

WARANGA NEWS

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A community newspaper staffed by volunteers

Thursday 20 March 2025

Bob and Floss celebrate 70 years



Last Wednesday (12 March) marked another milestone for long-time residents of Stanhope, Bob and Floss Holschier – 70 years of marriage! After being inundated with cards and greetings from every important personage imaginable (yes - including King Charles and Queen Camilla!), they enjoyed an anniversary lunch with family at the Wallenjoe Hotel. As valuable members of the Waranga News team for many years – Bob held the esteemed positions of Committee President and Cleaner, while Floss managed the postal subscriptions – we think they have earned front page status for their photo!

Read more about Floss and Bob's seven decades together on page 8.

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Easter excitement building up

Easter is less than a month away! And planning is well underway for this year's Easter Heritage Festival which is planned to be bigger and better than ever.

It seems everyone loves a competition (just look how we all enter into the spirit for the Christmas tree competition!) As well as all the usual attractions, this Easter there will be plenty of opportunities for those with a competitive streak at this year's Festival.

An Easter Colouring Competition this year is being sponsored by Jaz at the General Store Rushworth. Colouring sheets will be distributed at our local schools or they can be picked up from the General Store.

The Easter Bonnet Competition is on again so with just a month to go it's time to get working on your beautiful Easter bonnets. There are two competitions – one for the kids and one for adults. The entries for competition get better and better each year, so thinking caps on and we look forward to seeing some wonderful creations. This competition is sponsored by Chris Bolton Real Estate.

Last but by no means least is the Doggy Catwalk event. Bring your best pal along dressed up for Easter. The Best Dressed Dog will be judged as well as a few other doggy events to keep you and your doggy friends entertained – and there will definitely be some doggy treats available! Sponsors this year are Goulburn Valley Mulching & Slashing – and two other stallholders will also be providing vouchers.

Keep your eyes on the Waranga News, social media and our local stores for the program for the day. Remember – all of the competitions are free to enter and no pre-registration is needed. Just turn up on the day!



Always a popular event, the Doggy Catwalk will have no shortage of entrants.

Moora Working Draught Horse Muster

This year's Easter Sunday Moora Muster is shaping up to be a great event.

Held at the Moora Reserve, there will again be the popular working draught horses using traditional farming methods.

Throughout the day there will be lots of stalls and a variety of 'heritage' style demonstrations such as rope making and blacksmithing, as well as sheep dog trials and saddle making.

An added bonus for the day will be an informative talk given by Dr Judith Mulholland of Farrier Vet Lancaster.

A feature this year is the addition of mules working singly and in teams giving demonstrations of working in harness and jumping on leads.

For the kids there will be donkey rides and a "Kids Corner" with lots of activities planned.

Food and drink will be available all day and the customary BBQ will be held at the Big Green Shed at lunch time.

Entry is by gold coin donation and a



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Lockers for rough sleepers in Echuca

Campaspe Shire Council has partnered with Victoria Police (Echuca) and Anglicare Victoria to provide secure lockers for individuals experiencing homelessness in Echuca.

The lockers will provide rough sleepers a safe place to store their personal belongings, reducing the need to carry them constantly or leave them unsecured.

A working group comprising Campaspe Shire Council, Victoria Police (Echuca), Anglicare Victoria, and Njernda Aboriginal Corporation identified the need for these lockers. This collaboration led to the formation of the Housing and Homelessness Partnership Network, which now also includes the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

The network meets regularly to discuss the common concerns facing those experiencing homelessness in the Echuca area. It identified the impact secure lockers could have on improving the lives of those in this position.

Mayor of Campaspe Shire, Cr Daniel Mackrell expressed his enthusiasm for the project and said the initiative is a testament to Council's commitment to supporting the most vulnerable members of our community.

"By providing a secure place for rough sleepers to store their belongings, we are helping to restore their dignity and sense of security," Cr Mackrell said.

Inspector David Bowler from Victoria Police (Echuca) also highlighted the importance of the project, emphasizing that the installation of these lockers is a practical step towards ensuring the safety and well-being of those in need.

Anglicare Victoria Youth and Community Services Program Manager Cam Turnbull said his organisation was proud to be part of the collective effort to improve the lives of some of the most marginalised people in Echuca.

Six lockers have been installed at the Echuca police station, offering a central and safe location with good lighting. The Council funded the \$8,500 cost of the lockers, Victoria Police (Echuca) installed them on their headquarters' site, and Anglicare oversees their administration to those in need.

Services Australia's Mobile Service Centre to visit

Services Australia's Mobile Service Centre Blue Gum is visiting towns in northern and northeastern Victoria in the coming weeks.

Blue Gum offers the community easy access to Medicare and Centrelink services and can provide information about the National Disability Insurance Scheme and Department of Veterans' Affairs services.

Blue Gum agenda

The mobile service centre will be located at the following venues:

- Stanhope on Thursday 20 March near the Stanhope Hall, Godley Place (9am to 3pm)
- Tatura on Tuesday 25 March in front of Memorial Garden Park, Hogan Street (9am to 4pm)
- Rushworth on Wednesday 26 March in the Centre car parking area, High Street (9am to 4pm)
- Rushworth on Thursday 27 March in the Centre car parking area, High Street (9am to 4pm)
- Murchison on Friday 28 March opposite the Service Station, Stevenson Street (9am to 4pm)
- Nagambie on Monday 31 March in the Centre car parking area, High Street (9am to 4pm)
- Euroa on Tuesday 1 April near Burtons Supa IGA, Brock Street, (9am to 4pm)
- Euroa on Wednesday 2 April near Burtons Supa IGA, Brock Street, (9am to 4pm)
- Violet Town on Thursday 3 April near the Community House, Cowslip Street (9am to 3pm)



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

- Centrelink claims
- Payment and services information
- Updating information
- Confirming documents and supporting information
- myGov services
- Social work support and referrals
- Medicare registrations
- Accessing online services through a self-service terminal.

Campaspe community grants round one now open

Applications are now open for Round One of the 2025 Community Grants program, aimed at supporting local initiatives that deliver direct benefits to the residents of the Campaspe Shire.

The program encourages community groups and organisations to apply for funding to support projects that enhance social connectedness, promote inclusivity and contribute to the overall wellbeing of the community.

Campaspe Shire Mayor, Cr Daniel Mackrell encouraged all eligible groups to apply for the grants. He said the Community Grants program provides a fantastic opportunity for local organisations to secure funding for initiatives that will enrich our community. The program is about empowering residents to create positive change and build a stronger, more connected community.

Eligible applicants can request up to \$4,000

to fund programs, projects, and activities that encourage community participation and engagement. Each application will be evaluated based on specific criteria, with funding decisions reflecting the potential to enhance the quality of life for residents and contribute to the shire in a unique, collaborative manner.

Applications for the grant program close at 5pm on Thursday, 24 April.

Applicants needing assistance with their application are encouraged to contact Community Development Team on 1300 666 535. For full funding criteria, or to apply please visit www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/communitygrants.

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Murchison's diverse heritage on display

by Kay Ball

Murchison has a great deal of unique and diverse history. Events that have made Murchison's history special are not just of local significance, but are of State, National and International importance.

There are many places on the Victorian Heritage Register within ten kilometers of the town – Camp 1 and Camp 13, Dhurringile Mansion, Thornebridge (formerly Gregory's Hotel), the Ossario, Day's Mill and Farm and Noorilim Estate; some are also National Trust properties.

Also woven into Murchison's historical story are the following:

- One of four Aboriginal Protectorate Stations in the Colony was established here in 1840 at the end of what we now call Stevenson Street Murchison.

- Rare Aboriginal graves of the original inhabitants, the Ngurai-illum Wurrung people are in the Murchison cemetery.

- From 1853 a punt operated near the present-day bridge establishing the town as a crossing place and many gold seekers traversed the track between Beechworth in the north east and Ballarat and Bendigo in the south west.

- Day's Mill and Farm established in 1865 in South Murchison still stands today as the best example of a 19th century flour milling operation in Victoria.

- The first public funded large scale irrigation system in Australia began on the bank of the Goulburn River south of the township in 1885 until the Goulburn Weir was functioning in 1891 which has led to the prosperity of the Goulburn Valley, known as the food bowl of Australia.

- During World War 2, prisoner of war and internee detention camps were built in the area, housing many thousands of men and women until 1947.



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- Consecrated in 1961, the Ossario in Murchison Cemetery holds the remains of 130 Italians who died while detained in Australia during World War 2.

- A significant art collection, created by a German prisoner while in Camp 13 Murchison is part of the collection housed in Murchison Heritage Centre.

- In 1969 a rare meteorite 4.6 billion years old, broke up over the town. Star dust extracted from Murchison meteorite in 2020 has been identified as 7 billion years old; nothing else this old is in existence on planet earth.



Heritage Centre changes

From the end of March, we are changing a few things to make membership of Murchison Historical Society even more enjoyable, more engaging and hands-on.

We have decided to have the Heritage Centre open to the public only on Saturday mornings 10am – 12noon, no longer on Wednesday morning. We are always happy to open up the Centre at other times by arrangement, email contact best: murch.hs@outlook.com

For group bookings, please ring Janet on 5826 2363. We can offer a range of experiences from guided town tours, slideshow talks, morning or afternoon tea or light lunch, family history research and of course a wander around our gallery showcasing our amazing history.

Interested in knowing more? Want to explore the rarely seen treasures in our store room? We warmly welcome new members to be part of our friendly group. Members can hear guest speakers, hands-on involvement caring for the collection which includes thousands of photographs and historic documents, setting up engaging displays, hosting groups visiting the Heritage Centre, outings to historic places and socializing with like-minded people.

Instead of evening meetings for members, mostly concerned with business matters, we will have daytime gatherings on the third Tuesday in the month from 9.30 – 12.30 pm starting on 15 April to enjoy the activities mentioned above.

Call in to the Heritage Centre at 4 Stevenson Street, on any third Tuesday in the month and meet our great band of members. Contact us by email: murch.hs@outlook.com or leave a message on our 'phone: 0475 018 743 if you would like more information.

*Kay Ball,
Murchison & District Historical Society*



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Have your say!

Readers are invited to contribute their letters, opinion pieces and ideas to these pages.

A Golden opportunity

With the proposed World Heritage listing of Rushworth and Whroo within the Historic Gold Fields of Victoria, a golden opportunity exists to place the Waranga area of the Shire of Campaspe amongst major tourist attractions in the state.

However, this will require some positive action from local residents with the formation of a Waranga Tourism Group and the full support of the Shire of Campaspe, both physically and financially. If this does not happen, then everything will remain the same, with golden opportunities missed.

The gold rush days of the 1800s is a fantastic story in its own right, however there is much more to offer the tourist than the story of gold and this includes the other gold in the Waranga area, **water**, the liquid gold.

During the 1980s until early 2003 I operated "Australia Wide Travel Services" which incorporated four tourism companies, all operated from a small office in Rushworth. During those years there were thousands of tourists who visited Rushworth, including visitors from overseas, senior citizens and thousands of school students, all wishing to learn about the gold rush days and the irrigation system.

Nowadays, there is even more to offer the tourist, with world class murals at Colbinabbin and Stanhope, together with what I would refer to as the food triangle of the Shire, including the Colbinabbin Hotel at Colbinabbin, the Gargarro Café at Girgarre and the more recent Wallenjoe Hotel at Stanhope, all offering the best of food and service,

So, for residents and businesses of the Waranga area of the Shire, this is a great opportunity not to be missed. Now in my 90s and partially crippled, I am unable to assist physically, but am happy to assist with advice, as I firmly believe the Waranga area has more to offer the tourist or visitor than any other area within the Shire of Campaspe.

Bob Holschier OAM
Stanhope.

No pub in town

As someone who has recently returned from a long stint in WA, it is disheartening to find both pubs closed.

I have always enjoyed a drink and a chat with friends and locals. It's sad that we no longer have a place local for dinner.

I don't know what the solution is but I hope that as a town we can find a way.

C. Dennis
Rushworth

Letters to the Editor are welcome, but must be accompanied by the sender's name and residential address (address not for publication). Anonymous letters will not be accepted. Longer letters may be subject to editing. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the views of the Waranga News.

What do you think?

Contributed by Graeme Hanigan

I hope you're enjoying this series inspired by Melanie Trecek-King, but first let's have a quick recap.

1 Socrates "the unexamined life is not worth living", and how strong is your epistemology?

2 How our pattern seeking brains try to make sense of nonsense, this is called pareidolia.

3 The foundation of science is falsifiability, introduced by the philosopher of science Karl Popper.

Today we're going to see if we can detect an illusion:

I love watching magicians as they perform the most amazing feats, right before my very eyes whilst I gasp in amazement "how did they do that?"

Yet magicians admit to simply diverting attention, perhaps with an attractive assistant, and whilst I'm distracted they perform the sleight of hand, which I completely fail to notice.

Imagine a young child watching a magic trick for the first time. If we wanted to help her understand that there was no magic involved, just sleight of hand, we could explain what the magician did. But to really help her master how and why she was fooled, we could teach her how to perform the trick herself. (Plus, it's a lot more fun!)

We humans, have astonishing minds, capable of brilliant insight, deep probing thought, and complex, multi-layered understanding, and most of us see our minds as a block of Cheddar Cheese, solid, sturdy, factual and dependable.

But in reality our minds are like Swiss Cheese, delightful but absolutely riddled with holes of false perception, and it's the magician who knows where these holes are. They rely on them to create illusions for the fun and enjoyment of their audiences, and the audiences KNOW it's all an illusion.

But what if you're presented with something which is claimed to be real, but is really just an illusion? How would you tell the difference? It's not easy!

You've probably seen advertising such as 'Multi award winning sixth generation International Psychic, Medium, Empath', which looks impressive, or been told by a friend 'this psychic is real' and as we are trusting beings, straight away the trick has slipped through a Swiss Cheese hole in your brain, and bypassed the question, 'I wonder if this actually works?'

The person performing the illusion will probably use some form of props such as tarot

cards, a pendulum, an Ouija board, runes, crystals, smudge sticks, horoscopes, sound bowls or dowsing rods etc, all of which is claimed, serve as gateways to the spiritual realm, enhancing the 'psychic experience'. Like a magician they are simply creating a distraction, the illusion of some 'supernatural' connection.

If it's someone pretending to offer a health treatment, they will often wear a white coat, or even scrubs, perhaps use a stethoscope or some pseudo-scientific equipment or terminology to give the impression that you're experiencing real medicine. The product they sell will be packaged to appear to be medicine, but in reality what they are doing is creating an illusion which tricks your mind. Once again the illusion has slipped through that Swiss Cheese hole and the question, 'I wonder if this actually works?' is never asked.

The implication here is that these practitioners who deceive people with false promises of communicating with your dead relatives or curing your ailment, may also be deceiving themselves, such as our example 6th generation psychic brought up in a family where there was probably no chance of asking the question 'I wonder if this actually works?'

"If we've been bamboozled long enough, we tend to reject any evidence of the bamboozle. We're no longer interested in finding out the truth.

The bamboozle has captured us. It's simply too painful to acknowledge, even to ourselves, that we've been taken.

Once you give a charlatan power over you, you almost never get it back."

