

# HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE

Edition 70 – April 2020

Produced by:

Harcourt Progress Association Inc

Online: [harcourt.vic.au/news](http://harcourt.vic.au/news)

## Support for Harcourt Community



**HELLO!** If you are self-isolating, I can help.

**My name is**  
.....

**I live locally at**  
.....

**My phone number is**  
.....

**If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 I can help with:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Picking up shopping	<input type="checkbox"/> Posting mail
<input type="checkbox"/> A friendly phone call	<input type="checkbox"/> Urgent supplies

Just call or text me and I'll do my best to help you (for free!)

**As corona virus is contagious I will take every precaution to ensure we are only spreading goodwill in Harcourt.  
Anything I deliver will be left on your doorstep.  
Stay safe.**

### INSIDE

- HPA-2
- CHIRP-2
- Applefest Roundup-3
- Vale Warrick Harwood-4
- Applefest Art Show-5
- Harcourt CWA-6
- HVPS-6
- Community Banking-7
- Harcourt Uniting Church-8
- Putting Smiles on Dials-8
- Harcourt CFA-9
- Heritage Centre News-10
- Pioneers of Harcourt-11
- Harcourt Lions Club-12
- Judy Coram's Diary-13
- Harcourt Bowling Club-14
- Walking Together-15
- Weather and Water-16
- Shire News-17
- Gardening-18
- Crossword-20
- Councillor Comment-22
- Rabbit Control Workshop-23

### DEADLINES & PUBLICATION DATES

We aim to publish by the 6th of the month. The deadline for submissions is the 24th of the month prior. Advertisers and community groups will be sent reminder emails. **There is no edition in January.**

*This card has been adapted by the Harcourt Progress Association from one created by the Volunteer Centre in Merthyr Tydfel, Wales, for the use of the Harcourt community. Stay safe. It is advisable to use this postcard with near neighbours and people you know; drop this card in their letterbox and use good hygiene practices when delivering items.*

I don't know how many pieces of communication we have all received pointing out that these are strange and unprecedented times. And it's true for most of us, it is a strange new world we are living in. Yet there are still some wonderfully comforting things going on in our small community. I'm enjoying the conversations in Hardcore Harcourt about the ghost train and that there is still enough humour around for someone to accuse our own local train aficionado of 'train porn'.

Life in our region goes on – it's great that people are still concerned about each other and the lost cats and dogs are still finding their way home.

The Harcourt Progress Association is just organising its next meetings, because, like

everyone else, the shock of COVID-19 threw us off track momentarily. This enforced time at home, where projects and face-to-face meetings are on hold gives us an opportunity to prioritise our efforts and plan for the new world of life after coronavirus.

We are so grateful for the businesses that have stayed open and the people still going out to work in them. We are also grateful for the volunteers who are on standby to help where and when the need arises.

Finally, a huge thank you to Robyn and Bernie for giving us some continuity through *The Core*, and to all the contributors for providing some news to connect us all.

Stay safe out there.

*Sha Cordingley, Chair HPA*





# Harcourt Progress Association

## June Commencement for Stanley Park Playspace

Mount Alexander Shire Council has approved an extra \$75,000 toward Harcourt's new play space with the overall project to cost up to \$500,000 and work to begin in coming weeks.

At last week's March council meeting, Calder Ward's Cr Tony Cordy moved in favour of approving the extra allocation from the council's Open Space Reserve to enable construction of the preferred design for the new attraction to proceed.

"This is a fantastic project," Cr Cordy told the meeting.

"It's entirely appropriate that we access a little bit of top-up funding from the Open Space Reserve."

Speaking in support, Cr Brown Machin said one of the reasons she did support the additional funding for the new Stanley Park North play space was

because "it's come out of considerable community engagement".

Construction of the new play space is scheduled to begin by June and be completed by December. The play space and landscaping is expected to cost up to \$500,000 with the council funding the work in partnership with the state government that's providing a \$250,000 grant.

Harcourt Progress Association is contributing \$6500, courtesy of a Maldon Community Bank grant.

The proposed funding top-up went to council this week after a costing plan indicated the total budget needed to deliver the community's preferred design - complete with large play tower - would require an extra \$75,000 rather than the \$55,000 originally expected.

The all-ages and abilities play space

will include a wheelchair accessible carousel, accessible and traditional swings, accessible rocker, spinner and extensive nature-play elements.

A barbecue, drink fountain and picnic setting are aimed at ensuring people stay a little longer in the area that an increasing number of young families are now calling home.

The motion to approve the additional funds went through unopposed.

*Eve Lamb*

Thank you to Lisa Dennis, Editor of the Castlemaine Mail, and to Elliot Midland News for allowing The Core to reproduce this article which appeared in the Midland Express Tuesday March 24, 2020.

Update: The latest information as to commencement of the Playspace construction is now July.



## CHIRP Still Providing Support

CHIRP Community Health is currently continuing to provide support services to the Mount Alexander community, but all group programs are currently on hold due to COVID-19.

"We are currently continuing to provide essential services but are providing these in different ways such as via telehealth where possible", says CEO Di Couch, CEO of CHIRP Community Health.

Di Couch clarifies that "services continuing include Counselling and Psychology, Alcohol and Drug, Housing, Family Services, Diabetes Nurse Education, Community Health Nurse, Physiotherapist and Exercise Physiologist and specialist clinics. These services are operational in a way which ensures maximum safety for all involved. We suspended our exercise groups including walking groups, Tai Chi groups and strength training groups last week along with training courses such as First Aid and programs provided by volunteers such as L2P"

The cancellation of groups is in line with social distancing recommendations of the Department of Health and Human Services, which is important in protecting elderly people and those with chronic diseases or pre-existing medical conditions. Stay 1.5 metres away from others to reduce your exposure to COVID-19. The Premier has today requested that people stay at home if they can unless they need to purchase essential items so we can reduce the spread of the virus.

We know that it will be important to continue to remain in contact with our clients as the situation evolves and we encourage people to get in contact with us if they need to. Please be assured that we are working collaboratively with Castlemaine

Health, Mount Alexander Shire Council and local GP practices as usual to continue to provide essential services and coordinate our activities. We will advise on our website and social media as changes are made to services.

Also recommended are the following hygiene measures when you do need to go out:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or using the toilet. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitiser that contains at least 60 per cent alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow.
- Do not sharing drinking bottles, crockery and cutlery.
- If you believe you may have been affected by COVID-19, get medical help by calling your doctor (GP) or the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 and follow their recommendations.

