

DONALD

Phone: 5497 1222
 Articles to:
 news@buloketimes.com
 Adverts to:
 admin@buloketimes.com

The Buloke Times

Est. 1875

BIRCHIP

Phone: 5492 2735
 Fax: 5492 2863
 Email:
 birchipblc@
 bigpond.com

Published Tuesdays and Fridays

PP331336/0000 1

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

PRICE (inc. G.S.T.) \$2

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



Rally Riders Take a Break

They came from near and far, heading for a location near Charlton, off the Boort Road.

The groups of motorcycles pictured here, were parked outside the Donald Hotel on

Saturday, while their riders took a break to enjoy lunch before heading off to their destination.

They were on their way to the 32nd Redback Rally, which extended from February 7 through to the 9th, and were looking forward to plenty of band music and other entertainment.

Taking a Moment for Ourselves

The appetite for community art workshops continues to grow in Buloke, offering a much-needed escape from busy, always-on lifestyles.

“When we finally get time for ourselves, we’re often too drained to do anything but flop on the couch and watch television, or mindlessly scroll through social media feeds,” said Donald artist, Kerry Duncan, who has delivered two workshops at the Donald Train Station precinct.

“This is often mistaken for relaxation, but actually leads to greater mental fatigue. These no-experience-needed workshops are proving to be a great way for people to re-learn how to relax — sparking creativity, laughter, and a refreshed mindset.”

The success of these workshops is evident across the region. In December, Charlton

artist Bronwyn Fisher’s decoupage sessions in Nullawil and Nandaly attracted participants of all ages, while an upcoming fabric weaving workshop with Charlton artist David Beatty — scheduled for next month — was fully booked within just three days of being advertised by Charlton Neighbourhood House.

Building on this momentum, Wycheproof Train Station hosted a two-day workshop last weekend with Gunditjmarra and Wotjobaluk artist Tanisha Lovett and Barkindji Ngaympaa Maligundij artist Tracy Wise. The workshop will culminate in the Visions of Tomorrow Exhibition hosted by the

Wycheproof Community Resource Centre, set to take place this Thursday, February 13, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Wycheproof Train Station.

Deeper Purpose

Beyond the creative process, these workshops serve a deeper purpose.

“They provide a safe space for people to process their experiences as well as share a bite to eat,” said Buloke Shire Mayor Cr Alan Getley.

Research has shown that creative expression reduces stress, lowers cortisol levels, and improves mental well-being.

• Continued on page 3.



• Charlton artist Bronwyn Fisher led decoupage workshops in Nandaly and Nullawil, where children and their parents transformed beautifully preassembled boxes crafted by the Donald Men’s Shed into unique designs.

Tackling the Tough Topics

Buloke Shire Council is committed to supporting mental health in our rural and farming communities.

Its Community Recovery team, along with Birchip Cropping Group and Donald Scouts, is featured in a new national resource from the National Centre for Farmer Health (NCFH).

The guide “Tackling the Tough Topics: A Step-by-Step Guide to Planning Mental Health & Wellbeing Events in Farming Communities” showcases proactive approaches to fostering community wellbeing.

Buloke Mayor Cr Alan Getley welcomed the new guide

as an important tool for rural communities, emphasising Buloke’s advocacy in community-driven recovery and mental health support.

Resilience

“Our communities have demonstrated incredible resilience in the face of challenges, from natural disasters to economic pressures,” he said.

“This guide acknowledges and strengthens the work already happening in Buloke and across rural Australia.

Across Australia and internationally, there is growing recognition of the importance of supporting farmer mental health.

Communities are developing initiatives and hosting events that foster open discussions, reduce stigma, and provide pathways to support, often featuring guest speakers, panel discussions, and lived-experience stories.

However, successful mental health and wellbeing events

must go beyond messaging—they need to connect with farming communities in ways that align with their values and daily realities. Events that are practical, relatable, and engaging are the most effective.

Example

A great example of these approaches included the “Just a Farmer” movie event at Charlton and recently supported appearances of Warren Davies — “The Unbreakable Farmer”, at events across Buloke, which coincided with The Paddock Run, a harvest wellbeing initiative conducted at the end of last year.

What’s Inside the Guide?

✓ 14 Key Planning Questions – A structured approach to event organisation.

✓ Practical Templates – Tools for smooth event delivery and successful outcomes.

✓ Case Studies & Best Practices – Insights from real rural community events, including those in Buloke.

✓ Speaker Preparation & Support – Ensuring guest speakers align with local needs and sensitivities.

“This guide ensures local leaders, farmers, and support networks have a reference to

give them confidence to deliver impactful events that protect and promote mental wellbeing in psychologically and emotionally safe ways,” added the Mayor.

Community members can download the resource from NCFH’s website, however once printed copies are available, Council will be seeking to distribute some in the community.

Visit www.farmerhealth.org.au/tackling-the-tough-topics-a-step-by-step-guide-to-plan-mental-health-and-wellbeing-events-in-farming-communities



• All lanes were full at lap swimming in Birchip, Thursday morning.

Morning Swimming and Aqua Exercise

The pools across Buloke Shire have become a hub of activity this summer, with community members taking full advantage of morning lap swimming and engaging aqua exercise classes.

Across Buloke, the pools have been open to the public on various mornings, that are best suited to each community between 6 a.m. and 8.30 a.m. for free morning lap swimming.

Lap swimmers have enjoyed the flexibility of being able to go when it suits them, and as more people are getting back into the routine of school and work, the numbers have been steadily increasing.

Neighbourhood Houses in Charlton, Wycheproof, and Birchip have also been making the most of the flexible opening hours, ensuring

these vital community spaces are being well utilised by offering structured aquatic fitness programs led by dedicated and professional instructors Nicola Kirk, Brenda and Maddie Doran, and Averyl Loft.

Their enthusiasm and expertise have encouraged many locals to embrace water-based fitness, which is known for being gentler on the body compared to land-based exercises.

Lifeguards

Neighbourhood House coordinators and community

members are grateful to the Buloke Shire's Gaynor Atkin, Lachlan Start, and all the hardworking lifeguards who have made these initiatives possible.

Their efforts in ensuring the pools remain open at times that accommodate residents' needs have contributed to the increased participation and enjoyment of aquatic activities in Buloke.

Social Connection

Beyond structured classes, the pools are also a place of social connection, where friends and family can come

together to enjoy the water and each other's company.

The significance of these pools extends beyond recreation, as they are also being well utilised by local schools for physical education classes and school swimming sports.

With the continued support of the community and the flexibility provided by the Buloke Shire, the pools remain an essential part of rural life, promoting both physical well-being and social connection in these small but vibrant communities.

Last Chance To See

(By The Red Gate Crew)

The Giant Russian Sunflowers at Donald's Red Gate Community Garden are in the final days of their spectacular bloom.

Measuring some four metres in height (that's around 14ft in Red Gate parlance) with seedhead/flowers weighing in at around 2 kgs (4lbs ?), they have been photographed many times by visitors passing through town and locals alike. Check them out soon if you haven't already done so.

Towering above the McCulloch St. streetscape they have become a sight-seeing talking point and we have distributed many seeds to anybody who cared to ask.

This is the second year we have planted and grown them and we intend to continue planting them for many years to come.

Joy of Gardening

We challenged all growers to a competition to grow the tallest sunflower but no-one stepped forward to claim the prize. So I guess the challenge carries over to 2025. We see it as a great way to introduce kids to the joys of gardening, but it's open to all age groups.

We have also had spectacular success with our passion-fruit vines. The fruit-fly netting has enabled us to harvest excellent tomato, apricot and plum yields in addition to other at risk crops. We worked out why our carrots were stunted and forking – the addition of sand to the soil did the trick. And like so many other gardeners around town, our brassicas (cauliflower, broccoli, cabbage and brussels sprouts), were a disappointment, probably due to seasonal conditions, so we

will be persevering again this year in the hope of improved results. Our asparagus is bolting, spreading and producing in ways we never expected. However, we need to refine our rhubarb techniques – another set of failures last year!

We have a prolific crop of Thai Basil but no-one seems to know what to do with it – it's quite unlike the Sweet Basil we're all familiar with; it has an aniseed flavour. If anybody would like to try some, just drop in to the Red Gate Garden any Tuesday morning – and this is an open invitation to EVERYONE! Share some of our produce, have a cuppa and a chat – Tuesday mornings from around 9 to 11.

Participation

Participation is what we strive to achieve.

Gardening also works as a subtle form of exercise for those who disdain formal exercise – you call on muscles and perform positioning that you might never attempt otherwise – all with a defined purpose: to produce food or ornamentals.

The Harvey family (Leonie/Geoff and son Bowen) re-habilitated our poly tunnel greenhouse/shadehouse with Bowen supplying the costly materials to us free of charge. The harveyhouse will hopefully give our seedlings a head-start for all seasons.

Come along and check us out – a fine bunch of people and excellent gardeners.



• Giant Russian Sunflowers peeking over at the streetscape.

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"Get outta here!!!"

Probians Meet

Donald Combined Probus Club began 2025 with a short meeting for its first assembly for the year.

It began with an altered program, meeting at an earlier time slot to allow those attending to support one of our own, Brian Bayles and his family, in their time of loss.

A welcome was extended to new member Jenny Dennis, who was inducted at this meeting, and John Coats was also remembered. John sadly

passed away last week and had been attending our meetings and was also to be inducted at this meeting.

Members are reminded the AGM will be held in March, when plans for another happy year will be shared. New members are always welcome.

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Taking a Moment for Ourselves

• Continued from page 1.

“We are fortunate to have such talented people in our community and to support their training in trauma-informed disaster recovery approaches,” the Mayor added.

“Before the Community Recovery Hubs Program, there were no artists in northern Victoria trained in this way. Now, we have more than a dozen in Buloke, strengthening our capacity to respond to future events.”

Lino print art workshops with Wotjobaluk artist Kristie Witt and Birchip artist Kristie Dean have also been in high demand, with sessions already delivered Charlton and Culgoa, as well as other arts projects at Birchip and Sea Lake. These workshops incorporate storytelling and an environment walk, inspiring intricate designs and fostering a deeper connection to nature.

For those still keen to participate, limited spaces remain for their next free Lino Print Workshops:

Donald Train Station – Saturday, February 15, 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m..

Wycheproof Train Station – Sunday, February 16, 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m..

Bookings essential via Customer Service at 1300 520 520 or email buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au.

• Right: Paula Wright of Charlton working on her lino print design.

• Below: A two-day ochre and acrylic workshop at Wycheproof on Sunday. Gunditjmara and Wotjobaluk artist Tanisha Lovett and Barkindji Ngayampaa Maligundidj artist Tracy Wise, attracted participants from across the shire. It culminates in an exhibition of the participant’s work this Thursday at the Wycheproof Train Station.



