

CHURCHILL & DISTRICT NEWS

"Connecting Your Community"

Established 1966

Distributed Free



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Churchill and District Australia Day Awards



Australia Day
2025

Laurie Marks Churchill Citizen of the Year

Laurie Marks is a highly regarded community leader, a proud Aboriginal man, and passionate about promoting Aboriginal culture. He shows great strength and support to his family and community and has a strong passion for sport, which he sees as a gateway to bridging the divides across communities and across the generations.

Laurie has always lived on the land of the Gunai Kurnai people and has strong ties to the Lake Tyers Trust in East Gippsland, where he was raised as a child with his mother and extended family. He also has ties back to Wotjobaluk nation in Western Victoria

Laurie started work with the Latrobe Shire in grounds and lawn maintenance in 1979, a position he held for 16 years.

Laurie then became one of Victoria's first Aboriginal bail justices and sports youth worker

Laurie is currently attached to the Inner Gippsland Proactive Policing Unit as an Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer, a position he has held since 2005 when he was one of the first to be recruited as an Aboriginal Community Liaison Officer.

This came about as a recommendation from the Royal Commission into Aboriginal deaths. Today he is Victoria Police's longest serving Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers.

Laurie is a highly valued member of the Inner Gippsland Proactive Policing unit. One

of Laurie's most significant achievement has been delivering more than 120 cultural awareness training sessions to police across Gippsland.

He is also a past chair of the Del Cha (Dhelke Dja) which is a family violence reference group, and the past chair of LAJAC and a member of RAJAC.

Laurie has a strong passion for sport. As a talented fast bowler Laurie was selected in the Australian Aboriginal Cricket team which toured England in 1988, Laurie has played and coached cricket and soccer with many clubs around the Latrobe Valley.

He currently serves as the Budjeri Napan Chair which is a community organisation which promotes sport within

Aboriginal communities, a position he has held for 15 Years.

Laurie has always been engaged in the Churchill community whether it is through sports or attending schools, sporting clubs talking about kids in sports or through supporting junior cricket.

Laurie has achieved much but his proudest achievement is his marriage to Meagan and his three children

Well Done Laurie you are a great community person and a most worthy Churchill Citizen of the Year and great Australian.

Laurie responded by thanking the Lions. He also said it was an honour to receive the award.

More Australia Day reports - centre pages



AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD
Dianne Billingsley AFSM
BOOLARRA

CHURCHILL & DISTRICT NEWS

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Churchill and District News is a community newspaper staffed by volunteers.

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- Assistant Treasurer: Rachael Perrott
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Contributions

The DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION of articles and advertisements for the March 2025 edition is February 25, 2025

EDITORIAL

Articles for publication and Letters to the Editor can be sent to: Churchill & District News
PO Box 234, Churchill, 3842
Or Email: cdneditorial@cdnews.com.au
All articles must be submitted by the 25th of each month for publication in the next issue.



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We acknowledge the support of



Shopping

Centre Toilets

The public toilets at Hazelwood Village Shopping Centre were upgraded by contractors during January. Latrobe City Council paid for these works, in response to advocacy by CDCA and the community at large about the lack of accessible public toilets in the Churchill retail centre.

A way-finding sign is also to be erected in a central location. Visitors and newcomers to Churchill often do not know about, or see, the public toilet facilities that are tucked away in the foyer behind the Churchill Hot Bread shop.

Unfortunately, the upgraded toilets do not solve the problem of having toilets open and accessible during extended retail operation hours. The public toilets at

Hazelwood Village are closed once the Post Office and Hot Bread shop close at the end of their trading hours.

That means there are no available toilets within the shopping centre precinct after 5pm on weekdays and during the afternoons and evenings on weekends. So really, problem not resolved!

CDCA was under the impression that Council's mid-year budget review would take place last December, but in fact it will be held in early 2025. We are hopeful that any surplus will be allocated to commencing works on a Council owned accessible public toilet that is located centrally on one of the parcels of land that

Council owns along Georgina Place (as per Council's "Public Toilet Plan" for Latrobe City.)

We hope that many locals took the time to submit their thoughts to Council's "Have Your Say" webpage on priority items for consideration in the 2025-26 Budget. If there is no money allocated for toilets in Churchill beforehand, then the next Budget is our best hope.

It is rather sad, and frustrating, that in 2025, 60 years after the establishment of our town, there are still no Council owned accessible public toilets within the CBD. All other towns (with the exception of Newborough) have a Council toilet available within the town centre.

CDCA will meet at 7pm on the second Thursday of every second month this year, at least until our AGM in August. Meeting dates ahead are April 10, June 12 and August 14 (AGM).

We often have guest speakers at our meetings and all local residents are most welcome to come along and listen. Our local

than other years.

Hazelwood South had 10% more rain than the Latrobe Valley weather station. 2024 had a total of 697mm of rain, 85% of the yearly average for 38 years. 1997 was the driest year with only 68%.

Hazelwood South had 17% more rain than the Latrobe Valley weather station during 2024. January rain was close to average, with 54mm, and Hazelwood South had 30% less rain than the Latrobe Valley weather station.

The garden needed lots of watering. An unexpected and welcome 20mm of rain on January 23, has topped up tanks, maintained most of the grass to be green, and kept the trees in good condition.

Rainfall



Churchill Rainfall

Rainfall in Churchill for December was well below average with only 31.5 mm recorded, from a total of nine days of rain for the month.

The year's total was well below average for Churchill and only 655 mm recorded for the year. This was the lowest yearly total since 2018 when 542.5 mm was recorded.

January 2025 has produced 33mm of rain over seven days. Compared to previous years, this is below the January average.

Rain at Hazelwood South

December only had 36% of its average rainfall, a meagre 23mm. The grass remained mostly green, but had little growth, making mowing and weeding easier



police officer-in-charge is sometimes in attendance, as is a Council liaison officer and even our Ward Councillor. Their attendance adds to the information tabled at CDCA meetings and presents a unique opportunity to ask questions and have an informal discussion on a range of issues.

The popular Shop Local Markets will be held again this year. Dates are Saturday May 3, (Mothers Day market), Saturday August 30, (Winter market) and Saturday December 6, (Christmas market).

CDCA will again be attempting to secure funding to cover the costs associated with providing this free event for locals and to ensure we have lots of shopping vouchers for Churchill retail businesses to give away to shoppers on the day.

You can contact CDCA through our website: cdca.org.au or email us directly at info@cdca.org.au or send us a message via our Facebook page (search for Churchill District Community Association); you can even write to us at PO Box 191, Churchill. We welcome your thoughts and contributions!

Come along to our next meeting on Thursday April 10, at 7pm downstairs in the Churchill Town Hall (enter from Philip Parade) - you would be most welcome!

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4.	58 mm x 260 mm	6 x 5.8 cm	93.00	150.00	84.00	134.00
5.	138 mm x 128 mm	3 x 13.8 cm	109.00	174.00	98.00	156.00
6.	188 mm x 128 mm	3 x 18.8 cm	154.00	247.00	139.00	222.00
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1st Churchill Scouts



Churchill
Scout Group



A Queensland adventure for Churchill Scouts

Over the summer holidays, nine Churchill Scouts and two of their leaders joined over 12,000 scouts and their leaders from across Australia and around the world, in Maryborough Queensland for 10 days of fun and adventure at the 26th Australian Scout Jamboree.

With the theme of "your adventure, your way", Scouts enjoyed a wide range of activities with highlights including hatchet throwing, motorised esky racing, mud challenge courses, abseiling, crate stacking, 3D printing, flying drones and robotics, archery tag, air blower soccer, laser tag, rock

climbing, crate electronics, zip lines and more.

Off-site activities included beach activities at Hervey Bay, a city adventure in Maryborough, and a trip to Australia Zoo, and each night the Scouts were entertained at the main arena. Opening night's Amy Shark concert was a highlight, as well as a comedy night with Dave Hughes and Mel Buttle, and a magic night.

The Scouts enjoyed swapping badges with Scouts from all over, as well as making new friends.

Churchill Scout Group offers age appropriate adventurous, fun, challenging and inclusive programs for all youth, which teaches

leadership and life skills with a focus on outdoor adventures.

Joey Scouts (ages 5 to 7) meet Thursdays from 5.30pm to 6.30pm

Cub Scouts (ages 8 to 10) meet Wednesdays from 6.30pm to 8pm

Scouts (ages 11 to 14) meet Tuesdays from 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Venturer Scouts (ages 14 to 18) meet Mondays from 7pm to 9pm

Rover Scouts (ages 18 to 25) meet Fridays from 7pm.

To join the adventure in 2025 or for more information, please contact the Group Leader Tammy via groupleader@1stchurchill.com.au



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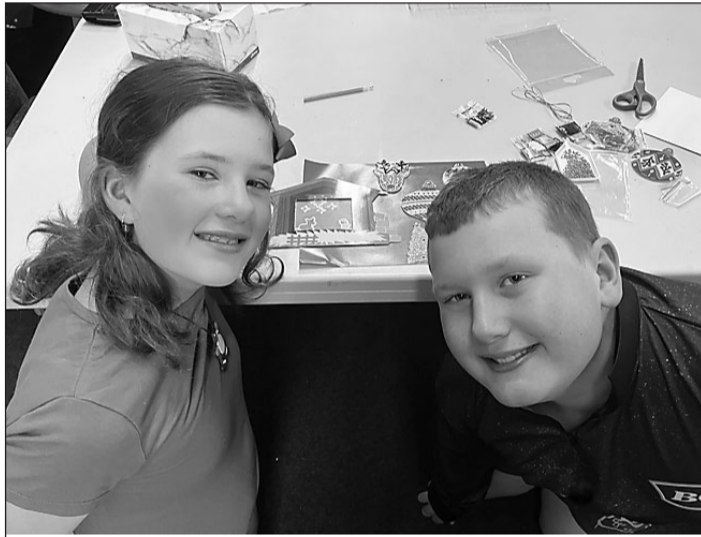
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CHURCH *news*



On December 14 the church welcomed over 80 children from Grades 2-4 of Churchill Primary School to hear the Christmas story and do lots of wonderful craft activities organised by Faye. Congregational members came willingly to help with the activities for the excited children.

Thank you to the school for continuing to support this traditional activity. A huge thank you to the helpers who made the day possible. We were



happy to contribute to the hampers being organised by the Churchill Christian Fellowship (CCF) congregation who worked to provide them for local schools.

Members of our church were part of the Carols by Candlelight Committee organising the Carols by Candlelight program at the Churchill Christian Fellowship.

Our Christmas services were well attended. Cathie had done a huge amount of work organising the services which were to be a focus on the four places mentioned in the Nativity story- Rome, Nazareth, Bethlehem and Jerusalem.

Large banners of the places visited were displayed each week. Special activities for the children and adults who wanted to join in were available at tables or in the west end of the church.

Blue Christmas was held at Boolarra for those who find Christmas difficult.


The crib service went ahead despite the leader coming down with COVID. Our thanks goes to the fire brigade members who brought Santa at the end of the service.

Anglican Holy

Communion was celebrated at Boolarra at 8 pm that night.

January services were held as usual alternating between Boolarra and Churchill.



 <h2>Church Times</h2>	
<p>Co-Operating Churches of Churchill Sunday Services: 10.00am Williams Avenue, Churchill. Tel: 5166 1819</p>	<p>Churchill/Morwell Catholic Parishes Tel: 5134 2849 Fr James Fernandez Saturday 5.00pm St Vincent's, Morwell. Sunday 9.00am Lumen Christi, Churchill. 10.30am Sacred Heart, Morwell. Every 4th Sunday alternates Yinnar/Boolarra. <i>See Church bulletin or call 5134 2849</i></p>
<p>King of Glory Ministries International YINNAR Service 1st and 3rd Saturday each month, 7pm at the RSL Hall. Bible study and prayer each Friday 10am - 12, at the Yinnar Bakery and Coffee Shop.</p>	<p>Boolarra/Yinnar Co-Operating Parish Boolarra/Yinnar 1st and 3rd Sunday: 10am Christ Church Tarwin St., Boolarra</p>
<p>BOOLARRA Ladies Craft, Cuppa n Chat, 10am - 12 Wednesdays Bible study and prayer, 10am-12 Thursdays at the Co-operating Church Hall, 19 Tarwin St. Info 0400 690 972 https://kogmii.com</p>	<p>Churchill Christian Fellowship 3.00pm Sundays at Haz S. Hall 762 Tramway Road Churchill (next to the soccer ground) Everyone Welcome 0409 173 747</p>

Churchill Christian Fellowship

By Steve McNeilly (Pastor)

It has been something of a tradition at Churchill Christian Fellowship to take a break from some of our regular meetings during January and schedule some social events instead.

This January just past, we had a New Years Day picnic lunch in Yinnar, an afternoon of ten-pin bowling in Morwell, a BBQ at Mathison Park (on a very wet evening!), a movie night at the Hazelwood South Hall, and an Australia Day BBQ, also at the hall.

Two Home Fellowships will have resumed by the time this comes out. We

have purchased War Room study guide booklets to work through in the first five or so weeks. War Room is an inspirational 2015 Christian movie by Alex and Stephen Kendrick.

Basically, it's about praying well. (By the way, it is worth watching the movie just for the amazing footage of a jump-rope competition near the ending.)

A new year always brings new aspirations for the Christian community. For CCF, one of our goals for this year is to get some sort of children's ministry started. Once upon a time, children received some Christian

Religious Education in schools but Jesus never ignored the children and neither should we. We have certain logistic issues at our hall on Tramway Road but, with God's help, these will be overcome.

If anyone from the community has a special interest in children's ministry, we would love to hear from you.

Please feel free to visit with us any Sunday at 3pm, or enquire about one of our Home Fellowship/Bible study meetings. You will be most welcome.

For more information, please call 0409 173 747.

Plants in my Garden

By Mike Beamish

Species:

Tetratheca pilosa.

Family:

Elaeocarpaceae (formerly Tremandraceae).

Derivation:

Tetratheca: From Greek tetra, meaning four, and thece, meaning box, and referring to the four cells of the anthers.

pilosa: From Latin pilosus, meaning hairy, and applied botanically to mean covered with more or less long hairs.

Common Name: Hairy Pink-bells.

Distribution:

A common and widespread species occurring from southeastern South Australia, right across Victoria and Tasmania, and north along the NSW south coast to about Newcastle.

Description:

A bushy shrub to about 60cm tall with stems having fine silky, white hairs. Leaves are narrow to elliptic, up to 15mm long and 5mm wide, irregularly scattered in whorls of three or four along the stems, with bristly hairs on veins and margins, dark green above and paler underneath. Flowers occur in late winter to early summer, are usually single and have magenta, pink or white petals to 12mm long. There are two subspecies, pilosa and latifolia, differing in the width of the leaves, the former less than 1.5mm wide and the latter more than 1.5mm wide. Thus, mine is



subspecies latifolia (meaning broad leaf).

Opinion:

I have tried this species (and others in the genus) a number of times and have not been able to keep them alive for more than a year or two. Which is very annoying since there is a colony of T. ciliata growing in the Boolarra bush no more than a kilometre away from my place. However, that colony is growing on the top of a hill in sandy soil and I am at the bottom of the hill with heavy clay loam soils. That probably explains it!

My specimen came from cuttings borrowed from the roadside, where plants were growing on the banks of a cutting not far from Yallourn W Power Station,

where they were slashed every year (or every few weeks/months) and were as healthy as you could ever expect. I managed to get a few to strike and ended up with one planted in a 40cm waterwell tub, where it has fared reasonably well for a few years now. Depending on the warmth or dryness of the seasons, it can suffer a bit of dieback every now and then, with a branch or two turning a crispy brown, but overall it seems to be able to cope with regular re-sprouting from the base. It seems that the better drainage in the tub is essential to keep the plant going, as all the other cuttings planted out in the garden have not survived.

