and Kybe Bellinger with 56.

Birchip put up a good fight in the chase but was bowled out for 138 in the 31st over. Mark Trollope top scored with 43. For the Giants, Kyle Bellinger took 4/40 (8), while Finn Shannon took 2/6 (2) for the Giants.

North-Central Pennant Bowls



This Week's Selected Club Teams

DIVISION ONE Round 14, Saturday, February 8

Boort v. Donald Golf BOORT

Teams not available
DONALD GOLF

W. Livingston, G. Geddes, A. Humprey, D. Pettifer (s)
M. Frank, R. Reseigh, R. Adams, G. Rigby (s)
G. Stopps, B. Murray, S. Hollis, P. Hibberd (s)
Cars: Hollis, Adams, Pettifer. Leave 11.50 a.m..

Charlton v. Wycheproof WYCHEPROOF

A. Jones, B. MacDonald, N. Coles, J. Grylls (s)
E. Rayes, J. McLean, J. McKay, A. Mead (s)
P. Coles, A. Coatsworth, D. Groves, G. Allan (s)
Emergencies: Nicholls, Rayes, Milburn.

CHARLTON
Teams not available

Wedderburn v. St. Arnaud Country Club WEDDERBURN

Team not available

ST. ARNAUD COUNTRY CLUB

T. Coloe, R. Pole, L. Lynch, W. Rodger (s)
D. Moulday, D. Mullins, M. Esmore, T. McDonald (s)
F. Rodger, B. Medlyn, J. Nevill, J. Abbott (s)
Cards: T. McDonald. Manager: M. Esmore.
Emergencies: Jorgensen, Bales, McAllister.

Donald v. St. Arnaud DONALD

T. Farrer, J. Collins, A. Adamson, H. Wingfield (s)
B. Hegarty, J. Howley, L. Morgan, N. Hollis (s)
J. Meyer, T. Gravestocks, L. Kelly, P. Kelly (s)

ST. ARNAUD
Teams not available

DIVISION TWO Round 14, Saturday, February 8

Boort v. Donald Golf BOORT

Teams not available
DONALD GOLF

D. Adams, J. Slater, A. Dionopolous, L. Borden (s)
G. Bowles, B. Brasier, B. Dixon, S. O'Shea (s)
B. Bayles, M. Raynes, P. Raynes, G. Wood (s)
Cars: Raynes, Bayles, Bowles. Leave 11.50 a.m..

Charlton v. Wycheproof WYCHEPROOF

D. Nicholls, S. Barratt, J. Grylls, P. Connolly (s)
V. Grant, R. Coles, D. Denney, R. Grylls (s)
C. Jones, P. Bagley, G. Coatsworth, M. Nicholls (s)
Emergencies: Nicholls, Rayes, Milburn.

CHARLTON
Teams not available

Wedderburn v. St. Arnaud Country Club WEDDERBURN

Team not available

ST. ARNAUD COUNTRY CLUB

L. Watkins, C. Webb, K. Meade, J. Needs (s)
M. Pole, G. Shaw, N. Robinson, A. Bond (s)
G. White, S. Atkinson, P. Mullins, P. Elliott (s)
Cards: G. White. Manager: J. Needs.
Emergencies: Jorgensen, Bales, McAllister.

Donald v. St. Arnaud DONALD

M. Wolski, C. Perry, K. Wyllie, D. Romeo (s)
L. Holland, P. Wyllie, M. Quick, E. Adams (s)
B. Hollis, S. Robertson, B. Brennan, B. Milne (s)
Emergency: M. McEwen.

ST. ARNAUD
Teams not available





• Twenty-two teams playing on eleven rinks filled Donald Golf Bowls Club's two greens for Sunday's annual tournament.

Donald Golf's Big Bowls Weekend

A big weekend of bowls took place at Donald Golf with Saturday's Pennant and the Annual 4's Tournament taking place.

Division 1 players outplayed Wedderburn at home to secure 10 points to 2. Peter

Hibberd's team tried hard against Alan Jackson's rink, but was eventually run over

30 shots to 20. Daniel Pettifer's rink played well to defeat Laurie Witham's team

25-20 in a fairly low scoring match. Geoff Rigby's four completely out-bowled Damian Mason's rink to win 34-18 to secure victory to Golf, 79 shots to 68.