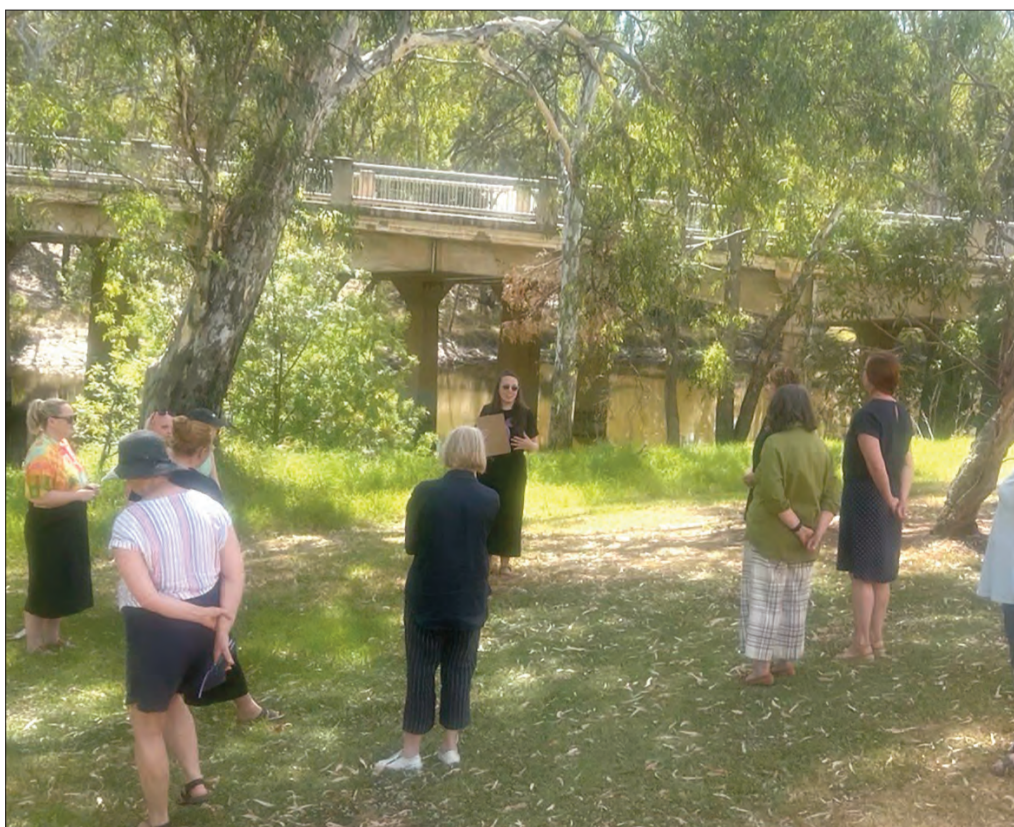
• Nandaly: left to right: Immersing themselves in the art of decoupage at the Nandaly workshop, transforming ordinary objects into beautiful designs are Millar and Jenna Stewart.



• Donald: Due to the overwhelming demand for Kerry Duncan’s 3-2-1: An Afternoon of Art session at the Donald Train Station — which filled within days and left a substantial wait list — residents recently gathered for an encore workshop.



• Donald: Kerry’s workshop also included a life drawing session. Pictured left to right, back – Jodie Hollis, Jeannie Robinson, Jodie Parkinson, Eileen Simpson, Leonie Harvey, Wendy Harvey, Tye Sibley (model), Jodie Aspland, Tahlia Gray, Tracey McKenzie (obscured), Leonie McConville, Kirby Richmond-Davis, Anne Rodgers-Trickey, Front left to right: Liz Richardson, Bronwyn Fisher and Marion Trickey.



• Charlton: Charlton Lino tile workshop participants heard stories about the kookaburra and the fire shared by Wotjobaluk artist, Kristie Witt, and walked the Avoca River banks to find inspiration from the environment to incorporate in their designs.



"Times" Classifieds

95TH BIRTHDAY



Wishing
May Ferrier O.A.M.,
a happy 95th birthday for
Tuesday, February 11.
You are very loved and
precious to us all.

—Lots of love from
all your family. Xoxo

DEATH ARMSTRONG (Fox).— Kathleen Agnes 25/4/1935 - 7/2/2025

Loved daughter of Daniel
and Nina Fox (both dec.).
Sister of Daniel (dec.),
Bernie (dec.), Brian, James,
Evelyn, Kevin and Pat.

DEATH BAYLES.— Marion

Our deepest sympathy to
Brian, Sarah, Rebecca,
Joanne and Andrew.
Marion was a special friend
of our family for many
years

—Leigh & Joan
Hardingham & family

Words are few, but
thoughts are deep.
Memories of you
are ours to keep.
A life made beautiful
by kindly deeds.
A helping hand
for others needs.
RIP our friend xx



DEATH COATS.— John 2577704

Member of Jeffcott Fire
Brigade for 65 years

The Chairman, Board,
Management and members
of CFA are saddened by the
passing of John and offer
their deepest sympathy to
his family.



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WEDNESDAY, FEB. 19

6.30 p.m.
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Russell Hallam, Support
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E: accommodation@ewhs.
org.au M: 0487 531 580

Printed and published for the proprietors
by Robin Letts, at the office of "The
Buloke Times", 6 McCulloch Street,
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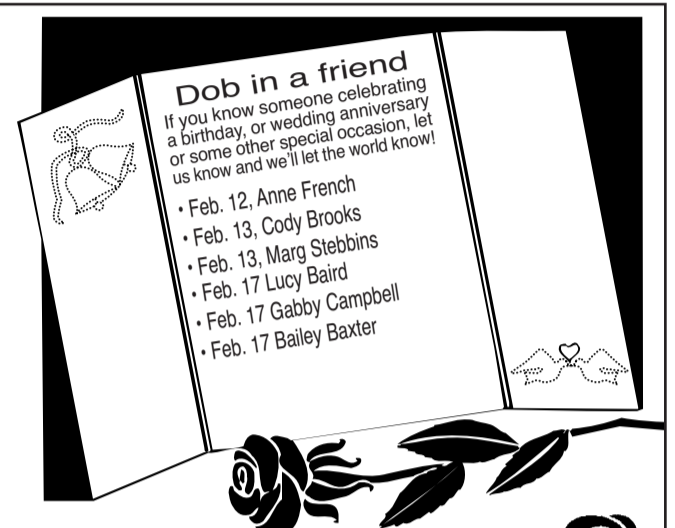
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Friday's Issue:
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Thursday.
Display advertisements
(2 or more columns), 3
p.m. Wednesday prior.



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The Donald Family Clinic will be **CLOSED** from **5:30pm Thursday 13th February 2025** & will re-open **8:30am Monday 3rd March 2025**

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Community Grants To Promote Equity and Inclusion

Northern Grampians Shire community groups and not-for-profit organisations can apply for money to help develop or improve services or facilities through the council's annual grants program.

Applications for the 2024/25 Community Grants round opened on Monday, February 10, with funding up to \$5000 available for eligible groups.

This year's program features a focus on community equity and inclusion, with grants going towards projects that: Support opportunities for multicultural inclusion; enable all residents to be so-

cially connected; enable access to healthy and affordable food; and provide leadership opportunities for women and girls.

Council staff will host community drop-in sessions for individuals and groups seeking more information about the grants process, including tips for writing strong applications.

Sessions

The sessions will be at Stawell Library on Tuesday, February 18, and St Arnaud Library on Wednesday, February 19. Both sessions will be from 12.30 p.m. to 3.30 p.m..

Northern Grampians Shire mayor Karen Hyslop encouraged people seeking assistance with their applications

to attend one of the information sessions.

"It's a great opportunity to receive some help from our experienced staff," she said.

"The Community Grants Program is a wonderful program that has helped so many groups and organisations throughout our shire.

"If you have something in mind, that meets the criteria, I encourage you to apply."

Funded

Cr Hyslop said among last year's funded projects were a community dinner to increase social connection in Great

Western; a pergola and glass cabinet to improve the visitor experience at Swanwater West Cemetery; restumping of Paradise Hall; and structural repairs to improve safety at St Arnaud Rifle Club.

"This year we have a focus on projects that focus on community equity and inclusion, and I can't wait to see what people come up with," she said.

"The recipients of these grants provide great services and opportunities for our community and council is

pleased to be able to support them through this fantastic program."

Applications for 2024/25 Community Grants close on March 21, 2025.

People can visit: www.ng-shire.vic.gov.au/Residents/Grants/Community-Grants for more information, including grant criteria, tips for writing applications, and links to apply.

Council staff will notify grant applicants of the outcome of their assessment, by Friday, April 4, 2025.

"My Father is the Engine Driver"

The year 2024 has finished and 2025 has begun. Last year was a tough year for many with its difficulties and challenges, but in the midst of these situations, encouraging things can happen.

For example, the recent Grampians fires destroyed much property, livestock and fences, but thankfully some good news is that the volunteer farming relief group "BlazeAid" has set up camp at the Willaura football oval and hopes to soon have up to fifty volunteers helping replace fencing lost in the fire.

Also, hundreds of CFA fire fighting volunteers coming, even from interstate, have been helping the locals in what has been a major threat to the district. What amazing encouragement this brought to local people traumatised by the fire for a three week period!

We are also grateful for up to 15mm of rain which has fallen over the Grampians region recently bringing the fire under significant control – thank You Lord!

New Year

Now we have a new year before us, 2025. For many there is an increased sense of foreboding and anxiety as they contemplate the future. Amidst terrorists attacks which have already occurred and increasing lawlessness, violence and wars and rumours of wars around this country and other parts of the world, some people are asking, "Is there any hope for humankind?" To help answer that question, let me refer back to a recent day when I was observing a J class steam locomotive belching black smoke and clackety-clacking along its regular route on the Castlemaine to Maldon railway line with excited passengers on board. It reminded me

of the story of a young boy who was travelling on a passenger steam train on the Edinburgh to London route, a 700 kilometre journey, a long journey for a small boy travelling alone. At one of the railway stations on route, an elderly gentleman engaged the boy in conversation.

"Are you travelling alone sonny?"

"Yes sir".

"How far are you travelling?"

"To the terminus in London."

"Are you not afraid of taking such a long journey all by yourself?"

"No, I'm not".

"Why not?"

"Because my father is the engine driver!" declared the young boy.

So it is for us, as we face the future the Bible reminds us that we have a Heavenly Father who created the universe and is the "engine driver" for us passengers on board planet earth. Everything was made perfectly in the beginning, but the Bible reminds us that human sin resulted in the disease, death, and suffering (Romans 5:12) that we see around us. But we can still have hope because there are many stories of transformed people making great choices.

Paul Noble is one of these people. In earlier life Paul made bad choices whereby he assaulted police and rammed their cars. He was gaoled on repeated occasions. Thankfully one day a young woman who was dating Paul's brother told Paul about the Jesus Christ of the Bible.



• Bruce Stewart

Initially Paul thought she was deluded, but he then began thinking, "Could this really be true? Could Jesus Christ empower me to start my life all over again? Does He even love someone like me?"

Paul did some investigating and he read the Bible. Then Paul prayed, "Jesus, if You are out there, come into my life and help me. I want to leave my life of anger and crime behind".

A radical transformation began in Paul's life and after a few years, such was the evidence of a changed life, he was appointed as Pastor of a couple of churches in rural Victoria, where he faithfully served helping many people on the journey of life. No more tax dollars were being used to keep Paul in gaol!

The Bible says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him and He will make your paths straight" (Proverbs 3:5,6). The journey of life often resembles a winding path with twists and turns that can leave us at times feeling fearful, lonely, guilty and uncertain about the future, so invite Jesus to be our Saviour and Lord and thus "make our paths straight" so we can then experience His forgiveness, peace within, comfort in the tough times, purposeful living, guidance and have a hope for today and the future.