Carl Sagan (2011). "Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark", p.314,

As my grandfather constantly challenged me with "what do you think?" look for that claim trying to slip through the Swiss Cheese hole, and critically examine the information we receive, especially when it offers easy solutions to complex problems with no plausible explanation.

It also underscores the importance of self-honesty, it's empowering mentally and very healthy to admit "I was wrong!"

I hope you're enjoying these articles on improving your thinking, more of which you can find at <https://thinkingispower.com/> or wait for the next edition of Waranga News.

Melanie can be contacted at melanie@thinkingispower.com

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More qualifications for SES members

Rushworth SES members headed to the Rushworth pool on Saturday 8 March to gain their qualifications for their 'fit for role' as a member of the boat squad within the unit.

The day was a delightful temperature which made for a lovely cool swim. Our junior member, Hayley, was one of the first to brave the cool temperature. The qualifications needed are to swim fifty metres and drag a forty kilo 'body' out of the water, (right).



New member, Catherine, takes to the water.

SES women in rescue

To coordinate with International Woman's Week, the SES conduct an activity day for the women in the SES units across the region using the equipment.

This year was no different and a group of women from Rushworth SES attended the day. They are put through their paces regarding rescue and other activities.



Hayley drags the forty kilo 'body' out of the pool.



The women cut a ring off a finger using the Dremel machine.

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Around our towns Around our towns Around our towns Around our towns Around our towns



Around Rushworth

Rushworth on the air

It appears that Waranga News is no longer the only media operation in town. We see there has been a notice that the long rumoured Rushworth radio station is up and running. 3RW social posts have announced that test transmissions have commenced and you can tune in at 87.6 FM.

The town with no pub

Whoever would have believed that a town with the 'proud' history of maintaining two thriving hotels over so many years is now the home of two 'pubs with no beer' in 2025? While Rushworth residents do happen to be served within a 20 km radius by some excellent licensed establishments (Colbinabbin, Stanhope and Murchison East), we're sure everyone looks forward to being able to call something similar our very own 'local' once again.

Planning for Christmas!

We know you think 2025 has only just started, but do you know the first quarter is nearly complete? This is why plans are already afoot for a special Christmas Day community lunch for Rushworth in just nine months time. Initiated by CFA Motorbike enthusiasts The Red Knights, there will be a 'scoping' meeting this Monday at 7pm at the CFA to hopefully form a working party and get the ball rolling.



Holschiers celebrate Platinum

It was a day of congratulatory greetings, celebration and (as milestone events tend to be) reminiscing.

When we caught up with Bob and Floss the stories ranged from the early days of marriage, the happy and the sad times, the achievements and some of the sillier moments (like the Rushworth High teachers' wine bottling event at the Holschier farm when no one noticed the little boys testing their new pen knives on all the hay bales' twine!).

Bob, a plasterer, and Floss, a school teacher, first got together at Clayton, where Bob played football and Floss lived while teaching at the Mulgrave Primary School.

They were married at St. Johns Anglican Church in Centre Road, East Bentleigh on 12 March 1955.

The couple built a home in North Road, Clayton, where they lived and had three children, John, Debra, and Gregory, before moving to Stanhope in 1964 to take up dairy farming. Their youngest son, Russell was born at the Rushworth Hospital in 1967.

Floss continued with teaching for 27 years at the Rushworth High School (now P-12). In later years Bob conducted a tourism business in Rushworth, with a particular focus on the



On our wedding day, March 1955

Rushworth and Whroo goldfields region.

Both Bob and Floss have been great contributors to community life in the Stanhope and Rushworth areas over the decades, with Bob being awarded an OAM for his services to the community in 2019.

A BIG congratulations to Bob and Floss on their special milestone anniversary!

Valé John Newberry

John Newberry, a teacher at Rushworth High School in 1978, died on 4 March. John taught Geography and English, and was involved in outdoor activities for the students of that year.

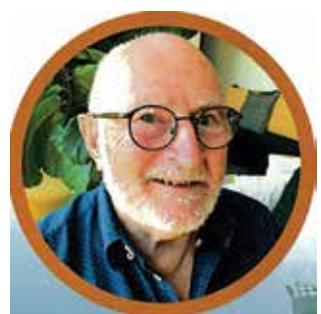
With the teacher accommodation scarce in Rushworth, John rented a house at Corop, travelling to and from school each day via the Old Corop Road. He developed a friendship with Brendan Barlow and members of his wider family, including Brendan's mother Pat, his brother Jeremy, and

their friend Peter Hawking.

John taught for most of his professional life, including a period in Queensland, where he met and married his second wife Lyn. They have a daughter Jessica.

His last four or five years have been challenging, after a belated diagnosis of Parkinson's Disease. His final year was spent in an aged care facility in New Gisborne. John was 83.

A memorial event was held in Sunbury on Thursday 13 March.



By invitation, one of the speakers was Alan McLean, a friend of 52 years. Also attending were former Rushworth teacher Karl Koci and his wife Maria.



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Around our towns Around our towns Around our towns Around our towns Around our towns

Parrots and Sugar Gliders nesting at Girgarre

Rushworth Field and Game have been making and erecting more nest boxes, the latest being in Girgarre along the Rail trail.

Conservation Officer Graeme Wall said it was good to erect parrot boxes in conjunction with the Girgarre Rail Trail Committee.

Field and Game Australia has a hollow replacement program and the Rushworth group are strong supporters of the initiative. The Rail Trail, with its trees at an age where they haven't yet developed natural hollows for nesting, is ideal.

The three pillars of Field and Game are hunting, clay target shooting and conservation. Hunters and some in the community struggle to see the value of conservation work in wetlands and other areas but at Rushworth they are committed to promoting their projects.

Results are continually monitored for success and failures. Strathallan Landcare group has donated sugar glider boxes to the Girgarre Rail Trail committee and these will be monitored to see their success.

With further projects in the pipeline there are more opportunities for people to get involved they have been running working bees each Wednesday morning commencing at 9am and finish by 12. Anyone interested in attending to help build different boxes for wildlife or helping to erect them, keep an eye on our Rushworth Field and Game Facebook page for when they are scheduled.

Rushworth Field and Game membership is continually increasing with a 25% rise in members over the last twelve months and their Facebook page showing their conservation efforts is followed across Australia.



Charlie Cerchi, George Weeks, Graeme Wall and Geoff Hawking.

New Stanhope Market a success

The inaugural Stanhope Community Market on 2 March was a marvellous day for Stanhope.

Approximately forty stalls lined Birdwood Ave selling a wide variety of artisan items including craft, candles, soap, tyre art, moccasins, woodwork, patchwork, homemade cards, honey and jewellery.

There were no less than five plant stalls, as well as jams and relish, shoes, toys, secondhand tools, fire pits, garden ornaments, pet food and, to keep the strength up, confectionery, a coffee van and a sausage sizzle.

Popular local singer Alia entertained the many visitors who passed through to enjoy the day.

The Stanhope Community Market is now on the first Sunday of each month, the next market being 6 April.

The market is the initiative of the Stanhope & District Development Committee and the local community.

To book please ring 5857 2866 or on Stanhope Community Market Facebook page.



Alia was a popular drawcard at Stanhope Community Market.



George Weeks putting pellets in boxes.

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Enough summer now?

Will someone please tell 'Im up there that we are supposed to be in autumn not the middle of summer still. I feel like a melted ice block dripping around the house instead of doing useful stuff like painting or gardening or socialising. Conversations down the street seem to end with people saying "well, I must get back to the air conditioner – goodbye!"

Big news for the Rushworth Community Support organization is that we have been going for three years now. I will be writing up more about this next edition as I want to include a photo of all volunteers together but that's rather like herding cats! Suffice to say over the last three years besides supporting the Rushworth Food Bank, approximately \$42,000 has been put back into the community by supporting various other community organisations and activities around town. Pretty brilliant I think you will agree.

Three year birthday sale

To celebrate our third birthday we are having a special sale. All adult clothing (unless otherwise marked) will be \$3, all women's shoes (unless otherwise marked) will be \$3. And the sale will be for three weeks from 21 March to 11 April. Meanwhile children's clothes remain at \$1 per item, games and puzzles \$2, books three for \$1.

With autumn supposedly arriving, it's time to start thinking of bottling fruits and some veggies. We have a lot of Fowler jars if you need them. I always like to see those very prettily arranged jars of fruits on the internet and wonder how they are done, for example, cucumber slices all down the sides of the jars neatly over lapping. Why don't they all fall into the middle when the vinegar is added. Just one of life's mysteries I guess.



Happy birthday Mavis!

The Little Green Shed is going great guns and will also have some birthday specials on so just ask. Hugh has been working so hard on the garden and he would like to thank all the people who have donated succulents to make the place look good. BRICKBAT – to the person that came along and stole some of those plants and also some things out of the little shed – again! It makes me so mad that theft from a community organization by some adult idiot happens (remember we have a camera). So, it is lovely to hear of a young girl in Rushworth who has set up a GoFundMe page for the Rushworth Food Bank. Well done for your thoughtfulness.

Christine and volunteers at the Food Bank have been working hard in their garden. New seedlings have been planted and the place looks a picture. When I stopped by, the bees were buzzing madly from herb to herb. In this heat Christine has been busy keeping the water up to the plants and I'm sure this winter there will be a lot of yummy vegetables ready for the Food Bank to use.

To end on a very happy note, a very favourite volunteer had a birthday last week. So after singing Happy Birthday to her, very loudly and off key, I just had to take a photo of our wonderful Mavis. She is happy to share that she was 85 and she is such a little pocket rocket I feel exhausted just watching her at times. Thank you Mavis for your volunteering, happy face and laughs that we have with you; long may you continue to keep us all on our toes.

Until next time may you all have a full belly and a happy smile,

Heather Wellington



So many beautiful shoes.

I'm Cactus!

I am a cranky cactus with needles long and thin,

I live beside the Green Shed with others of my kin.

We found our home quite recently, Hugh gathered us together

And now we grow here quietly in all this sunny weather.

But – alas, alack and other words I dare not write down here

A rotten person came along quite early in the year,

And now not once, but twice they've been to steal from us I fear

Some bits and bobs from our small shed, and now I'm really mad,

To steal some plants around our shed, that's just plain, nasty bad.

I hope by now they've got enough and leave us well alone

'Cos my thorns are growing longer and them I'm going to hone

'Til they're really sharp and ouchy, then I'll wait for thieves to come,

Pull up my roots and run behind and stick thorns in their bum!

Heather



Retro coffee table with ash tray



So many clothes to go at \$3 each.



Colbo Tit Bits

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Trusted Performance

Jack's Pesto missed out

What a great series was Muster Dogs on ABC TV and even though we were all barracking for Pesto (because of his Colbo connection) he didn't win the contest. But he ended up with a good family who love him and he still has time to learn. It's amazing how skilled those twelve month old pups became.

Cornella Care AGM

Cornella Care held its AGM last week. Office-bearers for this year are: Ann Stewart (President), Rosie McIntosh (Vice President), Maree Stewart (Secretary) and Pam Nihill (Treasurer).

Colbo PS Market Day

Don't forget: Colbinabbin Primary School is holding its annual Market Day on 30 March. Always a great day!

More babies

We have more babies to welcome to Colbinabbin: a daughter, Maggie Eve Weeks, born to Grant and Michaela, and a son, Tex Stuey Hill, born to Kris and Em.

Angelus' first gig

Our 'local musos' were part of the Festival of Small Halls Australia who played recently at Karramomus Hall. Yes, Julie Price, Lou Costa and Emma King (Angelus) performed for an appreciative audience and will be playing again at Numurkah.

U17 netballers wanted

The Colbinabbin Football and Netball Club is seeking more U17s netballers to join their team for seasons 2025. Contact Carlie Ryan for more info on 0417 351 918.

Library

The library is shut during hall renovations.

Cemetery Trust

Mowing Roster (lawn section only)

March - Geoff Weppner

April - Ray McEvoy

Colbo Diary

Coffee and Cake 1st & 3rd Tuesdays 10.15am @CCH
 Colbo Community Shed - Thursdays BYO BBQ lunch
 Colbo Pub Choir - 5pm Tuesdays at CCH
 New Parents' Group 9am 1st & 3rd Thursdays @ CCH

MARCH

Sun 30 Colbo PS Market Day

APRIL

Wed 23 Annabelle Cleland 2pm @CCH

FIRE BRIGADE ROSTER

March 23 Matt Ryan, Martin Borger
 March 30 Ray McEvoy, Pat Tuohey
If unable to attend for duty, call Chris/Leo.

Siren, radio and test pager at 9am. Crew member should ensure the siren and radio tests are carried out. Vehicles should be checked for fuel and taken for a road test.

Renée and Joe wed in Thornbury



Renee Weppner and Joe Contin were married on Thursday 13 March at St Mary's Church in Thornbury. The wedding group included Renee's son, Dominic, and her nieces and nephews (L-R) Maisie, Kiarah, Hudson, Alfie, Austin, Harlow and Talon.

Growing hemp - a good harvest

The invitation to go to inspect a crop of hemp couldn't be resisted.

There were no high security police checks or electrified barbed wire, but just have a look at that crop! Obviously it wasn't the sort of hemp you smoke!

Dan Walker has been growing hemp for the past three seasons at Nanneella and has found the free-draining sandy loam is perfectly suited for growing hemp as an irrigated summer crop in northern Victoria.

The hemp is processed to separate the woody core from the fibre to be used in construction and as animal bedding. Its fibre has worldwide potential particularly in industrial uses as a stronger and more sustainable material over synthetic fibres. One hectare of Dan's hemp crop is enough to build a standard super-insulated hemp home.

Dan advises to start small with a trial crop if you want to grow hemp. While there have been a number of successful first-time hemp growers there have also been varying degrees of failure or 'learning experiences'.

Pyramid Hill Hemp is the largest grower



(L-R) John and Glen Avard with Dan Walker (Landcare) in his crop of hemp.

of hemp in Victoria with more than 100 ha planted this season.

Harvest of Dan's crop took place on 10 March using specialised hemp harvesting equipment (158 days after sowing).

If you are interested in finding out more about hemp as a crop, you can contact secretary@victorianhempassociation.org.au

Legally the difference between 'hemp' and 'cannabis' is its tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content.



Rushworth COMMUNITY HOUSE INC.

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Facebook:

[Rushworth Community-House](https://www.facebook.com/Rushworth-Community-House)

Office Hours:

Mon, Tues Thurs : 9.00am to 3.00pm

Wed, Fri : 9.00am to 1.00pm

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Government services.**

Rushworth & District Aged Care Services Expo

Negotiating the Aged Care minefield is always a challenge with a myriad of questions to be explored, multiple levels and types of support to be compared and contrasted, and a host of risks and outright scams to be avoided.

Rushworth Shire Hall will be the venue for an Aged Care Services Expo to be held on Thursday, 10 April between 10.30am and 2.30pm. The Expo is a joint initiative of Campaspe Shire, Goulburn Valley Health and the Community House.

Such Expos are typically convivial, vibrant events designed to connect seniors, caregivers, families, and service providers.

If you have elderly parents, the Expo will be an excellent source of information to assist with planning options and ensuring that they have the very best of care at home, in a gated community or in residential aged care.