CHIRP Community Health can be contacted regarding general concerns relating to the COVID-19 situation such as financial difficulties, food shortages and loneliness. If you reside in the Mount Alexander Shire, call: 5479 1000.

*Media release: CHIRP Community Health and COVID-19  
Date: 25th March 2020.*



It was a good thing that we held the Applefest when we did. Two weeks after the event, mass gatherings and face-to-face meetings were banned for fear of Covid-19.

Because of the virus, the Applefest Review Meeting scheduled for March 23 had to be postponed.

The organising committee really values the feedback from the annual review meeting and asks that you write down your thoughts on the event, while you are social-distancing or self-isolating. Please keep the bit of paper handy – one day, not too far away, we will be able to meet and discuss the things that might be improved for next year. We will also celebrate what was a great occasion for the entire community. The committee has already been able to judge the success of the event in a variety of ways.

Approximately 4,000 people attended. They stayed for longer than other years, partly due to the nice weather, but mostly due to the quality of the entertainment, the food and the other interesting features.

The Nalderun indigenous display attracted a lot of attention. The art show, with its stunning works, was well patronised and made plenty of sales. The CWA ladies in the tea rooms were run off their feet. The baking competition revealed some great cooks. The granite-splitting demonstrations

added a uniquely Harcourt 'lost trades' element to the day. Apple products of every variety were a hit. The popular on-stage entertainment seemed to flow without a hitch (I was at the other end of the grounds and didn't get to see or hear much of this). The huskies under the Bunya Tree seemed to lap up the attention. The Lions

Club BBQ sold out. The play equipment in Stanley Park was a magnet for a lot of littlies, and the band at Goldfields Track Cafe made for some relaxing late-afternoon ambience. So much to think about – so much going on.

The committee was keen to make the Applefest a waste-wise event, and at the end of the day, we found that with the help of Wash Against Waste, Coliban Water, and some hard-working volunteers there was far less rubbish than in previous years, perhaps two-thirds less. It was humble aspects like that that gave the committee a warm inner glow. Since the Applefest, the Mount Alexander Shire Council has adopted a waste-wise events policy. But we were ahead of the game!

Feedback from the Fruitgrowers' Tent was very positive as per the following comment:

"The Fruit Growers' tent remains a key part of the Applefest. There was consistently good feedback about how great the display looked, and how interesting people found the fact that many different varieties of apples and pears were on show."

Feedback from stall holders was also complimentary. The following three emails were sent to our market co-ordinator:

1 "Just a quick note to say, thank you for Saturday. We had a GREAT day at your market. My staff enjoyed their day, they said it was busy and bustling (and people were spending). We hope the Harcourt community also benefitted from those attending the festival. We look forward to doing it all again in 2021."

2 "Thank you very much for the opportunity to be part of the Harcourt Applefest. We had a very successful day and we hope you did too. We would like the opportunity to return in 2021."

3 "Very sincere thanks to all of the Applefest Committee members for a fabulous day yesterday. We loved it! Thought it was all really well organised, welcoming and such a lovely example of our community working together."

### Thank you to our volunteers

The organising committee wishes to thank the volunteers who took on a multitude of tasks, many for the first time. Your selfless assistance was of immeasurable benefit to the success of the event. We look forward to meeting up with you at the Review Meeting (on a date to be fixed) so that we can hear of your suggestions for Applefest 2021 and personally thank you for your magnificent efforts.

On behalf of the Organising Committee  
George Milford

## Friends of Castlemaine District Community Health

The Friends of Castlemaine District Community Health (CHIRP) are an informal group of residents who are concerned about any loss of community health services in the Shire of Mount Alexander.

The group came together after a public meeting was held by CHIRP Community Health at the Castlemaine Town Hall on 22 October 2019.

Whilst we are in communication with the management of CHIRP, we have no formal ties with CHIRP and act independently to support their work.

The main purpose of our campaign is to work with government at both Local, State and Federal levels to ensure current funding continues as well as looking at options for increased funding needed so CHIRP can continue to provide services at previous levels.

Although funding has not been reduced, funding levels have not kept pace with the cost of delivering services. We understand that an additional \$350,000 in recurrent funding is required to restore services.

To date, our energies have been devoted to gaining community support for our campaign and establishing lines of communication

with our local State MP, Maree Edwards, and Jenny Mikakos, the State Minister for Health to clarify our role as well as to ensure all information being received is accurate across all parties.

We successfully staged a community meeting on Monday, 10 February, to highlight the services CHIRP has had to reduce due to their financial situation. These include diabetes education and outreach which has lost one quarter of current staff time; housing services cut by one day per week staff time; physiotherapy losing one third of services and drug and alcohol rehabilitation and counselling losing one third of services.

If you do not wish to see health services in the Shire of Mount Alexander downgraded, you can help by demonstrating to the State government there is broad community support for a strong and viable community health service. You can do this by going to our Facebook page and signing up to our email list. You can also write to the local media and our state parliamentarians voicing your support for the continued funding of CHIRP services.

Margaret Griffen  
for Friends of CHIRP



# Warrick Harwood 1957–2020

## A tribute from Doug Falconer

To say Warrick Harwood was a well-known face around Harcourt, Castlemaine and further afield would be something of an understatement.

And what a face – tanned, weathered and always cheerful, this was a man who had experienced just about all life has to offer, taken the knocks and come up smiling.

I met him in 1992, long after he'd given up the life of a touring muso but not the music itself. Never that.

After years in neighbourhood bands with brother Rob, Warrick was a founding member of one of Australia's best loved bands, Goanna, playing on their debut album 'Spirit of Place' and its standout single 'Solid Rock'. That's his signature rhythm guitar sound you hear all over it. You may have had the privilege of seeing him reprise it at Castlemaine Idyll last year and the bushfire benefit at the Theatre Royal just a couple of months ago, despite being desperately ill.

When I met him, he was a deadset farmer on his property in Gaasch's Road, never happier than on a tractor or backhoe, whistling up one of too many dogs. Not one for hats, his face and arms were already tanned, the rest not so much. We planted a lot of trees on his place, often as an excuse for a party which usually ended in a jam session in the shed.