There is a wonderful hope for 2025 if we allow Jesus to be the "engine driver" of our lives. Check Him out and see. Have a purposeful and hope filled 2025.

Bruce Stewart.



• "Is there any hope for humankind?" To help answer that question let me refer back to a recent day when I was observing a J class steam locomotive belching black smoke and clackety-clacking along its regular route on the Castlemaine to Maldon railway line with excited passengers on board, thus reminding me of the story of a young boy who was travelling on a passenger steam train on the Edinburgh to London route, a 700 kilometre journey, a long journey for a small boy travelling alone.



• I photographed these neighbours helping one another as they fight a fire.

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A Club for All Ages

Donald and District Pony Club has been an important and prominent grassroots sporting club for a number of years.

In this time, many equine enthusiasts have started at this club, learning the basics before heading on to further challenges within the horse community.

Although Donald's pony club is small, its members are from diverse backgrounds, and different age groups, coming together to share a common interest – horses! Riding is their sport of choice; their way to keep active in body and healthy in mind. And it is not just children learning the basics of the sport to eventually pursue their interest further; members range up to the age of 80

and a number of DPC's riders are mature adult riders.

Donald Pony Club has been so fortunate to find a fantastic riding coach, in Hosham's Corrie Potter, who fits so well with the riders, parents and horses, and is willing to attend regular rallies at Donald. Corrie has been instructing at the club for some time now and with her coaching and encouragement, most of the riders braved their first show in 2023 (also supporting the local P. and A. Society). Some members might be learning the basics for the first time,

others are returning to riding after having children, or illness/disability; whatever your level or ability, Corrie can be flexible to meet different training needs.

Following a fundraising campaign and volunteer services providing children's entertainment at the Donald Cup, DPC has secured Corrie's services for the year ahead, ensuring memberships and rally fees stay at an affordable price for all members. Members of the club sincerely thank Donald and District Racing Club and the Racecourse Reserve committee for their generous donations and support.

Pony Club Australia is currently switching memberships over to align with the financial year, therefore, the beginning of this year presents a unique opportunity for potential members to the club. Memberships are available until June for those wanting to try pony club out, but might be unsure of making a 12-month commitment to start with – this is the perfect time to come along!

The club will be meeting back at its first rally for 2025 on Sunday, February 16. Though group usually meets on the first Sunday of each month, a change of date was required to avoid the heat-wave forecast for the initial rally date. It is hoped the weather will be kind for members to return on this date for 2025, however, those interested in attending should keep an eye on the Facebook page for current notifications, or get in touch with Jill McEwen 0428 915 269 for more information.



• Last year's Christmas break-up rally, left to right: Kendra Clark on Bomber, Samantha Clark, Jill McEwen, Tayla Wyllie, Melinda McEwen holding Fred, Erin Clark and Kallani Fisher on Mumsie.



• Kallani Fisher on Mumsie, with Tayla Wyllie and instructor Corrie Potter.



• Representing the Donald and District Pony Club at the Donald Cup was Melinda McEwen, placing one of many temporary tattoos on kids and adults on the day. Members sincerely thank the Donald Racing Club and the Racecourse Committee for their generous support.



• Kendra Clark on Bomber, with Samantha Clark leading.

“A Real Pain”

It's a strange title, but this weekend's Rex film, “A Real Pain” has resonated strongly with audiences and is another Academy Award contender – this time featuring a road-trip theme.

Blending humour, heartache, and introspection, the story is about two American Jewish cousins – David Kaplan (Jesse Eisenberg, who also directs) and Benji Kaplan (Kieran Culkin) who aim to reconnect with their heritage and commemorate the death of their late beloved grandmother (a Holocaust survivor) by visiting her childhood home in Poland. Embarking on the journey Benji and David take the tour with a small group of five others, with each member of the group having their own reasons for being there.

Benji is a free spirit; charismatic, spontaneous and speaks his mind, while David is quiet, practical and often anxious and apologetic about his cousin's behaviour. David is also married with a child, and the responsibilities that come with that. Benji, however, is less stable and more affected by the trials life.

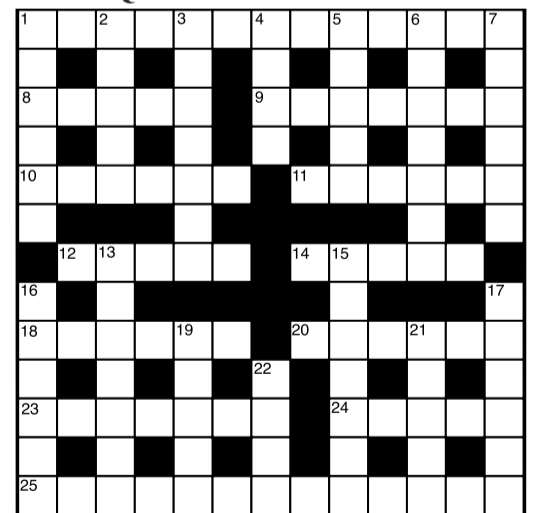
The recipient of two Academy Award nominations Best Supporting Actor (Kieran Culkin) and Best Original Screenplay, plus 4 Golden Globe nominations Culkin delivers a stunning performance, embodying a character who masks his internal emptiness with a disarmingly positive demeanor. Jesse Eisenberg, equally compelling, not only gives a heartfelt performance but also showcases remarkable skill as the film's director, weaving moments of levity and sorrow seamlessly.

From the laugh-out-loud to the reminders of how deeply the past influences who we are, the story is heartfelt and thought-provoking, making it a must-watch for anyone who values authentic, meaningful cinema.

“A Real Pain” (MA15+ 90 minutes) screens at The Rex – Saturday, February 15, 8 p.m. Sunday, February 16, 2 p.m. Tuesday, February 18, 8 p.m.

“Times” Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8164



ACROSS

1. Prescience (13)
8. Turn (5)
9. Feeler (7)
10. Boil (6)
11. Harsh (6)
12. Wood (5)
14. Hurl (5)
18. Disregard (6)
20. Goal (6)
23. Atrocious (7)
24. Din (5)
25. Obstinacy (13)

DOWN

1. Talisman (6)
2. Lift (5)
3. Room (7)
4. Stone (4)
5. Machine (5)
6. Cell (7)
7. Exultant (6)
13. Pennant (7)
15. Erudite (7)
16. Clergyman (6)
17. Emphasize (6)
19. River (France) (5)
21. Dirt (5)
22. Second-hand (4)

• Solution next issue.

The Life of John Vincent Coats

A service celebrating the life of John Vincent Coats, one of Donald district's best-known and most community-minded citizens, was held at St. Andrew's Uniting Church, Donald, last Tuesday, February 4.

Officiating at the service was Graeme Pearse, while the eulogy was shared by John's daughters, Valetta and Heather, and son Damon. Memories were also contributed by his grandchildren, Bethany and Angus.

The following is the eulogy, "Remembering John":

John Vincent Coats was born on the 20th of March, 1940, in Donald, to parents Vin and Peg Coats, just as World War II was under way. Sisters Margaret and Carolyn followed in 1943 and 1945.

His first memory of the farm was being stranded in the middle of the home block in a dust storm in the mid '40s and the heated debate with his father as to which way was home. Fortunately, wiser counsel prevailed, and they made it home safely. Then there was the time when he was, yet again, playing in the cow yard just south of the house, returning home to his mother in a mess. His retort that "there was nowhere else to play" in the middle of 632 acres did not go down well.

Jeffcott South School

Eventually time came for school at Jeffcott South. A horse named Trixie was the transport. It is fair to say his love/hate relationship with horses started here and ended with a kick in the face at the Royal Melbourne Show many years later. Our Auntie Carol recalls the game at school where you all lined up and, for each letter in your name which was randomly called out, you took one step forward. First to the finish line was the winner. John decided that John Vincent didn't give him a winning edge, so he renamed himself John Vincent Samuel Alexander Thomas Coats. He either couldn't think of a name for the remaining letters, or thought he should leave those out to give a slim chance to his classmates.

Donald High

When the school closed in 1949, he moved to the Donald High School where he had to ride to school on his bike, which was not a welcome option. In the summer he went to the silos in the hope he could put his bike on the back of a tray truck to save riding home.

There always seemed to be a job waiting when he got home at night. Stooking hay tracks around the paddocks seemed to be one of the most remembered with his arms looking like he had chicken pox after about a week of working the sheaves.

When Grandma came down with polio, she spent her recovery years with her mother in Surrey Hills, with Margaret and Carolyn. Dad boarded at the homes of Mrs Gus Beckham and Miss Ella Griffiths before being sent to his Uncle Percy's place near Warragul. When grandma was

fit enough to come home, he also returned home, where a "new" house from Watchem was delivered.

College

To further his studies at school, Dad went to Haileybury College in Melbourne to board for years 11 and 12. After starting as a regular boarder, he finished up being a boarding house prefect for 2 years and a school prefect for 1, finishing being awarded the Citizenship Prize for the school at year end.

He played first eleven cricket and first eighteen football, winning colours in football. He must have been o.k. as this was when a Hawthorn scout invited him down to training. He was also the First Pipe Major of the school pipe band. He captained the house football and cricket teams, winning house colours for football and tennis. It was while he was playing tennis that he developed a long-term friendship with Jeff Toll, who eventually was his best man at his wedding. He won a Commonwealth Scholarship for University studies, which would have been something to do with Civil Engineering, if the farm had not called him home.

Home on the farm in 1959, thus relieving his father Vin from most hands-on jobs, he developed a continuing interest in P.F.A. and the Victorian Young Farmers, while enjoying cricket and football at a local level. He even managed to play in 2 premierships in one day in 1963, but failed to get in either of the photos, being late arriving for one and still being on the ground for the second one. His interest in civil engineering was satisfied to a degree in planning new fence lines, tree plantations, drainage systems and water reticulation.

Marriage

He met Betty Arnold from Nanneella in 1964 through Young Farmers and after a prolonged courtship, due to Mum going to New Zealand on exchange, they were married on the 9th of April 1966, in Kyabram. They moved to Trollop's after they were married where Lisa, Damon and Heather were born in 1968, 1970 and 1972 respectively. In 1974 they moved to the home farm when Grandma and Grandpa moved into Donald. Valetta arrived in 1977 on Dad's birthday.

Pipe Bands

John continued to play the bagpipes and was a member of Donald and St Arnaud pipe bands. We kids recall him warming up on the morning of an event and our cats consequently running away. Dad's main sporting activities were umpiring football to a limited success, playing cricket, administration as secretary of the Donald and District Association. Long term achievements with the bat and

running a five-a-side competition for the Jeffcott Cricket Club were rewarded with a life membership of the club. Other pursuits included the local Fire Brigade, Church treasurer, work within the High School Council including a term as president, and many years working as a steward for the Clydesdale horse judging at the Royal Melbourne Show culminating in a life membership of the society.

Holidays

Family holidays were a road trip to Adelaide after harvest. The 6 of us would pile into the Kingswood and start the 12-hour drive to the beach at Aldinga. Now many of you might be thinking that Adelaide is only a 5 or 6 hour trip, and you would be correct. However, when you add in looking at road works, railway lines (which may or may not be still in place), bridges old or new, nothing in between, and the fact that Dad would talk to anyone, prolonged the journey, much to our disgust, including Mum's, although even she could not get him to move any faster. Mum must have had influence on the location, however, as Dad did not swim. Water was for showering only, and only when he needed it. The only year Dad needed to get in the water, Mum was 8 months pregnant with Valetta.