Unfortunately, Division 2 suffered defeat, 70 shots to 85 and scored 2 points to 10. Shane O'Shea's rink won very well against Ian Hall's team 34-19, however losses to George Wood's team 20-23 and Lindsay Borden's crew 16-43, led to a defeat which has hindered the chances of making the finals.

Sunday's tournament was played in hot conditions and tournament secretary Robert Reseigh did a great job to assemble a 22 team field. Teams came from Nhill, Webbcona, Lake Boga, Nyah, Minyip, Kangaroo Flat, Sea Lake, Kerang Golf and most North Central clubs.

The overall winners came from Nhill and comprised Shaun McDonald, Ryder Byrnes, Matt Morrison and Nick Robins. Runners-up was the Nyah team of Rod Wickham.

The winners of the highest margin wins in each game were:

Round 1 – Leigh Hardingham (Kangaroo Flat).

Round 2 – Col Young (Webbcona).

Round 3 – Laurie Wodeason (Webbcona).

Round 4 – Robin Jolly (Lake Boga).

The club is very grateful to the club ladies, very capably led by Sue Donnellon, for their excellent meals, and to the various volunteers who helped make the tournament such a great success. Thank

you also to the greenkeeper Stewart Hollis and his band of helpers including Bill Livingston, Tony Dionosopolis and Geoff Stopps, who helped prepare the green.

We would like to acknowledge all our sponsors, especially Southern Mallee Seed Cleaning, the Adams family, Weir's Supermarket and the Bayles family.



• Donald Golf president, Peter Raynes (left) congratulates the Nhill combination of Shaun McDonald, Ryder Byrnes, Nick Robbins and Matt Morrison, winners of Sunday's Invitation Fours tournament.



• Sea Lake visitor and club champion, Adam Louttit, wills his bowls towards the head.



• Regular tournament participant, Eddie Caine, representing the Kangaroo Flat Bowls Club, sends his bowl towards the head, as his St. Arnaud Country Club opponent, Des Moulday, loads his bowls into his bowling arm.

"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8163 - SOLUTIONS

Across - 1, Platypus. 6, Wise. 8, Snip. 9, Napoleon. 10, Chaos. 11, Hazard. 13, Tennis. 15, Rocket. 17, Sparse. 19, March. 22, Morphine. 23, Lion. 24, Stud. 25, Kerosene.
Down - 2, Lunch. 3, Typhoon. 4, Punt. 5, Sapphire. 6, Waltz. 7, Scourge. 12, Asterisk. 14, Expolit. 16, Chablis. 18, Rapid. 20, Clown. 21, Pear.

Permanent Water Saving Rules

1 Hand held hoses
Use a leak-free hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle

2 Sprinklers / water systems
Use manual or automatic water systems between 6 pm and 10 am

3 Water features
Use fountains or water features that recirculate the water

4 Hard surfaces
No hosing of hard surfaces including paths, concrete, decking & driveways.

5 Public areas
Rules apply to watering of playing surfaces, public gardens & public lawns



Help save water by following the Permanent Water Saving Rules when restrictions are not in force.

gwmwater.org.au

Weekend Tournament a Big Charlton Hit

Charlton, home to Victoria's oldest regional tennis club, has once again shown why it has been able to survive for so long, the Charlton Lawn Tennis Club hosting another spectacular tennis tournament.

Whilst numbers were down on 2024's record entries, returning to more normalised levels of just under 200 players, the Charlton and District Community Bank Australia Day Weekend tournament saw three great days of tennis ensue, the 16 grass courts playing perhaps the best that they have ever played, certainly in recent memory.

Brian Heenan is to be commended on how the courts were presented, and how they stood up three warm days of tennis. Many comments were heard about how true the bounce was, playing more akin to hard courts than what players have come to expect of grass courts.