With his first wife Melissa and mine Stephanie, we formed a band dubbed 'The Bumpkins', playing original music written by him and Stephanie. I can't remember if we ever actually played a gig, but rehearsals were raucous and fun.

We had kids the same age. His, Charlotte and Patrick, would play dressups with mine, Lily, for hours. The girls would take great delight in dolling Pat up in a frock and makeup, and then do a lengthy play consisting of hilarious, improvised dialogue around ordinary domestic bliss, and shopping.

When Warrick and Melissa separated, he devoted himself to the kids, and the farm, and diversified into earthmoving, water cartage and firewood delivery. He was the hardest worker I've ever known, but he knew how to kick back and wind down too. Our birthdays are on successive days, and combined birthdays were often weekend affairs full of music, laughter and more music.

In 2000, I was privileged to be invited to play on his solo album 'How Do You Feel', all original songs of love, loss and



hay-baling. Guests included Brod Smith, Chris Wilson, Nigel MacLean, Pete Howell and Mick O'Connor. One of the songs was called 'Still Water', a plea for calm after too many rough years.

Someone must have been listening, for not too long afterward, Warrick met the love of his life, Kerry Oldfield. The two were one of those matches 'made in heaven', completing each other and making a beautiful life together.

Together they built the farm up again, making it a palace fit for them and the significant numbers of visitors they attracted.

Kerry and Warrick married in 2017 at a typically musical shindig at Harcourt Valley Winery, and two happier people you would be hard pressed to find. Life seemed to be finally working out for this humble, generous man.

Sadly just months later, Warrick was diagnosed with a particularly aggressive form of bowel cancer, which was advanced by the time it was caught. Bouts of radiation and chemotherapy were unsuccessful.

Typically, as devastating as this was, Warrick set out to enjoy what remained of his allotted time. Surrounding himself with loved ones and music, he was determined not to waste it.

New songs flowed, recorded by his brother and long-time collaborator Rob and recently released on Soundcloud – check them out. Have tissues handy.

Two weeks ago (before the restrictions) a large group of family and friends gathered at the farm to pay their respects

and say farewell to Warrick. Confined to bed and unable to join them, they spoke and sang through his bedroom window as he waved back.

Kerry, Rob, Charlotte – herself now married and her Dad's biggest fan – and Patrick – now a man mountain (no-one would dare put a dress on him now) – led the festivities. The mood was uplifting and celebratory despite the circumstances.

Warrick died in the early hours of Sunday March 29, less than a week later. He will be greatly missed.

He would have had a lot of trouble sitting at home due to a malevolent microbe anyway.

### Harcourt Carpet Bowls Association

The Association is postponing the start of their bowls season until the restrictions are lifted and the country is in the clear with regards to the virus.

We will advertise in *The Core*, on Hardcore Harcourt (Facebook) and with notices around town when the season is to commence.

We hope that many decide to join us in a game of carpet bowls.

So, until we can meet again, stay safe and look out for one another and your own health.

Any further information contact Loretta (Secretary) on 54742453 or John on 54742226.

# Applefest Art Show 2020

There was a good response to the Applefest Art Show. There were 157 art works submitted, of which 22 were sold. This is as good as we have experienced. The Harcourt Art Show is a real influence on the artists of the region, setting a high standard by forcing them to produce 'smaller' work and then providing competitive awards. Artists from Bendigo to Woodend and from as far as Beaufort entered the Art Show. It was particularly noticeable that, when the artists came to collect unsold works on Monday March 9, they lingered to study each other's work and to compare notes. In management-speak, due to the Applefest Art Show, the artists are establishing a collaborative culture and, ultimately, collectively boosting the quality of their output.



## This Year's Judge

Art Show judge for this year was Dick Turner. Dick recently completed a doctorate in Arts at LaTrobe University, crowning a lifetime that has revolved around the arts at both a theoretical and a practical level. Dick's life-long involvement with art and design started when he won an award at an art show when he was eight. It is gratifying to the Art Show organizers that we can include a student section in the annual Applefest display. It is hoped that some of today's budding artists will find their true vocation in the creative sector.

## Primary School Art

The Applefest exhibition of indigenous-themed art works by the pupils of Harcourt Valley Primary School attracted a lot of attention. Many local children took the opportunity to show off their works. Thanks to the school staff and Auntie Julie for getting on board with this project. An immense Bunjil soars proudly above the student work. With careful observation it is possible to see that its feathers are hand cutouts of every pupil in the school. What an achievement! Those who have not yet seen the work are invited to drop in to have a look on any Wednesday after the coronavirus restrictions are eased.

## Awards

Best in Show (Chairman's Award) \$300

Artist: Russell Annear Title: Reminiscing

Highly Commended Oil/Acrylic ASQ voucher \$50

Artist: Stephen Phillis Title: Mt Alexander Viewed from Harcourt 2

Best Oil/Acrylic (Cameron Lang Memorial Award) \$150

Artist: Catherine Tait Title: Walkies, Castlemaine Gardens

Highly commended Watercolour ASQ voucher \$50

Artist: Linda Newton Title: Koala

Best Watercolour (Shirley Stewart Memorial Award) \$150

Artist: Jean Perry Title: Farm Yandoit

Highly Commended Other Medium ASQ voucher \$50

Artist: Ann McAlpin Title: Neighbourhood Watch

Best Other Medium \$150

Artist: Joan Halpin Title: Moonlight

Highly Commended Local Subject ASQ voucher \$50

Artist: Rita Mills Title: Cottage Maldon

Best Local Subject \$150

Artist: Col Brown Title: Windfall

## Student Awards

Highly Commended Junior 12 years & under \$20

Artist: Emily Browning Title: Splash of Colour

Best Junior 12 years & under \$40

Artist: Nicola White Title: Going to the Vet

Highly Commended Senior 13 to 18 years \$30

Artist: Rachel Howlett Title: Golden Point Tree

Best Senior 13 to 18 years \$60

Artist: Karlie Showell Title: Starry Night



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# Chatting with Harcourt CWA

Was it only a month ago that we were all enjoying a wonderful day at Applefest? So much has changed since then but I thought I would show you a few of the highlights from our CWA stall when social distancing was still unknown and the Coronavirus was but a distant possibility.



Applefest gives our Branch the opportunity to raise money - it is, in fact, our biggest fund raiser each year. Our stall is always full of delicious baked goods and preserves and how lovely it is to have return customers come back each year.



