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The Buloke Times

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

Buloke Achievers Recognised

The 2025 Buloke Shire Council Awards celebration was held on January 23, in Wycheproof Town Hall, featuring buffet-style catering with an incredible selection of delicious food, sweets, teas, and coffees, creating a very welcoming atmosphere.

Local caterer Donna Pellegrino, of Tuscany on Calder provided the spread, while live music was performed by local talent, Brodie Glen. Buloke Shire councillors were at the door to greet guests, adding a nice formal touch to the evening.

As the crowd gathered and mingled in the appropriately decorated hall, with its wattle boughs and flags, media, communications, and other staff were on hand to ensure the event ran smoothly and ready to go live for the 6:30 p.m. livestream.

CEO Wayne O'Toole, welcomed guests with an acknowledgment of country and introduced the evening's guest speaker, Assistant Commissioner for Victoria Police, Glenn Weir. Wayne also extended a warm welcome to the OAM recipients, nominees, and all those in attendance.

Australia Day Theme

Glenn Weir spoke warmly of his childhood in Horsham and of the "country way". He highlighted the theme of Australia Day this year – Reflect, Respect, Celebrate – that it isn't about one day of the year, it is about who we are as a nation. He shared that life in the country is about being "part of the community, not apart from it", and hard work, good humour and local traditions are commonly found traits in the residents of these small towns.

Glenn also talked about his early years growing up in

Horsham and how the drive to Wycheproof felt like coming home; a stressful morning could just melt away with the miles. He reminded everyone how lucky we are to live in such a beautiful area, and to maintain our region's integrity, he urged the audience to "stop, pause and reflect" on the role we have in mentoring the future generations. It is important to understand where we all fit in the story of Australia and to create an environment of confidence and hope for our future generations.

Event of the Year

Buloke Shire Awards were then presented to worthy recipients for their outstanding contributions to the community across the whole shire.

Presenting Community Event of the Year award were Cr. Bernadette Hogan and Cr. Charmaine Delaney.

The winner was Charlton Neighbourhood House's "Blue Tree Project" and its popular initiatives to highlight mental health issues. Visual reminders were placed about the towns within the shire to help break the stigma of mental health, help start conversations, foster connection and creating symbols of hope and resilience. Representatives from Blue Tree Project accepted with a few words and statistics about mental health, and thanked the Buloke Shire for recognising the initiative, saying it is hoped it will help to build a



• 2025 Buloke Award Winners (from left to right): Citizen of the Year: Corey Harrison, Young Citizen of the Year: Keely Allan and Event of the Year: The Blue Tree Project represented by the Charlton Neighbourhood House Team, left to right, Kaylene Cossar (president CNH committee), Bronwyn Fisher (Blue Tree Project instigator), Cathie Hobbs (CNH staff member), Marea Judd (CNH committee member CNH).

strong and connected community.

Young Citizen

Cr. Graeme Milne and Cr. Bruce Stafford presented the Young Citizen of the Year award to Wycheproof's Keely Allan. Keely is a not only a passionate advocate for rural living, she also displays exceptional dedication and leadership within her community, particularly in her role as president of the Wycheproof Youth Group.

Upon accepting the honour, Keely expressed her appreciation eloquently, acknowledging the people before her that paved her way,

such as Wycheproof P-12 principal, Christine McKersie, who does so much for the youth of the town. She also thanked the community itself, with the belief that growing up in this area has contributed a large amount to her success.

In closing, Keely pointed out that she doesn't come from a shire with really advanced technology and bustling numbers, but she comes from a shire whose residents will huddle into the hall on a Thursday evening to recognise everyone's efforts, which speaks volumes of the example she has been set to become the leader she is today.

Mayor Cr. Allan Getley and last year's Citizen of the Year winner, Trevor Emerson, presented the 2025 award which is consistently won in the Buloke Shire by champions volunteering to make their community a better place.

Citizen of the Year

Corey Harrison was named Buloke Citizen of the Year in recognition outstanding and tireless contributions to the community over many years. In his roles as CFA volunteer and captain, coaching and umpiring roles in football, hockey and cricket,

Corey is often the first to arrive and last to leave. As well as the local community, Corey has been committed to raising funds for Royal Children's Hospital and is area manager for the Good Friday Appeal. Corey is a dedicated dad, friend and volunteer; an outstanding person who gives so much to his community and those around him.

Upon accepting, Corey admitted that he thought something might have been going on when he saw so many of his friends and family assembled. Until then, he'd had no idea what was coming.

• Continued on page 2.

"Blue Gum" is Coming to Town

Services Australia's Mobile Service Centre Blue Gum is visiting towns in the Shire of Loddon and Wimmera Mallee region of Victoria in the coming weeks, offering locals easy access to Centrelink, Medicare, National Disability Insurance Scheme and Department of Veterans' Affairs services.

"Blue Gum" will visit:

Charlton on Wednesday, January 29, in front of the Shire Office, High Street (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Wycheproof on Thursday, January 30, in front of the

Men's Shed (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.)

Donald on Friday, January 31, near Donald Mall, Woods Street (9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.).

• Continued on page 2.



• Blue Gum coming to a town near you!

Blue-Green Algae in Lake Lonsdale

(From Fisheries Authority)

Recreational water users are advised to avoid direct contact with water in Lake Lonsdale following the detection of elevated blue-green algae levels.

Visitors can still enjoy recreational activities such as boating, bushwalking, sight-seeing and other activities at the lake that do not involve direct water contact.

Warning signs have been positioned at major recreational areas around the lake and will remain in place until blue-green algae levels drop below the threshold considered safe for recreational use.

We Recommend

- Avoiding all contact with affected water.

- Affected water not be used for cooking, drinking, washing/showering or any other domestic use. Boiling the affected water will not make it safe to use.

- If you come into contact with the affected water, you should wash the area of skin exposed immediately in clean water.

- Those experiencing any health issues after being in contact with blue-green algae

affected water should seek immediate medical advice.

Blue-Green Algae Facts

- Blue-green algae occurs naturally and can be dangerous to humans and animals.

- Characteristic signs of algae contact are skin rashes or itchiness, sore eyes, ears and nose; or if swallowed, nausea or vomiting.

- Pet owners should prevent pets from drinking or having direct contact with blue-green algae affected water.

- It is not possible to predict how long the algae will remain at high levels within the lake.

Anglers wanting more information please visit Victorian Fisheries Authority website at www.vfa.vic.gov.au and search on "blue-green algae".

We will continue to monitor the lake regularly and will keep the community informed of any changes regarding blue-green algae alerts through our disruptions website page at <https://www.gwmwater.org.au/bga>

As Students Return to School . . . Transport Alert

Motorists are reminded of school speed zones with students returning to the classroom after the summer school holidays.

School speed zones will be in operation from 8 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. and from 2.30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays from Wednesday, January 29, until the end of term one on Friday, March 4.

Motorists can expect an increase in road, pedestrian and bicycle traffic around schools, and near bus and tram stops, at drop-off and pick-up times.

Drivers have a responsibility to be especially cautious when travelling near schools, as younger children don't have the same awareness of road safety as adults do and their behaviour may be unpredictable near the roads.

School speed zones across the state operate in line with the Victorian government school calendar (some permanently), while others operate

from 8 a.m. to 9.30 a.m., and from 2.30 p.m. to 4 p.m. on weekdays.

School speed zones are designed to keep pedestrians safe by lowering the speed limit at peak times when children are travelling to and from school. Regardless of whether a school is open or closed, or has a student-free day, all sign-posted speed reductions will still apply.

The Department of Transport and Planning thanks motorists and passengers for their patience while these important works take place.

Real-time traffic conditions are available at traffic.transport.vic.gov.au. The latest public transport information and network status is available at ptv.vic.gov.au or in the PTV mobile app.

Buloke Achievers Recognised

• Continued from page 1.

After extending his thanks to both councillors and the Buloke Shire, he also thanked his wife, firstly for keeping such a secret and also for being such an unwavering support.

Corey expressed his appreciation of the many people who have taken him under their wing in his various roles and led him to where he is today, also acknowledging the other volunteers he works with and the hard work they do for both emergency services and all sporting codes, much of which goes unnoticed.

"What an absolute honour!" Corey said in closing. "Thank you all, never in my wildest dreams would I have thought I would be standing up here accepting one of these awards."

As a thank you, Grevilleas were presented to the award winners, and a local hamper

to the guest speaker. The event celebrated local businesses and talent, with the Shire proudly showcasing local products and support throughout the evening. The crowd was especially supportive, with two Wycheproof locals honoured; many family and friends were on hand to make the celebrations infectious.

Wayne O'Toole closed the night by congratulating all the nominees, thanking the staff and those who helped put the event together, decorating the hall and for the remarkable catering.

"These awards are a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the incredible people in our community," Mayor Alan Getley said.

"The dedication and passion shown by the winners and nominees are what makes Buloke such a special place. Congratulations to all involved."



• Guest speaker, assistant Commissioner Victoria Police, Glenn Weir.



• Guests gathered to enjoy a light buffet meal.



• The delicious dessert buffet was a feast for the eyes as well as the stomach.

Letter to the Editor



School's In

(The Editor, "The Times")

Dear Sir.—As a new school year approaches, I would like to wish our teachers, students, staff and families a great year ahead.

No matter whether you are just starting your schooling journey or preparing to finish at the end of the year, I hope this year will be a productive and enjoyable one for all our local students.

For those students commencing their final year of schooling, I encourage you to make the most of your time and prepare yourself for the next chapter, whether it includes further study or entering the workforce.

Best wishes to all our students who are starting school. It can be an emotional time for the parents and carers as their children take the first step into their primary school years.

Last year I had the pleasure of visiting many primary and secondary schools across the electorate and it was really fantastic to get to meet and connect with our youth.

I have seen first-hand the dedicated and hard-working teachers who work tirelessly to support their students and ensure they are set up to grasp the opportunities of the future and contribute positively to the community.

Finally, to the parents and families, thank you for being such an important part of your child's education. Your support makes a huge difference, and I encourage everyone to stay involved and connected with our schools and teachers throughout the year.

I can't wait to catch up with and hear from students in the year ahead and I will continue to support our students, teachers and schools in any way that I can.

Jade Benham MP

"Blue Gum" Is Coming to Town

• Continued from page 1.