The North Central region, probably not appreciating the point of difference they have with so many clubs still being able to hold on to so many, you only have to look down the road at a major regional centre like Bendigo, now without a grass court, to realise how fortunate those in the region are to have more than 100 grass courts in small communities, all less than an hour's drive of Charlton.

From Near and Far

Amongst the crowd that plays in Charlton each January are a host of regulars, some having played the Australia Day weekend event for more than forty years!!

Regular returnees come from Merimbula, Adelaide, Sale, Seymour, Avenel, Shepparton, Geelong and greater Melbourne, some making Charlton their home for more than a week, enjoying the local company and amenities, joining tennis club volunteers in helping to set up and make sure a great weekend guaranteed for all.

New players this year were attracted from as far as Dubbo, Graham and Alison making the 792km journey for an enjoyable weekend's tennis – vowing to return next

year, such was the "amazing" time they had. Monday's forecast no doubt slowed the number of players wanting to play singles, but the doubles and mixed doubles days still having great support.

Sunday

Australia Day Sunday was again the major focus of the weekend's activities, mixed doubles the format of the day, the showcase of the Charlton tournament since lights were installed on the front row of courts in time for the 2023 event. The five finals were under way at 7:30 p.m..

Before that, though, players and spectators alike were treated to a bevy of food options, Little Sangria with their wonderful Paella, The Vale of Avoca with pizza offerings, Asian infusion with dumplings and fried rice on offer, pulled pork rolls, and traditional barbecue prepared by the Charlton Lions Club, topped off with soft serve ice cream, allowing no one to go hungry, and only the fussiest of fussy eaters could find a reason to be remotely disappointed.

Australian Open

If the local tennis was inspiring enough, the Australian open men's singles final was playing on the big screen courtesy of the Charlton Football Club and GrainCorp, patrons settled in on the magnificent surrounds of the Charlton Tennis Club, head on a swivel as they tried to keep an eye on everything that was going on.

Fireworks

At the conclusion of the local finals, the large crowd was treated to a spectacular fireworks display, many townsfolk enjoying the show from the comfort of their own porch. And if that wasn't enough, local entertainer Greg Towers of East Charlton Hotel and now Cricket Club Hotel swung into action, joined on mike by daughter Alicia to keep the festivities in

full swing. It would be great to see more locals take advantage of this free night's entertainment and join in the fun over at the tennis club in 2026 – ALL WELCOME – you don't need to swing a racquet to enjoy the weekend.

Local Success

Locals to do well included: Jo Southcombe, winning the ladies "A" grade singles and teaming with Troy Heenan to make the final of the "A" grade mixed doubles; Nick Thompson winning the men's "B" grade singles; Mason Heenan pairing with cousin Nate Pokorzynski to win the men's "C" grade doubles, Beth Dillon's grandson and Rae and Brian Heenan's nephew Samuel Ellis playing with Taylah Pratt to win the "C" grade mixed doubles; one of Charlton's newest residents, new teacher Claire Smith jumping on court to finish runner-up in the ladies "D" grade doubles; while St Arnaud member Stephen Rodger also did well, pairing with Grant Woodbridge (Merimbula) to finish runner-up in the men's "A" grade doubles. Great to also see former Charlton player Les Finlay's grandson Adam and great grandson Jesse on court at this year's tournament; Les's daughter Anne also in attendance.

All in all, another incredibly successful tournament, tournament secretary Rae Heenan, now in her 30th plus year, reflected on the consistency of entries across recent memory, even if a little panic had set in a week out with less than 20% of final entries received!

Appreciation

Special thanks to the Charlton and tennis communities, Kim T. and Andrea O'G., who, along with Donna S., Rebecca H., Marisa B., Natasha S., Jayne B., Leanne F., Deirdre McK. and Kaylene C., in preparing lunches for the ravenous crowd, freshly



• Men's open doubles (winners in middle): Sam McHarg and Zach Ranson; left, runner-up Joe Nihill; right, runner-up Troy Snow.

made each morning, in an admirable show of community spirit. These, along with the many who made slices and Gloria B., who sets up the canteen each morning, do so despite any of them being members of the tennis club, understanding the importance of the event on the community schedule and happy to do their bit.