This year's Apple Pie Competition was a huge success. Thirty one entries in total was an excellent improvement over previous years. The introduction of a new category, Apple Chutney, saw our very own Marie Twyford take out first place and our famous muffin maker, Marlene Thompson was the Open Muffin winner.



Then of course there was our raffle. I know I have mentioned it before, but our members have the most amazing talents and, once again, our very own Jenny Steiner, provided the First Prize in our raffle. It is so easy to sell lots of raffle tickets when Jenny's sculptures are up for grabs.



Like the rest of the world, we have had to cancel our monthly meeting until this horrible Covid-19 pandemic is behind us, but don't worry, I'm sure I will find something to talk to you about next month.

Take care everyone and please stay at home and stay safe.  
*Lyn Rule*  
Publicity Officer, Harcourt CWA



## Harcourt Valley Primary School Term 1 News

*From the Principal Andrew Blake*

Easter school holidays are with us early this year because of school closures on the March 24, due to the Coronavirus. It certainly will be a different school holiday period for everyone. Do keep safe and well. At this stage, school is scheduled for reopening on Tuesday April 14, but this may well change. Parents are being kept up to date through the school's Flexibuzz communication system.

As of March 15, the school was already adapting to life with the Coronavirus, cancelling all excursions and camps; hopefully some can be rescheduled later in the year. Fortunately, Applefest still went ahead, and thanks

to effort of all involved, \$5,300 was raised from all those apple pies. Well done everyone.

Students have also been busy raising money for the Heart Foundation through Jump Rope for Heart, a skipping activity. So far, students had raised over \$900.

The school council has now filled all of its vacancies but will need to conduct virtual meetings. It certainly is a time of huge change and adaptation for everyone. Let us hope that we can beat this virus, and that our children can get back to school as soon as possible.

*Lois Denham*

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How are you coping with the dramatic change in the world?

It's been an interesting time, to say the least, and we're probably still just at the beginning!

Here at Maldon and District Community Bank our main message is "we're here to help!" There have been a few changes in how we're operating, but as an essential service, we're committed to continuing to offer normal banking services.

One of the changes that has been introduced is that we're asking people to call the branch (on 5475 1747) before coming in, for a few reasons:

- to see if we can help you with your banking over the phone
- to help you get set up with internet banking
- to give more information about the various assistance packages that we're offering
- we can set up an appointment if you need help with your banking, e.g. making a loan application.

The main point is: there are many ways we can help if you're experiencing financial difficulty, so please get in touch if you need help. Please visit our Facebook Page ([facebook.com/MaldonCB](https://facebook.com/MaldonCB)) for regular updates.

The other main place to visit is the dedicated COVID-19 page on the Bendigo Bank website – [www.bendigobank.com.au/help/coronavirus-assistance-package](http://www.bendigobank.com.au/help/coronavirus-assistance-package).

One of the impacts in our local community is that many of the projects we've funded have been postponed or cancelled, sadly including the Harmony

Picnic Harcourt the Harcourt Uniting Church were planning to hold on 21 March.

Our executive officer Karly Smith has been in touch with most groups affected, but if you have any concerns or questions please get in touch with Karly on 0478 435 110 or [executiveofficer@mdcb.com.au](mailto:executiveofficer@mdcb.com.au).

On a brighter note, we've got some good news!

Each year we give away a \$2,000 scholarship to a local student, to help with their tertiary studies, and two runners' up scholarships of \$1,000 each. This year we had more applications than ever, including some from Harcourt!

This year the main scholarship went to Maldon's Flynn Leeson to assist him with his Bachelor of Business at Swinburne University. He's planning to work in a field related to public policy. "How I get there is currently up in the air, but as long as I can positively influence the world in my own small way I'll be happy!", commented Flynn.

Bryleigh Geurts-Hartmann and Alyssa Geurts each received a \$1,000 scholarship. Bryleigh is studying Nutrition and Food Science at Ballarat's Federation University. Alyssa moved to the Wimmera this year to study at the Longerenong Agricultural College. A former student at Maryborough Education Centre (MEC), Alyssa will use her scholarship funds to assist with fuel and associated study costs.

On a final note, be aware that the reality is that for many people in our community this is a time of heightened anxiety, confusion and lots of change. These changes - whether it's working from home



Flynn Leeson with Branch Manager Adam Balzan and Executive Officer Karly Smith

or maybe even being out of work for the first time, contemplating home-schooling your children or learning new ways to keep connected - can all be confronting. These are quite normal feelings. It's what you do about these feelings that make the difference.

We're using our Facebook and Instagram accounts to share positive ways to look after your mental health at the moment, so please check them out for some practical tips!

Stay well everyone!

Katie Finlay  
Director,

Maldon and District Community Bank

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# Harcourt Uniting Church

As the media keeps telling us – we are living in a very different world at the moment, so I hope that everyone is keeping safe and finding lots of jobs to do around the house.

The Harcourt Uniting Church, along with all other Churches, will be closed until further notice. In the meantime, we have organised to keep in touch with our members with phone calls, emails, online services from some of the larger Churches and even writing letters, which is a lost art these days.

With the COVID-19 restrictions, we don't anticipate being able to celebrate our Easter Services this year either.

The Community Picnic welcoming Refugees and Newcomers was to be held on March 21, however it had to be cancelled as well. The article in the March *Core* welcomed everyone to join us in what would have been a fun day for all. The proceeds of the raffle, which was drawn despite the picnic not happening, will be donated to the Melbourne centres supporting refugees and asylum seekers. The prizes in the Refugee Picnic raffle went to: Chris, Frances, Josie, Bruce, Bree, Val, Janyce, a BASP refugee, Narelle and Meg.

Recently, we held our Harvest Thanksgiving Service with the usual generous display of food which was then donated to our Castlemaine St Vinnies.

The sign outside a Church (standing knee deep in water) read: "If you have been praying for rain please stop"!

*Jan Jenkin*



# Putting Smiles on Dials

*Some readers might be interested in a 'Good News' story.*



*Narelle with the volunteers*

Our adult daughter Narelle (who has an intellectual disability) enjoys supported activities with Castlemaine Windarring – a local Service Provider for people with disabilities.

Recently, Windarring's Kim Stevens organised a weekend holiday to Ocean Grove.