It didn't seem to matter where he was, he always found someone he knew or someone who knew someone from Donald. Whether this be Switzerland or at a packed MCG there was always someone to talk to. Many of you here today would have been bailed up by Dad at some point for a chat or received a drop-in visit. It didn't seem to matter how many times we told Dad to call first, he never got in the habit. "They will tell me to go if they are busy."

Most people were way too polite to kick him out and many people here have probably had him fall asleep on their couch or in a chair. It didn't have to be someone's house either, Landmark, the Harvest Café, even McDonalds were fair game too. The café will now be able to sell the "Herald Sun" with the crossword puzzle and Sudoku not already done.

Farm Jobs

There was always a job to be done on the farm, kids and in-laws and even friends were definitely considered unpaid labour. Picking up sticks and rocks were amongst his favourites until Heather and Damon, on different occasions, broke the back window of the ute. We all either crashed into a fence or threw Dad off the back of the truck whilst feeding grain or hay to the sheep. All the sons-in-law recall Dad giving them more than a job or two when they came home with the daughters for a weekend. Graveling

the driveway with a sledgehammer was one job successfully completed with son-in-law labour.

Projects

Dad was a frustrated engineer, many projects around the farm were carefully planned and double measured. A lot of the work was done with shovel and crowbar until the arrival of front-end loaders and his favourite toy, the JCB. Man, he moved some dirt with that thing, quite often on angles and in precarious positions, the lack of mudguards, mirrors and rear indicators were testament to some of the spots he got himself stuck. We even worded up James Burke to convince Dad that some things were no good for JCBs, only for James to drop the ball when Dad sprung it on him one day out of the blue. Another couple of years of random holes and bent buckets, thanks James.

Passion

Now Dad's other recent passion was driving around checking on every farm and business in the district. These farm excursions more often than not involved dirt roads. Dad used to get really mad at those old blokes driving on wet dirt roads after rain and stuffing them up. Well, over the last couple of years we regularly had to pull him out of mud, or a couple of years ago a giant wash away claimed the black territory by ripping the whole bottom out of it. With Dad gone we're looking at Johnny Burke to take up the mantle and speed up impassable roads and call his sons for help.

UCM, GrainCorp and BB Harvesting can go back to normal now, there will be no silver Territory driving randomly into their yards, parking in the road and asking, "so what are you up to, who are you, where do you fit in," and then "I knew your grandpa/cousin/aunt or next door neighbour." There would be a connection there, it was only a matter of how many questions he needed to ask to find it.

Family occasions were special to him, whether it be Christmas, a birthday, anniversary or wedding, he always made sure to make himself available. He instilled in all of us the importance of family and that we should be there. When we lost Mum, he also made sure he took over the mantle of buying the presents for these occasions. Every mail order catalogue company will be seeing a drop in sales, and we apologise to the next resident in his unit for the junk mail they will initially receive.

Travel

Upon retirement he took the opportunity to see some of the world and even more of Australia. Trips to Canada and America in 2005 with good friend Ron Hollis, Europe and America in 2006, America again in 2008, China in 2016



• The late John Coats.

and Japan in 2018, all with the recurring theme from our childhood, bridges and trains.

Family Tree

As many of you know Dad spent many of his final years pursuing his passion to produce the Coats family tree. The Sim family remember several times when he would arrive at their home in Station St. Burwood, and settle in for a visit. Suddenly one end of the family dinner table would become an unofficial office desk, covered in paper and address lists. Lisa would be called on to find phone numbers of people out of Yellow Pages, and then Dad would commence cold calling to line up the next lot of visits for his book research.

This did not always end well, as often people simply didn't answer their landline phone, much to Dad's frustration. Unfortunately his time of research coincided with the reality that people were more and more giving up their landline numbers in favour of mobile phones. If there was one thing that Dad was, though, it was tenacious, and the Coats family history, in the end a 590-page masterpiece, was launched at the Coats family farm 150th anniversary celebrations in 2023.

He had been spruiking this book ever since and you too could own this limited addition hard cover book for the bargain price of \$80.

Bulletproof

We had quite often joked that he was somewhat bulletproof. Broken cheeks, broken fingers and toes, ruptured appendix (twice), bowel and liver cancer and pulmonary embolisms never seemed to slow him down. His illness in the end was short, he was a man who had never been in rush for anything and was more than often late, but he was determined and a little bit stubborn. In this instance we believe, he had decided that it was time, and he went out on his own terms.

Highlights

At the request of the Coats family, close friend Harold

Flett also spoke, as follows, during the service.

"As a prelude to Prayers of the People, I felt it appropriate to share three different highlights from my 64-year association with John, which began after I left school, the end of 1960.

"John and I were involved in a church concert, singing two duets from days gone by. Backed by the rest of the Presbyterian Fellowship Association (PFA) we sang 'Two little girls in Blue', and 'I don't wanna play in your yard!'

"To suit our parts we were dressed in red stockings, blue gingham dresses, yellow wigs of binder twine, and bonnet style hats. The highlight was John crying at Harold – 'I don't wanna play in your yard!' and Harold responding 'I don't like you any more!'

"Next was debating – part of the 'culture' side of the Young Farmers' movement of the 1960s. Our team of Gwen Funcke (now Malcolm), Harold and John did well and progressed to the area final. In the final, Gwen and I had done well in our two speeches, and it was John's role to rebut the oppositions arguments. John had noted TEN points he could argue against in his ten minutes, the problem was he was only on point three when the 'one minute left' warning bell sounded.

"State Achievement Day was in Wodonga one year in the early 'sixties. John was already courting Betty, and he and I stayed at the Arnolds' dairy farm en route to Wodonga.

"At the Achievement Day, the Wimmera District did not have a hay loading team from one club, so Graeme Schmidt, Colin Hobbs (from Horsham) and John and Harold from Donald pooled resources to enter a team. By jumping up over the rear wheel of the little Massey tractor and into the driving seat instead of the time consuming 'around the front of the rear wheel' method of getting on, we were a few lengths away before our opposition got started. We WON! – State Champion Hay Loaders."

St. Arnaud College Opens New Facilities

(By Peter Marland from "North Central News")

The official opening of the brand new facilities at St. Arnaud Secondary College was held last week.

Martha Haylett Member for Ripon; Northern Grampians Councillors Karen Probst and Murray Emerson and Mayor Karen Hyslop, School Captains and present Principal Tony Hand and past Principals Paul Hon and Dale Pearce, all made the opening

such a memorable afternoon of celebrations.

Many from the local community were also on hand to tour the improved teaching and learning facilities and marvel at the beautiful surroundings students can now enjoy.

The ceremony was opened by College Captains Zoe Bryce and Dusty Raiyn McIntyre, address presented by Principal, Tony Hand, cutting of cake by past student and employee, Howard Amos and ribbon cutting by Martha Haylett MP.

Year 12 students invited the guests to tour the new building and a delicious afternoon tea was enjoyed.

There were many people involved in ensuring the celebrations were enjoyed by all, from grounds maintenance, staff working bees and the student emu bob.

The College is proud to be able to offer excellent teaching and learning facilities and spaces for the young people of St. Arnaud.

The Honour Board, dating from the year 2000 when St. Arnaud High School was renamed St. Arnaud Secondary College, will hold 100 years of history.

• Below and left: Guided tours, led by Year 12 students, included the well-equipped Beth Harper Memorial Kitchen.



• Current Principal, Tony Hand with past Principals, Dale Pearce Principal at Bendigo Senior Secondary College (Principal SASC 2000-2006) and Paul Hon Senior Education Improvement Leader (Principal SAHS 1998-2000).



• Martha Haylett MP cuts the ribbon at the opening of the new facilities at the St. Arnaud Secondary College.



• Left: Howard Amos had the pleasure of cutting the cake to commemorate the opening.

• Returning students from 1971-76. (left to right) Mark Tracy, Barbara Decker (Beer), Shirley Richards (Cheesman), Debra Cameron, Kaye Albon (McLean), Helen Polkinghorne (Coates), Lindsay Ezard and Glenda O'Neill (Dyke).



Builders Applaud Apprenticeship Incentive Boost

The Federal Government has today recognised the importance of addressing the chronic tradie shortage to be able to overcome Australia's housing crisis.

From July 1, 2025, eligible apprentices in the residential construction sector will receive \$10,000 in incentive payments, on top of their wages under a new Key Apprentices Program. The new payment will be staged at 6, 12, 24, 36 and upon completion which is something Master Builders has long called for.

Apprentices in the building and construction industry currently receive a \$5,000 payment, which is front-loaded. This payment will remain available for apprentices who are not eligible for the Key

Apprentices Program and has been extended until the end of 2025.

Last year, Master Builders released its blueprint for increasing the attraction and retention of apprentices in the industry, which can be read at: https://masterbuilders.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Apprenticeships-Paper_Final-1.pdf

Enormous Task

"Australia's building and construction industry faces the enormous task of building enough homes, commercial premises and infrastructure to meet increasing demand

and a growing population," Master Builders Australia CEO Denita Wawn said.

"Labour shortages are currently the biggest handbrake on fixing the housing crisis.

"Coupled with government funding of fee free vocational education and training, there is no better time to pick up the tools and become a tradie.

"The revised staggering of payments is something Master Builders Australia has long called for, so there is a financial incentive for apprentices to complete their training.

"Around 50 per cent of all apprentices do not complete their training – the new staged payments approach will hopefully see the rate of completions increase.

"Builders would like to see this payment expanded to other areas of the building and construction industry that are also facing chronic shortages and crying out for more apprentices. Without roads, rail, sewerage and water we can't build more homes for Aussies.

"We are disappointed that the high costs associated with hiring and training and apprentices has not been recognised as yet. Ninety-eight per cent of businesses in building and construction are small and they are doing it tough.

"Master Builders continues to call for a robust incentive system that supports employers and minimises the risk with taking on an apprentice who may or may not complete their training."

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Potholes For All Seasons

Last week, the Liberals and Nationals presented Premier, Jacinta Allan, and Roads and Road Safety Minister, Melissa Horne, with a copy the least glamorous calendar imaginable.

They received Potholes For All Seasons 2025 – a month-by-month horror show of damaged roads throughout Victoria.

Photos were submitted by fed up drivers statewide in recent months, with the best (or worst) featured in the calendar.

They are sending an urgent message to the State Government to fix our appalling, crumbling roads.

The Government's own study has found a staggering 91 per cent of the roads surveyed are in poor or very poor condition.

Last year's roads maintenance budget was 16 per cent less than it was four years ago.

Data from the Department of Transport and Planning shows the area of road "rehabilitated or resurfaced" in regional Victoria fell to just 422,000 square metres in 2023/24, down from nine million the year before and 11.5 million in the prior year.

The "Potholes For All Seasons" 2025 calendar exposes the depth of the issue as there was no shortage of photo opportunities in every corner of the state.

Shadow Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Danny O'Brien, said the State Government needed a reality

check.