The Australian Plants Society Latrobe Valley Group hosts monthly activities, excursions and / or meetings. Interested persons are welcome to join in, please contact Mike for more information, email mcandcjb@gmail.com or phone 0447 452 755.

Sources: Sharr – WA Plant Names and their Meanings.

Corrick & Fuhrer – Wildflowers of Victoria.

Wilkinson & Turner – Wildflowers of East Gippsland.

Boolarra Folk Festival, 2025

Bigger, Better, Guaranteed

On Saturday, March 1, the multi-award winning Boolarra Folk Festival will once again host a line-up of fabulous musicians, 30 food vendors offering a diverse range of delicious foods, and a bustling arts and craft market of over 100 stalls.

This unique event is a free, all-day folk festival, staged in one of the most beautiful parks in Gippsland.

This year's program begins at 10.30am and headlines The Soutlanas, a local 7-piece band who will surely entertain with party favourites from the past 50 years of soul and pop songs.

Riflebirds will bring a reputation for an electrifying live rock act honed from 12 years of playing festivals and pub gigs across the country.

Phil Coyne and The Wayward Aces will present a powerful sound with the raw intensity of Chicago blues together with rockabilly swing and garage surf drive.

The Boolarra Folk Festival always presents a variety of musical genres. A more lyrical performance will come from Ally Row, a local indie pop-folk rock duo, who blend velvet harmonies and memorable originals.

The Briagolong band have been at the forefront of Australian folk for 45 years and perform their own original songs, and blistering trad fiddle sets.

It is free, and it is in Boolarra.

The festival will open at



7pm on Friday, February 28, at the Boolarra Memorial Hall with another lineup of four extraordinary performances. Nearly Friday will headline with a sonic landscape experience that is both nostalgic and forward-looking, blending the best of classic synth pop rock with new age influences.

There will be a cover charge of \$10 for this

event. Funds raised will go toward the restoration of the Old Boolarra Post Office, a future venue for more exciting and memorable performances.

Check out the Boolarra Folk Festival website or Facebook page for the full line up.

The Boolarra Folk Festival is grateful for the sponsorship of the Latrobe City Council, Loy Yang B, the Foundation for Regional and Rural Renewal, Bendigo Bank Mirboo North Community Branch, Mirboo North Community Foundation, and Cool Aqua Springs.

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COMMUNITY SAFETY Words of Wisdom

Being fire safe

As the bushfire season is now well and truly upon us, we need to keep an eye out for possible arsonists that may start fires in our area.

If you see someone acting suspiciously, take note of the place, time and description of that person or persons and call Triple Zero 000 (if you need police attendance).

Keep your property safe by clearing flammable items away

from your house and ensuring that your grass is kept at a low level.

Install the "Vic emergency app" on your phone and tune into your local radio station to keep up with messages from the authorities.

Let's not have a repeat of the past where lives and property have been lost to crimes of this nature."

If you see something suspicious, report it to the police."

**FOR EMERGENCIES, RING 000
FOR NON URGENT POLICE ASSISTANCE OR
ATTENDANCE WITH NO SIRENS, RING 131444**

Police advise members of the public that, if you require police assistance, call 000. The police communications operator will be able to assess your need and either send a police vehicle, relay a message or find out when the police station will be attended.

Scammers were targeting online shoppers during the festive season, especially with Christmas shopping and Boxing Day sales.

Criminals create fake websites to look like well-known brands. They pretend to sell products at unusually low prices and may write fake reviews to make the website look legitimate.

The National Anti-Scam Centre has removed or limited access to thousands of investment, phishing, and online shopping scam

websites this year. About 50 per cent of fake or malicious websites taken down in the last three months have been running online shopping scams.

How to spot the scam

Products are for sale at unusually low prices compared to other websites.

Reviews are only positive and do not have a lot of detail.

The website does not have any terms and conditions, ABN or privacy policy.



You are told to pay in an unusual way. This could be by money order, pre-loaded card or a request to pay multiple PayIDs or accounts.

How the scam works

Scammers set up fake profiles and fake websites that imitate real brands. These websites may have URLs and page designs

that look the same as real shopping websites.

You make a purchase thinking you have bought from a legitimate store or brand but instead you have entered personal and financial details into a scam website.

You lose your money but no goods are delivered. Your

personal and financial details are now compromised.

What you should know:

There are simple steps you can take to help avoid online shopping scams:

Do some research on the seller before clicking straight to the website.

Compare prices with other websites.

Search for independent reviews on other websites.

Keep the operating system and apps on your device or computer up to date.

Stay protected

STOP – Scammers often pretend to be businesses that you know and trust. Stop and confirm you are buying from a real online store and not a fake website. Be wary of social media stores that are new and selling products at very low prices. Scammers also post fake ads and fake reviews.

CHECK – Search for the official website of the company. Do not assume the first search result is the real website. Check that the website you want to buy from has information about

privacy, terms and conditions of use, dispute resolution and contact details, plus a secure payment service like PayPal or credit card.

PROTECT – Act quickly if something feels wrong. Reporting suspicious websites to Scamwatch quickly will allow us to take swift action to take down fake websites and protect other shoppers against financial harm.

If you have been affected:

Do not be embarrassed about unintentionally shopping on a scam website. It can happen to anybody.

If you have given your personal information call IDCARE on 1800 595 160.

When you report the scam, the people who read your report understand how you are feeling. You are not alone. Contacting support services can help you understand what happened but also tells authorities about scam activities so they can work on making it harder for scams to succeed.

Help others by reporting scams to Scamwatch.



Churchill
Neighbourhood
Centre
churchill.org.au

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN TERM 1 2025

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri
10:00am to 3:00pm Can and Bottle Recycling	10:00am to 3:00pm Can and Bottle Recycling	10:00am to 3:00pm Can and Bottle Recycling	10:00am to 3:00pm Can and Bottle Recycling	10:00am to 3:00pm Can and Bottle Recycling
10:00am to 2:30pm NDIS Course \$80 8 sessions \$40 Concession	10:00am to 12:00pm Food Bank By appointment	9:30am to 11:30am Play Group Contact Anglicare	9:30am to 11:30am Play Group Contact Anglicare	10:00am to 3:00pm Reading & Writing By appointment
From 10:00am Men's Shed \$5 per session	10:00am to 12:00pm Community Garden Free	10:00am to 10:30am Chair Yoga \$80 T1 10 Sessions	10:00am to 12:00pm Food Bank By appointment	4th April 2025 First Aid CPR Refresher - \$80 Level 2 + CPR - 150 Education - \$180
10:30am to 12:30pm Photo Editing PC \$60 T1 8 Sessions	10:00am to 12:00pm Intermediate PC \$75 T1 10 Sessions	10:00am to 12:00pm Phone & Tablets \$75 T1 10 Sessions	10:00am to 3:00pm Form Support By appointment	
1:00pm to 3:00pm Beninner PC \$60 T1 8 Sessions	10:00am to 12:00pm Social Craft \$60 T1 10 Sessions	11:00am to 12:00pm Tai Chi \$120 T1 10 Sessions	10:00am to 12:00pm Patchwork \$100 T1 10 Sessions	Sat
	12:30pm to 2:30pm Cooking \$100 T1 10 Sessions	1:00pm to 2:30pm Photography \$130 T1 10 Sessions	1:00pm to 3:00pm Patchwork \$100 T1 10 Sessions	
Make Suggestions at churchill.org.au/ideas	1:00pm to 3:00pm Fundraising Free	1:00pm to 3:00pm Games + Movie T1 Free	4:00pm to 7:00pm Dungeons & Dragons 13-25 Free - T1 10 Sessions	Coming Soon 1st Sat of the month 10:00am to 12:00pm Can and Bottle Recycling Community Garden
Volunteers always needed!	6:00pm to 9:00pm Dungeons & Dragons 18+ \$60 10 Sessions	6:30pm to 9:00pm Patchwork \$110 T1 10 Sessions		

Churchill Neighbourhood Centre has a range of activities and services lined up for Term 1, 2025.

From workshops to social gatherings, there is something for everyone.

The Can and Bottle Recycling service runs Monday to Friday, 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, and the Food Bank is available by

appointment on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

The Men's Shed meets every Monday, while the Community Garden invites participants every Tuesday morning.

Classes on offer include Chair Yoga, Tai Chi, Cooking, Patchwork, and Social Craft. Tech enthusiasts can learn

photo editing, computer skills, or smartphone tips. For younger participants, Dungeons & Dragons offers free sessions for ages 13–25, with adult sessions also available.

This term, the Centre is hosting a First Aid Training Day on April 4, 2025.

Thanks to partnerships with local organisations and

businesses, many sessions remain affordable and accessible to the community.

The Centre values community input and welcomes volunteers.

Share your ideas at churchill.org.au/ideas or contact the Centre to get involved.

Make this term one to remember!



The Churchill & District News is looking for volunteers. We are looking for people who would like to be involved in advertising !! We would like to hear from you! Please ring Ruth on 5122 1961



Churchill Fish and Chips

Chrissie has been running this takeaway business in West Place for 24 years. It is open Tuesday to Sunday 11am – 8pm.

There is a traditional menu which includes old favourites along with grilled options, all from quality ingredients. Food is made to order - telephone or in person orders are both welcome.



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Churchill AA Accounting and Bookkeeping thrives on supporting individual clients and business owners to manage their way through Tax and Business Growth, including maximising tax refunds and staying on track with lodgements/ payments and legal requirements. Tony or Liam are happy to give information or a free consultation.

“The Vanishing Half” by Brit Bennett

Brit Bennett, an American woman of colour, was born in 1990 and raised in southern California. She attended Stanford University. Now based in Los Angeles, her debut novel “The Mothers” 2016 was a New York Times best seller, as was “The Vanishing Half” 2020.

This story is set in the deep south of America in a hamlet called Mallard, so small it is not recorded on any maps. The founding father of Mallard is Alphonse Decuir who inherited his sugar plantation from his white father, who once owned him. He married a Mulatto woman, even lighter in colour than himself, and his aim was to establish a town for people light in colour, hoping that each generation would become lighter than the last.

The main characters in the story are the identical Vignes twins, Desiree and Stella, who are the great-great-granddaughters of Alphonse Decuir. As small children they witnessed the lynching of their father by a group of white men and he is later murdered, leaving them deeply traumatised. They desperately want to escape the town, and at sixteen their mother Adele finds them work where they are put

into service cleaning the home of a wealthy white family.

This is not what they want, so at the Founders Day Picnic they escape to New Orleans to start a new life. Desiree gets work in a laundry and Stella is able to get a secretarial job. Without warning Stella disappears and Desiree is devastated, not knowing where she is or why she left.

Desiree eventually moves to Washington DC where she gets a job analysing fingerprints, marries Sam and has a daughter Jude. Unfortunately she is the victim of domestic violence and decides to return to Mallard with her daughter until she plans her next move. There is some tension when she returns but she eventually settles in to life in Mallard, working at the local diner. Jude attends the local school but because she is so much darker in colour than the other pupils she is bullied and always on the outer.

An old acquaintance, Early Jones arrives in Mallard and he is a bounty hunter, paid by Desiree’s husband to find her. He sees the bruising on her neck and decides not to go through with the job. He also offers to help find Stella. He falls in love with Desiree and each

BOOK REVIEW

time he is in the area he visits her.

We then go to Stella’s story. Her boss in New Orleans, Blake Sanders, asks her to accompany him to his new position in Los Angeles. He is unaware she

Kennedy. The family lead a very privileged life but the secret of Stella’s identity is always with her. She reaches crisis point when a coloured family wants to move into their exclusive estate. The family does move in but they



is a woman of colour and Stella realises she can pass for white. She marries Blake and they have a daughter,

are shunned by the rest of the community. Stella goes along with the community outrage, but is fascinated by

the comings and goings of Loretta Walker and her family. She is horrified when her daughter is found playing with the Walker’s daughter and overreacts, but eventually apologises and the girls occasionally play together with Stella even visiting Loretta. However there is always an uneasy truce between the pair.

In the meantime, Jude has been accepted into UCLA to study medicine and has a relationship with Reese, who is transitioning from female to male. They have a very loving and supportive relationship. By chance, when Jude is waitressing, she sees Stella and realises who she is – she also remembers the daughter who is with her and seeks her out. The girls, whilst from very different backgrounds, keep in touch, and gradually Jude discloses Stella’s true identity to Kennedy. This results in Stella returning to Mallard to ask Desiree to keep Jude away from her daughter because she is afraid of being exposed. There is a tense meeting at the diner but when they return home their mother barely bats an eyelid, and accepts Stella just like old times. However Stella does not stay long.

This book was easy to read, enjoyed by us all and full of interesting characters. It centres on the tensions of race and racial discrimination and the belief that being white leads to an easier life. It was interesting that the people of Mallard are not accepted by white people yet they discriminated against Jude because she was darker than them.

The issue of gender was also raised with Jude being very accepting of someone different to herself. She has grown up to be tolerant, with a more realistic view of life, she is accepting and supportive of Reese and she has a strong work ethic, studying to become a doctor. This is an interesting comparison to Kennedy who is superficial, lacking in real ambition and has always expected life to be easy for her. However she is less judgemental than her mother.

In many ways life has been much easier for Stella, but she has had to live with the underlying tension of her real identity. She has been quite self-absorbed but also very lonely. On the other hand Desiree has been a good mother and also a good daughter, as she has cared for Adele in her later years. Throughout the book the importance of family and of honest and open relationships ties the story together.

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Friends of Morwell National Park

December Activity Report

The day's activity was to do some track maintenance around Fosters Gully Track. Parks personnel had recently been around Stringybark Track and removed the trees down from across that track. Rangers have also slashed the steps down to the site of the new Stringybark bridge which will hopefully be installed in the new year.

To tackle Fosters Gully the group split, with one group starting at the beginning of the track and the other group starting from the opposite end. Both groups removed many small obstructions, and undergrowth that was encroaching upon the track. Peter (with Mike's assistance) removed a tree

which had come down across the track.

Damian Andrews - a local Youtube presenter recorded a Youtube interview with Caitilin, Ken and Anita talking about the National Park, our Friends' group and our publications. The clip is located at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DUifdXCuMFk>

Caitilin passed on her thanks to the whole group for all of the support she and the group has received throughout the busy year. The creation and launch of the bird book had required the support of many and its success goes down to the help of many people. The bird book is now available in various local stores.

In koala news, the regular

koala normally above the picnic area had relocated off into the distance so it was not seen in the morning. With the peace before lunch the koala was located along with two other koalas.

January Activity Report

Over the last week work has begun upon the new bridge to Stringybark Track. The contractors are working by hand to erect the metal bridge. It is great that the work is being done by hand to help protect the environment around the site.

All our activities for the year have been entered onto Parks Connect. This will be another source of information about upcoming activities. Since nobody from Parks had signed off on this day's activity, we were limited in what we could do.

For the day's activity we went in to remove some of the many weeds in this part of the park.

Rose, Joelle and Wayne left after the meeting while the rest of the group travelled down the Braniff Road track. Two vehicles came in while one group started on the many weeds beside this track. This is the same area handled by cutting and dabbing poisons activity with Parks last month, but many new weeds had raised their heads.

Another group headed down closer to the creek crossing to work on weeds there. Ragwort, thistles, tutsan and teasel were the worst weeds. Blackberries are also bad since they have yet to be sprayed this year.