The highlight of the weekend was participating in surfing with the Ocean Grove branch of the Disabled Surfers Association. The Association's goal is: 'to provide an inclusive experience for all people with any disability to experience the rush of riding a wave.' You can read about the Association if you type 'Disabled Surfers Association' into your search engine. These volunteers make sure that people with disabilities of any age can enjoy the experience – even those in wheel chairs or with severe disabilities are lifted onto the boards to enjoy the freedom of surfing.

A volunteer from the team helps them put on a vest and goggles, then the participant lies on a surfboard (which has handles to grip onto) and is taken out into the surf. The volunteer also rides on the board, lying behind the person. Other volunteers form a 'guard of honour' to cheer them on and are ready to assist if needed. As they surf in, seeing the smiles on their faces is magic. As Narelle came in, she called out to the volunteers on each side: 'Look out I'm coming through.'

There are many local Ocean Grove organisations supporting this wonderful cause in both practical and financial ways. You can see a list of groups on their website. If you're into Facebook you will see many pictures of people enjoying this amazing experience on the Ocean Grove Disabled Surfers page.

As parents, we celebrate any achievements of our children, however, when you have a child with a disability, these experiences are made even more special.

'Putting smiles on dials' is the catchphrase used by the group. And they certainly do.



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# Harcourt CFA

## Fire Danger Period Termination

Monday March 23 saw the end of fire restrictions for Mount Alexander, Macedon and Central Goldfields Shires and March 30 for the City of Greater Bendigo. So, while this means you can now burn off, it is vitally important you do the following, now more than ever:

- Check with your local council for regulations prior to burning off. Note that Bendigo have put in extra laws to limit the amount of burning off conducted.
- Never leave a burn unattended.
- Always monitor weather conditions – prior, during and after. Is it safe to burn?
- Can you fight the fire if it gets out of control?
- Make sure your fire is 100% out on completion.
- **ALWAYS** register your burn. Phone 1800 668 511

This will not only reduce the likelihood of us being called out, but it will also limit our crew's exposure to each other and the public with the current situation we all find ourselves in.

### CFA Tackling COVID-19

As a Community-based Fire and Emergency Service provider it is imperative that the CFA maintains operational service delivery in accordance with its mission to "Protect Life and Property". Therefore, all Brigades are required to cease face-to-face, non-essential gatherings including meetings, training, public engagement events and social gatherings. Sunday morning maintenance checks are now required to have minimum personnel attend the station, and all turnouts now require an assessment on how many trucks and fire fighting personnel should attend.

This not only highlights how important it is to ensure you do the right thing when burning off, but also giving an accurate description when reporting a real fire or incident. Your support in these very trying times is very much appreciated.

### Applefest Roundup

Our Applefest activities at the fire station were once again well received by the public, both locals and visitors to our town. Once again, our "Little Squirty" Fire Truck races were very popular with the young and some not so young. The

little helicopter was also popular with the smaller kids, and the opportunity to look over the fire truck was taken by many.

It is interesting to note that this year we received some different questions and comments to normal due to the extreme fires that occurred right along the east coast of Australia this summer. This in itself is pleasing, as it shows the public being more fire aware and conscious of the dangers and threats we experience each year.

### Recent Spontaneous Training Exercise

In March, the Shire needed the Harcourt main swimming pool emptied for repair works and approached the brigade for assistance. The Castlemaine brigade was asked to bring their new pumper out to assist and give it a real workout. They also came with their tanker so there was a lot of water moved in a bit over three hours. This proved to be a valuable training night for those involved but with quite a bit of waiting time to complete the exercise. Some interesting data and hose layouts were also learned on the night.

### Vehicle Product Recalls

Two Vehicle recalls that can cause fire that I am aware of are:

1. **Kia Motors Australia** – Kia VQ Carnival MY2011-2014. The fuel rail in petrol vehicles may develop a small heat-induced crack, which can result in fuel leakage, which may catch fire.
2. **Mitsubishi Australia** – Mitsubishi MQ and MR Triton MY2015-MY2019. Due to incorrect installation, the genuine accessory towbar wiring harness (where fitted) may allow liquids to contact the electrical circuits, which may cause overheating, burning or fire.

If you have one of these vehicles and have not received notification from the manufacture, then contact an authorised dealer for further information.

Stay safe during this time of corona-virus social distancing and self-isolation. We are all in this together. Just like a raging bushfire, there will be an end, but when that will be we do not know. And also like fire, the smaller we can keep it, the less damage it can do.

*Tyrone Rice*  
Brigade Community Safety Coordinator

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# Heritage Centre News

## Arrangements during COVID-19 outbreak

Harcourt Heritage Centre (ANA Hall) is now closed to the public under the public health and wellbeing directions issued by Local, State and Federal Governments.

- Harcourt's Little Library is closed until further notice.
- The annual ANZAC observance has been cancelled.
- The program of Tours and Talks is suspended for the foreseeable future.

One of the highlights for 2020 is to be a dramatised presentation of an event that happened in 1867 right here in Harcourt. When this disease peters out, and it will, Harcourt Heritage will make sure that you hear about our 'Third Sunday-of-the-month' special dramatisation, so that you can come along, sit where you like, alongside other people, be able to share a cuppa and have a yarn, just like we used to do.

For the foreseeable future, Harcourt Heritage will not be able to accommodate drop-in research requests and/or unplanned visits. Our volunteers will attempt to respond to research enquiries if made by email to: [heritage@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:heritage@harcourt.vic.au) or via the website: [harcourt.vic.au](http://harcourt.vic.au)

We received the following comment from the Royal Historical Society of Victoria

"It seems that being part of large-scale history-in-the-making is quite uncomfortable and frightening. We stumble on, making major decisions on a daily basis, hoping that we survive."

## The Bunya Pine

At Harcourt we have also been under threat from something other than coronavirus. Before the Applefest, it was noticed that the ANA Hall's Bunya pine was crowned with a lot of cones. A drone was sent up and we counted twelve cones developing. A bunya cone can weigh a lot and when it falls it makes a sizeable dint in the ground! Due to the danger, we ensured that the public gave the tree a wide berth during Applefest. On March 25, six cones fell, probably thanks to some yellow-tailed black cockatoos. More cones will fall in the next few days. Luckily we are all out of danger, as we are all at home.