Key questions

Among the questions that the Expo will seek to address are:

- Navigating 'My Aged Care'
- How to handle dementia
- What technology is available to help
- Secure housing options
- Avoiding rip-offs and scams
- What to do in an emergency
- Moving to Advanced Care Planning

For more information about the 2025 Aged Care Services Expo in Rushworth, please call the Community House on (03) 5856 1295.

Community Dance this Saturday



Ninety years ago, Rushworth Shire Hall came alive with the 1934 Fire Brigade Ball. It was a formal occasion with bowties, long dresses and a huge amount of social camaraderie. This Saturday - 22 March - the Shire Hall will once again come alive as Rushworth holds the first of many informal Community Social Dances and everyone is invited to attend!

Proudly supported by Rushworth Community House, the Social Dance offers a chance for locals of all ages and backgrounds to come together and enjoy a night of live music and some sensational dancing.

The wonderful June Newman (*shown at right*) will be performing a wide range of music - old to new, fast to slow - to get you on your feet and grooving.

Costs for the night are \$10.00 per adult and \$5.00 for children. BYO snacks and drinks (alcohol is permitted)!

Tickets can be purchased on the night or at the Community House, so grab your friends and don't miss out on what is sure to be a hoot of a evening!



Radio station 3RW is now 'on air' from Rushworth Community Hub in Horne St.



3RW, Rushworth's own radio station, is now on air, fine tuning its transmitter power and broadcast antenna before normal programming begins shortly.

The brainchild of Community Radio enthusiasts Brad Geier (above) and Tony Jordan (right), the station occupies a small building at the Community Hub, and broadcasts at the lower end of the FM Band at 87.6 Mhz.

The station will broadcast news, current affairs, and interviews, as well as an easy-listening mix of music from the 1950s, 60s and 70s. Importantly, the station will also be able to operate as a local emergency services broadcaster, playing a vital role in future emergencies.



Arts & Tourism

Places to stay, things to do and see in our district

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Ellen Lee interpreting the landscape through art

Ellen Lee did a three month residency at Shepparton Art Museum in 2024, having won The Theodore Urbach Landscape Prize and Studio Scholarship. She was part of the recent Campaspe Artist Studio Trail 2025 and currently she is doing The Pumphouse Residency in Echuca as part of the Ripplefest 2025 which will be seen in Echuca and Rochester 22-25 May 2025.

Rushworth ART Depot will be bringing Ellen to Rushworth later in the year for a special workshop. In her own words:

"I am an artist from Echuca, working with watercolour, natural pigmentation and graphite to create large scale abstract landscapes. My works are an exploration into the subtlety of change that occurs within our landscape, and I seek to capture that change in my art process.

"My works originate from the blind contour drawings I take of the environment, where I map the movements and sounds that I experience. I find that when sitting and observing the occurrences around me, that the 'big' movements that might initially grab my attention start to fall away, and the smaller moments move to the forefront. It is these moments that I feel the need to capture and amplify, because for me, it's the collection of these sensory perceptions that make up the experience of the space I am inhabiting.



Works in progress

"Taking the time to exist in the landscape also allows for me to start noticing the daily routines of the wildlife and the patterns of the land; I start to see when and where the birds wake up, the branches that the resident kingfisher likes to fish from, where the water pool sand stagnates and the drying out of the earth. One of my favourite things to witness is the slow emergence of paths being forged on the land, as animals, birds and insects and even things like water gradually show their pattern of movement and turn it into a tangible mark on the land. Watching the way the landscape adapts and progresses over time fascinates me and it's the culmination of these daily occurrences that I use to determine my studio practice.

"Employing the characteristics of the landscape, I first expose the paper to the environment, allowing natural tannins from collected flora to develop and imprint the surface. Then, over days and weeks cumulative washes of watercolour are allowed to saturate the paper and dry. Between each layer I work to remove the pigment, brushing and scratching the surface to remove any pigment that has not fully



Ellen Lee who sees her works as a meditative reflection of her time in the environment, and aims to create an immersive and sensory experience, and really bring the viewer into a gestural landscape of time, change and movement.

taken then applying another wash. This pushing and pulling of layers is my way of facilitating a state of change on the surface of my work, allowing the pigments to move and stain and interact with the paper over time.

"Referencing my earlier blind contour drawings, I then gradually layer in graphite marks, using differing techniques and varying grades of graphite to convey that multitude of sensory elements. Working intuitively, I aim to recapture the movements and sounds of the landscape, the birds and insects, the water and the wind; all those small moments that can get a little lost amongst the big moments. I think that in amplifying these small, gentle moments there is a sense of reflection and peace in my work. My works are a meditative reflection of my time in the environment, and I aim to create an immersive and sensory experience, and really bring the viewer into a gestural landscape of time, change and movement."

Ellen Lee



Transitory Notes, watercolour, natural pigments and graphite on paper

Kennedy Shiraz 2019, Kennedy Cambria (Reserve) 2014, Kennedy Pink Hills Rosé 2021, Henrietta Shiraz 2020 Henrietta Rose 2022 available online and being served at Colbinabbin Country Hotel.



Souvlaki Cups

An easy mid week dinner.

600g lamb mince
1 cup of fresh breadcrumbs
1 garlic clove, crushed
1 egg lightly beaten
2 tablespoons oregano
100g feta cheese crumbled.

Mix all ingredients together well
Roll into small balls

Add small amount of oil to a frypan and heat.
Add meatballs, browning all over.
Place in a moderate oven to cook through.



Add to fresh crisp lettuce cups (iceburg or cos lettuce)

Add sliced tomato, sliced cucumber, sliced red onion.

Top with tzatziki and squeeze of lime or lemon. *Enjoy!*

From the seasonal kitchen



Beating fruit fly at their game



We have had bumper crops with our fruit trees this year. Last year we used organic sprays to prevent fruit fly infestation. Unfortunately, the apricots were full of maggots but later fruiting peaches, blood plums and pears were unaffected. This year, we invested in very large fruit fly nets which we found on the internet.

As soon as the blossom was gone and all the bee activity finished, we netted the trees, securing them tightly, closed at the trunk well above ground level where last year's fruit fly larvae pupate. (Although we did try to remove

all fallen fruit from ground.)

There is very little actual instruction on how to put these nets on the trees. Of course the day we chose was especially windy and the whole exercise proved to be very challenging to say the least! But we got there, resulting in a ghostly effect which appeared as if the garden had been decorated for Halloween, which ironically coincided with our activity.

Pleased to say that we had a wonderful crop on every tree completely unaffected by fruit fly.

Baby Boomer Bloomer

Kitchen tips

• Read the entire recipe:

Before you start cooking, ensure you understand the entire recipe, including the cooking techniques and ingredients needed.

• Clean as you cook:

Keep your workspace clean as you go to avoid a messy and time-consuming cleanup at the end.

• Sharpen your knives:

A sharp knife is essential for safe and efficient food preparation.

• Mise en place:

Prepare all your ingredients (chop, measure, etc.) before you start cooking to streamline the process.

• Taste as you cook:

Season and taste-test as you cook to ensure the dish is properly seasoned and adjust as needed.

Handy Hints

- from Lyn Rumble

*Hi there,
Repurposing or Re-using everyday items
- or quick and easy solutions to general
household issues that maybe you hadn't
thought of - is what I like to do. This
issue its cleaning time - I know - no-one
really likes to do that - but it does make
you feel better when something is nice and
squeaky clean! Hope these hints come in
handy for you in your cleaning chores!*

Lyn

* Microfibre cloths – I recently invested in a large packet of microfiber cloths and boy do they make cleaning life easier! I got a multi-coloured pack, 3 blue / 3 green / 3 yellow kind of pack, and so set one lot for laundry, one lot for bathroom, and another for kitchen/lounge etc. Makes it so much easier to clean up spills, dust stuff, and when they are dirty, just put in the washing machine with relevant loads of coloureds/ whites and even soaking wet - they dry in next to no time on the line!

* Keep your microwave squeaky clean - put equal amounts vinegar and water in a microwave-safe bowl, plus a small wooden object (like a toothpick) to prevent boiling. Set your microwave on high for 5-10 minutes, and then wait a few minutes to let it cool down. Then simply wipe down the inside with a paper towel or a sponge.

* Styrofoam absorbs sound waves, making it a cheap and effective way to soundproof a room or studio.

* Restore your showerhead's water pressure - pour half white vinegar and half water into a small plastic bag. Tie the bag around your showerhead so that the holes are immersed, securing the bag with a twist tie or similar. Let it soak for about 60 minutes, then remove the bag and wipe away the loosened lime scale deposits.

* Get your glassware sparkling - soak away built-up film on your glasses with vinegar for 5 minutes. Hand rinse them afterwards and dry with a microfibre cloth for a streak-free shine.

Health and Wellbeing

It's Advance Care Planning week 17-23 March

Advance care planning involves planning for your future health care and enabling you to make some decisions now about the health care you would or would not like to receive if you were to become seriously ill and unable to communicate your preferences.

Advance care planning offers an opportunity to think about, discuss and record your preferences for the type of care you would like to receive and the outcomes you would consider acceptable. It helps to ensure your loved ones and health providers know what matters most to you and respect your treatment preferences.

Ideally, advance care planning will result in your preferences being documented in a plan known as an advance care directive and the appointment of a substitute decision-maker to help ensure your preferences are respected.

Why it's important

Advance care planning benefits everyone: you, your family, carers and health professionals.

- It helps to ensure you receive the care you actually want
- It improves ongoing and end-of-life care, along with personal and family satisfaction

- Families of people who have undertaken advance care planning have less anxiety, depression, stress and are more satisfied with care
- For healthcare professionals and organisations, it reduces unnecessary transfers to acute care and unwanted treatment

If you haven't documented your preferences or identified a substitute decision-maker, and you become seriously ill or injured, doctors will make treatment decisions based on their assessment of your best interests. This may include treatments that you would not want.

Planning is for everyone

Everyone should consider advance care planning, regardless of your age or health. Ideally, you should start planning when you're healthy - before there's actually an urgent need for a plan.

It is particularly important if you:

- are older

- have a chronic illness
- have multiple diseases
- have an early cognitive impairment
- are approaching the end of your life

It's a team effort

Advance care planning requires a team effort. It involves having conversations with your family, friends, doctors, care workers and other health professionals. Having these conversations will help you start thinking about what's important to you.

The process

Advance care planning doesn't need to be complicated but it does require careful consideration. It involves thinking about your values and preferences for care and acceptable outcomes, talking about them with others, appointing someone to make decisions on your behalf and documenting everything.

(Information from the Advanced Care Planning website. For more information go to <https://www.advancecareplanning.org.au>)

Take steps to protect yourself from mosquito-borne diseases

Residents and visitors are being urged to take action to prevent mosquito bites after a second case of Japanese encephalitis (JE) was identified in a resident of northern Victoria, with likely exposure in the Riverina area of New South Wales.

Evidence of JE circulating has been identified through environmental and mosquito sampling along much of the Murray River in Victoria.

In Victoria, mosquitoes can carry a range of diseases that are transmissible to humans, including Japanese encephalitis, Barmah Forest virus, Ross River virus, Murray Valley encephalitis, West Nile/Kunjin virus, and Dengue virus. For some of these diseases there is no effective treatment or vaccine, and the consequences of infection can be serious, and in rare cases life-threatening.

Campaspe Shire Mayor Daniel Mackrell said simple precautions taken by residents and visitors could make a big difference in avoiding mosquito-borne diseases.

"Mosquitoes are a natural part of our ecosystem, but we can minimize the risk of bites by using repellents, wearing long

sleeves, and avoiding peak mosquito activity hours at dawn and dusk," Cr Mackrell said.

Japanese encephalitis is a rare but potentially serious infection of the central nervous system caused by the JE virus. Symptoms of JE may include fever, headache, nausea, vomiting and muscle aches, although most infected people do not have symptoms. People with severe infection can develop encephalitis or meningitis which can be fatal. Anyone with symptoms should seek urgent medical care.

A vaccine to protect against JE is available for specific groups at higher risk of exposure to the virus in high-risk areas of northern Victoria, including Campaspe Shire. The vaccine is recommended for people aged two

months or older who live or work in a high risk LGA (includes Campaspe) and:

- regularly spend time engaging in outdoor activities that place them at risk of mosquito bites,
- are experiencing homelessness,
- are living in conditions with limited mosquito protection.

JE vaccine is available at GP clinics, local pharmacies and Council immunisation providers. A provider list is available through the Loddon Mallee Public Health Unit website at www.bendigohealth.org.au or by phoning 1800 959 400.

Prevention is best

- Cover up outdoors with long, loose, light-coloured clothing
- Use mosquito repellents with DEET or picaridin,
- Limit outdoor activities whenever mosquitoes are about - particularly around dawn and dusk.
- Remove stagnant water where mosquitoes can breed,
- Ensure your accommodation has mosquito netting or screens,
- Use 'knockdown' fly spray, mosquito coils, or plug-in repellents where you gather outdoors
- When using insect repellent on children, check the label carefully and avoid applying it to their hands and face.

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All about wildlife

Kirsty Ramadan from BoHollow Wildlife
is a wildlife rescue expert. Here she
shares some of her knowledge about our
very familiar wildlife neighbours.

Wombats . . . and others

Wombats! I cannot think of another animal on earth quite like them.

Many of our native critters in Australia are amazing in their uniqueness: kangaroos, bilbies, koalas, platypus - and wombats.

Nature is dynamic, ever shifting, each living creature and plant striving to survive in conditions that can alter and shift. Our Australian climate can be harsh in itself so many of our species are what we call boom or bust. The definition of a boom or bust species is one which thrives when resources are plentiful and population dramatically rises quite quickly, then when resources become scarce their populations radically crash. The evolutionary sense behind this is that the species manages to hold on during the difficult times, relying on increased numbers to elevate the odds of strong, resilient survivors to carry the species through.

Even many of our native plants seem to share the same tactic. Unfortunately it is usually our boom or bust species who are considered by some as pests. If more than thirty kangaroos are seen in a mob, phrases such as 'they're out of control, they're a pest, they need culling or they just breed up', all come to mind. Again, if I had a dollar for everytime I've heard.... The other diatribe frequently sprouted in harsh times such as drought, when numbers crash as there's a shortage of resources, is that the animal concerned actually causes its own demise because it was overpopulated and eats itself out of house and home. The bigger picture doesn't quite tell the same tale.

Whether we like it or not, we are all a product of nature - it's not the other way round. Before any *Homo sapiens* reached the earth of Australia the existing native creatures played the evolutionary dance. The boom or bust way of surviving here was long established before humans arrived. The difference was that resources in times of harsh conditions were not having to be shared with us.

Cockatoos have always flocked in huge numbers. Barn owls have always been plentiful, or in a population crash. Roo populations have always fluctuated from 'boom to bust'. *Homo sapien* as a fellow species, has moved in and immediately altered the existing environment around them. They hunted, lit fires to burn the landscape, still a part of nature but already getting the upper hand in how much one species altered entire landscapes.

Progress was a lot slower. Possibly the first *Homo sapiens* to set foot here were a bit 'boom or bust themselves initially.