St Arnaud on Monday, February 3, near the town hall, Napier Street (10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.).

St Arnaud on Tuesday, February 4, near the town hall, Napier Street (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.).

Wedderburn on Wednesday, February 5, opposite the newsagency, High Street (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.).

Inglewood on Thursday, February 6, near the community hub, Market Street (9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.).

Mobile Services Centres are 20 tonne trucks operated by staff from Services Australia, providing regional and rural Australians with friendly face-to-face service and tailored support. Staff on board this trip can help with:

- Centrelink claims.
- Medicare registrations.
- Accessing online services.

Information about National Disability Insurance Scheme and Department of Veterans' Affairs programs and support services will also be available.

Big Day for the Adams Family

On Saturday, January 25, a sizeable crowd gathered at Donald Sports Centre's Goff Letts Oval to honour one of the Royal Blues' greatest behind-the-scenes figures – Colin Adams.

The occasion marked a significant moment in the club's history, as Colin was inducted into Donald Football Club's Hall of Fame, and the trainers' room was dedicated in his name.

The ceremony began with Danny Forrest, president of Donald Football Club, setting the tone with a personal reflection.

"One of the greatest gifts you can give is your personal time," he said, highlighting the lasting impact Colin had made over the years.

Colin's dedication to the Royal Blues isn't just a story of firsts – it's a legacy of unwavering support and commitment. The unanimous vote by life members to honour him spoke volumes, as Colin was recognised for the many ways he has shaped the club's history, both on and off the field.

Footy Farm

Thirty years ago, Colin was one of the first to turn the soil at the club's recently acquired footy farm, laying the foundation for the Royal Blues' future. His involvement with the club didn't stop there – he's been its number one ticket holder year after year and a consistent contributor, even offering up the number one item at the Goods and Services auction for 20-odd years.

Trainer

But his standout contribution was his role as a trainer, a position he held with distinction. Fellow trainer Greg

Egan, shared another "first" with the crowd: Colin introduced the first female football trainer to the club, a move that many have copied since.

Colin's impact has spread beyond just football. He was a fixture in the lives of players from multiple sports, including hockey and netball, even assisting with work injuries and organising appointments for players with the right doctors.

"Doctor"

He earned the nickname "Dr. Col" (or sometimes "Dr. Sid") for his incredible knowledge and knack for diagnosing injuries.

"And if Col didn't know something, he'd research it", continued Greg. "Whether it was a simple taping job or offering advice on more complex injuries, Colin was always there, often going above and beyond, even for the younger players who might not have taken the best care of themselves or their nutritional needs.

"Saturday mornings at his house became a ritual, where young players would gather for a hearty breakfast, thanks to Colin's nurturing ways."

Throughout the years, Colin had worked alongside and taught a stellar group of trainers, including John Davidson, Rodney Davidson, Anne-Marie Wright and Jed McLoughlan. His work ethic and dedication were second to none.

The trainers' room, which was dedicated in his honour, is a testament to his influence. What began as a small, makeshift space with trestles and a hard top, had grown over time, evolving into a proper, fully equipped facility, some of it built by Colin himself, with running water and all the necessary amenities to support the players.

The naming of the "Colin Adams Trainers' Room" is the Royal Blues' tribute to Colin's journey. Col's son, Marc, assisted in unveiling the plaque, though the extremely effective trainer's tape wouldn't peel off easily, to everyone's amusement.

Involvement

Colin, visibly moved by the turnout, took a moment to thank everyone for interrupting their long weekend to be there in support of him. His words revealed the depth of his connection to the club, recounting how he first got involved when his sons Simon and Marc started playing.

At that time, Colin had been retired from football and was more focused on golf, but soon enough, he found himself



• Colin Adams with his Donald family, from left: daughter-in-law Sara, grandson Jett, son Marc and granddaughters, Milla and Kayla.

at training, helping with taping and learning on the fly. From there, his role only grew, and he became an indispensable part of the club's fabric.

"I've worked with some outstanding people over the years," Colin said, naming a few key people who had been part of his journey, particularly Dr. Rob Bradford and his wife Vicki, and physiotherapists like Linden Hart. The support

from the club had always been there, he noted, emphasising how crucial the community's involvement and club leadership were in making everything work.

The day culminated in a round of cheers and applause for Colin, marking the occasion with family photos and plenty of congratulations. It was a well-deserved recognition for a man whose behind-

the-scenes work had made such a significant impact on the Royal Blues.

The trainers' room now proudly bears his name, a fitting tribute to a man whose contributions have shaped the club for generations. The message was clear: Colin Adams was, and always will be, at the heart of the Royal Blues' community.



• Following the morning's tribute to his grandfather at the stadium overlooking the main oval, Jett Adams swapped to the George Cartwright oval, where he starred with great bowling figures of 5 for 37 for the Donald-Jeffcott team. (Photo by Amanda Casey)



• The too effective trainers tape nearly upstaged the unveiling.



• A good crowd stuck around despite the long weekend.



Each wind turbine can provide energy for up to

4,200

homes per year

Although results vary according by the size of turbines, Energy Victoria states states that each megawatt hour of wind energy avoids the generation of around 0.7 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. That means a 7 MW wind turbine can power around 4,200 homes per year.

That's the same as removing around 4,600 cars from our roads. This clean, green energy is the future of power in Australia.



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Deadlines:—

Tuesday's Issue: Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Monday. Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Friday prior.

Friday's Issue: Classified advertisements (single column), 10 a.m. Thursday. Display advertisements (2 or more columns), 3 p.m. Wednesday prior.

BEREAVEMENT THANK YOU

Heather Joy Fletcher
13/09/1948 – 13/12/2024

The Fletcher families would like to thank all those who sent cards, phone calls and food following Heather's passing. A big thank you to the amazing staff at Rural Northwest Health for the loving care of Heather.

Thank you to Raelene and Mark O'Halloran for all their support, care and compassion during this time.

– Noel Fletcher & family.

Twilight Tennis IS BACK AGAIN FOR 2025!

Wednesday nights, beginning at 6 p.m.. Two sets (to 8 games) per person per night.

**February 5th, 12th
19th and 26th**

**Venue: DONALD LAWN
TENNIS COURTS**

Preference for entry is as a team of 4 (with players' names and team name).

Individual entrants will be placed in a team.

Cost: \$40 per person in total. This includes tennis and BBQ tea (meat and salad) for all four weeks. Drinks are also available at bar prices.

Enter teams and names to:
Stuart.Potter@
education.vic.gov.au or text
0439 971 362 or enter on
Donald Lawn Tennis Club's
Facebook page.

All welcome!

WANTED ROOM TO RENT

17 y.o. female looking to rent, board or share house in Donald. working locally. Ph. 0439 166 560.

MOVING HOUSE GARAGE SALE

34 Watson St, Birchip
Saturday, Feb. 1
9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Loads of indoor and outdoor items. Powertools, shed items – all items must go! **Come grab a bargain!!!!!!**

Some items you will see on the day:

- Log splitter (Petrol Hydraulic)
- Bookshelves
- Petrol Post hole digger
- Fridge/Freezer - with ice dispenser
- Books
- Christmas decorations
- Household items
- Hand tools
- Exercise equipment.

District farewell

Dennis and Jenny Baker

All friends and work colleagues welcome.

**Friday,
January 31, 2025**

AT THE JEFFCOTT
CRICKET CLUB
ROOMS

Liscensed bar,
no BYO
BBQ supplied
from 6 p.m.

Info contact Tony
0428 325 985



EMPLOYMENT POSITION

Goodwin Village operates a 38 bed residential aged care facility. 25 retirement living units and has 7 community care clients.

FOOD & DOMESTIC (full or part-time 24 to 38 hours per week)

There is a position for a full or part-time food & domestic services assistant. The position involves working as a cleaner, and the kitchen in our residential care building.

Further information about the position including position description is available from the Chief Executive Officer.

Key Selection Criteria

The position requires applicants to have the following attributes:

- Reliable, with a good work ethic, with a focus to meet the care needs of all individual Goodwin Village consumers.
- an empathy for elderly people,
- an ability to work individually, in a team environment,
- a commitment to assist with the continuous improvement of Goodwin Village processes.

Applications for the positions must be made in writing by 5 p.m., Friday, February 14, 2025.

Goodwin Village,
22 Camp Street, Donald,
Telephone: 5497 1304 **Facsimile:** 5497 1769.
Email: ahogan@goodwinagedcare.org.au

Anthony Hogan,
Chief Executive Officer.

Printed and published for the proprietors by Robin Letts, at the office of "The Buloke Times", 6 McCulloch Street, Donald.

Do b in a friend
If you know someone celebrating a birthday, or wedding anniversary or some other special occasion, let us know and we'll let the world know!

- January 28, Zac Constable
- Jan. 28, Helen Amos
- Jan. 28, Mary Herben
- Jan 30, Chloe Frank
- February 1, Brian & Marion Bayles' 51st Wedding Anniversary
- Feb. 2, Max Harris

Darrell Lea Fine Chocolates

JOHN SANDS

If you know someone celebrating a special anniversary, let us know at
Donald Newsagency & Emporium
For all your Greeting Cards, Wraps, Ribbons and Stationery needs.
37 Woods Street, Donald. 'Phone 54971510.

REX THEATRE CHARLTON 30-34 High St. Charlton 03 5491 2333 boxoffice@rextheatre.org.au rextheatre.org.au

COMING ATTRACTIONS

MUFASA: THE LION KING
PG 118 mins | Adventure | Animation

Sat 1 Feb 8pm
Sun 2 Feb 2pm
Tue 4 Feb 8pm

COMING: **CONCLAVE**
PG 120 mins | Thriller

The Buloke Times

Est. 1875

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

FREE 2-Day Workshop | Visions Of Tomorrow

art workshop

8-9 February 2025

Wycheproof

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Tanisha Lovett &
Barkindji Ngayampaa Maligundidj Artist
Tracy Wise

WYCHEPROOF TRAIN STATION
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Australian Government BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL VICTORIA State Government

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

ALL IDEAS ABOARD: DONALD 2000

TRANSFORMATION EVENT

FRIDAY, 21 FEBRUARY 2025

TIME: 6:00PM BYO CHAIR OR PICNIC RUG

FREE PICNIC SUPPER

BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL FOR CATERING
RSVP TO 0428 547 170 OR 0428 434 960

Australian Government BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL VICTORIA State Government

Community Celebrates at Birchip Memorial Park

The Birchip community came together in true Australian spirit on a beautiful, sunny morning to celebrate Australia Day at the Birchip Memorial Park.