In early spring, 2019, Council's gardeners pruned the shrubs at the entrance to the Heritage Centre. When I say 'pruned' I mean 'severely cut back' so that the grevilleas were little more than a central trunk with a couple of bare sticks. It seems that the beautiful bushes had been butchered. "What about the honeyeaters?" We cried. But now, six months later, we can see that the gardeners knew what they were doing. The Grevilleas have grown a lot of new leaves and are covered with a great show of crimson blossom. After the despair of seeing the seemingly-hopeless stumps last year it has been inspiring to see them as healthy, bird-haunted, profusely-flowering shrubs.

George Milford



*The size of the Bunya Pine cones can be judged by the Bosc pear in front. After a few days, the cones dry out and start to come apart. Individual scales can be separated by boiling in salted water or by roasting in an oven or in an open fire – the traditional method used by Australian Aboriginals.*

# Home Research

Harcourt Heritage Museum has closed its doors to the public for the time being. You may think our volunteers also close their books and files. How wrong you are: this might turn out to be their busiest time. Research projects can always continue in the relaxed space of your home. For me, it started as a throwaway line to someone enquiring about Barkers Creek Cricket club.

'Oh, do you have more photos about the club? We only have five photos in our records of club teams'

A visit was arranged, with my phone camera running hot on some of the priceless club photographs of the past. Of course, one never knows exactly where a project will end, but the good thing is it has started and the records of these proud members will be preserved for the community.

Many memories are stuck inside faded photo albums, hiding in boxes in the back of cupboards and even pushed out of the house into old sheds. Now, this is where you might be able to help!

Lockdown can sound restrictive and limiting on many levels, but if you're at home, there might be time to unlock the writer, the artist or the researcher inside you that has been hidden all these years.

Take that box of photos, black/white and colour, that you have been meaning to label. 'Label? Where do I start?' I can hear your cry ring out. First, take the photos out, one at a time, and enjoy looking at them. A story will come to mind, a long lost yarn, or a description. If you feel inclined, write the story down and then mark on the back of the photo: people/place/date.

What you do next will either extend this project or close the box. The photos will be back in the box, but with added information and maybe sheets of paper with your writing. The next person to open the box will no doubt be thrilled with what you have done.

Back to the Barkers Creek Cricket Club in the 1960s and 70s. Saturday was a big day for players and non-players. The photos indicated many winning teams of A Grade, A Reserve, B Grade and C Grade. For non-players, the wives and girlfriends, Friday was equally busy in the kitchen, baking the cakes that were consumed at afternoon tea the following day. Sadly, there are no photos of these workers!

If you find photos of the Harcourt Community that you think the Heritage Centre should add to its collection, we look forward to seeing you when our doors open again. We might even have baked the previous day.

Diana Cork  
[heritage@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:heritage@harcourt.vic.au)

Phil Carlyle

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# Harcourt Heritage Centre

## Martin McLean – The Postmaster

In recounting the life and achievements of Martin McLean, we remember a time when newspapers printed all the gory details, when young men spent their weekends rabbiting, when cricket and football were played on a reserve in Bridge Street and when the Australian Natives Association gave lively leadership to the Harcourt community.

George Martin McLean (known as Mart) was born in 1885 at Barkers Creek, the youngest son of Mr and Mrs Archibald McLean, who later moved to a property at Faraday.

As a young man, Mart had been a bugler in the Militia Force, but two serious accidents prevented him from active sport or Army service and no doubt shortened his life. We learn from the *Mount Alexander Mail* of December 10 1903 that when Martin McLean, 18 years of age, of Barkers Creek, was engaged in harvesting at Faraday he was standing on a wagon-load of hay receiving sheaves from a man on the ground. The horse became restless and swerved, with the result that Mart lost his balance and was impaled on a two-pronged hay fork leaning with prongs up against the wagon. The fork was removed, and Doctor Hill was sent for. In mid-January 1904, the *Mail* reported that Martin McLean was on the way to a full recovery.

A more serious accident befell Mart McLean in June 1905. He had gone out ferreting with a party of four young men. McLean was stooping over one end of a rabbit burrow, while at the other end behind him someone had placed a shotgun. A rabbit ran out at the far end and one of the party snatched the weapon up hurriedly and by some means caused it to go off. The shot struck Mart slantingly in the back of his right thigh, just above the knee. Part of the muscle was shot away. He was taken to the Castlemaine Hospital suffering great loss of blood and shock. A few days later, part of his leg was amputated. Martin remained in hospital for five months and walked with the aid of crutches from then on.

In 1911, Mart McLean married Ellen Timmins (daughter of Mr and Mrs Alf Timmins of Elphinstone) and came to reside in Harcourt. In 1910, he had been appointed Secretary of the Harcourt branch of the Australian Natives Association, and his outstanding ability



as an administrator was soon recognised by the members, so much so that he kept that position until the time of his death in 1942.

When the proposal to build a Hall was mooted, Mart McLean threw all his energy behind the project, and the hall became a reality.

Dances, ANA meetings, card nights, wedding breakfasts, soldiers' farewells, patriotic-fund meetings, bazaars, fruit-growers' meetings and soldiers' Welcome Homes made the newly-built hall a busy place. The fruit-growers' national conference and the Governor's visit took place in 1914. The ANA hall was the venue for hearings in connection with a Federal Royal Commission in 1915.

All of this placed a burden on the ANA Secretary. To meet the community demand, the supper room at the ANA Hall was extended in 1930. Mart McLean's role as Secretary and booking officer for the ANA must have given him a lot of work and placed him right at the heart of the community.

In 1915, Mart McLean accepted the position of Postmaster at Harcourt. General regret was expressed at the resignation of the former Postmistress, Mrs Guthrie, but the appointment of Mart McLean was a popular one and the *Mail* considered the new postmaster would command the esteem of the public.

The Post Office, which Mrs. Guthrie had conducted in the former Harcourt Hotel, was transferred to a building off High Street. (on the site where Goldfields

Track Cafe now stands). The Postal Department completed the transfer of the manually-operated Telephone Exchange by the end of February 1915 to enable the business to open in the new premises, and Mr and Mrs McLean moved into the Post Office residence.

Many responsibilities fall to the Postmaster, but we assume that much ANA business was done over the post office counter in addition to postal and telephone-switchboard tasks. Mart manned the telephone exchange during the day, but his daughters had to respond to the infrequent calls at night as their father had difficulty getting to the exchange once he was in bed.

Mart Mclean was Harcourt's Postmaster as well as secretary of the ANA, until shortly before his death, notching up many years of service in those roles.