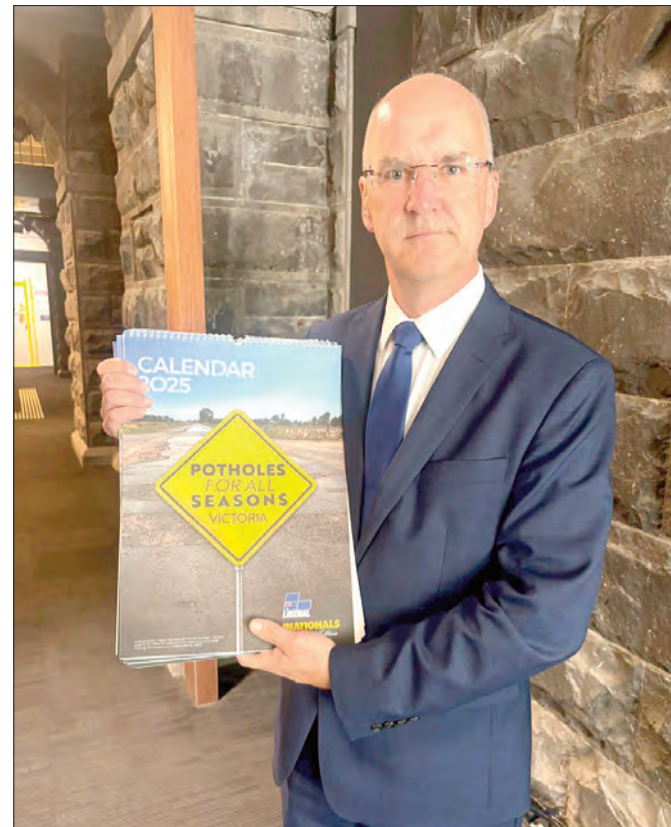
"Premier Jacinta Allan clearly needs a daily reminder of the dangerous and embarrassing state of our roads given the neglect of the network," Mr O'Brien said.

"Let's hope it is hung prominently in the offices of the Premier and the Minister – and they both take note.

"This is an ugly calendar, there's certainly nothing attractive about it, but sometimes you've got to face facts.

"We need urgent action to fix our roads. No more spin, no more lame excuses about rain and rare weather events.

"Labor can't manage money and it's our roads and Victorian motorists that are paying the price."



• Danny O'Brien.



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Lino Print Workshops

Immerse yourself in culture, creativity, and connection with hands-on Lino Print Workshops led by Wotjobaluk Artist Kristy Witt and Birchip Artist Kristy Dean.

Donald

When: Saturday, 15th February 2025

Time: 10:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Where: Donald Train Station, Walker St. Donald

Wycheproof

When: Sunday, 16th February 2025

Time: 10:30 AM – 3:30 PM

Where: Wycheproof Train Station

No cost to attend. Lunch provided - limited to 15 places per workshop.

Bookings essential: Call 1300 520 520 or email us at buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au

**This initiative is proudly funded by the Australian and Victorian Government's Community Recovery Hubs Program.

Gordon Park Playspace Upgrade

Works have commenced for Stage 1 of the Gordon Park Playspace upgrade in Charlton.

The old multi-play unit is being removed to make room for a new upgraded unit and will also include new footpaths, seating, shade, lighting and drainage improvements.

A section of the playground will be fenced off while the works are undertaken however the park will remain open to the public.

Stay up to date on the project by following our Facebook page for updates.

**This project is proudly funded through various State and Federal streams including: Regional Infrastructure Fund, Buloke Play Spaces Trail and the Victoria State Government as represented by its Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions.

Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase 4, Australian Government, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts.

Small Business Bus Coming to Charlton – Free Expert Advice for Local Businesses

Take advantage of a great opportunity to get personalised business advice when the Small Business Bus visits Charlton. Expert mentors from Monarch Institute will be offering free, confidential 45-minute sessions to help you start, grow, or improve your business.

Where: GMG Accounting Office, 52 High Street, Charlton

When: Tuesday, 25th February 2025

Time: 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Bookings are essential for one-on-one mentoring, however walk-ins are welcome for our Bus Concierge service, which provides general information about support available from Business Victoria.

Please note that only one session is available for each business per 12-month period.

Book now to secure your spot.

Please call Business Victoria on 13 22 15 for bookings and further information

Library Services Review – Shaping the Future of Our Libraries

We are excited to launch a Library Services Review to gather community feedback and improve our library services across the Shire. This review will help guide the future development of libraries, ensuring they remain accessible and relevant for years to come.

Have Your Say – Complete the Survey

As part of the review, we are asking all community members to participate in a survey. Whether you are a regular library visitor or don't currently use the services, your feedback is important!

Survey open: 10th February – 2nd March 2025

More information will follow as we move forward with the project, including opportunities for in-person consultations.

Your input will play a key role in helping us improve library services to meet the evolving needs of the Buloke Shire community.

To complete the online survey, visit our website. Hard copies will also be available at our libraries and the Wycheproof Customer Service Centre.

For more information, contact us at buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au or call 1300 520 520.

Expand Your Impact Workshops

FREE 3-part series of online workshops to develop your projects + ideas & gain the skills to achieve your goals - all in a supportive, interactive format!

Expand Your Impact helps you grow your project, side hustle, or even achieve your New Year's resolution.

When: February 18th, 19th & 20th

Time: Lunch & Learn 12noon – 2pm Via Zoom



Employment Opportunities with Buloke

Council is an equal opportunity employer. For more information on equal opportunity, call Human Resources on 1300 520 520.

You can find all current employment opportunities at www.buloke.vic.gov.au/employment

Applications can be lodged by:
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Executive Officer – \$115,977 – \$129,689 + superannuation & salary packaging options
We are seeking a proactive and organised leader to drive strategic initiatives and support our executive team. This role is key to optimising administrative functions, enhancing communications, and ensuring the successful delivery of Council initiatives. If you have strong leadership and strategic thinking skills, this could be the perfect opportunity for you.

→ Apply now!

Manager People & Culture – \$130,000 – \$146,000 + salary packaging options

A fantastic opportunity for an experienced HR professional to lead strategic and operational workforce initiatives. This role will shape Council's workforce strategy, focusing on employee attraction, retention, development, and compliance with State and Federal legislation. If you are passionate about people and culture, we want to hear from you!

→ Apply now!

Diesel Mechanic (Donald – Full Time) – From \$38.09 per hour + statutory superannuation

We're on the lookout for a skilled Diesel Mechanic to play a crucial role in maintaining and ensuring the reliability of our fleet, including graders, rollers, water tankers, and more. If you have experience in heavy vehicle maintenance and a commitment to safety and efficiency.

→ Apply now!

Nominations Open For Honour Role Of Women

The Nationals' Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, is encouraging community members to nominate remarkable women for the Victorian Honour Roll of Women.

The Honour Roll recognises women demonstrating remarkable leadership and excellence in their field of expertise, interest, or endeavour, or through their commitment to the community.

The program aims to celebrate and elevate the incredible contributions of Victorian women to Victoria, Australia and beyond.

Women can be nominated under one of 4 categories:

- Change Agent
- Emerging Leader
- Local Champion
- Trailblazer

All nominees must:

- Be a woman – we welcome nominations from or on behalf of trans women, sisters and gender diverse people.
- Have been born in Victoria, or have spent a considerable part of their life in the state.
- Have made a significant and lasting contribution at a local, state, national or international level.

Nominations of diverse women including First Nations Women, women living with disability, women of colour, women from culturally and racially marginalised backgrounds, the LGBTQIA+ community and women from regional and rural communities are encouraged.

"I come from a lineage of strong, influential women who have made meaningful contributions to their communities", said Ms Benham.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to not only celebrate the incredible women around us, but also to express our gratitude for their dedication to progress and growth."

Further information and applications can be accessed online at <https://www.vic.gov.au/honour-roll-women>

Nominations close at 11:59 pm, Sunday, March 16, 2025.



• Jade Benham.





Nature Notes

(from Prue McAllister)

So you have seen some living thing that is new, weird, possibly dangerous or just plain gorgeous.



• *The Madhatterpillar*

For the curious, it may not be enough to know it is an insect/bird/snake etc., but it may be captivating enough to send you searching for more information.

One such creature aroused my interest as it glided around the rim of a flower pot while I was sitting outside enjoying my morning cup of tea. Apparently a very hairy caterpillar with attitude, and I was keen to know which of my garden plants he/she may be interested in devouring.

Such are the technological tools that we now have at our disposal, the answer can be just a few clicks away.

Mad Hatterpillar

Out with the phone, a quick snap on iNaturalist and there it was, a gum leaf skeletoniser, *Uraba lugens*, otherwise known as the mad hatterpillar! Reading on, I discovered that this Hairy McLairy sheds its exoskeleton numerous times before wrapping itself into a cocoon. However, unlike other caterpillars, *Uraba lugens* doesn't shed the head casing but it remains adhered to its head. With each moulting the newly shed head pushes the older heads up until it has a pillar of heads teetering above as it goes about its skeletonising business.

Hat Stack

The second photo clearly shows the mad hatterpillar's



• *Hat stack on display.*

hat stack. What both photos miss are the fringed feet worthy of a Pacific Island dance troupe. No online photo could do it justice so you will just have to keep an eye out for this character in autumn and spring and see for yourself. It is found all over Victoria and up the eastern seaboard. This larvae will wrap itself in a homespun cocoon and eventually emerges as a tufted moth that is cleverly designed to resemble the bark that it calls home. Not something that would arouse much interest if you are lucky enough to see it.

The iNaturalist website and app is more than just a great way to identify living things. There are other sites that do the same, it is just a matter of googling them up. Like many other apps, iNaturalist uses a photo and AI to initially identify your find. The point of difference is that the ID is then verified by fellow naturalists with differing levels of expertise who can confirm and/or refine the identification. The record of your find is then logged onto a worldwide database to build up a remarkable record of the biodiversity of the planet.

Once logged into the website, you can access other people's observations, discover what has been found around you on the interactive map, connect with experts and find further information on living things from all over the world. An amazing Citizen Science project initiated by a handful of students at

Berkeley School of Information University of California, it is now a joint project of National Geographic Society and the California Academy of Sciences.

Workshop

The St Arnaud Field Naturalist Club is running a workshop at the St Arnaud Library on Wednesday, February 19, at 1.30 p.m. for those interested in learning more about using the iNaturalist tool.

For more information call Prue 0413 971236



DONALD HISTORY SOCIETY INC.



Enquiries for November to January.

Natalie Geddes contacted us to find the whereabouts of the Trollope farm, "Woodbank". Her father was Holger Moller and he was born at "Woodbank" in 1931, the son of Vera (nee Trollope) and Oscar Moller, from Denmark. Holger spent the first decade of his life at Donald, attending school here. He died recently and had asked to have his ashes scattered at Woodbank.

Laurie Trollop lent his assistance to pinpoint the area for Natalie and her two children to spread Holger's ashes on the 10th January, 2025. We were able to supply Natalie with one of Holger's school photos.

Justin Sexton called at the archives. His family were in Litchfield in the 1800s. He bought an R.P. Falla booklet on the selectors of Witchipool.