© Kirsty Ramadan

More *Homo sapiens* arrive. This time with more advanced tools, resources and knowledge brought with them suddenly from landscapes afar. This time the journey was shorter, the alterations to the now existing environment more rapid.

As the age of the machine was born, so too was the acceleration of precious habitat destruction and loss of resources for the existing wildlife.

Now in 2025 we are at stage where we appear to see ourselves as above nature. Every living thing has the potential to be cherished by someone until it is seen as an inconvenience or a threat to a way of life we feel entitled to. Disregarding the fact we are destroying and burning up not only our own, but the resources every living creature depends on to survive on this planet.

There are two ways to look at this. Are we in this position now because we are an evolutionary product so advanced over anything else known living on this earth? We have won, we have conquered every other species in one way or another, even the ones which can harm us, we have beaten it all from snuffing out mosquitoes with DDT and DEET to bringing down giants of the sea with harpoons. Should we be proud?

The second view is less glamorous and doesn't have the same egotistical edge...are we simply the human version of a cane toad in Australia? Those of us who realise if we are to have a survivable ecosystem we need to change our way of living, change our views on using resources that are not infinite and which took thousands and millions of years to create, are we more evolutionary advanced? We are looking at the future of our species, the resources we require to survive and realise we are a player in an ecosystem that

thrives on a precarious balancing point which can tip for or against us at any time. Or does it come back to the numbers game? Are the ones who continue to cause environmental destruction, continuing to believe we have this unquestionable right to plunder this planet for short term wealth, prosperity, convenience just because we can; are these people in such numbers and power that they are the evolutionary winners? Are you really a winner if you cause the demise of your own species and take with you multiple other species who pre-date us on the evolutionary timeline?

Just as cane toads are not making their invasion steadily south due to higher intelligence, will these be the winners and defeat other species until there is nothing left but humans and domesticated or controlled species? Evolutionary success is the longterm survival of a species, not the self inflicted downfall of one because of short sighted greed. We've advanced to an intelligence, a way of thinking beyond any other animal, communicating on a global level, yet we seem to still have a majority who are stuck in cane toad mode - populate and plunder at any expense to ever expand our territory, impact everything around us at the detriment of any other species in our way.

Maybe this is just evolution at its best..or worst. I do know that the delicate balance has been skewed. The web of all natural life as we know it has been breaking strand by strand for many, many years and now we have caused so much irreversible damage that the same web can never be rebuilt. I think we are way more than mere cane toads...we are akin to a doomsday comet on a collision course with earth.

For injured wildlife contact Kirsty at BoHollow on: 0447 636 953

ON THE BRINK *by Neil Laurie*

Looking at endangered or extinct flora and fauna.

Better ways

Originally the scientific gathering of information on Australian wildlife involved shooting or catching it and then preserving and/or drawing it. Our museums are full of stuffed, pickled or dried creatures and their skeletons; the rarer the better. These collections of animal and bird bits are still valuable scientific resources.

Every single bird illustrated in John Gould's 'The Birds of Australia' (over 680 of them) were drawn and painted from shot specimens. It was seen as being acceptable. Today, thanks to modern scientific methods, things are very different. The unfolding search for the presumed to be extinct desert rat-kangaroo (*Caulophryne campestris*) is an example of how new methods and technologies can be used.

The desert rat-kangaroo lived in the desert country of north-eastern South Australia. It differed from the other species of rat kangaroos and bettongs in that it had a short nose. Like most desert-dwelling species it was sparsely spread across its range and rarely seen.

It was first recorded in the early 1840s. The arrival of feral cats and foxes saw a sharp decline in its numbers and it was presumed extinct by 1850.

In 1931 a colony of them was discovered which ultimately died out. The last confirmed record of the desert rat-kangaroo was in 1935. It was officially declared extinct in 1994.

There is tantalising evidence that there are still some rat-kangaroos out in the desert. There were unconfirmed sightings in the mid 1950s and again in the mid 1970s after wet years.

In 1985 some remains were found in a cave. There have been other unconfirmed sightings. However, there has been no irrefutable proof that the desert rat-kangaroo is still in existence. It is not surprising that the rat-kangaroo has not been found; several other similar species have been rediscovered after being presumed extinct. The hard part is finding such a rare nocturnal animal in a vast area of desert. It is going to require a concerted effort using new approaches and the latest technologies.

The first step is to look for areas that have vegetation suitable for the desert rat-kangaroos to eat. It was assumed that with its short jaws it could only eat soft vegetation.

A biomechanical study of skulls by Flinders University has discovered the opposite is true; the short jaws allowed them to eat woody plants. The plan is to use

satellite imagery to locate areas of suitable woody vegetation and habitat.

These areas can then be surveyed at ground level. Like other rat-kangaroos and bettongs, the desert rat-kangaroo builds a sheltered nest of sticks. Although nests are difficult to spot from the air, the use of drones could make searching for the nests more efficient.

Any scats (poo) discovered can be analysed for DNA of the rat-kangaroo. The analysis of small scats has in the past been inconclusive. Dingo, fox and cat scats can also be analysed for the presence of desert rat-kangaroo DNA.

Once an area has been identified as probably having desert rat-kangaroos, researchers can use spotlights at night to search for them. Another search method is to use trail cameras. These have become quite cheap. They are triggered by sensing motion and also can record in the infrared, giving them night vision. Some record footage onto a SD card. Others send footage via a mobile network. They have a number of advantages: they give 24-hour, seven day a week surveillance, they allow a researcher to watch multiple sites simultaneously and they also record other animals. They give a more comprehensive understanding of the ecology of the area; very important if dingoes, foxes or cats are captured by the cameras.

Should desert kangaroo-rats be discovered, a more intense study can be carried out and conservation strategies developed. Establishing predator-free enclosures and captive breeding programs (strategies that worked with the greater bilby) are likely outcomes.

The days of walking around and shooting wildlife for science are long gone, replaced by better ways of studying them. There is a certain irony that the desert rat-kangaroo was first described in London by John Gould using three preserved specimens sent to him by George Grey, the Governor of South Australia. It remains to be seen if this extinct species really is extinct or if it is another 'Lazarus species'.



Vic Landcare grants available

Several Landcare grants are available in Victoria to support environmental projects and educational initiatives.

The Victorian Government has allocated \$3.55 million for the 2025 Landcare Grants, aiming to assist Landcare and environmental volunteer groups with on-ground works, education and capacity-building projects.

Project grants of up to \$20,000 are available to environmental volunteer groups and networks, including Landcare groups and networks, Friends groups, Conservation Management Networks, Committees of Management, Coastcare groups and First Nations groups.

Recipients can use the grants for on-ground works and community education projects that will enhance the natural environment such as native vegetation and wildlife, waterway and soils so Victorians can continue to enjoy spending time in the environment.

Support grants up to \$500 are also available to aid with administrative and operational expenses of eligible groups.

Goulburn Broken CMA Regional Landcare Coordinator, Kerstie Lee, said last year the Victorian Landcare Grants funded nineteen projects in the Goulburn Broken Catchment.

"I encourage our local environmental volunteer groups and networks to put in an application for this year's funding and look forward to a wide range of projects being considered," said Ms Lee.

The grants will help achieve targets set in Protecting Victoria's Environment - Biodiversity 2037, the Victorian Government's twenty year plan to protect our environment and native species.

Applications for the Victorian Landcare Grants will close on 16 April 2025, for more information and to apply, visit Grants - GB CMA - Goulburn Broken CMA or environment.vic.gov.au/grants.

Junior Landcare and Biodiversity Grants - closing 28 March

There are also grants to encourage young Victorians to engage in projects that value and care for the state's biodiversity and natural environment

Grant Amount: Up to \$5,000 each

Eligibility: Open to primary and secondary schools, Scouts, Girl Guides, youth groups, Junior Landcare groups and youth environmental volunteer groups in Victoria.

Application Deadline: 3 PM on Friday, March 28, 2025.

For more information, refer to the Junior Landcare Grants page <https://www.environment.vic.gov.au/grants/victorian-junior-landcare-and-biodiversity-grants>

Fifty years ago in our district....

Looking through the pages of past 'Rushworth Chronicles'
.....compiled by former district resident Alan McLean



"Tail End Charlie" visits Colbo in March 1975.

Colbinabbin was visited by a tractor known as "Tail End Charlie". The Chamberlain Champion was built for the 1956 Redex Trial of cars travelling around Australia, to pull the competitors out of bogs, creeks and sand drifts. Chamberlain's district manager, John Avard, told the Chronicle he had taken four hours to drive from Corowa to Colbinabbin, which seems pretty fair for a tractor. "Charlie" was then driven to country shows across Victoria.

Federal MP for Murray, Bruce Lloyd, reported an announcement from the ALP Minister for Labor and Immigration, Mr Clyde Cameron, for the "excavation, forming and pouring of concrete for footpaths in Rushworth". Six unemployed men were to be paid a combined total of \$21,600 for twenty weeks on the job. (*I know of at least one local reader who was part of this work programme known as Regional Employment Development or R.E.D. scheme.*)

Fisheries and Wildlife Officers nabbed some poachers in the Corop area.

A fire at the Corop property of Doug Crilly burnt grass and rushes but fire trucks from Corop and Colbinabbin hosed it down.

Community

A public meeting was called at Murchison to form an Elderly Citizens' Club.

Rushworth Youth Club planned a dance in the Shire Hall with Bendigo band Helios to provide the music. Admission charge was \$1.

Schools

Graeme Morgan contributed news from grades 3 and 4 at Rushworth Primary, and noted that they were "collecting rocks", "pictures of rocks" and had "watched men cut down trees"!

For Grade 6, excitement was high. "Paul Beck brought a musical instrument called the baritone. He played some tunes for us. Then Darren Nurse came into our room with his cornet. They played a duet, "Home on the Range". (*The fathers of the boys were enthusiastic veteran members of Rushworth Band, and no doubt had high hopes for the lads in their musical careers.*)

Grade 6 also reported on production of a graph charting funds raised for the Good Friday Royal Children's Hospital Appeal. 1973 was \$36.01, with \$38.61 in 1974, and high hopes for 1975. Graph producers were Wendy Raglus and Barbara McLean. (*May have been the start of Barbara's career in financial management!*)

Prep Timothy Collard had a slide at home "that lets him slide down into his pool".

Little Rushworth High School won the Goulburn Campaspe Secondary Schools Swimming Championships held at Echuca. They beat much bigger schools of Nathalia, Echuca, Rochester and Kyabram. Jeff Watson was the star with two individual firsts, one individual second and a relay second.

Others scoring points for Rushworth were Stanhope's Raelene Ryan, Shane Ryan, Gail Ryan, Peter Thompson, Wendy Stokes, Debbie Holschier and Debbie Lavery, Colbo's Ian McTaggart, Rushworth's April Lloyd, Janet Hawking, Joanne Hawking, Roseanne Heily, Denise Jones and Malcolm Cruz. Strength in relay teams won Rushworth large numbers of points. Training the squad outside school hours were Mr Ryan of Stanhope, Mrs Brown (Colbo) and teacher Mr Keith Taylor (Rushworth).

Personal

Another Watson, Jeff's sister Debbie, became engaged to Rod Lockwood. Both of Rushworth, this was announced by the four parents in the traditional style.

The Hitchcock family were to hold the big clan's annual gathering at the picnic reserve at the Basin bank.

The death of Clarence Henry Laurie at Western General Hospital in Melbourne was reported. Also passing was Mrs Helen Weaver of Phillips Street. She was known as Nell, the wife of Dick and mother of Barry and Judy.

Warwick and Gale Gregory (nee McLeod) of Murchison welcomed daughter Narelle.

An unreserved furniture sale listed for Colbo was to dispose of much of the contents of the home of Miss Darrigan.

Summer sport

Rushworth A-grade cricketers made 151 against Kyabram Red, thanks to a 30-run partnership by tail-enders Robert Bull (21) and Ian "Suntan" Perry (10), promoted from B-grade. G. Johansen made 49 and the Hawking Brothers got 29 (Trevor), and 19 (Geoff). No scores were published the following week so the match result remains a mystery.

B-grade wicket-keeper Mick Wall took four catches and made a stumping. In the junior cricket Murchison were all out for 51, as Danny Forte bagged 6/15 from seven overs. Rushworth's not out batsmen were Alan Hawking on 32 and Donald Bradman Potter on 3.

52 yachts competed in Waranga Sailing Club championships heat, but 15 boats mistook the course, failed to go round all the buoys, and were disqualified.

Ron Baker hosted President's Night at Murchison bowls with winners W. Trevaskis, R. McMaster and W. Winnell. Runners-up

were E. Jackson, M. Miller and John Revell. A new concrete floor beneath the clubhouse veranda had been laid by volunteer labor using donated cement, gravel and sand.

Rushworth 3 took 52 games from Rushworth 1 (98 games) in A-grade tennis. On the right side of the net were John and A. Brown (Ann or Alice?), Glen Rathjen, John Borger, Bill Barlow, Betty Buzzza, Beryl Home and Nan Jessup. Finishing second were Peter Raglus, Neville Thompson, Graeme Bolden, Ted Whitehead, Cheryl Hawking, Doreen Wall, Nola and Valma Pepperell.

Winter sport preparation

The golfers were limbering up, Ivan Jell, Rushworth newsagent, the new president at his local club.

With six weeks till the start of footy season in mid-April, coach Mick O'Sullivan called the players to training sensibly on 11 March. A vacancy existed for the role of head trainer, with interested persons to contact Matt Kennedy.

Murchison footballers practiced under new coach Robert Sloper from Mooroopna. The Under-16s heard the coaching whistles of John Dunlop and senior player David Dixon.

What had been known as the Waranga North-East Football League (a long way from Waranga) was crumbling. Its Seymour and Broadford Football Clubs talked of possibly joining the Heathcote League, and the Heathcote Club had been denied permission to join Bendigo's Golden City League. Tooborac remained in limbo. Local clubs were warming up, but which teams were they going to compete against?

Rushing to Whroo,

1853 to 1880



\$25

Alan McLean

0412 143 660

Books available:

Waranga News office and General Store Rushworth

FOREST YARNS

Stories from the Rushworth Forest

Early days of sleeper cutting

The last few stories have focussed on the sleeper cutters of the Rushworth Forest. They had a tough life working out in the forest, getting minimal return for their highly skilled work, while at the same time enduring plenty of changes in government policy and regulations.

Sleeper cutters were already in demand in the early 1880s, well before the railway line to Rushworth was completed in 1890. This is evidenced by the following advertisement in the Nagambie Times (9.11.1883) – WANTED SLEEPER CUTTERS to hew Sleepers at Coy's Diggings (Bailieston) or anywhere within five miles of Ponting's Punt. Good men make 14s. (\$1.40) per day. Apply by letter to M. MALONE, Coy's Diggings.