Some travelled across the creek via the vehicles while the rest cleaned up the Pipeline Track which still has a few large trees across it which will require a chainsaw. Now a walker can scramble along this track to access the main part of the park.

The groups leapfrogged along the track removing many weeds close to the track. The weeds seem to be spread along the track by



the vehicles, walkers and animals using the main track. The creek is also bad, but that would need to be left until later.

The groups gathered at Billys Weir and had lunch. A koala watched us while we had our break. Caitilin's photos show what it is like around the weir.

After the lunch break, the groups continued removing weeds. Two large inkweeds were removed from the creek banks, along with some patches of spearmint.

It was a very productive day and many weeds were removed.

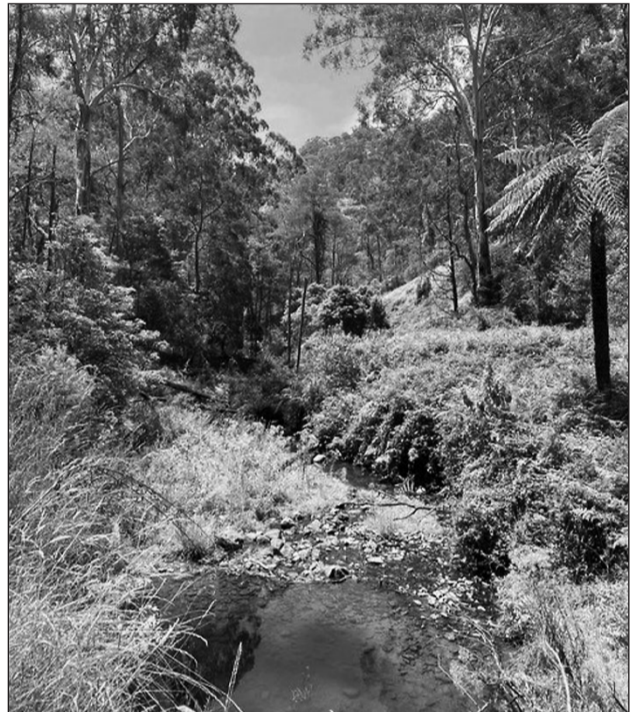
The nesting box survey which was meant to be done this month will be delayed until March when hopefully we will have access to the whole area the boxes are in.

February Activity

Sunday February 16, 6.30pm

The group will meet in the Junction Road car park for a spotlight walk and moth survey.

The evening will start with a BYO dinner. This will be followed by an evening



walk and the setting up of moth sheets.

You will need to bring your own food and drink for the picnic (folding chairs would also be useful) and wear clothing and footwear suitable for the conditions on the evening. Torches and spotlights will also be useful for the evening walk.

If you want to come just for the spotlight walk or moth survey, these activities will occur when it starts to get dark.

Anyone who is curious about the night life or insect life in Morwell National Park is welcome to join us for these activities.



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Strzelecki Koala

koalas and wombats in gum tree inspired sacks swung in the breeze. Meanwhile, many reflective, high visibility animal presence signs made a very artistic wall display with a very important message.

Kranky the Koala visited, bringing much delight and free balloon sculptures.

Visitors to the display also had the opportunity to complete a quiz. The task involved searching for answer cards in the nearby bushes and trees at the edge of the Community Centre lawn. Children and adults alike enjoyed this activity and learned a lot together. A completed and correct quiz sheet entitled the participants to receive a little toy koala.

The entry to the exhibit was the donation of a gold coin which went to help fund the work of Friends of the Earth Strzelecki Koala Action Team (SKAT). This group is requesting extra protection for the Mullungdung and Won Wron State Forests.

This group has conducted surveys of koala sightings and koala scats (poo) and recorded the presence of around 600 Strzelecki koalas in the Mullungdung State Forest. This is nearly 24% of the estimated remaining Strzelecki koala population.

Therefore the Mullungdung and Won Wron State Forests are crucial habitats for the survival of the Strzelecki koala population now and into the future.

Their genetic diversity means Strzelecki koalas are key to the survival of the whole koala species. It is very important that the Environment Minister, Honourable Steve Dimopoulos, also recognises the significance of these forests and increases the protection for the koalas and other threatened species by creating more reserved land.

If you wish to find out more and support the campaign go to <https://www.melbournefoe.org.au/koala>

Other ways you can help our precious Strzelecki koala.

Drive carefully and slower in koala habitat areas. For example, the Meeniyan area and Monash Way from Churchill to Boolarra are hot spots for koalas. Before Christmas three koalas were killed in the vicinity of Walshs Road and Jeeralang Junction.

Be a responsible pet owner. Keep dogs and cats inside at night.

Have fencing that is koala friendly and a yard that provides escape posts for koalas.

To help prevent heat stress in native animals particularly our Strzelecki koalas, place clean and fresh water bowls of different sizes around your property. Also ensure that pools are koala safe too. (www.wildlifewatcher.com.au 21-1-25) If you see a heat stressed koala call Wildlife Victoria for help.(03) 8400 7300

Protect, preserve and plant the koala preferred food trees and other local natives.

The toy koalas stayed protected and cool in the SKAT Wonderland Display. They wore hats and sunglasses under umbrellas when outside and life jackets when at sea.

They had ice creams with their friends. When Anne Abbott presents her next exhibit of "Koalas and Friends", try to attend.

Your inner child will appreciate it as well as the younger family members.

Helping groups that support the survival of the Strzelecki Koala will ensure that future generations will see these beautiful animals in the wild and not just as a pretty image on something we use. If you save koalas, you also save the other precious native animals because the methods to save them are the same.



An Amazing Awareness display promoting the Strzelecki Koala and friends

The koala is an Australian icon and cherished by most Australians and many internationals. Koala images are used on a lot of paraphernalia like tea towels, souvenirs, underwear and stationery. Koala fluffy toys of all sizes, with a variety of expressions and positions are very sellable

items because of their cuteness and cuddliness.

Such koala images were used for an interesting and colourful exhibit in the Sandy Point Community Centre. On January 18, Anne Abbott along with her family and friends set up a koala display to educate people about the Strzelecki koalas' existence, uniqueness of the Strzelecki Koala's diverse genetic makeup and the survival needs.

Individuals and family groups viewed fascinating, dazzling and humorous scenes comprising well over 1000 items from all over the world at Sandy Point. They saw koalas and their native friends engaged in many activities, including camping, cooking, bathing, at the beach or having a cuppa.

Outside very large plush



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In December, for the first time Carols by Candlelight was held in the Churchill Christian Fellowship (CCF) church grounds. A crowd of around 100 people attended. This number included band and choir members. It was a beautiful, sunny, warm evening and finally one suitable to have Carols outside.

Chairs were set up, the Community Concert Band arranged their seating and instruments and the choir consisting of the Coal Valley Male Choral, together with some ladies from another

choir, found their seating. Ian Combridge set up his public address system and all the other items he needed for his role.

Committee ladies were at two entry points with Carols booklet, candles, raffle tickets for the lucky prize draw on the night and words of songs to be sung. Many gave donations as they arrived.

All was in readiness. Proceedings began at 6 pm with the Churchill & District Lions cooking sausages and onions for a gold coin donation. They

Carols by Candlelight

also had cans of drink and water

Allan Halliwell started the program with his children's songs. Then Steve McNeilly, pastor of the CCF, opened with prayer.

The program then featured the telling of the Bible Christmas story with Carols to tell the story too. There were items from Steve and Sandy, and the choir. Classina from the CCF told how she would have celebrated Christmas in Holland.

Reverend Rebecca Hayman was the guest speaker. Bec is the chaplain at FedUni and is also attached to the Co-Operating Churches in Churchill, Boolarra, Yinnar. This is part of her talk.

'Now there is a lot of love in trying to get the right present for someone, but we all know, you know, I know, deep down everybody knows that really the best gift anyone could ever give us

is good relationships. Good friends, love and trust within families, with our spouse, with our children, with parents. These are the things that we crave more than any toy or gimmick from the shops. God knows it too.

The Bible describes God as our good Father because this is His desire to have that sort of loving trusting relationship with us. He created us not just for relationship with each other, but for relationship with Him. We broke that relationship because we decided we did not want to live the way He told us to. Essentially, like so many toddlers, we did not want to share. Instead, we ate things we were told not to eat, we stole things that did not belong to us, we cut down things, dug up things, destroyed stuff. We broke relationship with each other and with God. We ended up with this world that we have today, that is hurting and broken and polluted.

Christmas is about a gift. It is about God saying, 'I want relationship back. I want you back in my life.' He gave us a gift; and that gift is Jesus.

The gift of Jesus is God's way of saying, 'This is who I am. I came to earth to live as one of you, so that you

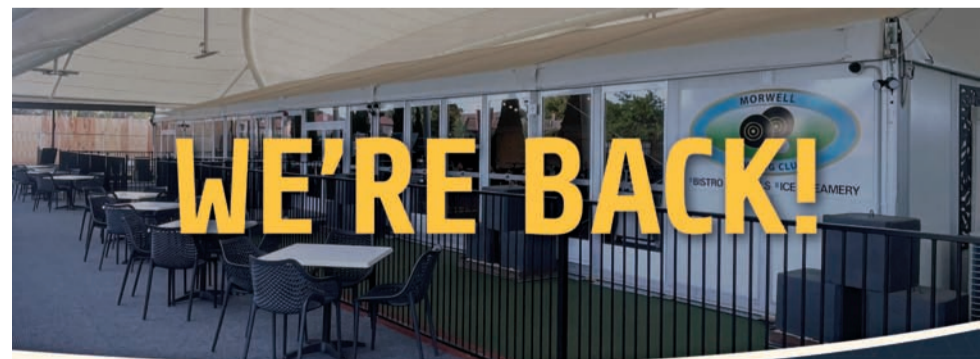
can know me again.' Jesus himself said, 'If you see me, you see the Father.' Everything Jesus did, the way he lived, the way he was killed, the way he rose again: all these things teach us about God and are designed to bring us back into relationship with him.

That is why we celebrate Christmas. We celebrate the great gift of God saying, 'I want you to know me again. I want to heal that relationship that we had because that is what you crave more than anything else.'

Christmas is about the gift of relationship with each other and with our good heavenly Father.

During the evening a collection was taken. This money plus the Lion's donation from the sausage sizzle was given to the university chaplaincy fund. Bec thanked those gathered for their support of the students.

Father James closed the program with a prayer. Santa arrived on the fire truck to say hello to the children who were few in number.



Darren Chester

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THE NATIONALS for Gippsland www.darrenchester.com.au

Authorised by Darren Chester MP, National Party of Australia, 126 Franklin Street, Traralgon VIC 3844

We are thrilled to announce that Morwell Bowling Club has reopened

The board members & staff are excited to be back up and running, and even more excited to welcome back our members and the community. We are truly grateful for your continued support during this closure, and I look forward to seeing you back at the club.

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| The following are now available: | • Full bistro menu | • Lawn Bowls |
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Butterflied lamb leg with herb mayonnaise



Ingredients:

1.5 kg of lamb, boned and butterflied, (get your butcher to do this for you), 1 tbs of dried rosemary, 1 tbs of olive oil, 1 tbs of Dijon mustard.

For the herb mayonnaise you will need -1/2 cup of whole egg mayonnaise, lemon juice, and a mix of fresh chives or coriander chopped. Preheat your barbeque to hot. Score the inside of the butterflied lamb leg in a criss-cross pattern. In a small bowl mix together the rosemary, olive oil, and mustard and smear over both sides of the lamb.

Place the lamb on the barbeque and reduce the heat to medium hot. Cook each side of the lamb for 20 minutes. Remove the lamb, cover loosely with foil and rest the lamb for 15-20 minutes before slicing, (resting the meat allows the juices to redistribute giving a more tender result). While the lamb is resting, prepare the mayonnaise. Combine the mayonnaise with the chopped fresh herbs and a squeeze of lemon juice. Serve with a mixed salad or vegetables of your choice.

Country Club fruit cake



Ingredients:

Topping - 1 can of sliced pineapple (432gm), glace cherries, sliced almonds.

Cake - 250gm of butter/ marg, 250gm of soft brown sugar, 5 eggs beaten, 1 and 1/2 cups of plain flour, 1 cup of self-raising flour, 1 tbs of mixed spice, 1.5 kg of mixed fruit. Preheat your oven to 160 deg C. Line an 8"x 8" pan or 9" round pan with baking paper. Drain the pineapple slices, finely chop 2 slices and add to the mixed fruit. Mix together the flours and spice. Beat together the butter/ marg and sugar until light and fluffy. Now add the flour and mixed eggs in measured increments, until well mixed. Stir in the mixed fruit. Spoon the batter into the prepared pan, spread top evenly. Arrange remaining pineapple slices on top of the batter, place a cherry in the centre of each pineapple slice and decorate with almond slices.

Bake in the preheated oven for 3 hours or until cooked through - when tested with a skewer inserted comes out clean. Cool in the pan on a wire rack before removing. (Optional), sprinkle with 1/4 cup of apera sherry while cooling.

Eggplants with garlic and sesame oil



Ingredients:

2 average sized eggplants, 250gm of Tomberry tomatoes, 3 tbs of minced garlic, 2 tbs mix of ground spice (cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, allspice), castor sugar and chopped fresh basil or mint and 8 tbs of sesame oil.

Preheat your oven to 160 deg C. Slice the unpeeled eggplants in half lengthwise. Slice the eggplant flesh in a crisscross fashion without slicing through the skin. In a medium bowl place the Tomberry tomatoes, mixed spices and minced garlic. Mix well to combine. Place the prepared eggplant halves in an oiled ovenproof dish and place the spiced tomatoes over the top of each eggplant half. Pour over the sesame oil. Cook in the preheated oven for 1 hour until the eggplants and tomatoes are tender. Taste the dish for seasoning, it is at this point I sprinkle over chilli flakes, but again this is your dish.

Serve with fresh basil or mint sprinkled over. This dish can be served as a main meal or cold as a first course. Mmmm this is delicious.

What do you know?



Here are the answers to December's cooking quiz

1. Batter.
2. Carbonnade
3. Lychee
4. A protein in wheat and some grains that, when mixed with liquid, allows a batter or dough to rise.
5. Anchovy.

Your February challenge:

1. The name of the tea made from dried and partially fermented tea leaves?
2. To dissolve a solid or semisolid into a liquid or near liquid state?
3. A meat originally venison, but now mostly beef, that has been cut into strips, salted and dried?
4. What is a French pastry filling of semisweet chocolate and thickened cream?
5. What is it called to place herbs or other ingredients in hot water to transfer their flavour into the water?

Spaghetti with a tropical meat sauce



Ingredients:

432gm can of pineapple pieces, drain and retain the juice,
500gm of dried spaghetti,
1 kg of mince,
1x 420gm can of condensed tomato soup,
2 tbs of minced garlic,
2 onions, peeled and thinly chopped,
250gm of grated tasty cheese,
2 tbs of canola oil,
cooked green peas to serve.

Cook the pasta with a drop of oil until al dente, drain. Place the chopped onions in a large pan with the oil and garlic, cook until tender.

Add the mince with the pineapple juice and the undiluted tomato soup and cook until evenly blended.

Turn the heat down to a simmer and let reduce a little.

Place 500gm of peas in boiling water and cook until tender.

To serve arrange layers of the drained spaghetti over the serving dishes topped with cheese and the savoury mince, garnish with the pineapple pieces and peas.

This is a really comforting family meal.