Sue (no surname given) emailed for history on Anderson's hosiery Mill. Sue's uncle, Harry Anderson, started the Anderson Hosiery Mill in the VPC building in McCulloch St Donald in 1946. The building is still standing and was most recently used by the Godkin electrical business. The factory provided work for about 20 young women in Donald and the manager, Dick O'Connell. Harry already had such a factory in Charlton. The girls used machines to make the heels and toes for the socks, which came to the factory as knitted tubes. We had many "Donald Times" articles and several photos on the factory. One photo from Phyl Anderson's collection showed the young women who worked at the factory. We are hoping that some women from that era will come into the archives and name all of the women in the photos. The

factory advertised for lads and girls to man the machines in February 1950 but closed later that year.

Simon Lumb asked for information on the opening of the East Laen Methodist Church in 1924. The Church was removed to Bacchus Marsh in 1961. We found the relevant article for Simon and he sent back a wonderful "handout" complete with photographs, written by David Buntine and printed for the recent centenary celebrations of the church building (now used as a Playgroup centre), which were held in Bacchus Marsh. This "handout" was reprinted, with David's permission, in The Donald Times on 21st January, 2025.

Diane Pocock (nee Stevens) always believed that her father had something to do with transporting the World War Gun, which is displayed at the Memorial Hall, to Donald. She would love to know the details if anyone can help.

Nicholas Thorpe is researching his ancestor, Robert Murchland, a stone mason who was in the Donald area in 1863. Robert's wedding certificate states that he was married in 1863 according to the rites of the Presbyterian Church by Rev. Hugh McKail at the private residence of Tobias Mankey at Rich Avon West. This was before the township of Donald evolved and most people in the area would have been workers on the large pastoral leases. It is possible that Robert was engaged in building residences and outhouses for itinerant workers, but we were unable to help with any information. The marriage certificate itself is a pretty amazing document.

It is the earliest mention of McKail, the first Presbyterian minister in the Donald area.

Michael Stephens from Inglewood called in to the archives and purchased some of our op shop items. Michael is the grandson of John Milton Klug who was the licensee of the Grand Central Hotel in 1931 and beyond. We were able to point out to Michael the former site of the hotel, opposite the archives building, and explain that the current building on the site was added on as a dining room and residence for the hotel. Michael also purchased the list of "Donald Times" entries about his grandfather.

Charlton and St Arnaud Historical societies both reported a cyclone like wind, doing much damage in January, 1925. We cannot say how Donald fared as we only have half of the January, 1925 copies of the "Donald Times". We had all of the microfilms digitised last year but there was no microfilm for 1925. Some loose copies, rescued from a storage shed many years ago, start at February and the bound copy of 1925 seems to have been invaded by moisture, virtually destroying the cover and wrecking the copies up till January 13th. Perhaps the "Donald Times" building was hit by the cyclone like conditions? Well, it is one explanation.

The following photo brought in by Val Alexander showed this area to be a powerhouse in basketball as well as football in 1974. The occasion was the Victorian Country Basketball Championships, which were played in Melbourne, won by the Donald team and reported in The "Donald Times" 15 November, 1974.



• Back row left to right: Ronald Green, Rod Loft, Colin Frankling, John Pertzel, Brian McClelland, Robert Male. Middle: Terry Green, Maurie Alexander, Trevor Campbell, Des Davidson, Hughie Delahunty. Front: Alan McDonald, Leigh Dennis. Absent: Graham Thewlis.

The Buloke Times

Coloured Photographs

Copies of "Times" photos can be purchased from our office/s.

Photos not published may also be available.

Call in to our offices, McCulloch Street, Donald, phone 5497 1222; or Cumming Avenue, Birchip, phone 5492 2735.

Trainers Invasion at Charlton Trots

(By Peter Hibberd)

It was a seven race program at Charlton last Friday, and trainers again came from many parts of the state. As has been proven many times over in recent years, when Sunraysia trainers come to Charlton, they rarely go home without a winner.

With a total of fourteen horses from Sunraysia racing on the day, Naomi Kerr and Andrew Vozlic both went home with winners; they also had two second placings.

Not to be outdone, other winners came from Stawell, Junortoun and Leichardt. Holding the flag for the locals were Michael Gadsden and Joey Thompson.

Results

Local trainer Michael Gadsden won the first race with veteran race mare Markleigh Caz. At 11 years of age, this free-legged pacer has won 21 races with 56 placings and is still racing very keenly.

The first of the Sunraysia-trained horses to win was Image of Starzzz, driven by a very good junior driver, Lochie Cook. He controlled the race early and was able to win in a very tight three-way finish.

Some horses have strange race names; one of those is Do It. A very big horse, it showed its quality sitting outside the leader and came away

for a good win. It was driven by Alex Ashwood, who completed a double after driving Markeigh Caz to win.

The Jason Ainsworth stable continues to provide winners, this time The Regulator won by a small margin. It was very unlucky not to win at the previous Charlton meeting.

The second of the Sunraysia pacers to win was Our Master Play driven by Michael Bellman and trainer by Andrew Vozlic. Andrew has had many good horses to race over many years, a lot of those in feature races.

The locals were very happy when Cee Cee in America returned to the winners' list for trainer Joe Thompson and driver Luke Dunne. It has been racing competitively but has not won since August 2023; however, some punters did get the big odds of \$33.00, starting at \$11.00.

A horse that has a lot of ability but as trainer Scott

Rains said "has some tricks", Kalkadoon Dreaming, put it all together. Driven by Sean O'Sullivan it proved too strong in the last section of the race.

Horse to Follow

The Joe Thompson-trained Joe Got Rolled returned to racing after a break of nearly 12 months. It settled well back in the field but was noted finishing the race in very good closing sectional. A final 800 metres in 55.46 was the best on the day, wow!

Comment

This is my comment only: With the current situation of harness racing, the appointment of a new person to a harness racing position staggers me.

Coming Up

Charlton, Wednesday, February 25.
Boort Cups, Sunday, March 2.
Birchip Cups, Sunday, March 9.
Charlton Cups, Sunday, March 16.



• The day started well for the locals when Markleigh Caz won for trainer Michael Gadsden; with him is Emily Wombwell.



• The smiles of driver Sean O'Sullivan and trainer Scott Rains tell it all. At its fourteenth race start, Kalkadoon Dreaming won its first race.



• The closest finish of the day: on the inside, Image of Starzzz, driven by Lochie Cook, narrowly defeats Normandy Nugget (middle) driven by Kerryn Manning, and outside, Caruso Star, driven by Ryan Sanderson.



• The second winner on the day for Sunraysia-trained horses. Our Master Play, driven by Michael Bellman, defeats Hesaa Lister driven by Jack Laughter and Spring Delight, Driven by Ben Xiriha.

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Mixed Results for Donald Golf Bowlers

With the completion of the home and away games in North Central bowls, Donald Golf's Division 1 team earned the "double chance" in the first week of finals by defeating Boort 72 shots to 60, securing 12 points to 0.

Peter Hibberd and Daniel Pettifer's teams had hard-fought narrow wins, whilst Geoff Rigby's team had a more comfortable win.

Unfortunately, Division 2 narrowly missed making the finals when St Arnaud Country Club and Wedderburn played a draw. Golf had to beat Boort and Wedderburn had to beat Country Club for our players to finish in the final four. Thanks to George Wood's great 36 to 7 shot win against Greg Smith's team, Golf defeated Boort 74 shots to 65, however Golf finished in fifth position overall.

Thank you to all players who represented the club in pennant and best of luck to Division 1 players in their quest for winning the pennant.

Well done to Joyce Hollis and Brenda Dixon who recently won the North Central State Pairs event. Best wishes are extended to Marilyn Frank and Bill Livingston in the upcoming Champion of Champion Singles events.



• Right: Joyce Hollis and Brenda Dixon winners of North Central State Pairs.

Cricket Grant Applications Open

The Nationals' Member for Mildura, Jade Benham, is encouraging all local cricket clubs to apply for the grants available under the Australian Cricket Infrastructure Fund (ACIF).

The ACIF is funded by Cricket Victoria and Cricket Australia to support community cricket facility projects, with a focus on growing participation and promoting greater access for all Victorians.

Over 60 projects were funded in season 2023-24 and over \$250 million of partnered investment with Federal, State and local governments has been generated since the ACIF's inception in 2019.

The ACIF is open to all clubs, associations, schools, local government and cricket facility managers, acknowledging the important role these partners play in providing and maintaining facilities for community cricket across Victoria.

Categories

The ACIF provides funding in the following two categories:

Community Cricket Infrastructure Grant – Minor: \$1,000 - \$15,000.

Community Cricket Infrastructure Grant – Major: \$15,001 - \$40,000.

Applications over \$40,000 will be considered on a case-by-case basis under the Strategic Cricket Infrastructure Funding category. Projects under this category will generally be multi-faceted and provide a broad regional benefit for cricket.

Crucial Role

Ms Benham emphasized the crucial role team sports play in fostering community spirit, health, and inclusion.

"Team sports like cricket bring people together, build friendships, and teach valuable life skills," she said. "I encourage all eligible clubs to apply for this funding opportunity to enhance their facilities and



• Jade Benham.

continue providing a welcoming space for players of all ages and backgrounds."

Applications close on Sunday, March 23, 2025.

Further information on the ACIF including guidelines can also be found at: <https://www.cricketvictoria.com.au/clubs-support/grants/>

Support services

Adult

Lifeline: 13 11 14 | Text 0477 13 11 14
lifeline.org.au

Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467
suicidecallbackservice.org.au

Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636
beyondblue.org.au/forums

MensLine Australia: 1300 789 978
mensline.org.au

StandBy Support After Suicide
1300 727 247

Youth

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
kidshelpline.com.au

headspace: 1800 650 890
headspace.org.au

ReachOut: ReachOut.com

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander: 13YARN.org.au or 13 92 76

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and/or intersex: 1800 184 527 qlife.org.au

Culturally and linguistically diverse: embracementalhealth.org.au

Other resources

Head to Health: mental health portal
headtohealth.gov.au

Life in Mind: suicide prevention portal
lifeinmindaustralia.com.au

SANE: 1800 187 263 (10am-10pm)
online forums: saneforums.org

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Wimmera-Mallee Cricket Scoreboard