Set against the backdrop of manicured green lawns, the event showcased collaboration, generosity, and the vibrant community spirit that defines the day.

Organised by the Birchip Community Forum, the celebrations brought together local groups and volunteers to ensure the event's success.

The Birchip Lions Club manned the barbecue, offering a hearty cooked breakfast fare and Wirrim CWA provided toast, tea, coffee, and juice to keep attendees refreshed.

TMC Enviro personnel worked hard to prepare the

park, setting up the space for the festivities, while the Buloke Shire Council funded the free breakfast and loaned the tables and chairs used at the event. The Birchip P-12 School contributed to the event by providing the sound system, ensuring everyone could hear the speeches and music that set the celebratory tone, and community members lent a hand in packing up after the celebrations, highlighting the teamwork that is the hallmark of the town.

Steve Nottle, the newly appointed president of the Birchip Community Forum, welcomed the crowd and

hosted the formalities which commenced with a stirring unaccompanied rendition of the National Anthem from Sarah Fritsch (née Doran), who had travelled from Mornington for the celebrations.

Awards

Steve introduced guest speaker Senior Constable Will Ringin, who provided a heart-warming address before announcing Judy Living as the prestigious winner of the Citizen of the Year and the two new 2025 award category winners; Les Cooper (Youth of the Year), and Birchip-Watchem Football Club as hosts of the Central Victoria Football League (CVFL) girls football grand final at George Cartwright Oval (Community Event of the Year).

In concluding the formal proceedings, Steve emphasised his vision to lead a productive Birchip Community Forum in 2025.

"I am committed to seeing that a range of projects are implemented to maintain a thriving and vibrant community, and I want to make sure we have a lot of fun while we are doing it," Steve said.

Meanwhile, children made the most of the sunny day, playing on the playground and enjoying a casual game of backyard cricket on the newly installed lawns where the Birchip Kindergarten building once stood.

The Australia Day celebration at Birchip Memorial Park brought together people of all ages and demonstrated the strength of community connections. Steve would love to hear from anyone who has any feedback on the celebrations, or any thoughts on how the Birchip community should celebrate Australia Day.

Together, the community can continue to make Australia Day a cherished tradition in Birchip.



• Wirrim CWA members Cassie Kemp, Val Lee, Elaine McCallum, Connelly Ryan helping with breakfast, Lions member Maureen Trollope is in the background.



• Sarah Fritsch singing the National Anthem.



• River Ryan, Grace McAuliffe and Lucy Coffey.



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70 Woods Street, Donald — 5497 1211

There's No Better Way

(By Daniel Puentes)

With beautiful skies and a fantastic temperature, the 2025 Australian awards landed on the perfect day.

The event was held at the Memorial Park, which I'm learning hosts an incredible amount of different events and celebrations year round. With a few guest speakers, plenty of food, and an amazing amount of conversation, I can only hope the rest of the year goes as smoothly as this event.

Starting us off in an incredibly Australian way, there was a fantastic casual game of backyard cricket. The scene was set with families gathering to enjoy the game, where the usual rules applied: one hand, one bounce, no LBW, and tippity run. The atmosphere was light-hearted, with big sixes, great catches, and wickets tumbling.

Danny "Fraggle" Forrester, Sam Beavis, and Cooper Anderson were on hand to organise the match, ensuring everyone had a blast. There were no losers, but all who played have to be considered winners going by the smiles on their faces! Smiles and laughter would end up being something that carried on throughout the day.

Before the awards were announced we all stood to sing the national anthem, I will admit to needing the guide as it was my first time singing an anthem, aside from the Canadian one. A pretty good choice for a first day if I do say so myself! Following that we read The Commitment, a set of values I found to be a very applicable for Donald as a community.

There were some Buloke Shire awards to celebrate some incredible achievements over the past year.

- Event of the Year: The Blue Tree Project.
- Young Citizen of the Year: Keely Allan.
- Citizen of the Year: Corey Harrison.

A big heartfelt congratulations to these winners, and those who assisted in the Blue Tree Project as a whole.

Speaker

After the shire's awards, we were graced with an incredible and personal story of someone who came to love Donald as his hometown, a place to plant his roots and to build into this incredible community – Tony Phillips, whose story of love, hope, and new beginnings were all highlighted by a sense of belonging.

A very deep connection that was really built through effort, being the past president of Donald 2000, a coach for the hockey club, involved in a school council and so much more. His words about how "every little bit you can do helps make this a thriving and friendly community" really struck home to me. Community is something we all work together to make.

Up next was a short speech from Jade Benham, who joked about not wanting to be one of those politicians who drones on and on during Australia Day before we were led into the next set of awards.

Event of the Year: Fireworks at the 2024 Donald Show

Representatives for the Donald Show Committee and Donald 2000 were both asked to come and accept this award, given for just how amazing the fireworks were. Rivalling the big New Year celebrations you may find at large cities, truly a testament to how impressive small communities can be when we work together!

Young Citizen of the Year: Cooper Anderson

While this award was for the young citizen of the year, the resumé presented to him

would be one a person of any age could be proud of. Coaching multiple teams in basketball and cricket, umpired all levels of basketball and both junior football and cricket, captain of the previous Donald Cricket Club, captain of the Donald-Jeffcott Cricket club's "A" team. To add on even more, he also finds time to volunteer at different events in addition to assisting teams with pre-game food preparation.

Truthfully I don't know how he has enough time in a day to do all that he has! An incredibly good choice for the award and congratulations on winning! To make it even more incredible he showed up at the event to assist in the backyard cricket earlier on not knowing he would be winning an award!

Donald Citizen of the Year: Brian Bayles

This was a man who I had met in passing and knew only as a swell older gentleman. As they listed his accolades and achievements over the years I was astounded to hear just what one person could do in a lifetime. In sport alone he played football, tennis, golf, bowls and even cricket! Even after retiring from cricket he continued in the sport as an umpire for over 10 years, in 10 "B" grade grand finals. He was also a member of the local ambulance branch, being the local ambulance community officer for over 30 years, and during this whole career he was on call 24/7. Truly a remarkable achievement in its own right; however it's overshadowed by incredible statistic where he has been involved with more than 1600 cases, the most recorded for any ACO.

Special Recognition: the late Pat Allen

Special to this year, a new award was made to celebrate the late Pat Allen. A man from Donald who was known all over Australia as the man with the magic fingers. An incredible supporter of Donald, and Kooka's Cookies. He always tried to either bring people to Donald or to stay and spend a dollar. Someone who was truly proud of where he lived, and wanted to share it with the world.

Inviting those in the racing scene to come to the Donald Racing Club. He also was an inaugural member of the badminton club, a cricketer with the Services Cricket Club, and a premierships player with the Donald Football Club and Marnoo Football Club. He was an icon both to those local to Donald and beyond in the sporting world. Truly an award worth making, to celebrate a local legend's incredible life. The award was accepted by Pat's wife Neilia and his daughter Alyssa.

After some beautiful words from Neilia, reflecting on her life with Pat, the official events concluded. But not before a surprise announce-



• The future of Donald cricket looks bright as Liam Stopps keeps his eye on the ball. Wicket keeper Sam Beavis.

ment that the barbecue was fully funded by the shire on this day, and that the Lions had best scramble as all of their food was free for the afternoon; immediately one could see the line-up grow!

A big thanks went out to all who assisted in the background to make the celebration what it was, a fantastic testament to community.

I know days like Australia Day, for me the comparison would be Canada Day. I do hope we all can remember that, what a country truly is, is not the land but the people of the community who find themselves at home alongside their neighbours and family. I hope this past Australia Day, and all those to come, become a day to celebrate what a fantastic community we are, and how incredible this country can be in the future. But for now after the celebration all I can say is "have a g'day mate!"

• Editor's note: A warm welcome to Canada's Daniel Puentes, as a staff member of the "Buloke Times", where he is hard at work mastering the Aussie lingo.



• Guest speaker Tony Phillips.



• A well deserved Special Recognition was awarded posthumously to Pat Allen. Accepting on his behalf was Pat's wife, Neilia and daughter Alyssa.



• Karla Griffiths and very good boy Quinn, found a shady spot to watch the proceedings.

to Start Australia Day



• Nicole Nunn (Donald P&A Society) during the acceptance speech for 2025 Event of the Year.



• Abe Beavis launches a rocket down the pitch during the backyard cricket.

• Below right: A very surprised Cooper Anderson accepting the Youth of the Year Award from Jade Benham and MC Lisa Woods (at left).



• 2025 Donald Citizen of the Year, Brian Bayles.



• Backyard Cricket in full swing.



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Involvement – the Life

(By Jenny Pollard)

In Charlton, as in other Buloke towns last Sunday, the spirit of endeavour was applauded under the over-arching Australia Day theme of “Respect. Reflect. Celebrate”.

In perfect weather conditions a large crowd gathered outdoors for the traditional Australia Day breakfast before acknowledging the award recipients whose extensive contributions have enriched the wider community.

With the ebb and flow of breakfast conversation building and a soundtrack of Aussie music in the background, the formalities began outdoors with the raising of flags followed by the singing of the national anthem. Supporting RSL representatives, Bill Freeman and Gordon Risk, with the flag raising were CWA Junior members, Molly and Renee Riley, while the Charlton Choir led the national anthem.

Moving into the Hall, the stage setting was a focus point reflecting the upcoming Golden Anniversary of local CWA Branch, Cabbaritta. Examples of handcraft, events and fundraising initiatives co-ordinated by the Branch referenced the scope of community support undertaken by this group. Friends of Red Cross also had an outreach stand with literature available from members Janet Stafford and Joy Freeman.

A warm welcome by Cabbaritta CWA president Maria Perger opened the proceedings before Cr. Bruce Stafford (Lower Avoca ward) gave a short address. Combining a personalised introduction and sharing reflections on what the national day means to him, Cr. Stafford highlighted Australia’s historical eras from the First Nations people, through to the convict settlement, pioneer expansion and immigration initiatives following on from the Second World War, helping to build the multicultural diversity of the nation, Bruce also listed the ideals which motivated these forebears, and encouraged the community to re-affirm and commit to Charlton remaining a “welcoming, inclusive and connected place” in which all have a role to play.