Jellied pineapple slices



Ingredients:

2 cans of pineapple slices, 2 packets of lime jelly crystals, boiling water. This is definitely a 'retro' dish and great for all occasions. Drain and measure the syrup from the cans (do not throw the cans out) and add enough water to make 1 litre in a medium saucepan. Bring the liquid mixture to boiling point, remove from the heat and stir in the jelly crystals till dissolved. Cool the liquid mixture. Spray each can lightly with cooking oil. Return the pineapple slices to the cans and pour the cooled jelly into the cans, around the slices. Chill until firm. Run a hot knife around the sides of the cans and unmould onto a serving dish. Serve sliced with cream or ice cream.

Frosted rose petals

(for Carol Dickinson)



Ingredients:

15 rose petals,
2 egg whites,
castor sugar.

Wash (lightly rinse) the rose petals and let drain until dried on paper towelling.

Whisk the egg whites lightly and paint each dried petal with it, then dip immediately into/onto the castor sugar to coat thoroughly.

Shake off excess sugar and place on a sheet of baking paper to dry.

Leave the petals in a warm dry place until very dry and crisp.

Frosted petals can be stored in an airtight container for three days before use.



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Call for Volunteers for the Gippsland Sculpture Exhibition

The Gippsland Sculpture Exhibition is seeking enthusiastic volunteers to help bring the 2025 event to life. Running daily from March 9 to April 20 between 10am and 4pm in Yinnar, this year's exhibition promises to be the biggest and most exciting yet, and your support can make it even better.

"We are incredibly fortunate to have a strong network of local residents, community groups, and supporters," said Nicole Allen, Committee Chair. "However, we need more

hands on deck to ensure the smooth operation of this seven-week event."

The event currently has 40 volunteers, including members from the local Lions Club, but additional help is needed. Volunteer roles are varied, flexible, and easy to step into, with plenty of guidance and support provided. From greeting visitors to guiding them through the exhibits and assisting with workshops, there are numerous ways to get involved.

Volunteer Roles

Our main need is

for Gallery Operation Volunteers, who help run the exhibition during opening hours from 10 am to 4 pm daily. This is a fun and interesting role that involves meeting and greeting visitors and ensuring they have an enjoyable experience. You do not need prior knowledge of art—just a willingness to work with the public. Key responsibilities include:

Assisting visitors with directions to sculpture locations outside the gallery.

Handing out catalogues and People's Choice Awards voting slips.

Selling raffle tickets. Monitoring gallery exhibits and ensuring their safety.

Facilitating sculpture purchases.

Maintaining the gallery and amenities in good condition.

Identifying and addressing any health and safety issues.

Responding to emergencies if needed.

Answering visitor enquiries.

Additional roles may also be available for those interested in supporting other

aspects of the exhibition. "Being a volunteer is a fun and rewarding experience," said Ms. Allen. "It's a chance to connect with the community, support the arts, and be part of something truly special."

The opening of the exhibition will take place at 1pm to 4 pm on March 9.

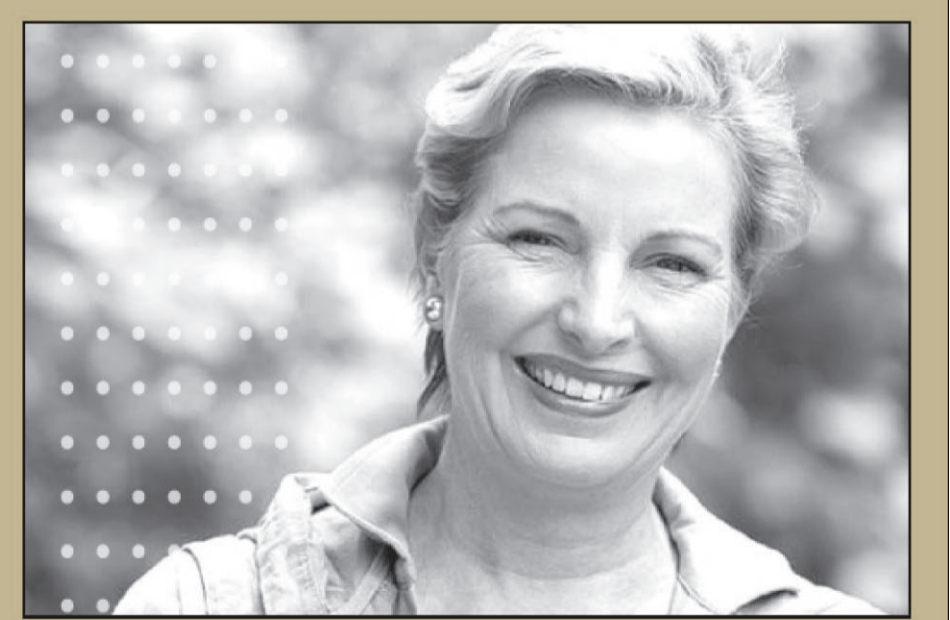
There will be free workshops in sculpture and live music on Sundays. The exhibition will be open each day during that period and volunteers will be on hand to answer any enquiries and to show people about.

Food and drinks will be available at the outlets in Yinnar, at the Yinnar Bakery, Café 3869 and the

hotel. A wide selections of exhibits will be on display for you to enjoy and marvel at.

The Gippsland Sculpture Exhibition is a much-loved event that showcases the talents of artists from across Gippsland and beyond. With over 12,000 visitors expected, the exhibition offers an incredible platform for volunteers to contribute to the region's vibrant cultural landscape.

To register your interest please contact Peter James 0477 222 025 (Phone or Text) or email gsepjames@gmail.com to learn more about volunteering opportunities.



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Strzelecki Bushwalking Club

2025 has definitely arrived and the holiday season is starting to fade into our memory a little.

It is time to get thinking about our New Year's resolutions and how we are going to spend our spare time this year.

If getting fit and meeting new people were part of your New Year's resolutions, then consider contacting the Strzelecki Bushwalking Club!

The SBWC is a highly active and inclusive Club with members mostly residing between Drouin and Traralgon, although there are members much wider afield.

2024 was a bumper year

for the Club with events held at both ends of the state from Portland through to Merimbula and everywhere in between.

We have a dedicated group of leaders who regularly host events such as day hikes, multi day hikes, base camp hikes, bike rides and regular kayaking events.

Our members are all ages and abilities, but all share a love of the outdoors and a passion for the Club.

January 2025 already has a host of great activities on offer including a two-night hike in the Licola region, a one night to the Alpine region, a walk along Stringers

Creek and an evening bike ride and meal along the South Gippsland Rail Trail.

Our first Club night of the year will take place in McGregor Park, Trafalgar on Wednesday February 12, beginning at 6pm, for a BBQ dinner. BYO food and drinks.

This is a wonderful way to meet up again with Club members and start out the new year. Visitors are welcome.

If these activities are appealing do not hesitate to contact the Club for more information on the website at sbwc.org.au, on our Facebook page or by contacting publicity@sbwc.org.au



Above - Members enjoying a snow day at Mt Baw Baw
Below - Some members of SBWC at Wilson's Prom



**YOU CAN'T CONTROL FIRE.
BUT YOU CAN CONTROL
WHEN YOU LEAVE.**

When the Fire Danger Rating is Extreme or Catastrophic, leaving early is your safest option. Download the Vic Emergency app or go to emergency.vic.gov.au



HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW FIRE?

Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne



Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists

Walkerville Coastal Geology

You are invited to join the Latrobe Valley Field Naturalists Club members on a geology walk on Saturday February 22, to observe the different types of rock formations along the Walkerville coastline.

Following morning tea and an introduction to local geology, we will walk south along the beach stopping to explore several points of interest.

The inspiration for this excursion was the recent publication of the booklet "Walkerville Coastal Geology".

Meet at 10.45 am at

Walkerville North.

On the walk, carry water and either lunch or a snack. Bring a hat and sunscreen and wear sturdy enclosed footwear suitable for walking on sand, and in short sections, across rocks and through shallow water.

The excursion will automatically be cancelled in the event of declaration of a total fire ban involving the South and West Gippsland area.

For more information and if you wish to attend please contact our secretary, Rose, on 0410 237 292.



LCHS Autism Assessment Clinic wins at Gippsland PHN Awards

A free, multidisciplinary autism assessment clinic is making it easier for children in Gippsland to be assessed for the developmental condition.

Latrobe Community Health Service's Autism Assessment Clinic offers autism assessments for children aged two to seven, from vulnerable backgrounds living in the Latrobe Valley.

Working with Latrobe Regional Health, the clinic provides assessments, diagnosis, and family support

with a team of specialists, including paediatricians, speech pathologists, and occupational therapists.

The clinic was recently recognised at the Gippsland Primary Health Network Awards, winning the 'transforming practice through multidisciplinary care' category.

Marina Tork, Paediatric Allied Health Team Leader at LCHS, said the clinic aimed to fill the gap of providing Gippsland families with timely and accessible autism assessments.

"We have supported over 100 vulnerable families in

Gippsland this year, and are committed to reaching even more in the future," she said.

"This service not only provides children with the assessment, but guides families through the process of diagnosis, helping them to understand autism and the resources and supports available to them.

We recognise that vulnerable families often face competing priorities and challenges which may limit their ability to navigate the healthcare system.

So, our clinic operates holistically – offering support to families

throughout the process and actively linking them with internal and external services based on their needs," Ms Tork said.

"We are constantly working to enhance our service, and receiving this award has affirmed that we are on the right track.

We hope this is the beginning of an exciting journey toward making an even greater impact."

To find out more about the Autism Assessment Clinic, visit the Latrobe Community Health Service website or give us a call on 1800 242 696.

CHURCHILL & DISTRICT NEWS
"Connecting Your Community"



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Craft Connections

Every Tuesday 10 am to 12 Noon

Craft Connections recommencing again
Tuesday, January 14.

Looking forward to seeing you all again.

Please feel free to contact Sue on 0411 714 564 for more information.

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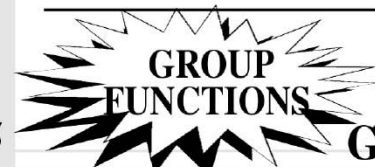
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Classic Toys

From the dawn of history children have always sought to be distracted into play by their imagination. Any object can perform this function.

All it has to do is to stimulate the imagination to be something it is not. A rock can very vaguely resemble an animal or a person and the child will react to it as they would to that animal or person in real life.

This still happens. A box can become an eighteen-wheeler truck to a little boy and he can pretend to drive it. Girls and their dolls can play out a multitude of scenarios to pass the time. A stick can become a horse to be ridden. The range of a child's imagination is almost infinite.

A doting mother or father can embellish something to make it more lifelike still to please the child. Carved animals have been discovered in ancient sites as have clay models of animals and people.

As time has passed, the figures have increased in sophistication and have kept up with technology and with the widening of the domestication of various animals. Carved reindeer have been played with by children in ancient Lapland and in Greece a small carved horse fitted with wheels was found at an ancient site. Straw dolls were found in the ruins of mesa-dwellers houses in New Mexico.

While people who have some status can afford to buy toys, the children of the poor have had to make do.

They usually had less free time for play as their labour was necessary for the survival of the family, but play they did. One invention of the poor was the marble, when a child rolled clay into a ball and let it harden in the sun. Imagination invented the games played and were often played only within a single family or a small group of families. Building blocks are another poor child's toy.

The kite is another poor child's toy which was embellished by the rich for their own use. Colour could be added to make the toy more desirable and even more personal. Size and shape could vary as did materials for construction. You also had to have a pretty good

wind, so geography could play a part.

Technology and the increase of wealth have played an ever-increasing role in the development of toys. Very seldom do you see a handmade toy today and more is the pity. Such things have been a precious item to children over the ages because they not only show that a parent or relative cares but also conveys to the child that he or she is a little bit special and their self-esteem expands.

The fashioning of miniature tools by parents was a common source of toys and provided an excellent learning source for the future, although a mud-pie is difficult to see as a teaching aid. The supporting tea-party does provide a learning opportunity though.

Hungary issued a set featuring classic toys in 1965.

Health Hints

The Benefits of Vitamin D

Vitamin D, often called the "sunshine vitamin," is a nutrient your body needs for many important functions.

Despite its name, Vitamin D is not a typical vitamin. It is more like a hormone, and your body can produce it when your skin is exposed to sunlight.

However, many people do not get enough of it due to limited sun exposure, diet, or lifestyle.

Let us explore why Vitamin D is so vital and how it benefits your health.

1. Strengthens your bones

One of the main roles of Vitamin D is to help your body absorb calcium, a mineral crucial for building and maintaining strong bones.

2. Boosts your immune system

Vitamin D plays a critical role in keeping your immune system strong and balanced. It helps your body fight off infections and may even reduce your risk of getting the flu or common colds.

3. Supports mental health

Your brain also benefits from Vitamin D. Studies have found links between low levels of Vitamin D and conditions like depression and anxiety.

4. May reduce risk of chronic diseases

Vitamin D might also help protect against chronic diseases, such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain types of cancer.

5. Helps with muscle strength

Vitamin D contributes to muscle function by helping your muscles absorb calcium and phosphorus.

How can you get Vitamin D?

Here are the three main ways to boost your Vitamin D levels:

Sunlight: Spending about 10-30 minutes in the sun a few times a week can help your body produce Vitamin D naturally.

2. Diet: Foods like fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, tuna), egg yolks, fortified milk, and cereals contain Vitamin D.

3. Supplements: If

sunlight and diet are not enough, Vitamin D supplements can help. Consult your doctor or pharmacist before starting any supplements to determine the right dose.

How much do you need?

The recommended daily amount of Vitamin D depends on your age:

- Adults typically need 600-800 IU (International Units) per day.

- Older adults may require more because their bodies do not produce or absorb Vitamin D as efficiently.

Final thoughts

Vitamin D is essential for keeping your body healthy, from your bones to your immune system and beyond. If you are not getting enough sunlight or your diet lacks Vitamin D-rich foods, you may want to discuss supplementation with your healthcare provider. Ensuring you have adequate levels of this "sunshine vitamin" is an easy step toward better health and well-being.

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Harriet Shing MP

MEMBER FOR EASTERN VICTORIA

Your voice in the Eastern Victoria Region

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harriet.shing@parliament.vic.gov.au

1300 103 199

harrietshingmp @ShingvWorld



Looking Back...

...through the eyes of local residents



By Leo Billington

Parts of Morwell's history worth recalling

History does not need to be sombre. There are some light moments, such as a "cow story" published in the Morwell Advertiser, on Thursday September 21, 1933.

Cow Causes Stir

An unusual incident occurred at the Morwell railway station on Monday last.

A cow, that had given a good deal of trouble was being driven by Mr Williamson along Station Street (now Princes Drive), and when opposite the railway station, it would appear that the animal suddenly made up her mind to board the passenger train, which was just about due to arrive.

She forced herself through between two small posts placed at the end of the footpath leading from the station.

She proceeded along the path and entered the station corridor.

She passed the ticket window, but did not stop to

get even a platform ticket. The barrier was open and Mrs Cow simply seized the opportunity to rush on to the platform, where she caused some commotion among people waiting for the train, and they were relieved when she suddenly took a header off the platform on to the railway line below.

The jump was negotiated in good style, just before the arrival of the "steam horse," and the last the people on the platform saw of the quadruped was her heading up the main street.

Such a perfect segueway to this month's local history column in the first 2025 edition of the Churchill & District News.

Let us have a look at the stranglehold the Victorian Railway Commissioners had on Morwell's development. (Mrs Cow did not care much for the railway station/line.)

On Tuesday evening June 21, 1938, the Morwell Civic Association had a general meeting announcing there were "big

problems" to be discussed. Held in Morwell's Town Hall Supper Room, about 30 people attended. President, Mr George H Budge J.P, opened proceedings acknowledging the larger than usual attendance.