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Round 11:	ST. ARNAUD	ST. MARY'S	MARNOO d. Southern Mallee	CHARLTON	WATCHEM d. Southern Mallee
"A" Grade St. Arnaud d. Donald-Jeffcott ST. ARNAUD C. Torney, c C. Anderson b E. Landwehr . . . 8 B. Williams, c K. Westerland b E. Landwehr . . . 0 J. McCartney, c W. Noble b L. Jones . . . 42 J. Patching, not out . . . 68 N. Gorrie, b L. Jones . . . 0 D. Grinham, b C. Anderson . . . 3 S. Penfold, run out . . . 0 A. Shovan, b C. Anderson . . . 1 G. Gorrie, run out . . . 2 H. Darby, b C. Anderson . . . 0 H. Torney, lbw C. Anderson . . . 0 Sundries . . . 8 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 132 Bowling: E. Landwehr 2/9 (8), D. Atkins 0/13 (7), N. Atkins 0/11 (3), J. Adams 0/19 (4), L. Rice 0/23 (5), C. Anderson 4/31 (7.3), L. Jones 2/18 (4). DONALD-JEFFCOTT C. Anderson, c S. Penfold b J. McCartney . . . 3 W. Noble, c J. Patching b J. McCartney . . . 1 E. Landwehr, lbw J. McCartney . . . 0 D. Atkins, b J. McCartney . . . 13 K. Westerland, run out G. Gorrie . . . 4 L. Jones, b H. Torney . . . 52 J. Adams, c S. Penfold b H. Torney . . . 37 N. Atkins, c H. Darby b H. Torney . . . 0 L. Rice, b H. Torney . . . 0 D. Ethakada, c H. Torney b C. Torney . . . 2 C. Rice, not out . . . 0 Sundries . . . 11 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 123 Bowling: J. Patching 0/11 (8), J. McCartney 4/23 (8), S. Penfold 0/15 (4), C. Torney 1/35 (6), A. Shovan 0/20 (5), H. Torney 4/12 (4.5). Birchip d. St. Mary's BIRCHIP C. Lee, b B. Dennes . . . 7 H. McCredden, c D. Westerland b B. Dennes . . . 8 L. Randall, lbw N. Toscano . . . 1 J. Paley, c N. Germano b N. Toscano . . . 8 R. Smith, c ? b H. Nixon . . . 86 J. Randall, b N. Toscano . . . 4 K. Hamilton, lbw C. Schmidt . . . 4	Fill-in, stumped b C. Schmidt . . . 0 R. Bennett, c ? b B. Dennes . . . 9 Fill-in, b H. Nixon . . . 18 W. Ryan, not out . . . 0 Sundries . . . 9 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 154 Fall of wicket: 17, 19, 19, 35, 51, 56, 56, 97, 148, 154. Bowling: L. Somers 0/25 (8), B. Dennes 3/33 (8), N. Toscano 3/16 (8), H. Nixon 2/37 (6.1), C. Schmidt 2/22 (5), B. Watts 0/20 (4). ST. MARY'S C. Schmidt, c&b R. Smith . . . 15 N. Germano, b J. Randall . . . 36 B. Watts, st J. Paley b C. Lee . . . 3 L. Somers, b L. Randall . . . 28 D. Westerland, c Fill-in b R. Smith . . . 5 B. Dennes, b H. McCredden . . . 15 N. Toscano, b R. Smith . . . 0 H. Nixon, b J. Randall . . . 0 C. Zanker, not out . . . 0 Fill-in, b J. Randall . . . 0 S. Knorpp, b J. Randall . . . 0 Sundries . . . 17 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 119 Fall of wicket: 44, 53, 97, 97, 109, 109, 119, 119, 119. Bowling: J. Randall 4/15 (7.4), L. Randall 1/25 (8), R. Smith 3/16 (8), C. Lee 1/31 (8), H. McCredden 1/17 (3). Marnoo d. Southern Mallee SOUTHERN MALLEE Z. Robins, b T. Caldwell . . . 6 J. Landrigan, b D. Shelley . . . 10 J. Flavel, c D. Shelley b T. Caldwell . . . 4 L. Mitchell, c D. Shelley b J. Duxson . . . 76 Fill-in, b D. Lang . . . 3 L. Weir, st N. Baird b J. McAllister . . . 0 M. Roberts, c D. Shelley b D. Lang . . . 0 J. Moore, b D. Shelley . . . 13 P. Hallam, st N. Baird b J. Duxson . . . 18 S. Roberts, lbw D. Lang . . . 4 Fill-in, not out . . . 4	Sundries . . . 19 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 157 Fall of wicket: 18, 24, 33, 46, 49, 50, 104, 134, 139, 157. Bowling: D. Shelley 2/28 (8), T. Caldwell 2/31 (7), D. Lang 3/35 (8), J. McAllister 1/34 (8), J. Duxson 2/22 (4.1). MARNOO J. Duxson, c: J. Flavel b: J. Moore . . . 7 D. Lang, c&b Fill-in . . . 38 N. Baird, not out . . . 87 D. Shelley, b Fill-in . . . 2 Fill-in, lbw Fill-in . . . 10 S. Lang, not out . . . 8 Sundries . . . 11 TOTAL (for 4 wickets) . . . 163 Fall of wicket: 9, 96, 100, 119. Bowling: J. Flavel 0/47 (7.1), J. Moore 1/32 (6), Fill-in 3/38 (8), L. Mitchell 0/19 (4), S. Roberts 0/22 (5). "B" Grade Donald-Jeffcott d. Charlton DONALD-JEFFCOTT J. Tellefson, c E. Fitzpatrick b C. Boyle . . . 22 S. Postlethwaite, c B. Sexton b P. Sait . . . 43 R. Bath, c E. Needs b C. Boyle . . . 82 A. Tatchell, c B. Sexton b C. Boyle . . . 0 T. Reekie, c P. Soulsby b E. Soulsby . . . 32 K. Green, not out . . . 27 J. Needs, run out E. Soulsby . . . 1 C. Anderson, lbw E. Fitzpatrick . . . 5 B. Griffiths, not out . . . 5 Sundries . . . 21 TOTAL (for 7 wickets) . . . 238 Fall of wicket: 66, 70, 70, 191, 194, 200, 213. Bowling: E. Fitzpatrick 1/32 (8), P. Sait 1/53 (7), C. Boyle 3/40 (8), P. Soulsby 0/46 (8), H. Sait 0/28 (4), A. Soulsby 0/26 (3), E. Soulsby 1/8 (2).	P. Soulsby, c C. Anderson b B. Griffiths . . . 18 H. Sait, b B. Griffiths . . . 2 B. Sexton, c K. Green b J. Needs . . . 29 P. Sait, c S. Postlethwaite b J. Needs . . . 28 E. Fitzpatrick, c S. Postlethwaite b R. Bath . . . 28 M. Sreekala, b C. Anderson . . . 12 C. Boyle, b R. Bath . . . 4 E. Soulsby, b R. Bath . . . 0 A. Johnstone, not out . . . 12 A. Soulsby, b R. Bath . . . 0 E. Needs, c K. Green b J. Donnellon . . . 8 Sundries . . . 9 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 150 Fall of wicket: 15, 26, 75, 88, 111, 122, 122, 130, 130, 150. Bowling: B. Griffiths 2/10 (5), T. Reekie 0/20 (4), J. Needs 2/37 (8), N. Nanayakkara 0/22(3), C. Anderson 1/21 (5), J. Donnellon 1/31 (2.5), R. Bath 4/6 (2). St. Mary's d. Birchip ST. MARY'S K. Zanker, st J. Knights b J. Emonson . . . 12 G. Fernandez, b J. Emonson . . . 17 J. Thomas, b L. Angel . . . 49 C. Preston, st J. Knights b J. Emonson . . . 5 L. Westerland, b Fill-in . . . 66 Fill-in, c J. Knights b Fill-in . . . 12 A. Keys, c Fill-in b Fill-in . . . 15 C. Hartnett, not out . . . 1 B. Le Guier, c ? b Fill-in . . . 1 Fill-in, not out . . . 0 Sundries . . . 28 TOTAL (for 8 wickets) . . . 206 Fall of wicket: 31, 36, 50, 110, 173, 191, 203, 206. Bowling: Fill-in 2/36 (8), Fill-in 1/24 (8), J. Emonson 3/45 (8), Fill-in 1/30 (8), L. Angel 1/20 (3), Fill-in 0/22 (3), Fill-in 0/18 (2). BIRCHIP J. Knights, c L. Westerland b Fill-in . . . 1 Fill-in, not out . . . 52 Fill-in, c C. Hartnett b Fill-in . . . 10 Fill-in, lbw C. Hartnett . . . 11 Fill-in, b A. Keys . . . 0 Fill-in, b C. Hartnett . . . 1	J. Emonson, c K. Zanker b C. Hartnett . . . 0 J. Coffey, b L. Westerland . . . 0 L. Angel, lbw C. Hartnett . . . 0 R. Ryan, c Fill-in b G. Fernandez . . . 4 A. Tyler, b G. Fernandez . . . 7 Sundries . . . 15 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 101 Fall of wicket: 1, 23, 38, 39, 42, 42, 45, 46, 92, 101. Bowling: A. Keys 1/16 (8), Fill-in 2/17 (3), C. Hartnett 4/14 (8), L. Westerland 1/5 (2), J. Hartnett 0/6 (5), C. Preston 0/25 (7), B. Le Guier 0/4 (2), J. Thomas 0/8 (1), G. Fernandez 2/3 (2.4). Watchem d. Southern Mallee SOUTHERN MALLEE D. Shannon, c C. Boyle b A. Dean . . . 10 K. Bellinger, b C. Boyle . . . 12 C. Castleman, b S. Milne . . . 0 Fill-in, c T. Colbert b J. Borden . . . 35 S. Williams, b C. Boyle . . . 1 Fill-in, b C. Boyle . . . 0 A. Decker, c ? b J. Borden . . . 2 C. Williams, c&b C. Boyle . . . 0 F. Shannon, c Connor Boyle b A. Dean . . . 3 C. Decker, not out . . . 5 N. Jones, c T. Colbert b N. Dean . . . 2 Sundries . . . 16 TOTAL (for 10 wickets) . . . 86 Bowling: A. Dean 2/15 (8), C. Boyle 4/7 (6), T. Colbert 0/19 (4), S. Milne 1/11 (4), J. Borden 2/13 (7), L. Kasthuriarachchi 0/14 (5), N. Dean 1/4 (3.2), J. Woods 0/2 (1). WATCHEM T. Colbert, lbw D. Shannon . . . 12 J. Woods, b D. Shannon . . . 1 D. Tatarskyj, not out . . . 51 J. Borden, c C. Williams b D. Shannon . . . 3 R. Hogan, c C. Castleman b K. Bellinger . . . 5 A. Dean, not out . . . 10 Sundries . . . 6 TOTAL (for 4 wickets) . . . 88 Bowling: C. Castleman 0/23 (8), D. Shannon 3/4 (6), K. Bellinger 1/28 (5), Fill-in 0/14 (2), A. Decker 0/15 (2).	

Saints Topple Cricket Leader

“The glorious uncertainty of cricket” was on show at Lord Nelson Park on Saturday, when fifth-placed St. Arnaud outscored the ladder’s clear leader, Donald-Jeffcott in round 11 of the Wimmera-Mallee “A” grade competition.

While half the St. Arnaud team failed to score, the foundation for a hard-fought victory was laid by a superb partnership between Jacob Patching, 88 not out, and Jayden McCartney, 42, in an overall tally of 10/132 in 38.3 overs. Sharing the wickets for Donald-Jeffcott were captain Cooper Anderson 4/31 (7.2), Eddie Landwehr 2/9 (8), and Lachie Jones 2/18 (4).

After the tea break, Donald-Jeffcott also lost early wickets, before Lachie Jones, 52, and Jett Adams, 37, “stopped the rot”, but the innings still fell 9 runs short at 123, in 35.5 overs. Completing a great individual “double”, Jayden McCartney took 4/23 (8), while Hayden Torney finished off the innings with 4/12 (4.5), after Carl Torney had taken 1/35 (6).

Marnoo at home strengthened its hold on second place after dismissing the Southern Mallee Giants for 157 in 35.1 overs. Outstanding batting for the Giants was the 76 by Luke Mitchell, including 5 fours and 3 sixes. Others into double figures were Parker Hallam 18, Jackson Moore 13, and Jobe Landrigan 10. All five Marnoo bowlers shared the wickets, with David Lang taking 3/35 (8), Dylan Shelley 2/28 (8), Ted Caldwell 2/31 (7), Jimmy Duxson 2/22 (4.1), and Jack McAllister 1/34 (8). Then, leading by example, Marnoo captain Nick Baird, 87 not out, shared a near-century partnership with vice-captain David Lang, to take the total to 4/163 in 30.1 overs.