President of the Charlton Forum, Wayne Litton then came forward to present the following local awards. (Citations have been abridged).

Charlton Citizen of the Year, Gill Gretgrix

“Gill’s unwavering dedication to the Charlton community since 1967 has earned her the title of Charlton 2025 Citizen of the Year. Over the years, Gill has made significant contributions, including playing tennis, golf, and hockey for local clubs, and supporting the Charlton Harness Racing Club as a caterer and later as club secretary from 1999 to 2007.

Her involvement extends to the Charlton Bowls Club, the Golden Grains Museum, and local events like the Christmas Fest and Carols by Candlelight. As the long-time organist at the Uniting Church, she has provided

music for services and led the church’s catering efforts. Gill has also played piano for the Charlton Deb Ball for over 25 years.

In recent years, she has served as secretary of the Charlton Probus Club, managed the Charlton Op Shop, and updated the community on river levels during the 2022 floods. Additionally, she played a key role in catering for the Rotary Art Show and hosted six Rotary exchange students. Gill’s selfless contributions have undoubtedly enriched the Charlton community, making her a well-deserved recipient of this award.”

In responding Gill said, “This is the most humbling thing which has ever happened to me. I just do what I do.” Acknowledging parental encouragement from an early age, Gill continued, “The lifeblood of our towns is the involvement in the community.” Whether the contribution is large or small – “not everyone has to be a major player”. A brief reflection on her initial meeting with husband Doug – coincidentally on the Australia Day weekend in Lorne – the social mores of the time with 6 o’clock closing of pubs, and her thoughts on involvement in events such as the Christmas Fest and Carols at The Rex, Gill concluded by saying “it is thanks to all you people who have been with me through all this time who have helped me be what I am today – and I thank you.” Gill also acknowledged the extensive support of her family.

Charlton Young Citizen of the Year, Fletcher Homes-Brown

“A shining example of a young citizen dedicated towards making a positive impact on his community, Fletcher Holmes-Brown was named the Charlton Young Citizen of the Year.

Demonstrating an unwavering commitment and dedication towards fostering positive change, Fletcher’s role as president of the Charlton Youth Group has seen the execution of successful fundraiser events which have unified the community and gained essential resources for youth group initiatives.

Fletcher’s ability to also juggle part-time work with youth group responsibilities is in addition to his academic and extra-circular roles at Charlton College. Respected by his peers, Fletcher will take on the leadership role of School Captain in 2025 and in addition to his other contributions, he has offered guitar lessons to younger students at lunchtime to encourage their creative expression.

Fletcher’s other commitments include membership of the Youth Parliament that worked across LGA borders to compile a Bill to present to Parliament. He is a “go to” person by the NCLLEN when

seeking a youth voice and this year he helped co-ordinate their cooking classes which were an extension of the CNH Charltonteens program. He is a member of the Buloke Loddon Ganawarra Youth Network, again providing a youth voice directly to LGA’s and their partners. He is the sole rural representative attendee to the State FreeZa Forums.

Actively supporting his local sporting clubs – in particular the Charlton Football Club – Fletcher’s direct involvement in the sport was brought to an end following a significant concussion injury, however, his determination to remain connected with the team continued with undertaking the role of Reserves runner each week during the 2024 football season.

Fletcher’s diligence and strong organizational skills are coupled with a remarkable ability to inspire and motivate those around him. His multifaceted contributions, encompassing leadership, community service, and academic excellence, make Fletcher an exceptional winner of the Young Citizen of the Year award.”

Opening with an acknowledgement to other award recipients, Fletcher’s response began with the value of shared time spent across many community organisations in town. Thanking his parents Matt and Jacinta, and praising the support of his all of his siblings over the past year, Fletcher also commended one of his closest friends for “proving that country kids are just as eligible for the opportunities which are often spoon fed to metropolitan private schools.” While grateful for the award, Fletcher expressed concern that future generations of youth in Charlton also have access to the many opportunities which he has enjoyed. In concluding he said, “There is no reason that “Country Bumpkins” such as ourselves cannot rise as high or accomplish as much as our bigger city counterparts”.

Charlton and Buloke Shire Event of the Year, The Blue Tree Project

While details of this event appear elsewhere in the paper, respondents for the Charlton award were Mia Ayars (Charlton Neighbourhood House representative) and project instigator, Bronwyn Fisher.

“On behalf of the Charlton Neighbourhood House we are incredibly honoured to accept this Charlton Forum award,” said Mia, as she recounted the communal drive to establish the project and the support with which the community embraced the project.

In a heartfelt and emotional speech, Bronwyn Fisher spoke about the stigma of suicide and mental health, revealing the ripple-on effects and the statistical data which includes; 3000 deaths per year

• Continued on page 9.



• Charlton Citizen of the Year, Gill Gretgrix is pictured with Charlton Forum President, Wayne Litton. Gill had a busy morning co-ordinating the choir which performed throughout the ceremony.



• Fletcher Holmes-Brown (third left) shared a moment with his parents and family following his announcement as Charlton Young Citizen of the Year.



• The Blue Tree Project received both the Charlton and Buloke Event of the Year for boosting awareness around mental health issues. Representatives of the Charlton Neighbourhood House (the facilitator) Mia Ayars and chairperson, Kaylene Cossar are pictured with the project instigator, Bronwyn Fisher (right). Charlton Forum president Wayne Litton is pictured (left).

Blood of Our Communities

• Continued from page 8.

in Australia; its leading cause of death for ages 15-44 years; double the number for the indigenous population; 1 farmer every 10 days and in the Defence Forces, 3 service men or women every fortnight. "The Blue Tree symbolizes hope, resilience and support", Bronwyn said.

Thanking the Charlton Neighbourhood House and in particular Kaylene Cossar for "paving the way for it to spread through the Buloke Shire during Mental Health Week", Bronwyn spoke emotionally about seeing the project come to fruition and its embrace by the wider community. Thanking a long list of organisations and supporters, she spoke of future locations in town which may support ongoing Blue Trees to carry the message forward.

Charlton Youth

Volunteer Awards

Poppy Fitzpatrick, co-president, Charlton Youth Group.

Annie Olive, secretary, Charlton Youth Group.

Isabel Soulsby and Emmersyn Nelson, Buloke Youth Group Liaisons.

Poppy and Annie are exemplary leaders of the Charlton Youth Group, known for their inclusivity and dedication. Together with Isabel and Emmersyn, they have made a remarkable impact through their volunteer work, helping to organize and lead fundraising events like Junior Discos and the successful ice cream sales at OK Motels events.

Emmy and Issy represent Charlton with pride at Buloke Youth Group meetings, attending both in person and via Zoom to share ideas and contribute to regional initiatives. Annie has also taken on addi-

tional responsibilities, writing articles and providing photographs for the quarterly Charlton Cultural magazine, enriching the community's engagement with youth-led projects.

All four of these young people are outstanding examples of dedication, teamwork, and positivity, making a difference in the Charlton and Buloke communities.

Guest Speakers

CWA members Bernice Kenny and Bronwyn Simpson presented a short reflection on the development and outreach of the Country Women's Association – a coverage of which will appear in a coming edition of the paper.

The ceremony continued with the presentation of Welcome Packs to newcomers who are now calling Charlton home.

The Charlton Choir, co-ordinated by Gil Gretgrix, provided musical interludes throughout the morning sharing favourites songs: "I Am Australian", "The Road to Gundagai" and "We've Done Us Proud".

Acknowledgement for the support from the following contributors to the Australia Day event included: Buloke Shire – Community Recovery Fund (provision of breakfast), Charlton Lions and Lions ladies (cooking the breakfast), Charlton Forum (co-ordinating the awards), Charlton Neighbourhood House (welcome to new residents), the Charlton Choir, all volunteers, John Stahl (power) David Pollard (sound), Red Cross and all CWA members.

The ceremony concluded with the singing of both verses of "Advance Australia Fair".



• Charlton Youth Volunteer Award recipients are (left to right) Isabel Soulsby, Poppy Fitzpatrick and Annie Olive. (Absent: Emmersyn Nelson).



• CWA Junior members (left to right) Renee and Molly Riley assisted RSL secretary Bill Freeman and member Gordon Risk with the flag raising at last Sunday's Australia Day ceremony.



• A large crowd attended the Charlton ceremony, enjoying the pleasant outdoor setting for the traditional breakfast.

"Mufasa: the Lion King"

One of Disney's most enduring classics continues with "Mufasa: The Lion King" which will be screening at The Rex this weekend.

"Mufasa: The Lion King" roars to life with an origin story that delves into the past of one of Disney corporation's

most beloved characters.

The film explores the background of Mufasa, an orphaned lion, who rises from

humble beginnings to become the future king of the Pride Lands and the father of Simba.

Visually stunning with its breathtaking photorealistic animation style, along with the state-of-the-art CGI, the character expressions are so vividly lifelike that the emotional connection is instant and heartfelt.

The movie fills in gaps in the lion king lore, offering fans a deeper look at Mufasa's formative years, his bond with his brother Scar, and the circumstances that shaped him into the king we know and love.

Complete with music by Lin-Manuel Miranda (creator of "Hamilton") including the catchy, "I Always Wanted A Brother", "Mufasa: The Lion King", serves as a heartfelt tribute to legacy and family – a continuing exploration of the highly cherished 1994 original. A great movie which will touch the heart and ensure enjoyment for the whole family!

"Mufasa: The Lion King" (PG 118 minutes) screens at The Rex – Saturday 1 February 8pm | Sunday 2 February 2pm | Tuesday 4 February 8pm.

MICHAELS OF DONALD
Belvedere By George Crenshaw
www.belvedere-cartoons.com

Yeah, yeah, very funny!

DONALD RAILWAY STATION
An Afternoon of Art
with Kerry Duncan

Sunday, 2 February 2025
2:00pm-6:00pm
Afternoon tea provided

Join us for an afternoon of relaxation, connection and creativity!
We'll explore three different classes: a charcoal sketch, an abstract piece, and a unique session called "3, 2, 1," where we'll work with 3 colours, 2 brushes, and 1 canvas. Expect a day filled with laughter, fun, and artistic inspiration!