For many years Mart was Vice-president of the local Cricket Club, as well as Vice-president and Secretary of the Football Club. During the years when Mart McLean was in office, both football and cricket were played on the reserve north of Bridge Street, on land now occupied by the Swimming Pool and the Pony Club.

Mart and Ellen McLean had two daughters, Nell (Mrs Alf Peeler) and Betty (Mrs Ken Jones). Mart McLean died in August 1942 at the relatively young age of 56 years. Ellen McLean then moved to a house at the corner of Coolstore Rd and Victoria Street.

Six months later, on Sunday February 14 1943, the ANA Hall was filled to capacity when a photograph of Martin McLean was unveiled. There were many complimentary speeches. All the speakers spoke very highly of the sterling qualities of Martin McLean and of the high regard in which he and his wife were held by the residents of Harcourt and district.

The framed photograph of Mart Mclean features in the museum display in the Harcourt Heritage Centre (ANA Hall) commemorating a gentle, selfless and kindly man who gave unstintingly of his time and efforts for the benefit of the Harcourt community.

*This is another in the series of 'thumbnail sketches' of pioneers of Harcourt, compiled by Harcourt Heritage Centre using material from the C H James collection.*



# Harcourt Lions Club

The last 8 weeks have been a very busy time for the Harcourt Lions Club!

In late January 2020, Grant Victor-Gordon was selected by the Lions Club District Council to be the Zone 6 Chairperson. This Zone includes the Lions Clubs of Castlemaine, Harcourt, Maryborough, Carisbrooke and Maldon. He commenced a visitation program to engage with the clubs to represent them at District Council meetings and to coordinate Club responses in the service requests, in the Zone. At the same time, the Lions Clubs of Zone 5 and 6 were asked to assist with the BlazeAid Camp at Lexton.

## Lions Clubs & BlazeAid Camp, Lexton January – March 2020

The Lexton-Ben Major Fire of December 2019 burned approximately 3,000 hectares of farm and bushland. Initial estimates suggest that more than 1000 sheep were lost and more than 150 kilometres of fencing has been damaged or destroyed.

The Lions Clubs of Harcourt, Maldon, Castlemaine, Maryborough, and Carisbrook (Zone 6) banded together with the Zone 5 clubs around Ballarat, along with several Rotary and CWA Clubs, to support the BlazeAid recovery plan.

BlazeAid asked the Lions Club Zone Chairpersons, to coordinate the preparation and delivery of the evening meals for all the volunteers working at Lexton each day. This was a workforce of between 15 – 50 people each day, for the 10 weeks of the recovery program. Our Zone 6 Lions Club Chairpersons, with the support of the Harcourt Lions Club, coordinated the response with the Zone 5 Chairperson.



*Katrina and Grant Victor Gordon, Gary Selwood and Sue catering at BlazeAid in Lexton at the end of February.*

Collectively our Lions Clubs arranged for the donation of marquees, portable cool rooms, portable air-conditioners, freezers, eskies and food to be supplied to the BlazeAid camp. These donations represented more than \$30,000. In addition our clubs contributed to the catering roster that prepared, delivered and served more than 2,500 nutritious, warm, hearty meals to the volunteers during this period of time. The Harcourt Lions Club also established a 2nd Bite food donation arrangement with Coles Maryborough. They donated excess bakery goods, fruit and vegetables every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to BlazeAid. Between the Maryborough Lions Club and Harcourt Lions Club, we arranged for it to be collected and delivered to

BlazeAid. Coles contributed more than \$4,000 worth of food products, during this time.

BlazeAid, along with the Lions Clubs, assisted the Lexton Community to remove over 150 kilometres of damaged fencing and restored or replaced more than 90 kilometres of that fencing. For more information on the BlazeAid Camps, please visit their website at [blazeaid.com.au](http://blazeaid.com.au)

The Harcourt Lions Club would like to especially acknowledge the amazing donation by Super Cold Cool Room Hire in White Gum Road, Barkers Creek. They donated the use of a cool room trailer for 10 weeks, and waived the hire fees of more than \$10,000.

For more information on Super Cold, Cool Room Hire, please check out their webpage at:

[www.supercold.com.au](http://www.supercold.com.au)

or call 0431 475 399 / 0425 724 307

or email them at: [info@supercold.com.au](mailto:info@supercold.com.au)

Finally, the Club has had to postpone holding our monthly meetings in person while we get through the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, we look forward to continuing our service to the community through alternative means, such as a donation to the Australian Lions Foundation (ALF) Emergency Disaster relief fund. Donations can be made at

[lionsclubs.org.au/foundations/australian-lions-foundation](http://lionsclubs.org.au/foundations/australian-lions-foundation)

If readers wish to contact Grant about the Lions Club:

Grant Victor-Gordon

Zone 6 Chairperson

M: 0410 261 338

E: [gvg1966@bigpond.com](mailto:gvg1966@bigpond.com)

## VMR Still Active

*From Andrew Mierisch, President of the Victorian Miniature Railway. From a post on Hardcore Harcourt.*

“Hello everyone; I hope you are all well in this very tuff climate.

As you are aware, recreational activities are closed. Due to this we have already suspended all club based activities at VMR and we are not open to visitors.

However the construction side of activities is still permitted, with social distancing, hygiene care and associated procedures.

We have split up projects to accommodate low numbers of people on site.

So while trade based work is still permitted, you will most likely see more frequent comings and goings along with the security and bin visits.

Take care and all the best from the bottom of my heart...

Regards

Andrew, VMR

PS We may have a small boom (explosion to remove granite) or 2 on some small stubborn lumps in the future but I will advise.”



# Stories from the West Nile, Uganda

## The Fireworks, December 31, 2008



**Harcourt resident, Judy Coram is a nurse by profession. We continue with her diary excerpts while working for Médecins Sans Frontières.**

New Years Eve 2008 in Arua, Uganda was a very different experience from the year before in Victoria, Australia.

The evening began at the Hotel Pacific where we had arranged to meet William, the driver. William had been our driver to Murchison falls the weekend before, and over the many games of cards we taught him, he told us he was the West Nile darts champion and competed at National level. He could be found at the Hotel Pacific every evening between 6pm and 11pm playing darts. I wondered if his wife was at home looking after the kids!