A later visitor to the Waranga area in 1889 described his observations – “As we proceed up the flat (between Graytown and Redcastle), camps of sleeper cutters are seen. This must be a very lonely life for some of their women. So far as could be gathered, three sleepers is the average per tree, they being 9 feet long 9 inches wide and 4 inches thick. The cutters get 3s 9d (about 40c) on delivery, but as they have not teams of their own, they give the teamster 1s each for cartage...The sleeper cutter uses a formidable looking instrument for squaring the sleepers, having a head 10 inches long and very heavy (i.e. a broad axe).”¹

Shortage of resource

These sleeper cutters were some of the early ones to work in the forest. Later, it was much harder to access trees that would

produce three sleepers from one trunk. There were constant requests from sleeper hewers to gain access to new areas where they could harvest timber of reasonable size.

As early as 1890, Waranga Shire Council received a letter from the Lands and Survey office, stating that “in consequence of the very grave nature of the timber destruction going on now, caused by sleeper hewers, it has been deemed necessary not to allow timber to be cut under 24 inches in diameter.”² The hewers themselves argued that their methods did not lead to much waste.

In 1895 the Minister of Forests made a decision to ban sleeper hewing in the Moormbool (Rushworth) Forest.³ Deputations to government were made, protesting the ban, which was overturned. Then, some new areas were opened up. “According to a notice in last week’s (Government) Gazette, permits may now be obtained to cut or hew and take away railway sleepers from all the State Forest, timber reserves, and open Crown Lands included in the parishes of Whroo, Bailieston, Wirrate, Cherrington, Dargile, Costerfield, and Gobarup.”⁴ This trend continued later in the decade up to 1900, when “a large number of new licences have been issued for sleeper hewing in the Moormbool state forest, and at Toolamba.”⁵

Other options

Options other than the Rushworth Forest were seized upon, if and when they became available. When land was being cleared for Waranga Basin, sleeper hewers were given access to some of the timber. At the same time, the men were allowed into Doctor

Swamp near Murchison.

Around 1910, the then Forests Department (forerunner to FCV) allowed sleeper hewers to source timber on land that had already been surveyed for settlers, much to the chagrin of the settlers who saw the timber as theirs. By this time, however, much of the land that was used for grazing and cropping had already been cleared, so that was no longer available as a source for sleeper hewers.

By 1914, it was claimed that there was still “upwards of 50 sleeper hewers...constantly hewing and supplying at Rushworth 1,500 to 2,000 sleepers per week. These were cut from the forest and private property and delivered and stacked upon the line at 3s 1d (31c) per sleeper.”⁶ This implies that the average man was hewing 30 to 40 sleepers per week. Other estimates of the weekly output per worker was less than this, so this may have been an exaggeration.

The reality was that suitable timber was in short supply by the 1920s, and moves were made by the government to limit the number of sleeper cutters in the forest. Pre-World War 1 there were probably 40-50 men legally working there, but by the late 1920s the numbers were down to a dozen. There was a brief resurgence in periods of need e.g. when there was high unemployment in the 1930s and during World War 11. However, the numbers of sleeper hewers never again reached the heights of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

References: 1 Bendigo Advertiser 10/8/1889; 2 Elmore Standard 5/9/1890; 3 The Argus 9/2/1895; 4 Elmore Standard 4/12/1896; 5 Tatura Guardian 17/2/1899; 6 Murchison Advertiser 27/3/1914

A Name from the Past

Alfred Baldwin, Stanhope, born in 1853

Baldwin is a name prominent in Stanhope in earlier years, and in Rushworth through to the present. Born at Woodend in the year gold was found at Rushworth, Alfred Baldwin lived a full life in this district. His story was published in Rushworth Chronicle of 29 March, 1935.

“The death occurred at Mooroopna Hospital on Sunday last of a very old district resident in the person of Mr. Alfred Baldwin of Stanhope.

He was born at Woodend 82 years ago

and selected land at Bailieston in the early days. Later he was a wood carter, and about fourteen years ago began farming again at Stanhope.

He is survived by a widow and four sons, viz., Jim (Stanhope), Bob (Nagambie), George (Rushworth) and Alex. (Colbinabbin East). His eldest son, Alfred, was killed in action in the Great War.

The remains were interred in Rushworth Cemetery on Monday afternoon, the Rev. A. Banks officiating at the graveside. His four

sons acted as pall bearers.

The funeral arrangements were carried out by E. F. Anderson.”

These days much is known about victims in all of Australia’s wars. Less recognition tends to be given to the families who had to continue their lives without one or more members. Mr and Mrs Albert Baldwin and their surviving children were one such family.

Alan McLean

Valé John Desmond Oliver

Rushworth resident John Oliver died at the Waranga Nursing Home on 8 December last after a long illness. A graveside service, conducted by Clive Coventry Funerals, was held at the Rushworth cemetery on 12 December. It was attended by a large number of family members and long-time friends. The eulogy was delivered by John's daughter, Tracey, supported by her brother, Darren. Valerie Wallace, the daughter of John's sister, Valerie, also spoke. This tribute is largely based on their comments.

John was born in the Rushworth Bush Nursing Hospital on 1 May 1940, the only son of Ethel Elizabeth Oliver (nee Hawking) and Alfred Desmond Oliver. John's only sibling was Valerie Fay who was eleven years his senior. Ethel later married Frank Rankin who became John's step-father.

From an early age John was an enthusiastic Melbourne supporter and, when aged about eight, he was given a Melbourne jumper. On its back was the No 11. This was, he informed his schoolmates, the number of his hero: Melbourne captain Denis Cordiner. After wearing the number 11 proudly for about a year, it was pointed out to John that a newspaper article mentioned that Denis Cordiner, as captain, wore number 1. This little setback was quickly overcome: one of the figures on the back of the jumper was torn off and for the next few years that jumper proudly carried the number 1 of Denis Cordiner, albeit a little left of centre!

John attended the local primary school where he displayed a talent in both football and cricket. His abilities were even more evident in his years at Rushworth HES and Alan McLean's column in the Waranga News of 2 February 2021 repeated some school reports from 1956, John's final year: John Oliver athletics champion. "John Oliver won the senior boy's high jump, long jump and the hop, step and jump...The over 15, 100 yards was won by John Oliver in 12 seconds and the 220 yards in 33 seconds."

The report also mentioned that Rushworth defeated Kyabram in the inter-school tennis, both boys and girls. Prominent amongst the former was John Oliver. In football Rushworth defeated Rochester by 12 goals with John Oliver kicking 4. Kyabram defeated Rushworth in the wet in a low scoring game, 3.4 to 1.7. John Oliver kicked the only goal for Rushworth and headed their 'best players' list.

Where did this sporting talent come from? Well, his mother Ethel had a brother



John Desmond Oliver.

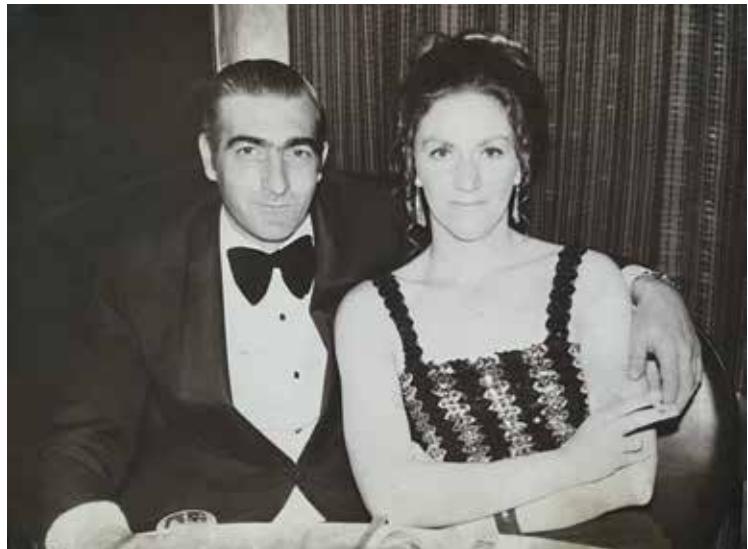
Tim (Hawking) who was captain-coach of the Rushworth football club in the glory days of the 1930's when it won five premierships. Incidentally, Tim's other sister, Elva (Brice) had a daughter (Desma) who could kick a football further than her male contemporaries. Although quite different personalities, the two cousins had close ties which they retained until John's passing.

John apparently did well enough with his studies in his Intermediate year for he obtained a position with the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, starting work at the Head Office in Collins Street early in 1957.

A few years later John met Sandra Sheahan and they married at Ascot Vale on 15 September 1961. They lived in that suburb until moving to Preston with their growing family: Darren (born in 1962), Tracey (1964) and Stuart (1970). Sadly Stuart, a primary school teacher, died in 2010 at the age of 40.

Sandra and John parted ways around 1971 and the family moved back to Ascot Vale with Sandra. John lived with his father, Alf, in Balaclava when he was not working away from Melbourne.

To describe John's work life as unsettled would probably be an understatement. From the rather sedate banking role, he became a sawmill worker in Dargo. Then



John and Sandra.

he was stores manager in the goldfield of Telfer in Western Australia before becoming a salesman for Hanimax cameras and Pioneer radios. For a time he was a sound technician in his brother-in-law's business which was involved in projects such as the installation of the Russell Street police tower, the sound system at the Melbourne Showgrounds and for the Commonwealth Heads of State conference in the Exhibition Buildings.

Throughout his life John kept up his interest in football, cricket, darts and pool, playing well into his adult years. He also loved the outdoors and spent spare time travelling and camping. He loved to sit beside the river with his esky and fish, not too far from the local pub where he would make many friendships.

John was basically a law-abiding citizen although there were occasions when he skated on thin ice. Speed limit signs were considered a rough guide and the extent to which they were observed depended on the proximity of the nearest police station. On one occasion during school holidays Tracey accompanied her father in his car as he filled his role as salesman. As they passed Albert Park Lake John suddenly pulled over, went to the boot and took out a shotgun. Shortly afterwards it was returned to the boot, along with a duck which only moments before had been sitting peacefully on the side of the lake. John then sped

away, leaving startled onlookers to wonder what was going on.

In his later life John met and lived very happily in Bentleigh with Patricia and their much-loved dog Buster. John was the owner-driver of a truck and worked delivering all over Melbourne with Buster by his side. When not working he was an avid gardener and, of course, a spectator at local sporting games. He was also much loved by Patricia's boys. When Patricia passed away, John made his way back to Rushworth where he spent his final years.

Meanwhile, John's family had expanded: Darren is the father of Darcy and Liam; Tracey is the mother of Robby, Zach and Molly; Daniel and Gemma are Stuart's children. Great grandchildren to Robby (4) and Molly (2) round out the family. John followed their progress in studies, sport and work and took pride in their achievements. The loss of Stuart was keenly felt.

John maintained his interest in sport and was a regular supporter of the Rushworth teams in both cricket and football. The cricket club even presented him with one of their T shirts in appreciation of his support. The year 2021 was a stellar one for John: the Demons won the premiership after a lull of 57 years. What's more, the team included a player with the surname of 'Oliver'. Regrettably, he wore number 13 and not the old number 11.

Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools

Rushworth SES visits Kinder

On Thursday 13 March some of the Rushworth SES Unit came to visit the children at the Rushworth Kindergarten and gave the children a demonstration of some of the tools and equipment that they use.

Susan, Mike and Raymond displayed and demonstrated the tools they carry on board the truck and explained to the children how they use them and the situations when they may be used. The children joined in holding the equipment, turning it on and exploring the truck.

The children even got to have a turn at switching on the lights and Mike gave them a quick listen to the siren. The children really loved the experience and continued to talk about it for the rest of the day. The children were also delighted to receive a gift at the end of the demonstration.

The Staff and Committee and of course the children would like to thank the Rushworth SES for allowing this day to happen and also Susan, Mike and Raymond for giving up their time to give the children such a fantastic experience.

You never know some of the children may just be the next SES volunteers.



Madeline Cleary attempting to lift the hydraulic cutters.



Children explore the truck.



Finn Storen with the light stick.



Aiden Wicks takes traffic control



Mike and Susan demonstrate how they can crush a can with the cutters

Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools Around our

A meaningful journey through Lent at St Mary's

The season of Lent has brought a wonderful sense of reflection and anticipation to our school community as we prepare for Easter.

This special time calls us to consider the sacrifices Jesus made during his 40 days and nights in the desert and to reflect on how our own actions can mirror his compassion and generosity.

Our school is buzzing with excitement as each class participates in activities designed to raise funds for Project Compassion, an initiative that unites millions of Australians in support of the world's poor. Project Compassion works to end poverty, promote justice and uphold the dignity of vulnerable communities across the globe. At St Mary's, our students have embraced this mission wholeheartedly by engaging in creative and thoughtful fundraising efforts:

- Foundation, Year 1 and Year 2 students are participating in a Guess the Lollies in the Jar challenge, where students donate

coins to take a guess.

- Year 3 and Year 4 students have organized a Dress-Up Day, encouraging classmates to dress in fun costumes in exchange for a gold coin donation.

- Year 5 and Year 6 students will be working together on a challenge to spell out the word CARITAS, the name of the Catholic Church's international aid and development agency, using donated coins.

Every dollar raised will go directly to Project Compassion, ensuring that we continue to support those most in need while teaching our students the power of generosity and service to others.

*Angela Fiske-Kealy
St Mary's PS
Rushworth*



Exciting learning experiences across the School

In addition to our Lenten celebrations, classrooms have been alive with engaging learning experiences:

- Foundation, Year 1, and Year 2 students have officially transitioned to full-time schooling! Up until now, our Foundation students have had Wednesdays as a rest day but they are now attending five days a week.

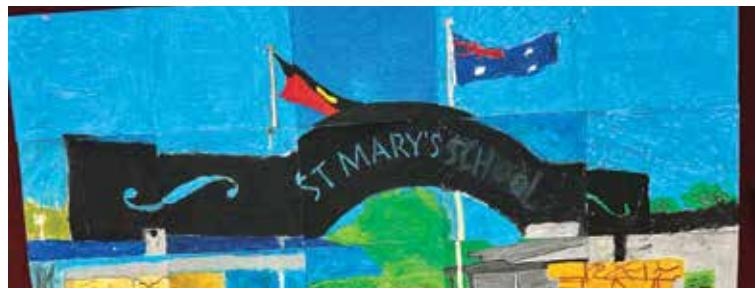
Their InitialLit program has already led to incredible growth in literacy, with students eagerly discovering letter-sound relationships, syllables and early word-building skills. It has been heartwarming to witness so many "lightbulb moments" as their confidence in reading and writing flourishes.

- Year 3 and Year 4 students have been exploring identity and place, focusing on how personal identity is shaped by the places where we live and work. This exploration has led to stunning visual representations

of each student's understanding, culminating in beautiful collaborative artwork displayed around the school.

- Year 5 and Year 6 students are deep into their economics-focused inquiry unit, preparing for an upcoming Market Stall Day. As part of this project, students are researching the cost of goods, budgeting and planning interactive events that incorporate their learning about financial literacy. This hands-on experience will provide them with valuable insights into real-world economic principles, all while fostering teamwork and creativity.

It has been a dynamic and enriching term so far, filled with deep learning, community engagement and meaningful experiences. We are incredibly proud of our students' efforts and look forward to seeing their continued growth as we journey through the season of Lent together.