Bookings
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strictly limited numbers

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

Australian Government
BULOKE SHIRE COUNCIL
VICTORIA State Government

Wycheproof Salutes its Award Winners

A good crowd assembled in the shade at Wycheproof's Centenary Park to celebrate Australia Day and recognise those in the community who have made significant contributions.

The day started with the delicious Lions bacon and egg barbecue breakfast, a chance to mingle, have a cuppa and catch up before the official proceedings began.

Lion Sandy Denney opened the ceremony with the raising of the flag and singing of the national anthem, before introducing guest speaker, Gary Ryan. Gary is a Lion and he and his wife Sandra have proved to be valuable members of the Wycheproof community. Gary served 23 years with Victoria Police before pursuing other roles in the security sector, for both private companies and government departments, with a long and impressive work history on his resumé, as well as many awards and medals.

After promising to keep his speech short, Gary stated simply that communities are the cornerstone of Australia. He went on to describe the

many different communities that helped to shape him, from his time at the police academy, through his different roles within police and prisons.

He reminded everyone that Wycheproof is made up of smaller communities; people pitching in at their sporting clubs, schools, emergency services. All of these smaller groups make up the larger community of Wycheproof.

"And as a community, we make Australia great!" he said to finish, so honouring the promise to his wife to keep it short.

Awards

Wyche Alive Awards were then presented by chairman Martin Duke, recognising significant contributions to the town of Wycheproof.

The 2025 Event of the Year was awarded to Mt. Wycheproof and District Racing Club for its Lexus Melbourne Cup tour.

"The race that stops the nation" was very present in the Wycheproof community and offered an amazing opportunity to showcase the town. The Cup's tour itinerary was inclusive of the whole community and everything that is seen as unique, including the railway line and Mount Wycheproof.

The tour created many photo opportunities and included the small town in an international event that saw the Elders Mt. Wycheproof Cup on stage alongside the Melbourne Cup in the company of Merv Keane, Eddie McGuire and Des Gleeson. These moments instil a pride amongst residents for where they live, the people they live amongst and the achievements for all to share and celebrate. It is an outstanding effort to present an event that integrated the community so cohesively.

"What an honour it is to accept this award on behalf of the Mt. Wycheproof and District Racing Club, and the wider community," said Jackie Noonan upon accepting the award.

"This recognition is a reflection of what can be done when a small but mighty community comes together with passion, pride and determination."

Jackie said the visit was about more than just a trophy – it was about creating a moment to celebrate the community and showcase its many attributes on national and international media platforms; shining a light on its Australian spirit.

Many tireless volunteers, businesses and community members went above and beyond to make the day unforgettable and Jackie made specific mention to those who were instrumental in its success and thanked them for sharing her vision.

"Because nothing says Australia Day like small town with pride, passion and a whole lot of heart – Mt. Wycheproof, take a bow!" Jackie concluded.

Keely's Double

The Wycheproof Young Citizen of the Year Award was won by Keely Allan, who was also named the Buloke Young Citizen for 2025. Keely has



• Above, left to right: Martin Duke (Wyche Alive), Keely Allan (Young Citizen of the Year for Wycheproof and Buloke), Jackie Noonan (Wycheproof Citizen of the Year and Event of the Year), Cr. Steve Barratt (representing Buloke Shire Council).

contributed widely to her community in various different ways and is a passionate advocate for rural living. She uses her voice to call for action to ensure the youth of the community are represented on various committees and that they have social events to keep them engaged.

On accepting, Keely was just as eloquent with her appreciation as she was on Thursday evening accepting her Buloke Shire award, expressing thanks to the community that raised her. She loves being a voice for her small town, because she has "never been silenced by Wycheproof".

Citizen of the Year

The final award presented was to Jackie Noonan as Wycheproof's Citizen of the Year in recognition of her efforts in organising and promoting many events over the years. A perfect example was the enormous task in organising the Lexus Melbourne Cup tour, which meant that Wycheproof was one of 24 towns/districts in regional Australia to host the Cup and part of an international event.

In addition to her role with the racing club, Jackie is also involved with Friends of Mount Wycheproof and the Community Resource Centre committee and contributes to the town in numerous ways, often unnoticed, and never asking for acknowledgement. She quietly promotes Wycheproof and its events and always speaks positively about her town.

Jackie was surprised to have been nominated for the award and it was clearly evident how honoured she was to have been chosen. She was moved to tears at the recognition and in expressing her thanks, also highlighted her love for the town, looking ahead to all the wonderful things that can be done for the community in the future.

Buloke "Citizen"

Cr Steve Barratt then addressed the audience to shine a light on Wycheproof's Corey Harrison who was named the Buloke Citizen of the Year on Thursday evening. Corey said a few words to those that missed the initial celebration, again thanking his wife for her support and the other volunteers he works with in his various roles.

All award winners' achievements were celebrated with hearty applause those assembled; with community champions like these, Wycheproof is set up for success well into the future and is exemplary of what it means to be an Australian community.



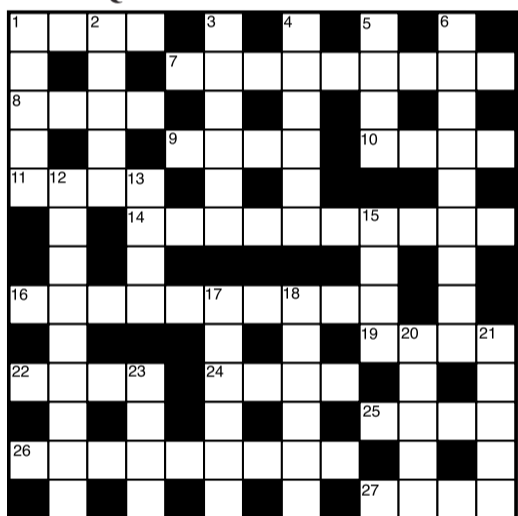
• Raising the flag at Wycheproof's Centenary Park on Australia Day is Lion Doug Morrison.



• Guest speaker, Gary Ryan.

"Times" Crossword

QUICK PUZZLE NO. 8162



ACROSS

1. Rescue (4)
7. Daring (9)
8. Tumult (4)
9. Abrupt (4)
10. Plunder (4)
11. Boast (4)
14. Decorative (10)
16. Measure (10)
19. Native of Denmark (4)
22. Stopper (4)
24. Dejected (4)
25. Wine (4)
26. Meddle (9)
27. Dam (4)

DOWN

1. Plant (5)
2. Musical instrument (5)
3. Season (6)
4. Fowl (6)
5. Cultivate (4)
6. Robot (9)
12. Abhorrent (9)
13. Animal (4)
15. Lack (4)
17. Alter (6)
18. Frustrate (6)
20. Solo (5)
21. Go in (5)
23. Colour (4)

• Solution next issue.

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CELEBRATING
35
YEARS



• Speakers at the launch of *Collinsville and Beyond* included Warren Davies, the author Chris Guthrie, Peter Rogers and Hamish Guthrie.

New Book Celebrates the Modern Merino

(By Heather Fleming)

A new book detailing the story of the Modern Merino sheep in Australia was launched at the Grampians Estate Cellar Door at Great Western last weekend.

“Collinsville and Beyond: a pastoral history of the Modern Merino,” was written by Chris Guthrie, well known breeder, classer and consultant from Rich Avon, near Donald.

Rich Avon was originally settled in 1844 and has been in the ownership of the Guthrie family since 1864.

The Guthries developed one of the oldest Merino studs in Victoria, and Chris has continued his forbears’ legacy.

Hamish Guthrie introduced his father Chris, saying his life centres around sheep production.

“He’s been exposed to all things sheep from a young age and has had a lifelong obsession with them,” he said.

Chris himself said his book was a celebration of the Merino of the past and an exposé of today’s modern sheep.

He said he was grateful for the contributions he had received from other stud owners, and the virtue they saw in what he was doing.

Architects of Change

“Collinsville and Beyond” features extensive information about three men Chris Guthrie describes as “The architects of change”: Tom Padbury, Neil McLennan and Jim Watts.

It delves into the history of the famed Peppin bloodline, and tells of renowned studs including Collinsville, Wanganella, Banavie Park, Charinga, Wallaloo Park and Stud Park.

There are also lots of photos, which Chris laughingly remarked was “the secret of any good rural book”.

On a more serious note, Chris spoke of the importance of the wool industry in our history, noting that in 1989 wool was Australia’s biggest export, surpassing even that of BHP.

“We need to remind the next generation that this is an industry that should be respected for what it has achieved,” he said. “Hopefully this book will be a celebration of the past and an illustration of the virtues of the Modern Merino.”

Several guest speakers also addressed the crowd. President of the Victorian Stud Merino Breeders Association, Peter Rogers, and fellow Merino breeder, John Carter from Wallaloo Park, both commended Chris for his valuable work on “an amazing and unique breed of sheep.”

Key Messages

The crowd also heard from mental health advocate and Unbreakable Farmer, Warren Davies. Warren spoke of his journey with mental illness, and how important mentors are to us all. He urged the predominantly farming crowd to remember three key messages: communicate with each other, stay connected to community, and ask for help if you’re struggling.

To conclude the formalities, Kelvin Donan from Nutrien Ag Solutions Ararat auctioned the first three copies of “Collinsville and Beyond”, with the proceeds going to the work of “The Unbreakable Farmer”.

Anyone wishing to purchase a copy of Chris Guthrie’s book can pick up a copy at Grampians Estate Cellar Door, or go online to grampiansestate.com.au.

Community Update Buloke.



Celebrating the 2025 Buloke Awards Recipients

Congratulations to the recipients of the 2025 Buloke Awards!

Citizen of the Year: **Corey Harrison**

Honoured for his long-standing service to the Wycheproof community through the CFA, sporting clubs, and volunteer efforts.

Young Citizen of the Year: **Keely Allan**

Recognised for her leadership in youth initiatives and her contributions to the Wycheproof Youth Group.

Community Event of the Year: **The Blue Tree Project**

A shirewide event, led by Charlton Neighbourhood House, that promoted mental health awareness and understanding.