Number one item was 'Improving the Town', next was a suitable location for municipal saleyards, number three item concerned the dangerous railway crossing and then finally, lunch-hour closing. Ironically, these priority agenda items were all interrelated to one problem, placement of the Morwell Railway Station, especially because it was on land which cut a wide swathe through the town.

Lunch-hour closing was an irritant during this time, laden with anecdotes claiming that "on one occasion he, Vin Hourigan, knew some people came in to Morwell to do some shopping, but finding the shops closed they went on to Traralgon and got their things there."

A safe way out - let

us have a community survey analysing lunch-hour closing and its' implications.

Returning to more pressing issues, as reported in the Morwell Advertiser, Thursday June 23, 1938, the Civic Association:

"recognised that there should be two shopping sides to the main street.

At the present time one side of the street was occupied by the railway yards.

It was felt that if the railway station was shifted some distance west and placed near where the semaphore is, it would permit of the main street having two sides."

No doubt a radical suggestion, but caution prevailed. Mr Budge wondered if the people were in favour of having the station shifted.

He believed that "unless there is a majority in favour of the proposal, there would be no good going to the Railway Commissioners about it."

Alternatively, perhaps the goods shed could be

shifted further west, or even east - about opposite the state school - as it was once mooted. Then seek approval from the Commissioners to sell, or lease, for a long term, railway frontage to Commercial Road's north side.

Mr Budge argued that the Association would need to "act guardedly and in a diplomatic manner as Mr Clapp was not a very approachable gentleman. He did not wish to throw cold water on the proposal but recommended caution in the matter."

Sir Harold Winthrop Clapp (May 7, 1875 - October 21, 1952) was a transport administrator with the Victorian Railways who over the course of thirty years revolutionised railways.

He became Chairman of Commissioners of Victorian Railways in 1920 and remained Chairman until his retirement in 1951.

There seems to be a wide range of opinions about Mr Clapp. Most are flattering although there is a focus on his strict adherence to officialdom.

Over many years, going to the Railway Commissioners seems a reflection of Oliver Twist who asked "please, sir, I want some more."

These are the most memorable six words that Charles Dickens (1812-1870) ever wrote. They appear very early on in his second novel, Oliver Twist, published in 1837.

Mr Clapp and his entourage of fellow Commissioners visited Morwell in February, 1939. Councillor Alf

Ronald asked that Railway Department officers visit Morwell to discuss adopting a planning scheme enabling substantial buildings to be erected on the railway land, north side of Commercial Road. Mr Clapp took notes to refer to previous files regarding this idea.

Constant lobbying was fashionable, but ineffective. Mr Herbert Hyland MLA was blunt in his remarks to Morwell's community, when in February, 1946, he said:

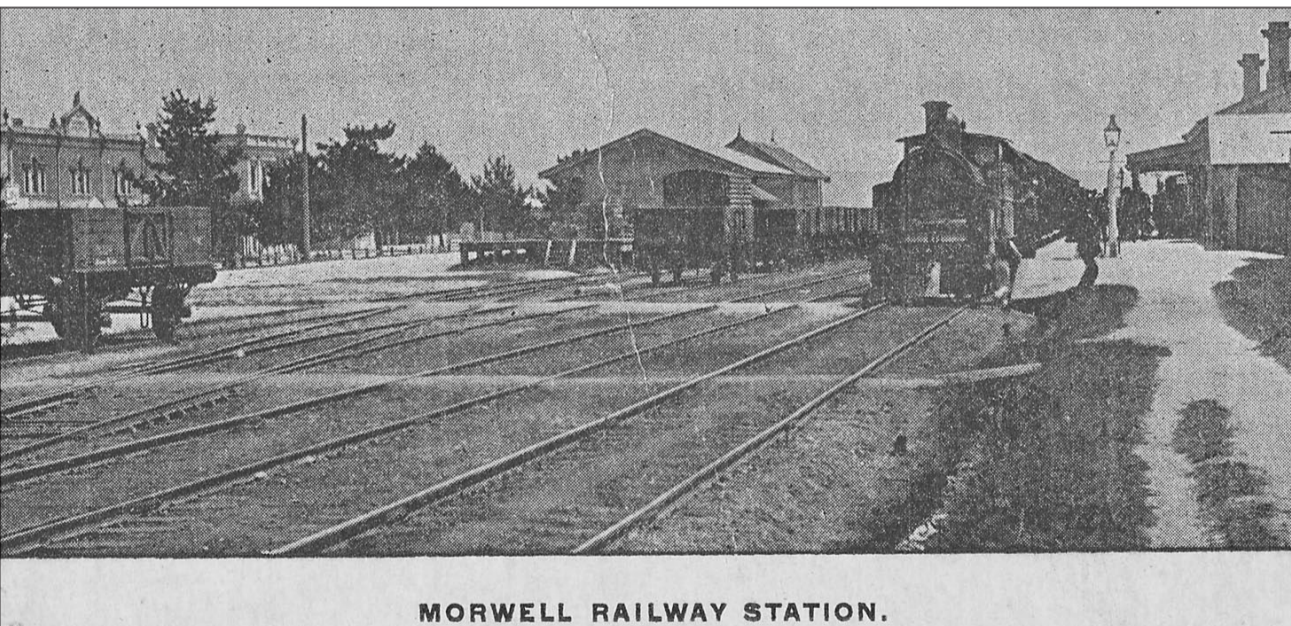
'As regards the town's pet aversion, the railway station, he advised them to forget about it for the moment beyond perhaps suggesting to the Railways Commissioners the moving of the goods sheds to allow of the opening up of more shop sites.

Until the final plans for the railway network to meet the S.E.C.'s requirements were finalised, it was useless to press for alterations to the station and railways yard. The Morwell Advertiser, Thursday February 14, 1946.

This leads to a larger topic - who had the stranglehold - the Victorian Railway Commissioners or the State Electricity Commission?

Space in this edition of CDN is limited to write a voluminous story about the lobbying from various sources over how to improve Morwell's main Commercial Road business district.

An opinion to think about - and as asked in a letter to the editor Morwell Advertiser, Thursday June 28, 1945, "Is Morwell the Cinderella town of the main Gippsland line?"



MORWELL RAILWAY STATION.



Yinnar/Yinnar South Landcare

By J Duncan

As we get ready for another big year ahead, we have a couple of good news stories from our vegetation projects.

In spring we could hear Reed Warblers in the reeds across the road from a private property where our group has assisted in establishing native shelter

look /listen are the Firmin's Lane Wetland outside Morwell or the reed beds below the former Green Inc (Now HVP) building in Churchill. There may still be a few of them around.

In other news, one of our group members has recently seen a platypus in Upper Middle Creek These fascinating and unique little

along the Upper Middle Creek valley at Yinnar South. Some areas were previously dominated by willows which are very poor providers of invertebrates to the hungry platypuses and fish in the creek below. A 2002 study (quoted in Bill Peel's Rainforest Restoration Manual for S.E. Australia p299) compared



Lesser Long-eared Bat Photo: Wildlife Unlimited



Australian Reed Warbler Photo: J. Venables from iNaturalist Observation # 188358799



Platypus (Tarra River) Photo: ambikab_iNaturalist Observation #26662896

belts. Reed Warblers are little brown birds that come here for the summer. It is good to know that the native shrubs are now able to provide a foraging resource and some shelter for these interesting little birds. (The reeds were already there as a place for them to roost.) Reed Warblers have a really loud call, but you are lucky to see one. Good places to

creatures are now considered to be a threatened species, so it is great to know that there is enough habitat there now to provide at least one of them with food. Platypuses eat insect larvae, worms, invertebrates and some fish, and they eat a lot, consuming 20% to 40% of their body weight every day.

We are now five years into our revegetation project

the number of invertebrate species found in willows with those found in native plants. Willows supported 20 species of invertebrates; Sweet Bursaria 1,402; Snowy Daisy Bush 463; Austral Mulberry 129 and Silver Wattle 263. Our plantings along Upper Middle Creek include these species and many more.

Threats to platypuses include predation by foxes, dogs and cats; stream bank compaction by stock; introduced weeds choking streams; loss of natural flows and habitat fragmentation. The illegal use of opera house nets for yabbies drowns some, but there have been many fewer reports of this since 2019 when these nets were banned. Other dangers include fixed lines and hooks left in streams and

discarded fishing line. Lost or discarded car gaskets, plastic rings, rubber bands and hair scrunchies are also a big problem in rivers and streams. If a young platypus gets a scrunchy or rubber band around its bill, it cannot get it off. As the platypus grows this cuts in to its bill and this wound will eventually kill the animal.

A good source of more information about platypuses is the Australian Platypus Conservancy. Their website is <https://platypus.asn.au/>. They are looking for volunteers to monitor a creek or waterway regularly and report any platypus sightings. With an expectation of seeing one at a good site once every six months or so, this job would seem to suit patient people best.

Our Landcare Group is now hoping to see similar benefits from establishing habitat for different native fauna in the drier country along Yinnar Road where we are adding pollinator patches to encourage native bees, other insects, birds, and bats back into a degraded landscape.

We will be looking for microbats in February and March; starting with a community workshop at sunset on Friday February 28. 'The Secret Lives of Bats' will involve a presentation at the hall and then a walk to look for evidence of bats. We cannot hear most bat calls

but using a device called an Echo Meter we can hear and explore the patterns of their calls. We are hoping we will find some bats at the township end of our pollinator link that is planned to extend as far as the Hazelwood Cemetery. Bookings for the workshop opened on February 1 and close on February 23 or when booked out.

Cost is \$10 for adults and free for those aged under 18. Bookings will be on TryBooking and the booking code is <https://www.trybooking.com/CYODT>

Sunday March 30 and Sunday April 27 are the dates for two community workshops for gardeners with a focus on 'Perfecting pollinator plantings: the what, why and how of pollinator gardens'. The presenter for these will be David Sparks who is currently Head of Horticulture at the Melbourne Polytechnic and who has previously led a number of community workshops for our group. Details will be in the next

issue and/ or on our website.

Before we get to do any of these fun things, our group will meet on February 15 to adopt a constitution that will lead to us becoming an incorporated association and qualify us to apply to become a registered charity.

Changes to tax exemptions for environmental groups mean that many similar groups are currently going through this process. It is not much fun, but all volunteer groups have to do this sort of work to keep functioning. We all love it when we find new volunteers prepared to help with the organisation side of group operations.

The community as a whole benefits from having many different community groups where people can get involved and follow their interests.

What better time to thank the volunteers who keep the Churchill & District News alive and provide us all with local news and information.

<https://www.landcarevic.org.au/groups/westgippsland/yinnar-south/>

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- Termite Inspections
- Pre-Purchase Inspections
- Vermin / Pest Animal Control

Morwell & District Red Cross Branch

Members meet on the second Wednesday of each month (February through until December) at 1.30 pm. at the Meeting Room of Yinnar and District Memorial Hall, unless otherwise notified. New members and visitors are welcome to attend. For further information contact the Secretary
Phone 0427 273 910

St Vinnies SOUP VAN

Soup van started Friday January 17

6.00 pm at White Parade reserve

6.30 pm at Illawonga Court

Soup, sandwiches, frozen meals, fruit, pantry items. Please bring a bag and yourselves. SPREAD THE WORD



Churchill Fire Brigade



Recent Fires

The Churchill brigade has been busy over the last few months as we have experienced a much warmer summer period this year.

We have been out assisting Fire Rescue Victoria at a wood mulch pile fire off Tramway Road.

We helped our neighbouring brigade Driffield with a nearly 5 hectare fire in some grass paddocks and bushland caused by a lightning strike on January 27.

We also attended a suspicious car fire near the

tennis courts on Manning Drive at 6:30 am on January 28.

Already this year in 2025, we have attended 23 fires or incidents, mostly grass and scrub fires, due to the increased summer temperatures and much

drier grass and other fine fuels than we have experienced over recent milder summers. For all of 2024, we responded to 151 fires, false alarms, motor vehicle accidents, house or shed fires, and a range of other incidents.

Fire Restrictions are still in force

The Churchill and District community is reminded that fire restrictions are still in force in Latrobe City, and across West, South and East Gippsland.

Find out what you can and cannot do during the declared Fire Danger

Period, and on days of Total Fire Ban, when fires in the open air are legally restricted in the Can I or Can't I brochure available from CFA District 27 Headquarters (20 Hazelwood Rd Morwell), or online: cfa.vic.gov.au/can



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[pipnikodemski](https://www.instagram.com/pipnikodemski)

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THE NATIONALS for Regional Victoria





Churchill Fire Brigade



Volunteering with CFA

In over 1200 communities across Victoria, CFA Brigade volunteers are proudly making a difference. Will you join us?

There are many ways you can lend a hand. Fighting fires, educating your community on fire safety or supporting the team from behind the scenes.

With full training and support from your local brigade, you can learn exciting new skills, connect with new people and play a vital role in your community.

What volunteer roles can I do?

There is a role for everyone as a CFA volunteer. Not all roles in a brigade require you to attend an emergency. There are operational roles and support roles in each brigade like social media, fire extinguisher maintenance or community education.

Managing vegetation – such as fuel reduction burns

Managing fire equipment
Our volunteers in support roles make a huge contribution to getting the brigade out in the community through fundraising or community safety education. They are also crucial to help keep the brigade operating and well managed. At some brigades, volunteers may choose to do an operational and a support role.

Young people can also volunteer with CFA. At the age of 16, young people can become a volunteer as outlined above.

Who can be a volunteer?

Do you live or work near a CFA brigade? CFA brigades welcome all members of the community of all ages and skills. Our members come from all walks of life.



communities in emergency situations. Willingness to lend a hand, learn and work as a team is a must.

We welcome all ages and backgrounds. You do not need to have experience with emergencies, all training is provided to you by CFA and your local brigade.

As a Child Safe environment, we require our members to have a Working with Children Check, and undertake a National Police Check as part of the application process.

Firefighting (operational roles) can involve strenuous and physically challenging activities, so a certain level of fitness is required to undertake this role.

You can discuss this with your local brigade to determine your suitability for this role. Training in specific firefighting or other operational roles is provided.

What can I expect as a volunteer?

CFA volunteers join because they want to give something back to their community and feel a sense of achievement.

Along the way, they develop leadership and management experiences, meet new friends, learn new life-skills and build valuable connections in their community.

No day is the same for our volunteers and each brigade is different because each landscape and community is different.

Volunteers perform many roles beyond fire suppression in grass and bushland and in homes and buildings. They educate and engage the community about fire safety, help residents develop fire plans and respond to other emergencies when they happen. This might include attending a road accident, or helping with flood response.

We are many different

faces with one crucial mission – protecting lives and property.

Apply to volunteer

Joining your local CFA is the most rewarding way you can give back to your local community. Our CFA members are dedicated and skilled and each volunteer makes a valuable contribution through the roles they perform.

CFA is focused on increasing the diversity of our membership as well as our flexibility to perform a volunteer role while

providing a range of opportunities and skill development. We are driven by our values and a commitment to inclusiveness and keeping our communities safe.

If you think this sounds like you, we invite you to apply to become a CFA Volunteer.

Applications are accepted online – see cfa.vic.gov.au/volunteers-careers/volunteer-with-cfa



Many volunteers find that operational roles – responding to emergencies like fires and rescues are highly rewarding and give them valuable new skills.

Operational volunteers respond to incidents where risks are posed to life and/or property. This may include:

responding to wildfires – such as grass fires and bushfires

Attending 'structural fires' – such as fires in homes, buildings and sheds

Attending road accident rescues

Assisting with other emergencies, including floods.