Annabelle CLEELAND MP
Member for Euroa
03 5762 1600 | annabellecleeland.com.au

Proudly supporting the local community

Catherine Fraser
Civil Celebrant
Celebrating Marriages and Funerals
293 Hill Road
Stanhope VIC, 3623
catherinemarycelebrations@gmail.com
0427 572 549

Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools Around our schools

Heywire Youth grants for good ideas

The FRRR* and ABC Heywire Youth Innovation Grants offer grants of up to \$10,000 to communities across Australia to implement ideas generated at the annual Heywire Summit.

These grants aim to help communities adopt, adapt, and act on projects developed by young Australians aged 16 to 22 living in regional, rural, and remote areas.

The 2025 Heywire program is currently open, with applications closing on April 30, 2025. Funding will be awarded in early August 2025.

Project ideas for the 2025 program include:

- Youth Ignite: Rekindling community spirit and improving trust between young people and their communities.
- How 2 Adult: Equipping young people with practical life skills needed for post-school life.
- Full Plate Pantry: Breaking down the stigma surrounding food insecurity in regional communities.
- HARK (Helping Australians in Rural Kommunities): Making career opportunities more accessible for young people living in the country.
- Wellness Wagon: Connecting regional young people with the health support they need.
- CommUnity: Using lived experience to educate and celebrate cultural diversity.

These grants are available for projects that will take place in regional Australia, defined as areas outside of Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth, and Sydney. Priority is given to youth-led projects and those that demonstrate strong community engagement.

For more information and to apply, please visit the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal's website.

* Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal

Rushworth P-12 has a Student Art Gallery

Rushworth P-12 has set up a Student Art Gallery in the old school hall, showcasing the creativity and talent of students. *Ms Kent*



(Above) So far, the Foundation – Year 3 Class have learnt about Chinese New Year and created colourful lanterns in honour of the festival.

(Below) They've also explored the vibrant art style of Romero Britto, creating colourful sunrises with bright colours and mixed patterns.



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Benn 0493 601 877

Lucy 0411 898 364

cleanedge33@gmail.com

Prayers for Pope Francis from all around the world



Pope Francis concelebrates Mass in the chapel of his hospital suite.

Catholics around the world are marking the twelfth anniversary of Pope Francis's election as pontiff by praying for his recovery.

Pope Francis, 88, has been hospitalised since 14 February, 2025, due to severe bronchitis that developed into double pneumonia. Recent updates from the Vatican indicate that his health is gradually improving. He continues to receive high-flow oxygen therapy during the day and has been reducing the need for non-invasive mechanical ventilation at night. A recently released photograph shows the Pope celebrating Mass in the chapel of his hospital suite, suggesting he is regaining strength. Despite his hospitalization, Pope Francis

has remained mentally alert and continues to manage church affairs from the hospital. While his condition is stable and improving, he still requires ongoing medical care, including physiotherapy.

PRAYER FOR THE POPE

Father in heaven, grant Francis, our Pope, comfort in his suffering.

When he is afraid, give him courage,
When afflicted, give him patience,
When dejected, afford him hope, And when alone assure him of the support of our holy people. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

Adapted from the 'Ritual of Anointing of the Sick' by Fr Tony Hill, PP Euroa.

Pope urges reflection on migrant experience for Lenten season

In a message signed before he was hospitalised, Pope Francis has urged Christians to use this Lenten period to reflect on their lives in comparison to those experienced by migrants.

"It would be a good Lenten exercise for us to compare our daily life with that of some migrant or foreigner, to learn how to sympathise with their experiences and in this way discover what God is asking of us so that we can better advance on our journey to the house of the Father," the Pope wrote in his message for Lent 2025.

The message is in keeping with the Pope's consistent themes urging solidarity and compassion for the marginalised, highlighting the experiences of migrants and emphasizing their vulnerability, struggles and need for empathy. He frequently reminds the faithful to recognize the dignity of each person, irrespective of their status, background or nationality.

Reflecting on the theme 'Let us journey together in hope', Pope Francis said that Lent was a time to confront both personal and collective struggles with faith and compassion.

Just as migrants embark on difficult and dangerous journeys, often facing hardship and uncertainty, Lent is a time of spiritual journey, where Christians are encouraged to reflect, sacrifice and renew their faith.

We are reminded to be compassionate, offering aid, support, and hospitality, mirroring the teachings of Jesus Christ.

District Church Times and Contacts

Anglican

- St Paul's, Rushworth: 0419 512 632
 - 9.30am 2nd Sunday of month - lay led service
 - 9.30am 4th Sunday of month - Communion
- Christ Church, Murchison: Rev Andre du Plooy 0458 155 930
 - 10.30 am Thursdays Holy Eucharist
 - 11am service every Sunday
- St Matthews, Stanhope: 0419 855 964 (Church Warden)
- St John's, Colbinabbin: 0428 329 344 (Mick Clayton)

Presbyterian

- St Andrew's, Rushworth: Sunday 9am: Minister Kalpan Vasa 0477 241 042 or Elder Gary Dunstan 5856 1332.
- St Andrew's, Stanhope: 5831 6494 (Rev Kyung Rae Ee)

Catholic

St Mary's Parish. 1st and 3rd Sundays: Cornella 9am; Stanhope 10.30am. 2nd and 4th Sundays: Rushworth 9am; Murchison 10.30am. 5th Sunday: One Parish Mass - Rushworth. Contact a team member on the parish mobile phone: 0459 898 925. Sunday Mass continues online from St Kilian's Sundays 10am.

Shine Church, Stanhope

Sunday services at 10am at the Stanhope Community Hall. Kids church running as well during service. More info call Wal Sinapius 0408 393 398.

Living Waters Rushworth:

Sunday 3.30pm coffee: 4pm service 0428 323 631 (Pastor Peter Guerra)

Generations Church, Tatura

5824 3240 (Pastor Jeremy Burr)

Salvation Army: 5852 3875

Uniting Church

Waranga Uniting Churches – Rushworth, Colbinabbin, Murchison and Tatura. Service Times: Weekly at 9.30am (with the 'room' open for a chat at 9am)

Every congregation is open for services which will be streamed each week into all four of our church buildings.

Each week one congregation will host the service with people in other congregations participating in leading the readings, sharing news and fellowship via the magic of Zoom.

You are welcome to join us in person or from your lounge room via Zoom.

The link for the Zoom service can be found on our website warangauitingchurches.net.au or can be emailed to you each week.

Baptism candles

In preparation for their upcoming Baptism, baptism candles were presented at Cornella last Sunday -

- to Hattie and Daly Tuohey, daughter and son of Sally and Pat;
- to Addison Rogers, daughter of Filly and Nathan;
- and to Greta Barlow, daughter of Hugh and Prue.



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living the **GOOD LIFE**

The power of the default: saying yes to life

Recently, I received an email informing me I would be automatically registered for a Conference unless I opted out.

I never choose to go to this event, and yet, every two years, the assumption remains the same: unless I say otherwise, it is assumed I am going.

It got me thinking about the power of default options over our lives. The small, unspoken assumptions that determine our life choices without us realising it.

The opt-in vs opt-out debate is well known in areas like organ donation. Germany and Austria are neighbouring countries, with similar cultures and economies, yet their organ donation rates could not be more different.

In Germany, where people must actively opt in to become organ donors, only about 12% register, whereas in Austria, where organ donation is the default position, that is, unless a person opts out, they are considered to be an organ donor, the registration rate is over 99%.

This dramatic contrast isn't because Austrians are inherently more generous. It's because people tend to go with the default option. When the easiest choice is to do nothing, that's what most people choose, whether it's about organ donation, superannuation plans or even the way we spend our daily lives.

How complexity pushes us to default

Another force that keeps us locked into the default option is 'decision fatigue'—when a choice feels too complicated, we avoid making it altogether. A famous study on retirement plans showed that when employees were given two or three investment options, most signed up. But when they were given 50 options, participation dropped significantly. Instead of carefully weighing up the choices, many simply did nothing.

The lesson is clear: when decisions become overwhelming, we default to whatever option is already in place.

Urgency and the cost of inaction

One of my mantras is, "What must be done, will get done." Urgency has a way of cutting through inertia. A crisis forces action in a way that normal life does not.

We rush to the emergency room, but we delay check-ups. We make time for a friend's

funeral, but put off visiting them when they are alive. We stay where we are until something shakes us loose. This is why studies on regret show that people overwhelmingly regret not doing things far more than they regret the things they did. When looking back on their lives, most people don't mourn their failures, but their inaction—the risks they didn't take, the words they didn't say, the opportunities they let slip by because life got in the way.

This raises a crucial question, how many regrets come from simply following the default option?



Jesus and the default of 'Yes'

This brings me to Jesus, who, if we were to define his 'default setting,' was someone who always said yes to life, to people, and ultimately to God's will—even when it led him to suffering and the cross.

The Gospels are filled with stories of Jesus interrupted. He is on his way somewhere, in the middle of teaching, eating, praying when someone calls out for help. A blind beggar, a grieving parent, a woman with a haemorrhage, a desperate crowd. Over and over, Jesus stops what he is doing, turns around and chooses to engage.

- When he is tired and looking for rest, but the crowds follow him—he feeds them.
- When a woman touches his robe in a bustling crowd, he doesn't move on—he seeks her out and speaks with her.
- When a Gentile woman begs him to heal her daughter, he challenges her but ultimately says yes.

Jesus' default position was not avoidance, but engagement. Not "I'm too busy," but "What do you need?"

Even in Gethsemane, while facing the unbearable weight of what lay ahead of him, Jesus prayed, "Not my will, but yours be done." This was Jesus' ultimate 'yes', not just to life, but to sacrifice, to suffering, to redemption.

Lent and the cross: choosing a different default

Lent is a season that challenges us to examine our own default settings.

- What are we living for?
- What assumptions guide our choices?
- Do we default to self-protection, avoiding difficult conversations, hard truths, and/or new challenges?
- Do we default to busyness, postponing the things that truly matter until 'later'?
- Do we default to inaction, waiting for urgency to push us into doing what we already know we should be doing?

As we walk toward the cross this Lenten season, we are invited to re-set our default positions. To be more open to saying yes to the things that matter—yes to grace, yes to love, yes to interruptions that call us out of ourselves.

Ultimately, Easter reminds us that Jesus' great 'Yes' did not end in death, but in resurrection. It also reminds us that stepping fully into God's will, no matter how costly, leads to life beyond anything we can imagine.

So perhaps the challenge of Lent is this:

- What would change if we lived with a 'Yes' default?
- Would we look back on our lives with fewer regrets?
- Would we be more open to love, to faith, to courage?
- Would we be more like Jesus?

This is the gospel, and it's good news.

*Brian Spencer, Minister,
Waranga Uniting Churches*

Giving up for Lent

1. Social media. Either cut down or completely stop using social media for Lent. Remove the noise and busyness of a constantly updating feed and the influence of other people's opinions.

2. Binge watching TV. Cut down on compulsively watching different TV series.

3. Gossip. Make a conscious effort to avoid repeating gossip and taking part in that cycle of negativity. Change the subject if you need to and focus on speaking positively about people.

4. Online shopping. If you find yourself impulse spending online, it might be time to try going cold turkey. Try completely stopping online shopping or only shopping for essentials during Lent.

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WARANGA NEWS CLASSIFIEDS

DEATH

KOLENATY, Jiri (George)**30/07/1927 - 09/03/2025**

With great sadness, we announce the peaceful passing, in Bendigo, of Jiri Kolenaty, born in Mestecko u Krivoklatu, Czechoslovakia. Husband of Joyce (dec). Father of Elaine (dec), Dianne (& Tom), Roger (& Anglelique dec) and Tania (& Graeme). Proud grandfather of Sarah (& Glenn), Saul (& Kylie), Talia (& Charlie), Toby (& Lucy), Emma (& Matt) and Wesley (& Brendan). Great Grandfather to Zara, Elsie, Bridie, Anderson, Macy and Woody. Cherished also by his extended family in Czechia.

May your compass guide you back to a place where your heart is filled.

Know you were, and are, truly loved.

IN MEMORIAM

HAYWOOD - Emma Andee**06 March 1975 - 04 April 1993**

"We hold your precious memory close to our hearts, dear one; Our world is such a poorer place without you. Your Dad and Little Mum Queensland

McARDLE, Charles Henry - 28/1/1987 and McARDLE, Patrick Francis 23/3/2002.

In loving memory of my Father and Brother. Warm memories of our early childhood days in Rushy with you, Dad, Mum and Paddy and me.

Lots of memories of fishing at the weir and the tin hut with you Dad and paddy on the three wheeler in the back yard.

Wonderful simple times so long ago.

Lots of love from Trevor, Moyra, Sean, Travis, Megan and the eight grandies.

BEREAVEMENT THANKS

CRUZ: Margaret June.

Ian (Abid), Suzie and Debbie and families would like to sincerely thank everyone for your wonderful support during Mum's final illness and subsequent passing. Thank you to Dr Joe, GV Health Respiratory Ward and a very special thank you to the staff members at Waranga Hostel for their kindness and care they gave mum. Mum thoroughly enjoyed her time at the Hostel.

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Kids Quiz Answers

1. Swimming, Cycling & Running, 2. April, June, Sept & Nov. 3. Black 4. Red & White, 5. Plane, 6. Mem Fox, 7. A mouse, 8. The sun, 9. The skin. 10. Clownfish.

Phone: 5856 1120

or email wnews@iinet.net.au

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DISTRICT INFORMATION BOARD

WHAT'S ON AROUND THE TOWNS

MARCH

Thu 20 March - Thu 3 April	Services Australia mobile service centre visiting surrounding towns
Sat 22	Rushworth Community Social Dance - at Shire Hall 7pm-11.30pm Bookings 5856 1295 \$10 Adults \$5 Children
Mon 24	Immunisation session 11.40am-11.50am Rushworth Service Centre bookings by appointment: www.campapse.vic.gov.au/immunisations
Sat 29 - Sat 5 Apr	Rochester Mural Festival
Sun 30	Colbinabbin Market Day 10am-3pm

APRIL

Sun 6	Stanhope Town Garage Sale from 9am
Thu 10	Rushworth Shire Hall Age Care Expo - all Services Providers
Sat 19	Rushworth Easter Heritage Festival Market, High Street - 8.30am
Sun 20	Moora Working Draught Horse Muster

Meetings & Activities - around the district

- Rushworth SES training: Wednesday evenings at 7pm
- Rushworth CFA: Tuesday nights
- Rushworth Food bank: Mon 10am -12pm, Wed 10am-12pm, Fri 10am-12pm
- #9 Op-Shop: Mon, Wed and Fri - 9am - 2pm Saturday 9am to 12pm
- Rushworth Community Garden every Wednesday
- Rushworth Community House - Genealogy, every Friday from 9.30 to 12.30pm
- Colbinabbin Library: Wednesdays
- Colbinabbin Community Shed: most Thursdays (old Shire Depot), 10am
- Rushworth Band practice: 7.30pm every Monday night
- Stanhope Walking Group: Tuesdays at 9.30am at McEwen Place
- Stanhope Community Garden: Wednesdays 8.30 to 9.30am
- Rushworth Market: 3rd Saturday of month - 8.30am to 1pm
- Rushworth ART Depot (RAD) - every Market day - Sat 10am -1pm
- Murchison CFA: Meeting 1st Monday 8pm - training on 3rd Monday 6.30pm
- Murchison Community Garden: Wednesdays 9am - 11am
- Rushworth Museum: every Saturday 10am-12 noon, 1st and 4th Sunday 11am - 1pm
- Rushworth & District Community Bank Board: meets 1st Tuesday monthly, at 6pm
- Rushworth Events Inc: meets bi-monthly, third Wednesday at 7pm
- Rushworth Community Walking Group: Thurs 8 - 9am meet at front of Waranga Health
- Stanhope Mens Shed: Mon - Wed - Fri 9am - 12 noon
- Murchison Mens Shed: Wednesdays 10am – 3pm
- Rushworth Garden Lovers Club meet 3rd Thursday Month 1.30pm at old Senior Citizen's building
- Friends of the Hostel: Third Monday 1.30pm monthly
- Alcoholics Anonymous(AA) meetings, 14 High st, Rushworth, Thursdays 7pm
- Stanhope: Chris's exercises at Seniors: Mondays 10.45am
- Rushworth: Chris's exercises at Rushworth Community House Mondays 1 - 2pm
- Colbinabbin: Chris's exercises at Colbinabbin Hall Mondays 3.30 - 4.30pm

Local clubs or groups who would like to display their event, occasion, community service, entertainment, meeting or opening times, give Waranga News a call or email to be included in our events calendar.