The awards were presented at the 2025 Australia Day Buloke Awards celebration held last Thursday in the Wycheproof Shire Hall with guest speaker Assistant Commissioner Glenn Weir.

Visions of Tomorrow workshops and exhibition

A free two-day workshop, is being held by Gunditjmarra and Wotjobaluk artist Tanisha Lovett and Barkindji Ngiyampaa Maligundij artist Tracy Wise.

Workshops details:

Date: Sat 8 and Sun 9 February 2025 - includes morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea on both days

Time: 10:00 am - 4:30 pm each day

Location: Wycheproof Railway Station, Railway Place, Wycheproof

Places are limited – To register call 1300 520 520 or email buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au

The workshops will lead to a public “Visions of Tomorrow” exhibition hosted by the Wycheproof Community Resource Centre on Thu 13 February 2025 from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Light refreshments will be available from 12:00 pm to 1:30 pm

**This initiative is funded through the Australian and Victorian Government’s Community Recovery Hubs Program.

Notice of an Application for a Planning Permit

The land affected by the application is located at **96 Horace Street, Sea Lake VIC 3533**.

The application is for a permit for the use of land to serve meals and drinks.

The application reference number is **PA25002**.

You may view the application and supporting documents on the Buloke Shire Council Website <https://buloke.greenlightopm.com/planning> or by making contact with the office of the Responsible Authority, Buloke Shire Office, Wycheproof on 1300 520 520.

This can be done during office hours and is free of charge. Any person who may be affected by the granting of the permit may object or make other submissions to the Responsible Authority.

An objection must be made to the Responsible Authority in writing, include the objectors name and contact details, include reasons for the objection, and state how the objector would be affected. An online submission form is available at <https://www.buloke.vic.gov.au/planning-applications-on-exhibition>

The Responsible Authority will not decide on the application before: **13 February 2025**.

If you object to the application, the Responsible Authority will tell you it’s decision.



Employment Opportunities with Buloke

Council is an equal opportunity employer. Our roles are non-gender specific, and Council encourages all suitably qualified applicants to apply. 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:
Mail - PO Box 1, Wycheproof VIC 3527 or
Email - recruitment@buloke.vic.gov.au

Diesel Mechanic – Donald
Permanent Full Time - from \$38.09 per hour (plus statutory superannuation)

We are currently seeking a fully qualified Diesel Mechanic to join our dedicated Infrastructure and Delivery Team. The successful candidate will play a crucial role in ensuring the reliability and performance of our fleet of vehicles and machinery that includes graders, rollers, water tankers, utilities, and mowers.
→ Applications close: Fri 14 Feb 2025.

Supervisor Pool Lifeguards & Pool Lifeguards – Berrwilllock, Donald, Sea Lake and Wycheproof

Casual from \$37.11 per hour (including casual loading plus statutory superannuation)

We are looking for pro-active, focused and motivated individuals of all ages to our join our Pool Lifeguard Team to help fill shifts towards the end of the 2024/25 swimming pool season. Positions are currently available at our outdoor pools located in Berrwilllock, Donald, Sea Lake and Wycheproof.



Phone: 1300 520 520
www.buloke.vic.gov.au

HOME FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST

- NEVER LEAVE COOKING UNATTENDED
- TURN OFF THE HEATER BEFORE BED
- NEVER OVERLOAD POWERBOARDS
- CHECK SMOKE ALARMS MONTHLY
- CLEAN CHIMNEYS AND FLUES YEARLY
- TURN OFF ELECTRIC BLANKET BEFORE BED
- CLEAN THE LINT FILTER OF YOUR CLOTHES DRYER AFTER EACH LOAD

AND MORE!

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CFA.VIC.GOV.AU/HOMEFIRE



St. Arnaud Unseats Wedderburn

North Central Playing Area's Division 1 pennant has a new leader after St. Arnaud blitzed top side and defending title holder, Wedderburn, in the highlight of round 12.

With just two rounds of the home-and-away season remaining, St. Arnaud leads by percentage from second placed Donald Golf, which secured all 12 points against Charlton at the weekend.

Wedderburn slipped to third, with Wycheproof making up the top four, after comprehensively putting an end to St. Arnaud Country Club's slim chances of forcing its way into finals contention.

Boort dominated Donald in their clash on the former's home synthetic green, doubling its opposition's score.

Next Saturday, Wedderburn will be looking to bounce back strongly when it takes on Donald Golf. There is added incentive for both combinations to be at their best, with a win likely to assure the victor second place and a "double chance" in the finals.

Ashley Dyke set the pattern of the day favouring St. Arnaud when his quartet blitzed Laurie Witham's Wedderburn rink by 27 shots. Steve Zsigmond built significantly on that margin by downing Damien Mason by 18 shots. And Terry McSwain provided the coup de grace, outscoring Alan Jackson's lot by 9 shots.

Despite several spirited counter challenges from host club Charlton, Donald Golf emerged with an 18-shot victory across the three rinks, to keep itself in the race for a top two finish, come finals time.

Daniel Pettifer and his charges had to pull out all stops to counter the excellent bowling of skipper Steve "Snake" Perry and his team, securing one shot with the final bowl to break a 22-all deadlock.

Peter Hibberd benefitted from some precise bowling by lead Geoff Stopps and the "take no prisoners" bowling of the ageless Stewart Hollis, as his rink earned a 10-shot win over Kevin Willey.

Robert Reseigh had more than his share of difficulty accounting for Ken North and

his crew, but when the final bowl was delivered, Golf was home by 7 shots.

St. Arnaud Country Club's faint hopes of securing a finals berth were quickly extinguished by a ruthless Wycheproof, which dominated the day's play and the opposition to the tune of 64 shots.

Paul Wellington scored a 12-shot win over Jason Abbott, Jono Grylls finished 20 shots to the better of Bill Rodger, and Grant Allan's lot had a day to remember, blitzing Simon Elliott to the tune of 32 shots.

Boort at home is proving a challenge for all visiting combinations, Donald being the latest to lower its colours, by a margin of 48 shots.

Shayne Morris took full advantage of the home rink knowledge to dominate Peter Kelly's rink by 40 shots. Laurie Maxted had to work a lot harder to achieve a 6-shot win over Norm Hollis, while Kevin Depiazza was pushed to the limit by teenager Hunter Wingfield, but secured a 2-shot win to complete the Boort trifecta.

Details:
Wedderburn 42-0 lost to St. Arnaud 96-12.

Laurie Witham 12 lost to Ashley Dyke 39, Damien Mason 12 lost to Steve Zsigmond 30, Alan Jackson 18 lost to Terry McSwain 27.

Boort 96-12 d. Donald 48-0.

Shayne Morris 45 d. Peter Kelly 5, Kevin Depiazza 25 d. Hunter Wingfield 23, Laurie Maxted 26 d. Norm Hollis 20.

Wycheproof 102-12 d. St. Arnaud Country Club 38-0.

Paul Wellington 28 d. Jason Abbott 16, Grant Allan 44 d. Simon Elliott 12, Jono Grylls 30 d. Bill Rodger 10.

Charlton 63-0 lost to Donald Golf 81-12.

Stephen Perry 22 lost to Daniel Pettifer 23, Ken North 23 lost to Robert Reseigh 30, Kevin Willey 18 lost to Peter Hibberd 28.

Division 2

St. Arnaud Country Club jumped into fourth place on the Division 2 ladder by eclipsing top side Wycheproof by a 14-shot margin, pocketing all 12 valuable premiership points in the process.

Two rinks were decided by very slender margins, John Needs defeating Wyche's Paul Connolly by 1 shot, and Arnold Bond securing a 2-shot win over Matt Nicholls, but the wily Phil Elliott gave the visitors a decisive advantage when he outscored Rob Grylls by 11 shots.

Wedderburn closed the gap separating it from leader Wycheproof after downing the visiting St. Arnaud by 17 shots and banking 10 points to 2.

Ian Hall finished 6 shots to the better of Lloyd Goddard, and Lance Standfield proved far too consistent for Laurence Goodwin, winning by 21 shots.

Wayne Rourke was St. Arnaud's only winning skip, defeating John Grant by 10 shots.

Donald Golf strengthened its hold on a finals berth with a 10 points to 2 victory over Charlton.

The overall margin was just 7 shots in favour of the visitors, however, Joyce Hollis and her crew coming up against stern resistance from the Charlton rink skipped by Doug Finlay, ably assisted by Eily Rosewall, still basking in the glow of her starring appearance on "Back Roads".

George Wood and Lindsay Borden ensured a Golf win, however, securing 3-shot and 10-shot victories over Doug Gretgrix and Gary Bateson respectively.

Boort, led by Joan "The Wrecker" Earl, showed no mercy to the visiting Donald,

winning by 71 shots across three successful rinks.

The Earl combination defeated David Romeo's team by 46 shots, while Greg Smith finished 9 shots to the better of Beth Hollis, and Tony Matley downed Kay Wyllie by 16.

Details:
Wedderburn 77-10 d. St. Arnaud 60-2.

Ian Hall 27 d. Lloyd Goddard 21, Lance Standfield 35 d. Laurence Goodwin 14, John Grant 15 lost to Wayne Rourke 25.

Boort 107-12 d. Donald 36-0.

Greg Smith 29 d. Beth Hollis 20, Tony Matley 27 d. Kay Wyllie 11, Joan Earl 51 d. David Romeo 5.

Wycheproof 56-0 lost to St. Arnaud Country Club 70-12.

Rob Grylls 15 lost to Phil Elliott 26, Paul Connolly 20 lost to John Needs 21, Matt Nicholls 21 lost to Arnold Bond 23.

Charlton 66-2 lost to Donald Golf 73-10.

Doug Finley 23 d. Joyce Hollis 17, Doug Gretgrix 24 lost to George Wood 27, Gary Bateson 19 lost to Lindsay Borden 29.



• Charlton skipper Ken North delivers his bowl last Saturday.



• Jeffery "Coxy" Cox, delivers his bowl. Watching on intently are Shane O'Shea and Robert Adams.



• Stephen "Snake" Perry is about to deliver his bowl. His match against Daniel Pettifer was decided on the last end.