Attending incidents with hazardous materials

CFA offers both emergency response and support roles, so there is something to suit your availability, interest and skills.

Are you:

Over the age of 16?

Living or working nearby to your local CFA brigade?

Available to attend Brigade meetings and training during the evenings and some weekends?

Are available at some point during a 24 hour period to attend emergency incidents?

Have spare time during your week to perform a support role function?

Our volunteers are ready, willing and able to help their



Melina BATH MP
THE NATIONALS MEMBER FOR EASTERN VICTORIA REGION

MY DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN

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MelinaBathMLC

Hazelwood Cemetery

By Leo Billington

How people are remembered and, hopefully not forgotten (series continued)

Late last year, an ABC report (December 16, 2024) disclosed that "nearly 2,000 bodies had been exhumed from a sports field at a Tasmanian boarding school - with some buried six people deep - in what is believed to be Australia's largest mass exhumation.

Contractors working at the prestigious Hutchins School in Hobart - one of the oldest schools in Australia - discovered human graves buried underneath the hockey field while carrying out

construction work in March.

Archaeology team member Leah Ralph said, "It feels like giving back their identity and their history, and it's bringing them back into the world where they've just been forgotten."

Similarly, there are cases from the Hazelwood Cemetery where Leah Ralph's pertinent comment could easily be applied.

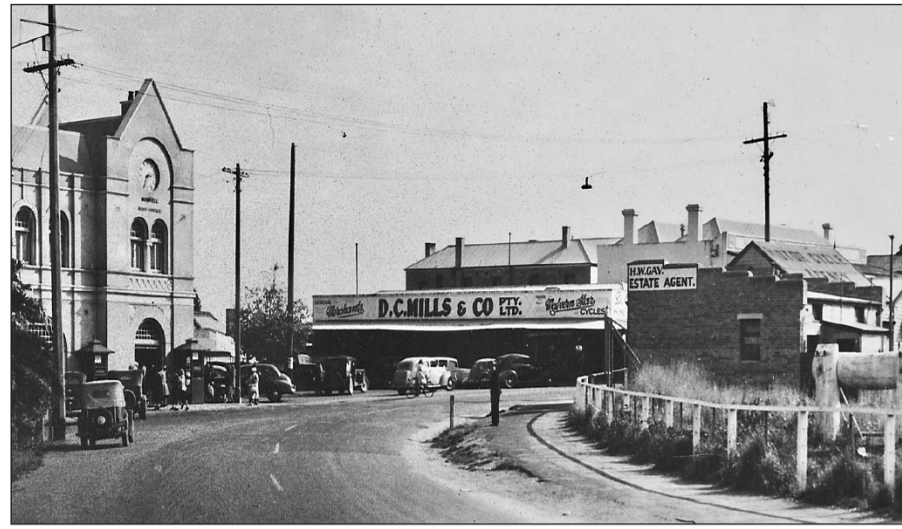
Mr Thomas Robins, a well-respected manager of the hardware section at Purvis Stores, Commercial Road, Morwell, was killed instantly at about 6.15 on Thursday afternoon, April 24, 1952. He is interred at the Hazelwood Cemetery.

Together with his close friend, Llewelyn Charles Cripps, Thomas was returning home after work to his residence in Buckley Street. He was married to Florence, and father to two boys, Richard and John.

There was no underground pedestrian subway under the former Princes Highway; until it was opened at 2.30pm on Wednesday May 11, 1955.

Both men were crossing the railway line, as was the regular practice of residents. Railway trucks were being shunted. There was a gap between two trucks, just wide enough. Thomas thought it was safe enough, Llewelyn thought not. However, the goods train suddenly moved; Thomas was killed immediately,

Coroner, Mr. W J Cahill concluded Thomas died from a fractured spine, abdominal and other injuries received



member of Morwell's Angling Club. He was born in Portland, spent childhood years in Western Australia as his father "chased" gold mining.

After his return to Victoria, Thomas, at age 21 years and 10 months, enlisted for service in the A.I.F. His occupation was grocer.

His obituary was

but not heard. Coroner, W J Cuthill, said he faced a difficulty "deciding between the conflicting stories."

In Warragul's County Court on Tuesday June 16, 1953, a claim was made by the Public Trustee Office as Executor of Thomas Robins, for £16,000 against the Victorian Railways Commissioners. Failure to give adequate warning of train movements and failure to provide appropriate railway crossing gates was gaining traction in the court proceedings. Suddenly, on a submission from the plaintiff's solicitor, the jury was discharged.

Apparently, it was claimed persons had seen the witness engine driver in the bar of the Club Hotel, Warragul drinking with and talking to two of the jurors on the evening before proceedings commenced.

It is of interest to note, at this trial, witnesses appearing for the plaintiff included Bill Panther Senior - Manager of Purvis Store in Morwell, close friend and employee at Sharpe's Emporium, Jack Tomkins and Llewelyn Cripps.

A retrial was held in Warragul on Tuesday October 6, 1953. Dubbed as a "court sequel", and obviously over a year since the fatality, this trial occupied three full days, which included a site visit to Morwell.

Eventually, a financial loss was assessed - with damages paid to Florence Robins, and separate amounts to Richard and

John. The Victorian Railways Commissioners met the court costs and a substantial cost to engage a Queen's Counsel.

Florence eventually moved to Stanton Street Morwell and is interred in the Highton Cemetery, Geelong. Raising her young family was challenging enough, yet it was necessary for a letter from Melbourne Legacy (Latrobe Valley Group) to Central Army Records - dated February 6, 1959 seeking assistance through the War Service Home Commission to obtain a house. First, it was required to obtain a Discharge Certificate for proof. Instead, certification of her husband's war service was provided in lieu of a Certificate of Discharge.

Postscript:

An unfortunate piece of local newspaper editing and layout is found in the Morwell Advertiser, Thursday October 15, 1953; right next to announcing the damages paid to Florence Robins, and separate amounts to Richard and John.

This announced the Railway Commissioners had strongly objected to a Comfort Station being built on their land, near the same crossing, adjacent to where Thomas Robins was killed!

More will be written about the stranglehold these Commissioners had on Morwell's development.

Llewelyn Cripps, son of Frederick George and Emily Norma Cripps - who owned their popular Central Café in Commercial Road for about three years - was a brother of Winsome Myrtle Cripps, the first Victorian girl nominated for the Olympic Games.

Winsome completed her education in Morwell before going to Melbourne.



when crossing on foot behind railway trucks, one of which passed diagonally over his body.

Well-known throughout Morwell's community, Thomas was remembered as a family man, a staunch

published in the Morwell Advertiser, Thursday May 1, 1952. In part, it was recorded that:

"Thomas served in France with a Trench Mortar Battery, attaining the rank of Sergeant in the 4/5th battalion.

As the result of a shell burst (heavily gassed in about May 14, 1918 and wounded in action; recorded May 3, 1918) he sustained injuries to both eyes, one which was for some time unrepairable. Eventually he lost one eye as a final bid to preserve the sight of the other.

At the service on Friday the President of the RSL Geoff Colebrook, referred to the sad loss of Thomas Robins and, at his request, the whole of the assembly paid a tribute of silence to his memory.'

Within weeks, on Friday May 30, 1952, at a Coroner's Inquest, recriminations about who was to blame were aired with great passion.

There was conflicting evidence - doubt that Thomas was using a usual footpath, the accompanying picture shows a gap in the fence line next to Gay's Estate Agency, was the goods train blocking a footpath, perhaps the train driver was careless, perhaps a train whistle was sounded



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COMMUNITY SAFETY

Words of Wisdom

Start of another School year

This month, we are looking at the start of another school year.

It is important to note that there will be a lot of school students making their way to school in the mornings and home in the afternoons.

Remember that the speed limits in the school zones are being enforced as per the times on the speed signs.

If you are not sure whether school is back in or not, it is worth sticking to the limits on the signs as required just in case.

There will also be a lot of first time students walking to school and back, so be on the look out for them as they may cross the road without looking first.

Always remember, it's better to be safe than sorry.

FOR EMERGENCIES, RING 000

FOR NON URGENT POLICE ASSISTANCE OR ATTENDANCE WITH NO SIRENS, RING 131444

Police advise members of the public that, if you require police assistance, call 000. The police communications operator will be able to assess your need and either send a police vehicle, relay a message or find out when the police station will be attended.

SCHOOL news

Churchill North Primary

Mumsupials

Mumsupials and Sons is a mobile native wildlife demonstration that comes to you. They provide local connection with our native wildlife and their aim is to educate in ecosystems enrichment, conservation and habitat. They came to our school to help educate our students with fun, friendly wildlife you would not get to see in the wild every day.

Every student had the opportunity to meet all their beautiful native animals up close. Students were educated on each animal, teaching them the importance

of our wildlife, and teaching our students how they can get involved in a safe and educational way.

The schools fundraising committee made sure that no students missed out on this amazing opportunity, and funded the incursion. Any money that is raised through our fundraising community throughout the year is given back to the students in the way of an educational learning day or a fun active day where families are invited to join in.

Elaina said that her favourite animal was the possum called Chestnut and

loved when it was eating sweet potato on her shoulder.

Anthony also loved Chestnut, but his favourite was the bearded dragon.

Lexie: There were three possums, I got to hold one of them, and I was able to pat a little blue tongue lizard. I love the stumpy tailed lizard.

Kelani: On Tuesday we went to the BER building to go see the animals and they were really soft, my favourite was the reptile, and my favourite type of reptile was the turtle. I also loved the golden fur possum it was fluffy, I really loved them all.

Bella: When we saw the

animals they were adorable lizards, possums, and turtles. We got to see a blue tongue lizard, and a very rare possum, 2/3 and 4H went together in the BER building.

Mordakye: At the Mumsupial incursion there was lots of animals like possums, lizards and turtles and my favourite was the blue tongue lizard. We got to see a blue tongue lizard with a tail that looked like his head. A Grade 4 started crying in cuteness because there was a blonde possum, We got to see a bird too.

Lily I: When we got to the BER building we sat in

a semicircle, and most of my friends were sitting around me and I was really happy. The first animal that we got to see was a lizard. It was a blue tongue and it had a tail like it was two heads, The second animal we got to see was an adult frill neck lizard and we got to touch it and it was very scary. After the lizards we saw possums and the first possum we got to see was a possum in a pouch, then I got to hold a possum on my arm but our arm had a towel on it, so its claws didn't scratch my skin, and we got to see a blonde possum but we weren't able

to hold it.

Quinton: I liked the golden brush tailed possum because it's adorable.

Austin: I like the one that was allowed to go on our arm, the brush tailed possum.

Bailey: I liked all the blue tongue lizards.

Mack: I liked the lizard, the shingle back lizard, named Rocky because I'd never seen one before.

Arya L: I liked the frill necked lizard because it is very cool and how it could run very fast.

Tempy: I liked all of the animals because it was good to see them up so close.



Left to right Aria, Nugget and Seth



SCHOOL news

Yinnar Primary

Graduation

Our Grade 6 students graduated from Yinnar Primary School on Wednesday December 18. It was wonderful to celebrate the years of primary school that our Grade 6 students enjoyed at Yinnar and to see them mature into fine young people.

During the evening special awards were made and include:

- Kurnai College Scholarship - Quade
- Morwell RSL Sub-Branch Bill Brannan Award - Jarryd
- Yinnar Primary School Learner Award - Annaliese and Alice

Yinnar Primary School Performing Arts Award - Caity

We wish all our 2024 Grade 6 students every success as they move onto secondary school and look forward to hearing of their achievements as they continue with their education.

We have a few families who are leaving Yinnar Primary School and we wish them well and thank them for their support for their child's education and their ongoing support and valuable contribution to the Yinnar Primary School community.

Australia Day

On Sunday January 26, three of our four school leaders attended the Australia Day ceremony in Yinnar. Annie, Adelaide and Jayden delivered their first official speech - 'What it means to be an Australian'. They were certainly well prepared and great ambassadors for our school.

2025

We extend an extra special welcome to our new students and new families. It has been lovely to see our Prep children settling into their new learning environment very quickly and show a willingness to try things. This mindset will

hold them in good stead as they encounter different challenges throughout the year. We have had a very smooth start to the term with all our students quickly returning to the routines of school ready for the year of learning. There is a very pleasant atmosphere throughout the school, both in classrooms and in the playground. For the next week or two, teachers are focussing on processes,

learning behaviours and expectations, to lay solid foundations for learning and growth.

One of the special qualities of our school is how the students show genuine care and are generally very inclusive of one another. The Prep students were welcomed and supported by their Grade 6 buddy in the playground during their first week at school.

We are extremely

fortunate to welcome Miss Tayla Cheffers and Miss Lexi King to our classroom teaching team. Over the past few weeks, we have been most impressed by the amount of effort all of the staff put in to make sure that the students had a very smooth start to the year. They are extremely passionate educators who aim to ensure that our children have the best possible learning experiences this year.



Yinnar & District Citizens of the Year

2000 Bill Webb	2019 John Harris
2004 Mark Smith	2020 Peter Dabney
2005 Neil Anandiah	2021 Dennis Webster
2006 Gary Jarman	2022 Nicole Allen
2007 Sharon Smith	2023 Sarah Phipps
2008 Peter Lohani	2024 Jan Smith
2009 Helen Parsons	
2010 Julie McMillan	
2011 Shirley Stewart	
2012 Chris Lang	
2013 Neil Williams	
2014 Hilary Stewart	
2015 Rory Lawless	
2016 Geoff Smith	
2017 Lloyd Wicks	
2018 Greg Darling	
2019 John Harris	
2020 Peter Dabney	
2021 Dennis Webster	
2022 Nicole Allen	
2023 Sarah Phipps	
2024 Jan Smith	

Australia Day - Citizen of the Year

2000	Neil Anandiah
2001	Neil Anandiah
2002	Neil Anandiah
2003	Neil Anandiah
2004	Neil Anandiah
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2018	Neil Anandiah
2019	Neil Anandiah
2020	Neil Anandiah
2021	Neil Anandiah
2022	Neil Anandiah
2023	Neil Anandiah
2024	Neil Anandiah

Yinnar and District Historical and Museum Society Inc.
Enquiries Phone 5163 4321 5163 1311 5163 1265
MEETING TIMES 2nd WEDNESDAY 7:00PM RAILWAY GOODS SHED

SPORT

Celebrating Churchill Baseball Club's 2024 Trophy Winners



The Churchill Baseball Club concluded its spectacular 2024 season with its presentation night on September 24, recognising the dedication, talent, and sportsmanship of its players, volunteers, and supporters. The evening celebrated not only individual and team achievements but also the milestones and contributions that make Churchill a standout in the local baseball community.

AWARD WINNERS

Best Club Person
Brooke Duncan and Chantelle Leigh. Brooke and Chantelle's tireless efforts throughout the year have earned them joint winners of the prestigious Best Club Person award. Their dedication and support have made a significant impact off the field.

Churchill Baseball Club Most Improved
Liam Duncan

Churchill Baseball Club Players Player
Daniel Hussain

Participation Awards
Every player in the U10, U13, and U16 teams received participation awards, reflecting the club's commitment to fostering a love for the game and encouraging growth in junior baseball.