LOCAL SERVICE PHONE NUMBERS

POLICE or FIRE.....	Emergency.....000
	Non-emergency 13 1444
AMBULANCE.....	Emergency.....000
	Non-emergency...13 3009
SES: (storm & flood).....	13 2500
DOCTORS:	
Murchison Medical Centre.....	5826 2575
Rushworth Medical Centre.....	5856 1329
Stanhope Telecare Medical Centre.....	4800 5291
Waranga Medical Centre.....	5851 8400
HEALTH:	
Stanhope Health.....	5857 0451
Waranga Health	5851 8000
Nurse on call.....	1300 606 024
HELP:	
Lifeline.....	13 1114
Kids Helpline.....	1800 551 800
POLICE:	
Rushworth.....	5856 1000
Murchison.....	5826 2222
Colbinabbin.....	5856 1000
SUPPORT SERVICE:	
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WARANGA NEWS OFFICE	5856 1120

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

FOR NEXT EDITION - 3 APRIL

Display Ads: Friday, 28 March

Classified: Monday, 31 March

wnews@iinet.net.au

Waranga News



A Voluntary Community Newspaper

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Your Council News

Coming Up

Council meeting | 6pm Tuesday, 15 April 2025 | Echuca Civic Centre
Meetings can be streamed live: www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/livestreaming

Immunisation Sessions

By appointment only. Register at campaspe.vic.gov.au/immunisations

If you are feeling unwell or have any cold or flu-like symptoms, you must cancel or reschedule your appointment.

Thursday, 20 March

11:30 – 11:50am | Lockington Bush Nursing Centre

Monday, 24 March

9:10 – 9:50am | Tongala Shire Hall

Monday, 24 March

11:40 – 11:50am | Rushworth Service Centre

Tuesday, 1 April

5.40 – 6.30am | Rochester Service Centre

Need help making an appointment?

Please call Council on 1300 666 535.

Tenders

Request for Quote 25010:

Aquatics and Wet Play Strategy.

Council is seeking submissions from suitably experienced providers for the above work.

RFQ submissions must be uploaded to the eProcure tender portal on Council's website no later than 2pm on 24 March 2025.

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Expression of Interest 24046:

Demountable Flood Barriers.

Council is seeking submissions from suitably experienced contractors for the above work.

Expressions of Interest submissions must be uploaded to the eProcure tender portal on Council's website no later than 2pm on 26 March 2025.

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Employment

#campaspecareers

- Customer Service Officer (casual)
- Emergency Management Officer
- Early Childhood Educators
- Group Fitness Instructor
- Learn to Swim Teacher

For all positions currently open and application details, visit Council's website or call 1300 666 535.

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Project Update

The Missing Link footpaths program provides new footpaths that fill gaps in the footpath networks in urban areas across the municipality as nominated by the community. A 70 m section of footpath was recently completed in Olympic Street, Girgarre, as part of this program.



Now Open

For all open projects and applications, visit campaspe.vic.gov.au/nowopen



Volunteers sought for Ripple Fest

Want to be part of upcoming arts festival Ripple Fest but don't have an artistic bone in your body? Or perhaps you do, but would prefer to work in the background? Either way, we've got

you covered! We're looking for volunteers to help bring this exciting festival to life in Rochester and Echuca from 22-25 May, 2025. Visit the Now Open section on Council's website to register your interest.



Draft 2025-30 Campaspe Library Service Strategic Plan

The draft 2025-2030 Campaspe Library Service Strategic Plan is now open for public comment. We encourage everyone to review the draft strategy and provide their input by 23 March.

Community Transport Drivers needed in Kyabram!

Join our team of volunteer drivers in Kyabram and help us make direct, positive impact every day!

Our service allows you to provide a trusted link to regional/city health specialists for local people. As a volunteer driver, your tasks will include:

Providing safe, reliable transport to out-of-town medical appointments; operating the supplied vehicle in a safe and efficient manner at all times, complying with Council policy and procedures; and providing a friendly and supportive environment

to empower our regional residents to keep accessing the best healthcare in Victoria no matter where they live. Please note, you do not need to be available every day, or even every week.



To apply:

Phone Narelle Betts, Community Transport Officer on 1300 666 535, or email shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au

Works Notices

Two Tree Road, Stanhope

Culvert and bridge renewal construction works in Two Tree Road, Stanhope, are scheduled to start in March and will take about four months to complete. During the construction period, Two Tree Road will be closed between Girgarre-Rushworth Road and Geodetic Road North. Detours will be in place. Access to properties will be available. Some traffic delays may occur, but council will endeavour to minimise the disruption to road users as much as possible.



Sturt Street Car Park, Echuca

Council is scheduling works in the Sturt Street Car Park, Echuca. The works are scheduled to start in March and the car park will be partially closed for the first week, then completely closed for the remainder of the works. The works will take approximately five weeks to complete. Electronic messaging boards will be erected before the works start to alert carpark users to the changed access conditions.

Readers' Corner

- interesting things to know and do!

BOOK IT IN

The Life Impossible by Matt Haig

The Life Impossible by Matt Haig is certainly a thought-provoking novel that explores themes of mental health, personal struggles, and the search for meaning in life. It's a 'journey' story that focuses on the main character's pursuit of an answer as she grapples with feelings of grief, depression, and the overall weight of existence.

I have been a big fan of Matt Haig's books in the past, especially *The Midnight Library* and *How to Stop Time*. Actually, I have not quite finished *The Life Impossible*, but tbh . . . I have to admit I'm not really loving it!

The protagonist is Grace, a 72-year-old retired maths teacher who is living alone in England, grieving the recent loss of her husband and the more distant loss of her son. An unexpected bequest from a past acquaintance sets her off on an out-of-character trip to the Spanish island of Ibiza. The scene appears to be set for a pretty standard 'finding herself' type of plot but, being Matt Haig, we can expect that the journey will be anything but 'ordinary'. And sure enough the 'standard' is quickly dispelled as those fantasy/magical realism elements (that Haig does so well) insert themselves into the narrative. As Grace searches for answers, what she uncovers is an impossible truth, stranger than anything she could have dreamed of.

Why am I struggling with it? It's definitely not the paranormal 'woo-woo' bit that might put some people off (if it was I wouldn't be a Matt Haig fan!). I think it is probably the character development that seems not subtle and lacking nuance. Grace's internal dialogue and experiences are central to the narrative, and they reflect an isolation that appears to come from her grief induced depression. But I feel that the author could have introduced and established the personalities of both Grace and Alberto (the other main character) early on and then left them alone to continue their relationship with the reader as the story unfolded. No need for every snippet of conversation to remind us of Grace's hostility towards Alberto!

The Life Impossible hasn't held my attention the way the earlier Haig books have, but it's good enough that I will definitely finish it. I do feel Matt Haig is trying to impart some much needed wisdom to his readers, but it sometimes comes across to me as a little bit self-righteous and preachy.

However this isn't a very long or difficult to read book and, if you don't mind a bit of 'woo woo', I think you should go for it. Certainly don't take my word for it! MJ

KIDS' QUIZ

1. What 3 sports are involved in a Triathlon?
2. Name the 4 months that only have 30 days.
3. What is the most common hair colour in the world?
4. What 2 colours are on the Canadian flag?
5. A "747" is a type of what?
6. What famous Australian children's author wrote "Where Is The Green Sheep?"
7. What type of animal is the TV character, Angelina Ballerina?
8. What is the closest star to the earth?
9. What is the largest organ of the human body?
10. What kind of fish is Nemo? (Answers page 26)

Did you know? . . . An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

Sudoku and Crossword puzzle

Lovatts
www.lovattspuzzles.com

HOW TO PLAY

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every number from 1 to 9 must appear in:

Each of the nine vertical columns

Each of the nine horizontal rows

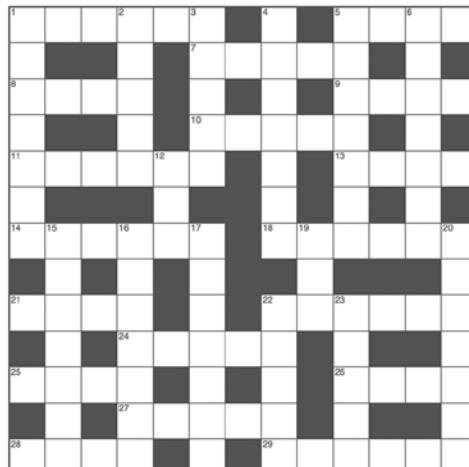
Each of the nine 3 x 3 boxes

Remember no number can occur more than once in any row, column or box.

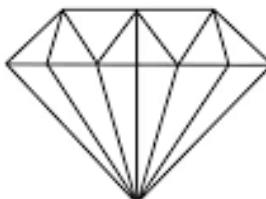
Rating: ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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

Crossword No: 47



Solutions will appear in the next edition.



Diamond

Who would have thought that a diamond is a solid form of the element carbon? (My burnt toast doesn't look anything like a diamond!)

The atoms of carbon are arranged in a crystal structure. Most natural diamonds are over a billion years old and come from as deep as 150 and 250 km in the earth's crust. The intense high pressure and temperature 'converts' the carbon to crystals.

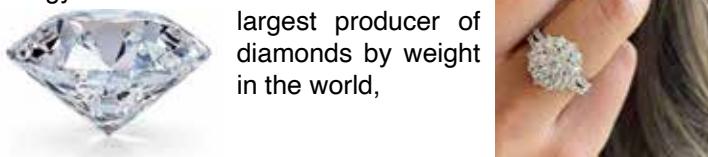
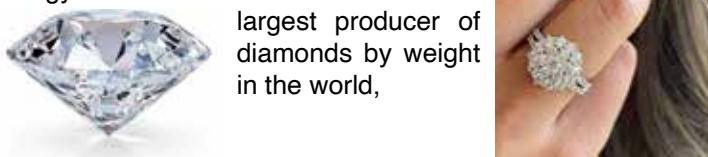
But synthetic diamonds

can be grown under the right conditions, if you're in a hurry and don't want to wait for a billion years.

Diamonds are really, really hard and are used in industry - you might have heard of diamond-tipped drills or saws, for instance. But they are also used as gemstones - most engagement rings will feature at least one diamond, more if you're lucky - and rich!

The Argyle diamond mine in Australia is the

largest producer of diamonds by weight in the world,



Rushworth Footy 100 Years ago

In 1925, Rushworth Football Club was playing in the Goulburn Valley Football League, which at the time comprised only seven teams – Rushworth, Murchison, Tatura, Mooroopna, Shepparton, Kyabram and Tongala. All were easily accessible by rail, which was the mode of transport used.

Generally speaking, the Tigers were cellar-dwellers in the GVFL in the decade from 1919 when the competition resumed after the war. However, by the late 1920s they had started to build towards their 1930s dominance, first making the finals in 1928 before being runners-up in 1929.

The Tigers had adopted the gold and black colours a few years earlier, when former Richmond player Frank Huggard was the coach. Prior to that, they had used a variety of colours.

Admission fee to the ground for home and away games was one shilling (10c) per person. The league was just starting to consider whether to make a charge for cars to enter the grounds, as the number of cars was on the increase.

Administration

President of the footy club from 1924-1926 was Harry Hilder, whose son (Otto Harry) and son-in-law (Frank Geisler) both played in the team. The large Hilder family had connections to many other Rushworth and district families at the time.

Secretary of RFC in 1925 was Fred Thompson, a teacher at Rushworth State School, and the Treasurer was Cliff Boyle, who was the accountant at the Bank of Victoria in High Street, Rushworth. League delegates were Messrs J D Chandler, D Wilson and W C Lambden.

Players

The player list for 1925 included many men from families who have a long association with the Rushworth Football Club – Abikhair, Collard, Colliver, Geisler, Hawking, Kinsman, Merryfull and Sexton.

Three Hawkings played that year, and Arthur “Nugget” Hawking joined them the following year. Three Geislars also played, with the Collard and Colliver families each being represented by two players. During the season, Les Abikhair was invited to try out for Carlton in the VFL but declined the offer. His younger brother Dick later played 120 games for Hawthorn and North Melbourne.

Some of the players who later formed the experienced base of the successful Rushworth teams of the 1930s cut their teeth during the



Harry Hilder (President of the Rushworth Football Club 1924-6) with his wife Caroline and their children. Photo courtesy of Gwen Hitchcock (nee Hilder) taken c 1906. Son Otto Harry (back right) played for the Tigers in the mid-1920s.

unsuccessful years of the mid-1920s. They included “Tim” Hawking, Keith Colliver, Bill Corner and Frank “Scurrah” Geisler.

Competition

A much shorter season was played in the 1920s. The seven teams they played two full home and away rounds during the season (twelve games, two byes), followed by finals. Clubs from the larger more populous centres of Kyabram, Shepparton, Mooroopna and Tatura dominated the competition, and all made the finals in 1925.

Teams from the three smaller towns of Rushworth, Murchison and Tongala were seen to be somewhat disadvantaged in terms of player personnel and finance and had very limited on-field success. There was even a proposal discussed at the start of the 1925 season to introduce some form of handicap system to make games more competitive, but this was rejected by the league delegates.

Ultimately, the minor premiers Shepparton had an easy win over Kyabram to take the flag 9.15.69 to 4.9.33, but Ky rebounded strongly from that disappointment to win the next three GVFL flags from 1926-8.

During the year, the GVFL played the GV Football Association, which included teams that now play in the Murray and Picola Leagues, or are defunct (e.g. the wonderfully named Muckatah FC), trouncing them by sixteen goals. No Rushworth players selected for this team.

At the end of the season, the GVFL

premiers Shepparton played the GVFA premiers Numurkah, the game being a fundraiser for Mooroopna Hospital. Apparently, they played an uninteresting match, even though it resulted in a draw.