NORTH CENTRAL PENNANT BOWLS

Positions of Teams, after round 12

DIVISION 1

	P	W	L	D	Bye	F	A	SD	%	Pts
St. Arnaud	12	8	3	1	0	883	653	230	125	104
Donald Golf	12	9	2	1	0	850	677	173	125	104
Wedderburn	12	9	2	1	0	866	706	160	123	100
Wycheproof	12	6	5	1	0	798	691	107	115	82
Boort	12	4	7	1	0	761	787	-26	90	60
St. Arnaud Country Club	12	4	7	1	0	725	832	-107	87	59
Donald	12	4	7	1	0	705	889	-184	83	55
Charlton	12	0	11	1	0	618	971	-353	64	12

DIVISION 2

	P	W	L	D	Bye	F	A	SD	%	Pts
Wycheproof	12	8	3	1	0	849	623	226	136	104
Wedderburn	12	8	3	1	0	864	700	164	123	97
Donald Golf	12	7	4	1	0	784	748	36	105	86
St. Arnaud Country Club	12	7	4	1	0	795	726	69	109	81
St. Arnaud	12	6	5	1	0	830	706	124	117	80
Boort	12	4	7	1	0	737	811	-74	81	52
Donald	12	3	8	1	0	585	851	-266	74	47
Charlton	12	1	10	1	0	583	862	-279	68	29

Birchip Mid-Week Bowls

On Thursday last, the finals of the 100-up handicap event were finalised. But before we arrived at that, on the previous Thursday, the games leading to the finals were played.

Again the numbers playing was down due to injuries and ill health. The results of these games were: A drawn game between Carolyn Reid and Moya Connelly resulted in an extra end to be played, with Carolyn being the winner. Pauline Bragg was defeated by Ronda Cooper 104 points to 88; Jackie Tierney defeated by Carolyn Reid 104 to 91 shots, leaving Ronda and Carolyn to play the final. All the games were of a high standard of bowling and if handicapping was not part of this game, the results could have been quite different.



• Ronda Cooper.

The final between Ronda on a handicap of 25 and Carolyn (15) was a game of two halves. Carolyn started off with some excellent bowling that Ronda was not able to attack. At about the sixty-point mark Ronda started to bowl very well and managed to turn

her game around. At this time Carolyn's bowling was not quite up to her usual standard and Ronda was able to gradually pull ahead. The final score was Ronda 106 points to Carolyn's 73. Congratulations ladies, on a good game.

Triples
Midweek, six ladies played triples, with the winner being Carolyn Reid. Jackie Tierney and Lesley Whitling defeated Peg Hogan, Ronda Cooper and Michelle Bragg. - "Off the Green"



Like Father, Like Son

Charlton Bowling Club singles champion following in his father's footsteps is Wayne Southwell defeating a previous champion, Kevin Willey 25-19, on a day that the bowls did as they wanted to in the very windy conditions.

Wayne seemed to have the wind worked out in a very tight game, until Kevin gave him a four, giving Wayne a three-shot lead nearing the end.

Wayne is the son of life member Ian "Nuggett" Southwell, who has won the singles championship eight times and Lynne Southwell, who has won the ladies' singles championship six times.

There are many tournaments and club championships coming up, members are to keep an eye on the boards to see what's happening.

Donald Golf Bowls Report

The resumption of weekend Pennant has seen two very good wins against Charlton.

Golf won all three matches in Division 1, with solid wins to skippers Robert Reseigh and Peter Hibberd and a grinding win to Daniel Pettifer.

In Division 2, wins to rinks skippered by George Wood and Lindsay Borden were enough to cover the loss of

Joyce Hollis's team. With only two pennant matches to go, our teams are well placed to play in finals.

Meryl Frank is Golf's Club singles champion for this year by defeating a gallant Brenda Dixon in the final. Congratulations to Meryl in defending her championship and well done to Brenda.

Robert Adams and Adrian Humphrey played Stewart Hollis and Geoff Rigby in the final of the club pairs. "Crazy" and "AJ" reached

the final by defeating George Geddes and Shane O'Shea, whilst "Stewy" and "Riggers" had beaten Robert Reseigh and Tony Dionisopoulos. The experienced combination of "Stewy" and "Riggers" emerged victorious after a keenly contested event. Congratulations to all players on the spirit in which the game was played.

• Right: Meryl Frank.

• Far right: Geoff Rigby and Stewart Hollis.



Wimmera-Mallee Cricket Scoreboard

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Round 9:

"A" Grade

St. Mary's d. Southern Mallee Giants	
SOUTHERN MALLEE GIANTS	
L. Hateley, c D. Westerland b B. Dennes	0
J. Landrigan, c L. Somers b C. Schmidt	9
J. Flavel, lbw N. Toscano	17
L. Mitchell, b C. Schmidt	25
Z. Robins, b B. Watts	13
J. Kiem, b C. Schmidt	1
L. Weir, c D. Westerland b B. Dennes	10
J. Bellinger, st D. Westerland b C. Schmidt	3
J. Moore, not out	13
M. Browne, b B. Dennes	0
S. Roberts, c N. Priest b L. Somers	1
Sundries	19
TOTAL (for 10 wickets)	111
Fall of wicket: 0, 31, 59, 69, 76, 76, 82, 104, 110, 111.	
Bowling: B. Dennes 3/13 (7), B. Watts 1/33 (7), L. Somers 1/21 (7.1), N. Toscano 1/20 (8), C. Schmidt 4/18 (8).	
ST. MARY'S	
C. Schmidt, b J. Flavel	16
D. Westerland, c&b J. Flavel	0
B. Watts, c Z. Robins b J. Flavel	19
N. Priest, c S. Roberts b J. Moore	6
L. Somers, c L. Weir b L. Mitchell	42
B. Dennes, not out	14
C. Zanker, c ? b L. Mitchell	0
N. Toscano, not out	1
Sundries	14
TOTAL (for 6 wickets)	112
Fall of wicket: 9, 39, 42, 56, 111, 111.	
Bowling: J. Flavel 3/21 (5), J. Moore 1/45 (6), L. Mitchell 2/32 (4.5), S. Roberts 0/14 (3).	

Donald-Jeffcott d. Birchip

BIRCHIP	
C. Lee, b T. Reekie	3
H. McCredden, c S. Postlethwaite b J. Adams	5
B. Robinson, c C. Anderson b T. Reekie	39
R. Doran, c S. Postlethwaite b J. Adams	0
J. Paley, c S. Postlethwaite b J. Adams	0
R. Smith, b T. Reekie	24
W. Marks, c K. Westerland b D. Atkins	22
L. Randall, c K. Westerland b J. Adams	2
J. Randall, c S. Postlethwaite b J. Adams	11
M. Trollope, not out	8
K. Hamilton, b D. Atkins	1
Sundries	10
TOTAL (for 10 wickets)	125
Fall of wicket: 8, 14, 18, 18, 72, 87, 92, 110, 119, 125.	
Bowling: C. Anderson 0/16 (7), N. Atkins 0/12 (5), D. Atkins 2/18 (7.3), T. Reekie 3/32 (8), J. Adams 5/37 (8), L. Rice 0/7 (2).	
DONALD-JEFFCOTT	
C. Anderson, c W. Marks b C. Lee	45
J. Tellefson, b R. Doran	4
K. Westerland, st J. Paley b C. Lee	7
D. Atkins, c B. Robinson b C. Lee	25
T. Reekie, c J. Randall b R. Smith	13
S. Postlethwaite, c R. Smith b R. Doran	4
N. Atkins b R. Doran	4
W. Burke, c J. Paley b R. Smith	5
J. Adams, not out	6
J. Needs, not out	0
Sundries	13
TOTAL (for 8 wickets)	126
Fall of wicket: 14, 29, 77, 88, 96, 110, 114, 125.	
Bowling: J. Randall 0/20 (7.3), R. Doran 3/14 (8), R. Smith 2/28 (8), C. Lee 3/38 (8), W. Marks 0/10 (2), B. Robinson 0/7 (1).	

Marnoo d. St. Arnaud

ST. ARNAUD	
Fill-in, c Fill-in b D. Lang	33
B. Williams, c&b D. Lang	12
Fill-in, lbw J. Duxson	4
J. McCartney, b D. Cameron	15
J. Patching, b T. Caldwell	12
Fill-in, lbw D. Lang	15
N. Gorrie, b D. Lang	6
G. Gorrie, b D. Shelley	0
Fill-in, b D. Shelley	6
C. Torney, not out	0
L. Patching, b D. Shelley	0
Sundries	30
TOTAL (for 10 wickets)	133
Fall of wicket: 59, 68, 71, 94, 108, 121, 123, 126, 133, 133.	
Bowling: D. Shelley 3/26 (7), B. Newton 0/12 (5), D. Cameron 1/28 (6), D. Lang 4/15 (7), J. Duxson 1/30 (4), T. Caldwell 1/10 (4).	
MARNOO	
J. Duxson, c L. Patching b C. Torney	48
D. Lang, c Fill-in b J. Patching	3
B. Newton, c Fill-in b C. Torney	18
D. Shelley, lbw J. McCartney	12
N. Baird, not out	39
Fill-in, lbw J. Patching	0
D. Cameron, not out	9
Sundries	6
TOTAL (for 5 wickets)	135
Fall of wicket: 11, 50, 65, 101, 107.	
Bowling: J. Patching 2/33 (8), L. Patching 0/20 (4), C. Torney 2/33 (8), J. McCartney 1/20 (6), Fill-in 0/15 (3), Fill-in 0/9 (2.5).	
"B" Grade	
St. Mary's d. Southern Mallee Giants	
ST. MARY'S	
K. Zanker, c ? b P. Hallam	32

J. Thomas, c D. Shannon b C. Castleman	9
C. Preston, lbw A. Decker	2
R. Adams, c D. Pulham b D. Shannon	15
H. Nixon, c ? b A. Decker	1
A. Keys, b D. Shannon	27
G. Fernandez, c&b D. Shannon	17
L. Westerland, c C. Williams b D. Shannon	4
Fill-in, b C. Castleman	13
Fill-in, c F. Shannon b A. Madhu	3
B. Le Guier, not out	0
Sundries	18
TOTAL (for 10 wickets)	141
Fall of wicket: 28, 47, 51, 53, 92, 110, 120, 129, 141, 141.	
Bowling: A. Keys 3/39 (8), H. Nixon 3/19 (7), L. Westerland 0/7 (3), J. Thomas 0/12 (1), R. Adams 1/14 (4), Fill-in 0/3 (2), C. Preston 1/9 (2), B. Le Guier 2/1 (0.5).	
SOUTHERN MALLEE GIANTS	
D. Shannon, c K. Zanker b H. Nixon	14
M. Roberts, lbw A. Keys	1
P. Hallam, b H. Nixon	1
D. Pulham, b H. Nixon	32
C. Castleman, c J. Thomas b R. Adams	29
A. Decker, b A. Keys	5
C. Williams, b A. Keys	2
A. Madhu, b C. Preston	0
C. Decker, c C. Preston b B. Le Guier	4
F. Shannon, not out	2
N. Jones, b B. Le Guier	0
Sundries	19
TOTAL (for 10 wickets)	109
Fall of wicket: 18, 19, 20, 69, 81, 101, 101, 105, 109, 109.	
Bowling: A. Keys 3/39 (8), H. Nixon 3/19 (7), L. Westerland 0/7 (3), J. Thomas 0/12 (1), R. Adams 1/14 (4), Fill-in 0/3 (2), C. Preston 1/9 (2), B. Le Guier 2/1 (0.5).	