U13 Award Winners
Best and Fairest: Hunter Duncan
Batting Average: Zack Holwerda
Coaches Award: Royden Williams
Coaches Award: Beau Saddington
Most Improved: Hudson Duncan

U16 Award Winners

Best and Fairest: Jack Thomas
Batting Average: Riley Duncan
Coaches Award: Conner Gray
Seniors "A Grade" Award Winners
Best and Fairest: Tim Bellerby
Batting Average: Max Vetter
Coaches Award: Rhys McKenzie

Seniors "B Grade" Award Winners
Best and Fairest: Jarrod Thomas
Batting Average: Brad Jones
Coaches Award: Jack Thomas
Seniors "C Grade" Award Winners
Best and Fairest: Daniel McKinnon
Batting Average: Gregg Duncan
Coaches Award: Noah McGuire

Milestones
Several players reached remarkable milestones this season:
Tim Bellerby: 350 Senior Games
Dylan Eldridge: 300 Senior Games
Gregg Duncan: 150 Senior Games
Rob Beamish, Rhys McKenzie, Laurie Curry: 50 Senior Games
These milestones are a testament to their dedication and passion for the sport.

Trophy Sponsors
The club extends its gratitude to the club sponsors whose support made these awards possible: Gippsland Motor Group, Churchill Hotel, Bunyip Equipment,

John Kieghran Plumbing and Gasfitting, ETU Victoria, Norm Oliver Meats, Morwell Bowling Club, Home Guard Pest Control.

Looking Ahead

As the 2024 season comes to a close, Churchill Baseball Club stands proud of its achievements on and off the diamond. The club's strong financial position, thanks to its sponsors and dedicated volunteers, promises an even brighter future. With juniors thriving, seniors excelling, and a supportive community behind them, Churchill is ready to hit it out of the park in 2025!

2025 season ahead

We are thrilled to introduce the 2025 Executive Committee for our club! These passionate and hardworking individuals are ready to lead us into another fantastic season of growth, teamwork, and success both on and off the field.
President: Gregg Duncan
Vice President: Tony Dickinson
Vice President: Brad Jones
Secretary: Ashleigh Hartwig
Treasurer: Ross Cooen
Canteen Manager: Chantelle Leigh

General Committee Members: Chantelle Leigh, Katrina Thomas, James Armstrong, Georgia Larkin, Brooke Duncan, Renae Gillett, Dylan Eldridge, Melissa Duncan, Kayla McKinnon, Sam Gillett
A huge thank you to our outgoing committee members for their incredible dedication and contributions to the club. Your efforts have been invaluable in building the foundation for the future.
We would also like to

extend a warm welcome to our new and transitioning committee members:

Ash Hartwig, stepping up from the General Committee to the Executive Committee as Secretary.

Georgia Larkin, transitioning from Secretary to a General Committee role.

Melissa Duncan and Kayla McKinnon, who are joining the committee for the first time – it's great to see junior parents stepping up to help guide our amazing club.

We would also like to thank Tim Bellerby and Shane Gill, who are stepping down from the committee

Basketball Australia alongside Visit Victoria, Latrobe City Council and TEG Sport recently announced that Traralgon will host the Boomers for their final window of the FIBA 2025 Asia Cup Qualifiers. Australia will play two games at the Gippsland Regional Indoor Sports Stadium with the Boomers facing Indonesia and Thailand on February 20 and 23, 2025.

The games will be the first Boomers international fixtures in the regional Victorian city of Traralgon, an area which continues to rise as a basketball hotspot for talent and participation. "Latrobe City is excited to host the Boomers in Traralgon in 2025. This is a fantastic opportunity to bring international level basketball to the region. We have a

but will still be around the club lending a hand and supporting where needed. Your ongoing commitment

Boomers take the battle to Gippsland

huge local number of local basketball fans who I know will be so excited to watch the qualifiers," said Mayor Dale Harriman, Latrobe City Council. "Events such as this solidifies Latrobe City's standing as an events capital south east of Melbourne and provides a significant boost to our tourism economy with visitors expected to come from across the region and beyond to watch the games."

Hosting these games in regional Victoria is a fantastic opportunity to showcase world-class Basketball, while giving local fans the chance to cheer on the Boomers. This is a celebration of sport, community, and the Boomers' incredible journey on the international stage. Gippsland continues to produce exceptional basketball talent including

is truly appreciated, and we are glad to have you staying involved!

Olympic bronze medallist Jade Melbourne, Australian Opal representative Jazz Shelley, Melbourne United's Jack White and coach Dean Vickerman. Jason Smith, Executive General Manager of High Performance looks forward to taking a team of Australia's up and coming stars for the double-header. "We have had a really exciting group of players throughout the FIBA Asia Cup Qualifiers and it's going to be an opportunity to come together and build chemistry in a home stint against two emerging basketball nations in Asia," said Smith. "This double-header is an exciting opportunity for our group and we hope to see a wave of green in gold on the streets of Traralgon in February."
General public tickets will be on sale from Tuesday, December 17, via Ticketek.

SPORT

Traralgon returns to national spotlight in 2025 ProMX Championship

The 2025 Penrite ProMX Championship presented by AMX Superstores (ProMX) calendar is now complete, with Traralgon to host Round 4 on Sunday, May 25.

Thanks to support from the Latrobe City Council, the famous Loy Yang Park track – which has hosted numerous national-level motocross events over the last few decades – will be making its' first appearance in ProMX alongside fellow 2025 debutantes Nowra and Warwick.

With gradient shifts, searching cambers, a variety of jumps, hairpins and punchy straights, Traralgon will make for exceptional racing across all the ProMX classes. As well as the spectacular Loy Yang track, Traralgon – one of four major towns which encompass the wider Latrobe City – also offers plenty for visitors including wide-ranging hospitality and service options and family-friendly attractions. The vastly experienced Traralgon Motorcycle Club will host the round, which will mark the



mid-point of the 2025 ProMX Championship.

The 2025 ProMX calendar is as follows:

- Round 1: March 22-23, Wonthaggi, Vic
- Round 2: April 13, Appin, NSW
- Round 3: April 27, Gillman, SA

- Round 4: May 25, Traralgon, Vic

- Round 5: June 22, Warwick, Qld

- Round 6: July 6, Nowra, NSW

- Round 7: July 27, Toowoomba, Qld

- Round 8: August 2-3, QMP, Qld

The MX1, MX2 and MX3 classes will compete at all rounds of the 2025 ProMX Championship, the MXW (women) at four, MX85 and MX65 Futures at three, and the Veterans at one. The class composition at all rounds will be announced shortly.

Mayor of Latrobe City,

Councillor Dale Harriman said "We are proud to host the 2025 ProMX and provide a new location for riders to test their skills right here in Traralgon. We look forward to welcoming riders, crew members and visitors to the event – and hope they can all make the most of what

Latrobe City has to offer during their visit."

For more information on the 2025 Penrite ProMX Championship presented by AMX Superstores, visit:

- ProMX website
- ProMX on Facebook
- ProMX on Instagram

Image: Foremost Media

Churchill & Monash Golf Club

December 7, 2024.

A Grade: M. Brereton 40 pts B Grade: I. Heppleston 38 pts C Grade: S. Martinac 40 pts

D.T.L.: 1. C. Sterrick 39, 2. D. Cluderay 37, 3. V. Reid 37, 4. R. King 37, 5. D. Burrigge 36, 6. T. Collins 36, 7. R. Abel 36, R. Noordam 36 c/b N.T.P: 3rd S. Allison, 5th W. McGrath, 12th (Pro Pin) J. Cahill, 14th D. Cluderay

Target Hole: D. Cluderay, Birdies: 3rd W. McGrath, T. Collins

4 Person Ambrose Medal Saturday December 14, 2024.

Winners: D. Byers, M. Lugton, L. Anderson 57.5 Nett

Runners Up: K. Westwood, K. Barnes, A. Jenkins, B. Jenkins 57.875 Nett

DTL: 1. S. Turner, R. King, D. Burrigge, M. Brereton 58 Nett, 2. P. Smart, R. Madigan, M. Smith, C. Wilson 58.125 Nett N.T.P: 3rd J. McCafferty, 5th D. Byers, 12th P. Smart, 14th M. Ryan

Stableford Tuesday December 17, 2024.

Winner: S. Caldwell 39 pts DTL: M. McConville 38 pts N.T.P: 3rd S. Caldwell, 5th S. Caldwell, 12th S. Caldwell, 14th S. Caldwell



Men's Monthly Medal Saturday December 21, 2024.

Monthly Medal Winner: G. Corponi 62 Nett Scratch Winner: R. Madigan 79 c/b Putts: C. Gilfillan A Grade Winner: M. Brereton 67 Nett B Grade Winner: B. Kilday 66 Nett

C Grade Winner: G. Corponi 62 Nett

DTL: 1. C. Sterrick 63 Nett, 2. R. Timbs 67 Nett, 3. R. Madigan 68 Nett, 4. J. Soppe 68 Nett, 5. Adam West 69 Nett, 6. G. Harvey 69 Nett, 7. T. Bennet 71 Nett c/b 8. J. Thomas 71 Nett c/b

N.T.P: 3rd G. Blizzard, 5th C. Thompson, 12th R. Vesty (Pro Pin), 14th C. Waring Target Hole: R. Noordam

Stableford Tuesday December 24, 2024.

Winner: L. Brent 40 pts DTL: Joan Clegg 39 pts N.T.P: 3rd L. Brent, 5th J. Clegg, 12th C. Hogbin, 14th J. Clegg Birdie: M. Hutchinson 14th

Stableford Saturday December 28, 2024.

A Grade Winner: J. Thomas 39 pts B Grade Winner: C. Gilfillan 42 pts C Grade Winner: C. Wilson 46 pts

DTL: 1. G. Spowart 39, 2. I. Heppleston 39, 3. G. Corponi 38, 4. M. Hutchinson 37, 5. W. McGrath 37, 6. L. Anderson West 36, 9. D. Vesty 36 N.T.P: 3rd Ash West (Pro Pin), 5th A. Auld, 12th M. Smith, 14th J. Thomas Target Hole: S. Turner Birdies: 3rd J. Balding, Ash West, C. Gilfillan, 5th C. Gilfillan, 12th P. McGann, C. Thompson

Stableford Tuesday December 31, 2024.

A Grade Winner: M. Hutchinson 41 pts B Grade Winner: A. Wright 41 pts

DTL: 1. C. Gilfillan 39 pts, 2. J. Blizzard 38 pts. N.T.P: 3rd M. Hutchinson, 5th S. Turner 12th C. Gilfillan, 14th S. Turner

Stableford Saturday January 4, 2025.

A Grade Winner: S. Allison 40 pts B Grade Winner: M. Soppe 42 pts C Grade Winner: C. Stevens 41 pts

DTL: 1. G. Spowart 42, 2. J. Vickers 41, 3. D. Ireland 41, 4. J. Soppe 40, 5. G. Tattersson 40, 6. D. Burrigge 39, 7. M. Smith 39, 8. D.

Radnell 38.

N.T.P: 3rd M. Smith, 5th R. Welsh, 12th P. Junker (Pro Pin), 14th D. Burrigge Target Hole: D. Burrigge Birdies: 3rd M. Smith, J. Cahill, A. Sharrock, G. Tattersson, 12th P. Flanigan, J. Soppe, P. Junker, 14th D. Burrigge

Monthly Medal Tuesday January 7, 2025.

Monthly Medal Winner: J. Blizzard 71 Nett Day Winner: P. Smart 70 Nett Scratch Winner: P. Smart 78 Putts: J. Blizzard 28, Carol Barnes 28

DTL: 1. L. Brent 72, 2. V. Reid 72 c/b N.T.P: 3rd P. Smart, 5th J. Clegg, 12th P. Smart, 14th L. Brent

Par Saturday January 11, 2025.

A Grade Winner: Adam West +5 B Grade Winner: C. Waring +3

C Grade Winner: P. Flanigan +6 D Grade Winner: B. Rowley +6

DTL: 1. D. Burrigge +5, 2. R. Sands +5, 3. P. Kearns +4, 4. M. Hutchison +4 5. R. King +3, 6. J. Jeffrey +3, 7. W. Sutton +3, 8. S. Martinac +3, 9. L. Chessum +3, 10. C. Thompson +3.

N.T.P: 3rd R. Sands (Pro Pin), 5th D. Ellwood, 12th D. Byers, 14th R. Sands Target Hole: M. Smith Birdies: 3rd P. Kearns, 5th G. Corponi, 12th D. Byers, I. Fortune

Stableford Tuesday

January 14, 2025.

Winner: L. Brent 38pts DTL: 1. C. Barnes 37, 2. I. Heppleston

N.T.P: 3rd M. Soppe, 5th V. Reid, 12th M. Soppe, 14th L. Brent

Stableford Captain Vs President's Day Saturday January 18, 2025.

A Grade Winner: Adam West 40pts B Grade Winner: M Smith 43pts

C Grade Winner: C. Stevens 36pts

DTL: 1. I. Fortune 40, 2. B. Kilday 39, 3. G. Barnes 39, 4. C. Wilson 39 5. M. Brereton 39, 6. R. King 38, 7. S. Turner 37, 8. D. Burrigge 36. N.T.P: 3rd M. Smith, 5th-, 12th C. Wilson (Pro Pin), 14th Adam West.

Target Hole: I. Fortune Birdies: 3rd M. Smith, Adam West, M. Brereton, R. Abel, 12th Adam West, M. Brereton, C. Wilson.

Winner of the Captain Vs Presidents is Team Captain with 32.26 over Team Presidents with 31.28

4BBB Tuesday January 21, 2025.

Winners: J. Blizzard and C. Barnes 50pts DTL: V. Reid and J. Clegg 47pts

N.T.P: 3rd D. Ellwood, 5th V. Reid, 12th M. Hutchinson 14th J. Blizzard Birdies: 3rd D. Ellwood, 12th M. Hutchinson

Stroke Round 3 Club Championship, Monthly Medal, Ken Garlic Star Medal Saturday November 30, 2024.

Men's Scratch Champion: R. Madigan (79,84,92) 255

Men's Handicap Winner: D. Cluderay 222 Nett

A Grade Handicap: R. Madigan 222 Nett B Grade Handicap: D. Cluderay 222 Nett

C Grade Handicap: Adam West 226 Nett

Day Winners Handicap:

A Grade: D. Burrigge 77 Nett B Grade: D. Cluderay 70 Nett C Grade: Ash West 77 Nett

Monthly Medal Winner: D. Cluderay

Ken Garlic Star Medal – M. Brereton Nett 81 c/b

Scratch Winner: Russel Dent 88

Putts: Adam West 28 D.T.L.: 1. G. Barnes 72, 2. Adam West 75, 3. B Jenkins 78, 4. R. Dent 79, 5. C. Waring 81. 6. N.T.P: 12th G. Barnes Target Hole: R. Dent

Stroke Monthly Medal Tuesday December 3, 2024.

Monthly Medal Winner: L. Van Rooy 81 Nett

D.T.L.: I. Duncan 82 Nett Putts: S. Caldwell 30 Scratch Winner: W. Hiriaki 80

N.T.P: 3rd M. Dear, 5th S. Caldwell, 12th L. Brent.

Stableford Saturday

BE A Churchill LOCAL SHOP LOCAL

**Shop LOCAL
Spend LOCAL
Eat LOCAL
Enjoy LOCAL**

*It takes **YOU** to start the trend*

Support local businesses who support your area where you live, work and play.