Hosting the St. Mary’s team, Birchip Swans used almost all its 40 scheduled overs in compiling 10/154, more than half of which was contributed by Rylee Smith, 86. Multiple wicket-takers for St. Mary’s were Nick Toscano 3/16 (8), Brodie Dennes 3/33 (8), Colby Schmidt 2/22 (5),

and Hugh Nixon 2/37 (6.1). In reply, St. Mary’s was given a solid start by Nick Germano 36 and Colby Schmidt 15. Brodie Dennes added 16, but with Jonty Randall capturing 4/15 (7.4) for Birchip, and Rylee Smith adding 3/16 to his top score, St. Mary’s was all out for 119.

“B” Grade

It was the battle of “B” grade leaders at the Jeffcott oval in Donald, where Donald-Jeffcott took on Charlton. The home team’s batting could hardly have looked more impressive, with a string of partnerships boosting the total to 7/238, individual scorers including Ryan Bath 82, Kalon Green 27 not out, and captain Jack Tellefson 22. Birchip’s Cooper Boyle led the bowling with 3/40 (8). Chasing the home team’s challenging total, Charlton took to the wicket with enthusiasm, notable scores coming from Billy Sexton 29, Patrick Sait and Elliott Fitzpatrick 28 each, and Patrick Soulsby 18. But this was to be Ryan Bath’s day, as the talented all-rounder, bowling at number 7, cleaned up the Charlton tail with figures of 4/8, from 2 overs, as the total came to a halt at 150, in 29.5 overs.

St. Mary’s and Birchip Swans both depended on “fill-ins” to complete their line-ups at Anzac Park, Warracknabeal. Batting first, St. Mary’s reached a 40-overs total of 8/206, top scorers being Lincoln Westerland 66, Jacob Thomas 49, Cary Fernandez 17, “fill-in” 15, and Kael Zanker and Aiden Keys 12 each. Leading the Birchip bowling was Joel Emonson with 3/45 (8). When Birchip’s turn came to bat, it was three “fill-ins” who provided almost all the 101 runs recorded, with individual scores of 52 not out, 10 and

11. Top of St. Mary’s bowling list were Chad Hartnett 4/14 (8). “fill-in” 2/11 (3), and Gary Fernandez 2/3 (2.4).

Watchem Panthers continued their march towards this season’s finals by dismissing Southern Mallee Giants for 86, of which a “fill-in” scored 35, captain Kybe Bellinger 12, and Dale Shannon 10. Watchem captain Connor Boyle took 4/7 (6), Austin Dean 2/15 (8), and Jam Borden 2/13 (7). Then Watchem claimed victory with 4/88 in 23 overs, Daniel Tartarskyj remaining not out on 51, while Ty Colbert scored 12 and Austin Dean 10 not out. Outstanding bowling figures for the Giants were Dale Shannon’s 3/4 from 8 overs.



• 4/23 for St Arnaud’s Jayden McCartney after contributing 42 with the bat.



• Charlton’s Patrick Sait launches into this shot, but unfortunately for him, it went straight to Donald-Jeffcott fielder, Sam Postlethwaite and was caught for 28. Donald-Jeffcott players are Jack Tellefson in slips and Kalon Green, wicketkeeper.

Wimmera Mallee Cricket Ladders

“A” Grade

	P	W	L	D	Bye	Pts
Donald Jeffcott	13	11	1	0	0	37
Marnoo	12	8	3	0	0	27
Birchip	12	6	5	0	0	23
St Mary’s	13	6	6	0	0	19
St. Arnaud.....	13	4	8	0	0	15
Southern Mallee.....	13	0	11	0	0	1

“B” Grade

	P	W	L	D	Bye	Pts
Donald Jeffcott	13	10	2	0	0	33
Charlton	13	9	3	0	0	31
Watchem	13	8	4	0	0	29
Southern Mallee	13	3	6	0	0	15
St. Mary’s	13	3	7	0	0	15
Birchip	13	0	8	0	0	3



• Birchip fielders celebrating with Patrick Sheahan with great catch dismissing Daniel Westerland. – Photo Amanda Casey.

Trash to Treasure

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Country Club Hosts Semi-Finals

North Central Playing Area's 2024-'25 pennant bowls semi-finals in both divisions will be contested at St. Arnaud Country Club next Saturday, when St. Arnaud will take on Donald Golf, and Wedderburn will be pitted against Wycheproof in Division 1.

With the Div. 1 final four already set prior to last Saturday's final round of the home-and-away season, the top four teams went through the formalities, using the opportunity to hone their skills and add up to 12 points each to their impressive season tallies.

Ladder leader St. Arnaud made short work of Donald, claiming victory by 35 shots after Steven Zsigmond defeated Luke Kelly by 16 shots, Ashley Dyke accounted for Norm Hollis by 8, and Terry McSwain finished 11 in front of Hunter Wingfield.

Donald Golf had to work hard for its victory on the Boort synthetic, but emerged with three winning rinks, Peter Hibberd downing Shayne Morris by 2, Daniel Pettifer shading Laurie Maxted by the narrowest of margins, while Geoff Rigby's combo carried the day with a 9-shot win over Kevin Depiazza.

Wedderburn finished 15 shots to the better of the visiting St. Arnaud Country Club, Damien Mason accounting for Bill Rodger by 10 shots, Alan Jackson outscoring Trevor McDonald by 4, while Laurie Witham's team had its collective nose one shot in front of Jason Abbott when the final bowl came to rest.

Charlton secured 2 points against Wycheproof when the wily Kevin Willey outpointed Grant Allan by 6 shots, but wins by Jono Grylls by 7 over Ken North, and Aaron Mead by 15 over Stephen Perry ensured Wyche. enters the finals on the back of a solid victory.

Details:

Division 1

Donald 48-0 lost to St. Arnaud 83-12.

Luke Kelly 13 lost to Steven Zsigmond 29, Norm Hollis 18 lost to Ashley Dyke 26, Hunter Wingfield 17 lost to Terry McSwain 28.

Boort 60-0 lost to Donald Golf 72-12.

Shayne Morris 21 lost to Peter Hibberd 23, Laurie Maxted 21 lost to Daniel Pettifer 22, Kevin Depiazza 18 lost to Geoff Rigby 27.

Wedderburn 70-12 d. St. Arnaud Country Club 55-0.

Damien Mason 26 d. Bill Rodger 16, Alan Jackson 24 d. Trevor McDonald 20, Laurie Witham 20 d. Jason Abbott 19.

Charlton 58-2 lost to Wycheproof 74-10.

Ken North 18 lost to Jono Grylls 25, Kevin Willey 24 d. Grant Allan 18, Stephen Perry 16 lost to Aaron Mead 31.

Country Club Safe

A drawn result with host Wedderburn was enough to ensure St. Arnaud Country Club retained its finals, both clubs finishing with 65 shots apiece, but Country Club won two rinks to 1.

Country Club's Phil Elliott and John Needs piloted their rinks to wins over Lance Standfield and Ian Hall respectively, by margins of 9 and 7 shots, while John Grant saved the day for the home club after he downed Arnold Bond by 16 shots.

Donald Golf had to win against home team Boort to have any chance of regaining its place in the top four, a goal it achieved by 9 shots and 8 points to 4, but by virtue of Country Club's winning margin, Golf failed to bridge the gap.

George Wood was the match winner for Donald Golf, accounting for Greg Smith by 29 shots, which more than made up for losses by Shane O'Shea and Lindsay Borden to Joan Earl respectively, by margins of 16 and 4 shots.

St. Arnaud conceded two rinks to host Donald, after Beryl Milne accounted for Laurence Goodwin by 1 shot

and Ev Adams finished 4 shots in front of Kerryn Dyke, but when Lloyd Goddard eclipsed David Romeo by 20 shots, St. Arnaud banked 8 points to 4 to enter the finals riding a winning wave.

Charlton had no answer to Div. 2 premiership favourite Wycheproof, which picked up all 12 points on the back of its 79-shot victory.

By defeating Doug Gretgrix, Rob Grylls contributed 27 shots to the winning tally, Paul Connolly added another 27 at Gary Bateson's expense, and Matt Nicholls rounded out the impressive total with a margin of 25 against Doug Finlay.

Next Saturday's semi-finals, also played at St. Arnaud Country Club, will see Wycheproof pitted against Wedderburn, while St. Arnaud and St. Arnaud Country Club go head-to-head for the opportunity to advance to the preliminary final.

Details:

Wedderburn 65-5 drew with St. Arnaud Country Club 65-7.

Lance Standfield 18 lost to Phil Elliott 27, John Grant 28 d. Arnold Bond 12, Ian Hall 19 lost to John Needs 26.

Boort 65-4 lost to Donald Golf 74-8.

Greg Smith 7 lost to George Wood 36, Kelvin Ritchie 28 d. Lindsay Borden 24, Joan Earl 30 d. Shane O'Shea 14.

Donald 66-4 lost to St. Arnaud 81-8.

Beryl Milne 26d. Laurence Goodwin 25, Ev Adams 25 d. Kerryn Dyke 21, David Romeo 15 lost to Lloyd Goddard 35.

Charlton 37-0 lost to Wycheproof 116-12.

Doug Gretgrix 11 lost to Rob Grylls 38, Gary Bateson 13 lost to Paul Connolly 40, Doug Finlay 13 lost to Matt Nicholls 38.

NORTH CENTRAL PENNANT BOWLS

Positions of Teams, after round 14

DIVISION 1										
	P	W	L	D	Bye	F	A	SD	%	Pts
St. Arnaud	14	10	3	1	0	1040	765	275	136	126
Donald Golf	14	11	2	1	0	1001	805	196	124	126
Wedderburn	14	10	3	1	0	1004	840	164	119	114
Wycheproof	14	7	6	1	0	944	825	119	114	94
St. Arnaud Country Club	14	5	8	1	0	856	962	-106	89	69
Donald	14	5	8	1	0	829	1044	-215	79	65
Boort	14	4	9	1	0	885	933	-48	95	62
Charlton	14	0	13	1	0	736	1121	-385	66	16

DIVISION 2										
	P	W	L	D	Bye	F	A	SD	%	Pts
Wycheproof	14	10	3	1	0	1082	700	382	154	128
Wedderburn	14	9	3	2	0	1014	835	179	121	112
St. Arnaud	14	8	5	1	0	974	826	148	118	100
St. Arnaud Country Club	14	8	4	2	0	952	852	100	112	98
Donald Golf	14	8	5	1	0	928	898	30	103	96
Boort	14	4	9	1	0	856	948	-92	90	56
Donald	14	3	10	1	0	691	1049	-358	66	51
Charlton	14	1	12	1	0	681	1070	-389	64	31



• George Geddes delivers his bowl. Standing behind is Adrian Humphrey, Anthony Matley and John Gibson.



• Donald Golf president Peter Raynes delivers his bowl. His team narrowly missed playing finals.



• Boort division 2 bowler John Hampson delivers his bowl.