Watchem d. Charlton

CHARLTON	
P. Soulsby, c D. Tatarskyj b A. Dean	9
H. Sait, c S. Lowry b C. Boyle	14
P. Sait, b T. Colbert	9
C. Boyle, c D. Tatarskyj b T. Colbert	2
M. Sreekala, c D. Slater b T. Colbert	5
E. Fitzpatrick, b A. Dean	31
E. Soulsby, b T. Colbert	0
A. Soulsby, c J. Borden b T. Colbert	9
A. Johnstone, b D. Tatarskyj	0
E. Needs, b D. Tatarskyj	0
Private player, not out	0
Sundries	10
TOTAL (for 10 wickets)	89
Fall of wicket: 23, 25, 32, 44, 45, 51, 66, 83, 83, 89.	
Bowling: A. Dean 2/30 (5.4), C. Boyle 1/13 (4), S. Lowry 0/15 (4), T. Colbert 5/14 (6), D. Tatarskyj 2/11 (4).	
WATCHEM	
T. Colbert, b E. Fitzpatrick	7
A. Dean, b E. Fitzpatrick	1
D. Tatarskyj, c E. Soulsby b H. Sait	21
D. Slater, lbw P. Soulsby	33
H. Lewis, b P. Soulsby	0
C. Boyle, b H. Sait	0
R. Hogan, not out	16
C. Barber, b P. Soulsby	0
J. Borden, not out	6
Sundries	14
TOTAL (for 7 wickets)	98
Fall of wicket: 10, 22, 57, 62, 71, 77, 77.	
Bowling: E. Fitzpatrick 2/13 (4), P. Sait 0/28 (8), C. Boyle 0/15 (3), P. Soulsby 3/14 (4), H. Sait 2/17 (5).	
Donald-Jeffcott v. Birchip	
Birchip forfeited to Donald-Jeffcott.	

Swans Test Cricket Leader

Round 9 brought Wimmera Mallee Cricket back into play on Saturday, with three evenly-matched "A" grade games.

Winning the toss on its home wicket, and choosing to bat first against Donald-Jeffcott, Birchip Swans lost 4/18 before Bodhi Robinson, 38, and Rylee Smith, 24, put together a 54-run partnership. Will Marks added 22, and Jonty Randall 11, and the tenth wicket fell 125 and 37.3 overs. Wicket-taking for Birchip was a mixture of youth and experience, with honours being claimed by teenager Jett Adams, his splendid figures being 5/37 from his 8 overs. Other successful bowlers were Tom Reekie 3/32 (8), and Daniel Atkins 2/18 (7.3). Leading from the front, Donald captain Cooper Anderson opened the innings with an impressive 45, while Daniel Atkins added 25 and Tom Reekie 13, to steer the side to victory at 8/126 (34.3 overs). Sharing the wickets for Birchip were Riley Doran 3/14 (8), Connor Lee 3/38 (8), and Rylee Smith 2/18 (8).

Facing St. Mary's at Hopetoun, Southern Mallee Giants reached a total of 111, chief contributors being Luke Mitchell 25, captain Jack Flavel 17, Jackson Moore 13 not out, Zach Robins 13, and Lenny Weir 10. All five St. Mary's bowlers shared the wickets, Colby Schmidt topping the list with 4/18 (8), and Brodie Dennes 3/13 (7). After the break St. Mary's wasted no time in posting a winning total of 6/112 from 18.5 overs. Colby Schmidt had scored 16, and Bradley Watts 19, Leigh Somers put the result beyond doubt with a mid-innings score of 42, while Brodie Dennes remained 14 not out.

Sent in to bat against Marnoo at Kings George's Park, St Arnaud was given a 59-run start by a "fill-in", 33, and Bradley Williams, 12. Other useful scores came from Jayden McCartney and fill-in, 15 each, and Jacob Patching 12, to take the 10-

wicket total to 133. Most notable bowling figures for Marnoo were those of David Lang 4/15 (7) and Dylan Shelley 3/26 (7). In reply, up-and-coming youngster Jimmy Duxson led the Marnoo batting with 48, Ben Newton added 18 and Dylan Shelley 13, and with Nick Baird remaining 39 not out (with 3 four and 2 sixes), Marnoo hit the front at 5/135.

"B" Grade

Impressive bowling figures by Watchem Panthers at Charlton Park brought Charlton's innings to a close at 89, in 23.4 overs, with half of them falling to Ty Colbert's brilliant 5/14 (8), the others being shared by Austin Dean 2/30 (5.4) Daniel Tatarskyj 2/11 (4), and captain Connor Boyle 1/13 (4). Charlton then claimed early wickets with Daniel Slater scoring 33, Daniel Tatarskyj 21, and Riley Hogan 16 not out, Watchem claimed the win at 7/98 in 24 overs. Multiple wicket-takers for Charlton were Patrick Soulsby 3/14 (4), Elliott Fitzpatrick 2/13 (4), and Hughes Sait 2/17 (5).

At ANZAC Park St. Mary's welcomed the chance to bat first, its total reaching 10/141 after productive batting by Kael Zanker 32, Aiden Keys 27, Gary Fernandez 17, Riley Adams 15, and fill-in 13. For the Giants, Dale Shannon starred with bowling figures of 4/12 (8), after Clint Castleman had taken 2/22 (5.1), and Axel Decker 2/21 (5). Then, despite mid-innings partnership by Daven Pulman 32 and Clint Castleman 29, plus 14 from opener Dale Shannon, the Giants' innings fell away 109 in 27.5 overs. Early bowling damage from St. Mary's was caused by Hugh Nixon 3/19 (7) and Aiden Keys 3/39 (8), while Bruce Le Guier also claimed 2/1 (0.5).

The other "B" grade game was forfeited by Birchip to Donald-Jeffcott.



• Birchip's Rylee Smith (24 runs), wicketkeeper Donald-Jeffcott's Koby Westerland.



• Birchip's Bodhi Robinson (39 runs), fielder Nick Atkins. – Photo by Amanda Casey.



• Donald's Cooper Anderson (45 runs), Birchip wicketkeeper James Paley, fielder Mark Trollope.



• Birchip's Riley Doran (3/14), Donald-Jeffcott batsman Tom Reekie (13 runs), Birchip fielder Will Marks (22 runs). – Photo by Amanda Casey.



• Part of the crowd watches the start of the Loddon Shire Wedderburn Pacing Cup.

The 'Burn is Back on Track

(By Peter Hibberd)

The Wedderburn and District Harness Racing Club returned to its own track last Sunday, with a major upgrade to the Donaldson Park complex and torrential rain last year, the club finally got to run its feature races.



• New Life Members: Bruce Hargreaves and Tom Nisbet with past president and Life Member, Gavan Holt.

These two races have not been at the track since 2022 and the amount of work required to get the track into race condition has been enormous. President Bruce Hargreaves said without Reeves Earthmoving and the countless hours by volunteers and his committee, this day might not have happened.

Life Membership

Life memberships of any club are not just handed out; last Sunday past president Gavan Holt gave these prestigious awards to Bruce Hargreaves and Tom Nisbet. Having known both of these people for a very long time, when asking a question, you could tell of the love of their club and the harness racing industry. When asked how long in the harness racing both could not give a date –

• Left: Presentation of the Reeves Earthmoving Trotters' Cup, left to right, Catherine Ainsworth (H.R.V.), Brendan Reeves and daughter Darla, and owners Geoff and Lorraine Barnes. Reeves Earthmoving is a new sponsor.

they said when it's in your bloodlines that's your destiny.

On the Track

It was ladies day as far as the results went, with Donna Castles training three winners of which she drove two of those winners. Jackie Barker drove two winners and Rebecca Bartley drove one winner, which happened to be the winner of the Pacing Cup.

Feature Races

The club ran its two feature races plus the time honoured Central Victorian Racing and Trotting Championships.

The Reeves Earthmoving Trotter's Cup was won by BerriesandCherries trained and driven by Donna Castles, starting off the 20-metre handicap, worked around the field to sit outside the leader and won by 2 metres.

The Central Victorian Trotter's Championship was won very impressively by John's Boy driven by Tristan Larsen. Both horse and driver are from New Zealand. To put more "Kiwi" into the win, owners from Invercargill,

New Zealand were on course to witness the very easy win.

The Loddon Shire Wedderburn Pacing Cup was a very keen affair with some of country Victoria's horses running. Western Sonador only returned to racing in early December after recovering from a major injury. Driven by Rebecca Bartley, it worked around the field to score in a very tight photo; the margins a neck by a nose. The Central Victorian Pacing Championship was won by Valiente, driven by "Herby" and trained by Ben Pell, who is in the early years of his training career.

Highlights

- Over 350 memberships sold.
 - Enormous crowd.
 - Umbrella village – first time ever.
 - Racing has changed at the "Burn", not a leader's track any more.
- Well done to Bruce, Tom, your committee and volunteers, all your efforts rewarded.
- Coming up – Charlton this Friday.



• Trainer Ben Pell wins biggest race of his career. Valiente, driven by James "Herby" Herbertson, wins the C.V. Championship, defeating Pesci and Terror the Christian.