CHURCHILL & DISTRICT NEWS
"Connecting Your Community"

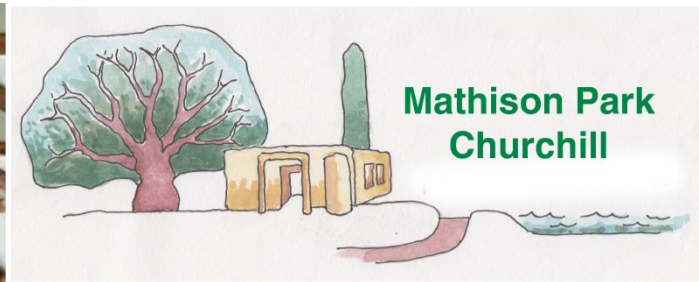
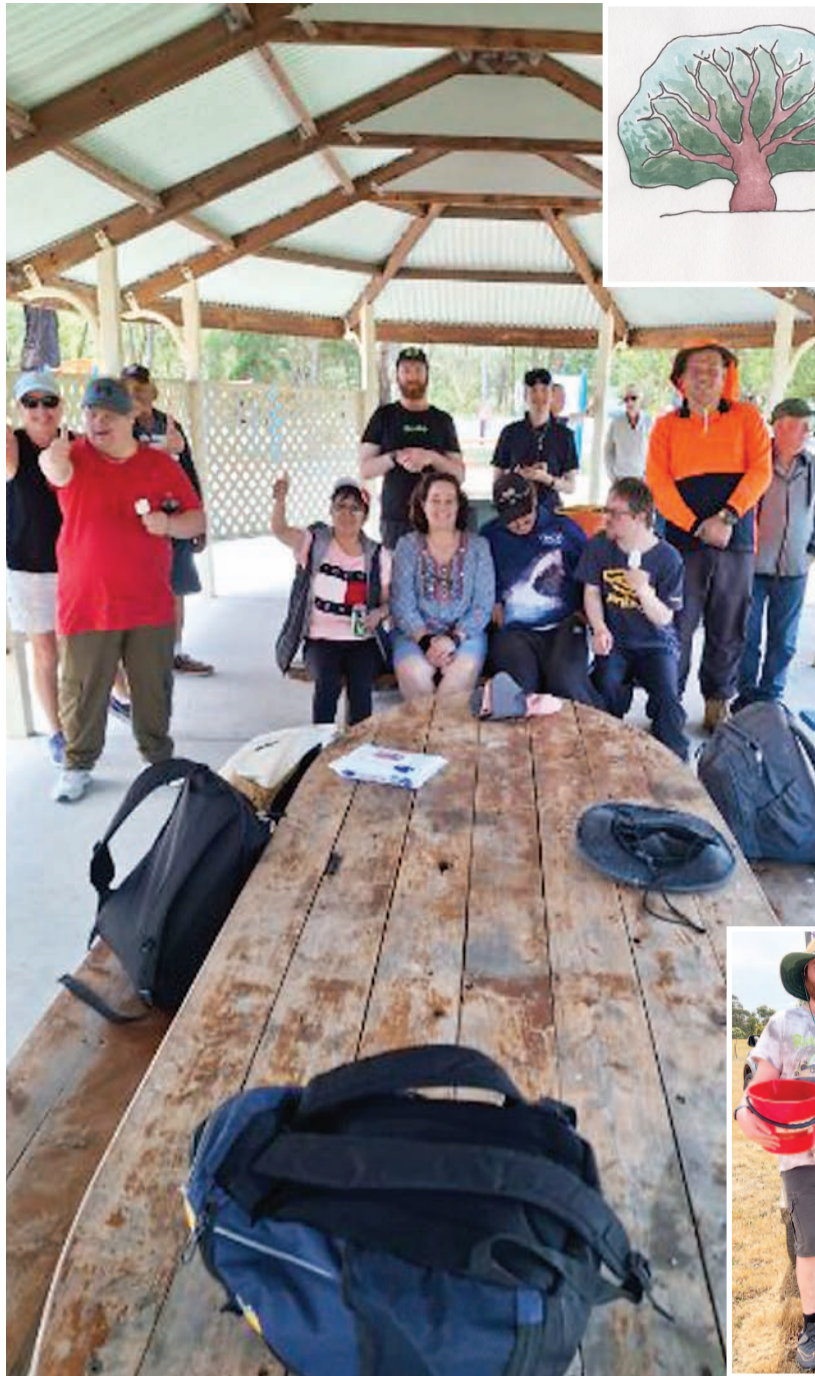
Danny O'BRIEN MP
State Member for Gippsland South



Working for Gippsland South

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 danny.obrien@parliament.vic.gov.au
 www.dannyobrienmp.com.au
 /dannyobrienmp

THE NATIONALS for Regional Victoria



The Gippsland Interchange crew has been a great help to our volunteers who readily give up another day each week to be with them, to carry out lots of tasks which need extra hands.

To show our appreciation, the crew was given lunch at the large picnic shelter in the park. Thanks were expressed and the food was enjoyed by all.

No formal working bee was held in January as volunteers took a break. The bird signs needed quotes for producing and installing them, so they were not installed as early as hoped.

With the warm dry weather and very little rain, watering of our new trees and plants was essential.

The Gippsland Interchange crew was back after their holidays and helped with this important task.



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Australia Day 2025

CHURCHILL



Australia Day 2025 was held at the Civic Space below the town hall where an anticipatory crowd gathered to hear and honour those who had been chosen to receive awards. The morning was fine and sunny. The Churchill & District Lions Club had set up the area with chairs.

Bill Rowley was entertaining the crowd with many Australian songs. The Lions were cooking up their well-loved egg and bacon sandwiches, plus sausages and onions with orange juice to wash it down. Lion Bill Hurenkamp introduced the proceedings, welcoming guests Martin Cameron our local MP and Leanne Potter our local ward councillor. A welcome to country was given. The 1st Churchill Scouts did the flag raising.

Pastor Cathie Halliwell from the Co-Operating churches said prayers for our country.

Martin Cameron spoke and acknowledged that Australia Day means different things to different people. It is a time to celebrate how lucky we are to be raised or to become a citizen of this country where we have safety, especially in Latrobe City. If we love the country we live in that keeps us safe. There are so many things we can do and achieve in Australia. Martin expressed a "Well done" to Bill, Reg and the Lions for their organisation of the day.

Leanne Potter said any day that brings community together is good. Australia Day is an opportunity to celebrate those unsung heroes who volunteer and make our communities so supported.



AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD
Dianne Billingsley AFSM
BOOLARRA
Full story Page 3



AUSTRALIA DAY AWARD
Churchill
Citizen of the Year
Laurie Marks
Full story Page 1



Australia Day 2025

CHURCHILL con't.

Reg Grisotto then read out the words describing the characteristic and achievements of the award recipients.

Bailey Robson Hazelwood North Primary



Bailey was nominated by his school Hazelwood North Primary School where he attended and completed year six last year.

Bailey was nominated by the school for his commitment to his education, respect for school values, his compassion for giving of his time to assist and help other students and his leadership qualities.

Bailey is a confident well-spoken, very likable young man who was Blue House Captain last year. Bailey is someone who gets on well with others and is a role model for other young people,

Bailey likes school, his favorite subject being science. He enjoyed helping out at school. Bailey loved attending school camp, where he enjoyed canoeing and nature walks. He also helped with some of the sick kids during the camp. Bailey appreciated the work that the teachers did to help him through school and is looking forward to attending Lavella College next year, but it is sport that is his main interest with soccer as the game.

Bailey played soccer for

Churchill United Soccer Club and now at Gippsland United where he plays in the Metropolitan league, as centre defence, all as team Captain. Bailey has achieved much as a soccer player and his team has won many league titles. Bailey plays with confidence, works hard, is ambitious, and is determined to develop as a player and encourages his teammates to play better, is a confident well-spoken, very likable young man, Bailey is someone who gets on well with others and is a role model to other young people and likes hanging out with friends. He also likes being with his family and has just completed a trip around Tasmania in the family's caravan.

Bailey is excited by the challenges that lie ahead and is determined to do well in his future academic studies, at the same time continuing to develop his soccer skills.

Bailey is a young man who knows where he wants his life to go, and is determined to succeed. He likes to do things his way and is reliable. Give him a job and he will do it. He has great support from his family and is a very worthy Australia Day award recipient. Well done Bailey.

Rory Fraser- Matthews Churchill Primary



Rory was nominated by his school Churchill Primary School. Rory was a Year 5 student last year

and will be a school Vice Captain this year, Rory is looking forward to Year 6 this year and is very committed to his education, has great respect for school values, and always makes time to assist and help others, helping out with the school's buddy system.

Rory lives with his Nan and Pop. He is confident, polite, and well-spoken; a role model for other students.

Rory is an active member of the school community, participating in school events and helping out whenever he can, whether it is helping other children in the class or playground, such as with the Buddy System. He is a popular and respected student.

Rory loves his sport and has played lots of different sports including Aussie Rules football, soccer, cricket and even giving archery a go. Robin Hood watch out, Rory is coming. Of all the sports he has played it is soccer that he loves best, and is playing for Churchill United where in 2023 he won the Clubs Best and Fairest Player award in the Under 11's. Last season his side won the Night Championship beating the season's top side.

Just like at school, Rory helps out at home and really enjoyed helping his Pop building a shed. He enjoys listening to music and playing with his dog Buddy

Rory is a determined young person; inclusive, helpful, willing to help when needed and always strives to do his best to succeed in everything he does.

A worthy Australia Day award recipient. Congratulations Rory.

Bella Watson Churchill North Primary

Bella was nominated by Churchill North Primary School where Bella completed Year six last year. Bella was a school Vice-Captain and was recognised by the school for her commitment to her education, her respect for school values, helping out around the school and helping out with the Kids after School care program.

Bella loves school, learning new things and being helpful in the classroom. Her favorite subjects are arts and writing



At the end of year school awards Bella received the Good Citizen Award for going out of her way to help other students, being a behavior role model, encouraging other students to keep trying, and helping teachers in and out of the classroom.

Bella has two other siblings and is the middle child. Bella loves being outdoors and is an active member of the 1st Churchill Scout group, She loves going on camps and enjoys being with her fellow Scouts learning to be creative and learning new leadership skills and qualities.

At home Bella likes crafts, crocheting and sewing. She enjoys hanging with her friends and loves being outdoors. She is a kind, compassionate young person who is always willing to help out others and contributes to her school community by assisting in school activities and assisting teachers when required.

A worthy Australia Day award recipient. Great work Bella.

Hunter Yacoup Lumen Christi

Hunter was nominated by Lumen Christi Catholic School where he is a popular member of the school community. He was nominated by the school because of his commitment to his education, his compassion, and giving of his time to assist and help others.

Hunter has two brothers, is

a polite young person who likes playing sports, and being active and involved. Hunter plays and loves competing in football for the Churchill Football and Netball Club and cricket for the Churchill Cricket Club.

Hunter is a very happy and creative person, helpful at home with mowing the lawn putting the bins out and keeping the house clean. Hunter likes to be involved whether it is at school, at home or at sports,

Hunter likes being with his friends, especially playing sport and being involved with team sport and doing his best for the team.

Hunter is always willing to help and assist others who need help, in class for the teachers when required, and looks out for the younger junior students.

Hunter is a definite role model



to other students in the way he conducts himself at school not only academically but also for his care and desire to help others whether at school or away from school or playing sports. He has a strong will to do well and make a difference.

Congratulations Hunter. A worthy Australia Day award recipient.

Following the awards and photo taking of proud families, the Lions breakfast was ready for eating.

A happy time of community gathering and chatting was a special part of the day.





Australia Day 2025

BOOLARRA



Another great Australia Day celebration at Railway Park in Boolarra with around 120 people turning out to enjoy the mild weather, an egg and bacon sandwich and a chance to have a chin wag with friends they do not run into often. The volunteers on the BBQ started at 7.30 to ensure the hungry masses were very well catered for. Big thank you to members of Boolarra Development Group for feeding everyone breakfast. Well done also to Juliett and Denise for bringing the Koffee Kart along and providing free coffees to the masses. The kids had fun with the games of cricket under the trees.

The older crowd members were kept on their toes by Australiana Trivia Questions provided by Robert Franssen. There were 18 nominations for the Community Recognition Awards this year. This reflects the enthusiasm people have for being able to have their friends' efforts formally acknowledged in front of an audience of their peers. Once again it was a terrific range of recipients this year, with a number of the quiet achievers acknowledged, along with a number of people who have been closely involved.

Councillor Leanne Potter arrived from her prior commitments at Churchill and Yinnar and spoke of the significance of Australia Day.

and the values it represents, and how these are reflected in our community and the strength of the community spirit within Boolarra. We then had the raising of the flag. Congratulations to the following recipients in recognition of their significant contribution to the Boolarra community:

Michael Gleeson - Boolarra Cemetery Trust.
Matthew Gleeson - Justice of the Peace.
Margaret Gleeson - Boolarra Wool Group.
Sue Clutterbuck - Boolarra Wool Group.
Colin Brick - Boolarra Community Development Group.
Brock Mack-Matthews - Boolarra Community Development Group.
Doug Black - Boolarra Community Development Group.
Margaret McKay - Conference of the Birds.
Gilbert Douglas - Conference of the Birds.
Cameron Alexander - Storm clean up.
Laughlan Alexander - Storm clean up
Kyle Alexander - Storm clean up.
Roslyn Carstairs - Boolarra Memorial hall.
Robern Lubawski - Boolarra Memorial hall.
John Lubawski - Boolarra Memorial hall.
Kat Kershaw - Boolarra Memorial hall.

Liz Black - Boolarra Memorial hall.
Cooper Stanton - Jeeralang Boolarra Panthers Cricket Club.

The Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM) is awarded in recognition of a persons' exceptional service, leadership and dedication to CFA, the fire services and Victorian community. As the highest award in the fire services in Australia, the AFSM is a prestigious recognition for those who have made an extraordinary impact in their communities and the broader emergency service sector.

Diana Billingsley AFSM
 Diana is known for her proactive, solutions-focused approach; someone who is willing to roll her sleeves up to help drive positive change. She has attended more than 200 incidents in the 20 years she has been an operational volunteer with Boolarra brigade. In addition, she performed the role of crew leader during the 2009 Black Saturday and 2019-20 Black Summer fires. More recently, Diana has taken on the role of deputy group officer and group training officer for the Merton Group, where she plays a larger role in supporting volunteer training within her district.





Australia Day 2025

YINNAR



Herb with Danny after he received the life long achievement award



1st Yinnar Scouts



Australia Day celebrations in Yinnar started well with a beautiful sunny morning. The attendance was better than expected given that the day had fallen on a long weekend.

Great food was provided by the Yinnar & District Lions Club. Ex Kurnai student Lucas Hobbs provided the entertainment with his rendition of several well known hits.

Yinnar and District Community Association president, Luke Townsend, chaired proceedings for the morning. Our local member Danny O'Brien, together with Councillors Darren Howe and Leanne Potter gave short addresses to the crowd.

The Australian flag was then raised by a great contingency of the 1st Yinnar Scout group, followed by the singing of the national anthem by attendees.

Three of the Yinnar Primary School Captains, Annie Bremner, Jayden Bond and Adelaide Cleaver, presented their rendition of "What is Australia Day?"

Each of the Captains spoke brilliantly.

The Australia Day Citizen of the Year awards were then presented. Unfortunately, there were no nominations for Young Citizen of the Year.

Luke suggested that next year the mission of the town should be to correct this oversight and provide nominations.

There were two nominations for Citizen of the Year, Laura Gee and Kevin Young.

The award was won by Kevin for his outstanding community work especially the establishment and upkeep of the RV stop over in Yinnar which has brought lots of new faces to the town.

The morning culminated in the presentation of a life long achievement award to Herb Smith.

A fantastic day appreciated by all who attended – well done everybody.



Yinnar School Captains: Annie Bremner, Jayden Bond and Adelaide Cleaver



Danny O'Brien, Darren Howe, Leanne Potter