Also a shout out to Wayne K. for his help on the bar; Grant Woodbridge who comes as a player, but makes sure he is in Charlton from Merimbula in time to help at the Friday working bee; Charlton Lions Club members on the barbecue; the Wycheproof Racing Club for the use of its umbrellas and tables; Charlton Football and Cricket clubs for their marquees; and the Charlton Harness Racing Club for its umbrellas, all combined to bring the Charlton Tennis Club within Charlton Park alive each January.

Finally, big thanks to all members of the Charlton Tennis Club for the huge amount of work that goes into putting on such an event; it's not easy, but is a valuable weekend on the Charlton calendar, pulling much needed external money into town, not just for three days, but across the week.

Results

Charlton and District Community Bank Open Mixed Doubles: Alex Bakogianis (Nathalia) and Ash Andrews (Melbourne) defeated Michael and Narelle Smyth (Bendigo); East Charlton Hotel "A" grade mixed doubles: Paul Page and Heather Richards (Adelaide) defeated Troy Heenan and Jo Southcombe (Charlton); Bakery Lane Apartments "B" grade mixed doubles: Peter French and Anne Crouch (Adelaide) defeated Denzel Cooper and Samara Connors (Bendigo); Charlton Hardware "C" grade mixed doubles: Samuel Ellis and Taylah Pratt (Bendigo) defeated Tyson McCoomb and Fiona Robinson (Avenel); Charlton Caravan Park "D" grade mixed doubles: Miller and Kylie Evans (Bendigo) defeated Stuart and Olivia Atkins (Ivanhoe).



• Ladies "A" grade doubles winners: Sheryn Long and Rose Nihill.

Charlton IGA Ladies "A" grade doubles: Sheryn Long (Bendigo) and Rosie Nihill (Nathalia) defeated Di Arnott (Adelaide) and Jennifer Luke (Sale); Priority 1 Property Ladies "B" grade doubles: Deb and Rhian Shepherd defeated Anne Crouch and Jenny Fisher (Adelaide); Foundry Palms Motel Ladies "C" grade doubles: Kylie Evans (Bendigo) and Cara Sacco (Frankston) defeated Priya Coatsworth and Lana Fawcett (Wycheproof); Perry Contractors ladies "D" grade doubles: Ava Gordon and Chloe Locke (Seymour) defeated Claire Smith (Charlton) and Elise Turner (Wheelers Hill).

Walsh Motors men's open doubles: Sam McHarg and Zach Ranson (Shepparton) defeated Joe Nihill (Nathalia) and Troy Snow (Geelong); Teys Australia men's "A" grade doubles: Kelvin McAlpine (Kooyong) and Paul Page (Adelaide) defeated Stephen Rodger (St Arnaud) and Grand Woodbridge (Merimbula); Charlton Massage Clinic men's "B" grade doubles: Brett Stephens and Jim Sutton defeated Simon Flood and Frank Ryan (Bendigo);

Fine Farm Organics men's "C" grade doubles: Mason Heenan (Charlton) and Nate Pokorzynski (Caroline Springs) defeated Justin Dungey and Sam Hower (Shepparton); MCG Airconditioning men's "D" grade doubles: Keith Chittleborough and Bryce Martin (Wheelers Hill) defeated Sam Payne (Shepparton) and Toby Robe (Cohuna).

Charlton Newsagency ladies "A" grade Singles: Jo Southcombe (Charlton) defeated Rhian Sheppard; Hannaford Seed Cleaning ladies "D" grade singles: Michelle Amalfi defeated Tallulah Duffy (Bendigo);

BQS Group men's open singles: Sam McHarg (Shepparton) defeated Zach Ranson (Shepparton); Vale of Avoca Men's "B" grade singles: Nick Thompson (Charlton) outlasted Peter French (Adelaide); Signwise/Wright's Building men's "C" grade singles: Lachlan Stark (Strathdale Park) defeated Adam Brandt (Green Gully); North West Ag Services men's "D" grade Singles: Ollie Robertson (Seymour) defeated Oscar Bath (Melbourne).



• Crowd watching the big screen entertainment.