Another season

After the 1925 season, Rushworth Football Club was debating the pros and cons of appointing a player with VFL experience to be the coach for the following year. “Tim” Hawking was among those in favour of this approach but ultimately became the coach for the following season, before handing over to players with those qualifications from 1927-30. He would receive a fee of one guinea per week (\$2.10). During the same year he was invited to “try out” with both Melbourne and Hawthorn in the VFL but stuck with Rushy.

It was to be Tim’s least successful year of coaching as the team finished with the wooden spoon, winning only the last two games of the season. When Tim resumed coaching in 1931, after four years of playing under very experienced coaches, the club was well on the way to the outstanding success it experienced in the 1930s. Tim was one of the major factors in that success.

This demonstrates how it is possible for a club to turn around in terms of on-field performance over a relatively short time. Key personnel both on and off field are vital for that to happen.

REFERENCE: Rushworth Chronicle 1925 per favour Rushworth Historical Society

Grand champion bowlers at Rushworth

What a brilliant display of bowls by our Division 7 team to win their Grand Final against Kyabram at Shepparton Park.

Rocky's team of Ross, Geoff and Glenis started slowly, being down 6/0, but after picking up a multiple, their confidence grew in leaps and bounds. It didn't take long for the scores to level up and they fought for the whole game to go down by only one shot 18/19.

Tim's team of Jason, Tracy and Helen got off to a good start and were never headed all day, winning their rink 23/8.

It was a pleasure to watch these predominantly new bowlers (and our couple of veterans) all contributing some wonderful bowls and obviously enjoying their day.

The club is immensely proud of this team and it has been a pleasure to watch the improvement in their bowling. All us oldies best watch out! Congratulations Division 7.

Jean Sprague



Division 7 Premiers 2024/25 - L-R - Jason Cashmore, Helen Hutchins, Geoff Durston, Glenis Ray, (emergency Barb Rogerson), Tim Lutnick, Tracy Ferguson, Ross Williams, Rocky Damon.

Helen Hutchins GV Novice Singles Champion

What a great day for our new bowler Helen Hutchins in the finals of the GV Novice Singles.

Played at Shepparton Park, the games were moved to the undercover green due to the rain.

Helen played Hayley Newby from Wunghnu in her semi final, having a comfortable win 21/4.

The final was a much tighter game. Helen's opponent was Gayle George from Eildon Bowls Club. Helen got off to a great start, picking up the line and weight well. Gayle however kept up her good form, eventually managing to level the scores 16 all. Helen drew three great bowls on the next end to go 19/16 up.

Only one more end was required, with two more super bowls from Helen for a 21/16 win. The heads these two ladies had during their game were excellent, with a great exhibition of draw bowling.

Very big congratulations to Helen on a terrific achievement in her first year of bowls. The club is very proud of you Helen!



Rushworth Speedway Vic Title

26 April – 4pm, Modified sedans, Victorian Title

Can Brad Wicks, the current Victorian No. 1 defend his title and go back-to-back? Or will a new contender rise to claim the crown. Don't miss the action. Keep your eyes peeled for nominations. The club wants to make this an event for the books,

guaranteeing the best night possible to wrap up the season. Whether you are a lifelong racing fan or new to the sport, this is the night to be at Rushworth Speedway.

Future Events

- 21 June - Presentation Night

RFNC

Events

Saturday 12 April, 6pm

- Ipod Shuffle and beer Ping pong

Pre-season training

Football

U15 and U18 football – 5.30pm

Seniors football – 6pm

Netball

U13 and U15 netball – 5pm

U17 and senior grades – 6-15pm

Admission price

There is a change to admission prices from the KDFL for season 2025.

- Adults \$12,
- Pensioners \$7
- U18 free, program free.

2025 Player Registrations

Thanks to everyone who has already registered, if you haven't, please follow the links below to get it done.

Under 18, Reserves and Senior Football:
<https://www.playhq.com/afl/register/66ad24>

Netball:

<https://registration.netballconnect.com/appRegistrationFo...>

Registrations should be completed before practice matches kick off.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please reach out to your Football or Netball Committee members.

Please send photos in with your sport stories. A picture tells a thousand words!

Murchison-Toolamba FNC 2025 season

Murchison-Toolamba Football Netball Club

welcomes Alex Tattersall for season 2025.



Alex has had a couple of years away from football due to an injury but we are excited to have another tall, athletic utility ruck/forward to add to the stock.

Events

- Ladies Day

Sat 26 April, 2.30pm – 6pm

Nifty fifties, raffles and grazing table on the day.

2024 was such a huge success so join in this year's event. Tickets are now available to purchase online for the day, offering two ticket options to choose from. You can go all out with the 'all inclusive' ticket, or the 'general admission' ticket.

Tickets, all inclusive

- \$75 -- Beer/wine/cider/soft drink from the first siren to the last siren of the seniors match along with finger food and one entry into the raffle.

- \$35 -- Fingerfood and one entry into the raffle, plus discounted spirits from the first siren to the last of the seniors match.

Grab the girls and join us for a day to celebrate the ladies!

Everyone is welcome. There will be raffles drawn on the day with prizes donated from amazing local businesses.

Book your tickets today - <https://www.trybooking.com/CZZBH>

Practice match

Sat 22 March at Katamatite, 12 noon.

Round 1

Home Game Premiership Flags Players Auction

Under 9/10 and 12s

Goulburn Murray Junior League first round 26 April

Training sessions -

Tuesday - 3.30-4.30 at Toolamba Recreation Reserve

Thursday - 5.30-6.30 at Murchison Recreation Reserve followed by free sausage sizzle.

Training for U9 and U12 teams have commenced.

Please contact murchisontoolambafnc@gmail.com for any questions or assistance.

Registration to play via PlayHQ using link - <https://www.playhq.com/af1/register/82c06f>.

Murchison need new clubrooms

Donated sheds for Murchison FNC are a good start but club rooms are still desperately needed.

The current club rooms were constructed in 1981 and they have not been renovated or upgraded since. Club officials have met with officers from the AFL who, after inspecting 3000 other football clubs, deemed the condition of Murchison's facilities to be in the bottom five percent in the nation.

The Hoppers desperately need investment to bring their facilities into the twenty-first century, which will encourage wider participation and secure a sporting future for local kids.

Liberal Member for Northern Victoria Wendy Lovell has advocated for many years for the state government to support Murchison-Toolamba Football Netball Club with the resources they need.

Ms Lovell supports the club's request for the Victorian Government to donate large sheds from the decommissioned Dhurringile prison for The Hoppers to repurpose as club rooms.

The government had agreed to transfer some relocatable buildings from the prison to the football club. However, this does not include the large shed that the club was particularly seeking.

The donated sheds will serve usefully for extra storage and

possibly a change room for junior footballers, but they will not help solve the long-term need for new club rooms for The Hoppers.

Wendy Lovell said, "The donated sheds are a good start but so much more is needed, and I will continue advocating for The Hoppers until they have facilities that club members can be proud of.

The Hoppers' club rooms are on Crown land, which gave the state government the perfect opportunity to support the club by donating the large sheds they wanted. But unfortunately the Government has chosen to prioritise the 'sale value' of the prison site over supporting a local football netball club."

Sheds donated to Murchison-Toolamba Football Netball Club by Corrections Victoria from Dhurringile prison will help the club with new storage space and some junior change facilities, but the club still desperately needs government support for new club rooms.

Murchison-Toolamba FNC President Simon Robinson said, "Our club and community are grateful for any support we receive as we seek an affordable solution to acquiring new clubrooms. But we are not just looking for any outcome, we are seeking the right outcome that provides appropriate modern, safer facilities for the hundreds of participants, their families and our supporters into the future."

CFNC - 2025

Event

Colbo Autumn Festival

11 April - 5pm, MJ Morgan Oval

- Jumping castle
- Live music
- Two course spit roast from 7pm
- Drinks at bar prices
- Ice-creams for the kids
- Dance floor
- All are welcome and encouraged to attend this family friendly event.
- Gold coin donation

New recruit

We welcome Jack Lear to Colbinabbin. He has been one of the premier defenders in the GV for a number of years, holding down some of the best big forwards in the league. He will really compliment the senior's other defenders in 'Dango' and 'Rirdo'.

The club have been impressed with Jackson's leadership and knowledge on the track already. Welcome Jack!

GO HOPPERS

Sporting club grants on offer

The council has encouraged local sporting clubs to apply for funds under the Sporting Club Grants Program.

This year, the funding is focused on supporting volunteers and officials, with grants of up to \$5,000 available for projects that enhance the skills and knowledge of volunteers, coaches, and officials, as well as initiatives aimed at improving volunteer retention.

Additional funding opportunities include:

- Up to \$4,000 to help clubs deliver new programs to the community;
- Up to \$1,000 for uniforms and equipment; and
- \$750 travel grants to assist clubs in participating in competitions away from home.

Ms Broad said volunteers were the lifeblood of community sport across northern Victoria.

'I encourage local clubs to put forward initiatives for funding to support their tireless volunteers and keep them engaged. Our sporting clubs would be nothing without our wonderful volunteers.'

Applications can also be made for uniform and travel costs, which can add up significantly for clubs in regional areas. Time is running out and grant applications close on 27 March.

More information, visit: Sporting Club Grants Program/Sport and Recreation Vic.

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Sports Report

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Rushworth Cricket Grand Final back to back

On Saturday 1 March both grades of Rushworth Cricket Club were playing in the finals with the winner going into the Grand Final to be played the following week.

B Grade

B Grade played Stanhope in a closely fought game at Stanhope.

Rushworth won the toss and elected to bat first. Rushworth were all out for 121 after 39.1 overs and Stanhope won the match. They were 8/122 after 36 overs, which sent them into the Grand Final.

Best batsmen for the day were Josh Francis on 35, Ahmad Karamat on 16 and Mick Enrico on 15. Best Rushworth bowlers were Shannon Jarrett with 3/13 off 7 overs, Justin Slater 2/28 from his 8 overs and one each to Regan Hanson and Liam Francis.

D Grade

D Grade, who finished on top of the ladder, played Echuca at home. Echuca won the toss

and elected to bat.

After 36 overs Echuca had made 8/113 with Rushworth 7/114 after 35.2 overs. This close result put Rushworth D Grade into the Grand Final.

Best bowlers for the day were Heath Ogden with 2/14 from 5 overs, Bradie Chillingsworth 2/29 from 8 overs and Charlie McLean 2/12 from 4 overs with Brodie Shepherd and Kade Dearing getting one wicket each.

Best batmen for the match were Declan Baldwin on 27, Brodie Shepherd on 20, Kade Dearing 18 (no) and Peter Francis 18 (no). This sent Rushworth D Grade into the Grand Final.

Grand Final - Peter Raglus D Grade Shield

Saturday 8 March, D Grade travelled to

Moama Recreation Reserve - Brick Alley to play against Stanhope, competing for the Peter Raglus D Grade Shield.

Stanhope won the toss and elected to bat. After 28.1 overs Stanhope had made 10/44. Rushworth making the runs in 13.4 overs 1/45.

Rushworth's best bowlers for the day were Brodie Shepherd with 0/3 from 6 overs (including 4 maidens), Heath Ogden with 1/11 from 6 overs (including 2 maidens), Declan Baldwin 3/18 from 6 overs (including 3 maidens), Dean Shepherd 1/4 from 6 overs (including 3 maidens), Kade Dearing 1/6 from 2.1 overs, and Charlie McLean 1/2 from 2.

Best batmen for the match were Brett Pateman on 20, Peter Raglus on 9 (no), and Bradie Chillingsworth 2 (no).

Presentation Day results

Senior Trophy Award Winners

Club Champion - Tommy Stevens

Coaches Award - Heath Ogden

U13 Trophy Winners

Jnr batting and bowling - Heath Ogden

Coaches Award - Isaac Perry

Most Improved - Bodhi Howe

Best team Player - Liam Jarrett

Fielding Award - Josh Hawking

B Grade trophy winners

Batting and Bowling

- Tommy Stevens, (who also won the league batting)

Captain's Award - Josh Francis

Most Improved - Admad Karamat

D Grade Trophy Winners

Batting - Peter Raglus

Bowling - Dean Shepherd

Captain's Award - Thomas Ogden

Most Improved - Heath Ogden

Five wickets/game Trophy and game ball -

Regan Hanson in 2 games,

Six wicket - Tommy Steven/game.

Six wickets D Grade - Declan Baldwin



Senior Trophy winners - Back Row: Josh Francis, Tommy Stevens, Regan Hanson, Peter Raglus. Front Row: Liam Jarrett (helping Tommy Stevens with his trophies) Thomas Ogden, Heath Ogden, Declan Baldwin, Dean Shepherd.

Rushworth Cricket Club Best of the best

On Sunday 9 March, Rushworth Cricket Club held its Presentation Day for all grades. The Club would like to thank their sponsors, people who have donated to the club and the players and spectators for their support.



Congratulations U13 Presentation Day winners - Bodi Howe, Josh Hawking, Liam Jarrett, Isaac Perry and Heath Ogden.

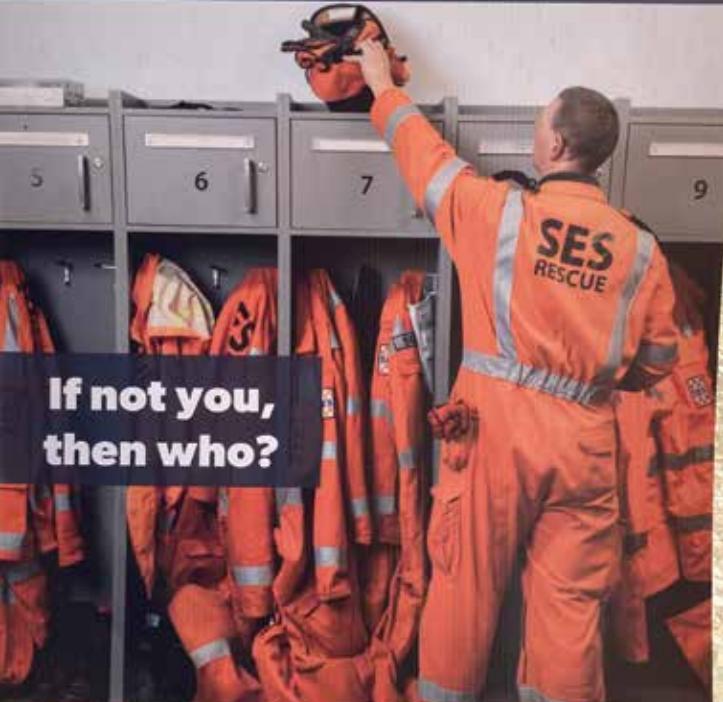
Rushworth D Grade back to back champions

The Rushworth D Grade cricket team made it two years in a row with an outstanding victory against Stanhope.



D Grade Grand Final winning team - Back Row: Brett Pateman, Peter Francis (vc), Peter Raglus, Brodie Shepherd, Dean Shepherd, Bryce Shepherd, Kade Dearing. Centre Row: Charlie McLean, Jac Barrett, David Baldwin (c), Declan Baldwin, Bradie Chillingsworth. Front Row: Thomas Ogden, Heath Ogden.

 **Murchison Unit needs 10 new volunteers or it will be closed.**



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