Sylvester, another MSF (Médecins Sans Frontières or Doctors Without Borders) driver had also invited us, as he had a state of the art disco business which was in high demand in the West Nile. The evening was rockin', but what was surprising was the number of young men who danced together and held hands in a very natural way. It is not unusual to see males walking hand in hand, or arm in arm, as they walk along the street. Talk about homosexuality to them and they deny that this is something that happens here in Uganda!

Once we hit the dance floor, the African dancing style erupted into the enthusiastic sexual movements seen here in the West Nile, and I suspect all over Africa. It seems to be a way for the men to express their power and sexuality through their dancing. They use precocious hip movements and hand movements saying 'come on!' They will stand over you, often in a sexually intimidating and aggressive way, mimicking the sexual act. The African girls, however, generally move more slowly and sensually and use their bodies in quite a different way.

It is fascinating to observe all the different dancing styles, and how movement is 'in their veins', passed down from generation to generation. However, just as the night was really hotting up, we decided to leave before midnight to catch the fireworks at the golf course.

Walking back through the town, it was just like any other New Years Eve celebrations across the world. Many people in very high spirits, some drunk, some merry and shouting out, 'Happy New Year, Msungi' (Msungi=white person). We must have looked a strange sight walking through the crowded streets of Arua, and it created quite a stir among the locals.

Anticipating the crowds, we parked the car at Palace 2 and walked along the dark roads, trying to avoid being run over by cars and boda bodas (scooters). Stumbling along the dark tracks, we followed the noise of the music from the concert at the golf course. Arriving at the golf course, we were met by a huge crowd of thousands in varying states of excitement, all waiting to see the fireworks. At one point, I became separated from my friends, and it was a little disconcerting to be the only white person surrounded by hundreds of drunk black faces all chanting 'msungu, msungu', I was glad that most of them were

in good humour and high spirits. When the fireworks began, it was remarkable to watch the huge crowd as it became hysterical with each firework that was set off. Thousands of people chanting 'fire, fire' and raising their arms in unison in awe of the spectacle.

I thought back to the millennium when the firework displays were seen across the world and were so sophisticated with electronic light and sound and millions of dollars spent. The elaborate displays on the Sydney Harbour bridge, the Eiffel Tower and the River Thames had nothing on the impact of this small fireworks display here in Arua and the excitement that it created.

We left the sounds of the concert and the crowds behind and walked back to the peace of the rooftop at Palace 2. As we sat under the canopy of stars on a clear night, watching Orion disappearing behind us, sipping champagne from South Africa and tonic from The West Nile, we talked about where we had all spent New Years Eve in 2007. Each one of us had celebrated it in different ways. Larissa from Peru had spent it in Sevilla, Spain, with friends. Sarah had been in Alaska at several parties and had walked home in the freezing cold and snow in the early hours of the morning. Marius had spent it in Juba in South Sudan, without his girlfriend but with his MSF colleagues. Celestine had been with his family in Calaga, Nigeria. Agnes had a protracted New Years with friends in Sainte, near Bordeaux – it lasted for two weeks! Bob and Maureen had spent it in their hot tub at their home in Colorado. Jeanne had spent it on call at the hospital in Santa Fe, and Rafat said that they did not celebrate it at this time in Iran, but rather in March.

I thought back to the special time I had spent with my daughter, Georgie, in the Grampians, hiking up Mount Stapleton on New Years Eve 2007. I had been away with MSF for a year in Thailand working with the cross-border Burmese, so that hike had been an opportunity to spend some special time with Georgie.

It had been an incredibly hot day of 42 degrees and a hard climb up to the top without another soul around, no doubt preferring to stay around the swimming pool! But was it worth it? Surrounded by such beauty on all sides, the Australian bush always providing a unique environment, watching the sunset, being under the clear skies watching the stars and a shooting star. More importantly mending some old wounds and making some New Years Eve resolutions together and hiding them in a crack in the rock cave we slept in.

We saw the New Year in, sipping a small amount of water, as our supplies were very low. No water, eating dry porridge oats the next morning and watching the sunrise. There was, however, nowhere else I would rather have been right then than on the top of Mount Stapleton with Georgie and that is one moment I will treasure forever.

I wonder where we will all be on New Years Eve 2009!



# News from the Harcourt Bowling Club

## Winners are Grinners!

So the adage goes, and there was a lot of grinning at Harcourt and much celebration, with two Grand Final wins on Saturday March 14!

Both Divisions played at South Bendigo under trying, windy conditions, with Division 3 playing Golden Square and Division 9 playing Bendigo.

Division Three, no strangers to finals, this being their third consecutive year contesting on the big stage, stood strong and bowled well against a very determined Golden Square. After the tea break Harcourt found another gear and were able to maintain a healthy lead with some great bowling.



Harcourt Bowling Club Division 3 Champions.

Division Nine is a new Division this year and the bowlers in the nines have had consistent success all season. Saturday was no exception and the gallery was not disappointed with the strong effort by the whole team against a formidable Bendigo.

As each team was presented with their pennant medallions, spirited renditions of the Club song could be heard across South Bendigo.



Harcourt Bowling Club Division 9 Champions.



A quiet celebration after the semi-final.

The Harcourt Bowling Club is immensely proud of the achievements from both divisions – 4 flags in 3 years! Not bad for a small country club!

## Weekend Pennant Grand Final results:

**Division 3:** Harcourt 17/108 defeated Golden Square 1/90 – Steven Douglas 26/19; Leo Moloney 24/17; Tony Olsson 31/31; Gary Maddern 27/23

**Division 9:** Harcourt 12/48 defeated Bendigo 2/32 – David Jefferies 13/20; Daryl Gale 35/12

Who they beat to get there!

Divisions 3 and 9 played off in the semi-finals against the same teams that beat them both the previous week. In close games all afternoon at Golden Square, Division 3 held on to win over Bendigo East by just 4 points. Division 9 held the lead most of the day finishing 6 points up over Woodbury. Both teams earned a week off and were well prepared to win the final.

While the club celebrates the success of the Weekend Divisions, we also congratulate the Midweek teams for their efforts throughout the season. Midweek Division Three equipped themselves well in their first year, providing strong opposition and just missing out on a spot in the finals. Midweek Division Five worked hard all season and provided a valuable training ground for our new bowlers.

## Barefoot Bowls Success

We had yet another great night of barefoot bowls on Tuesday 3rd March with a good crowd keen for some bowling fun. The winner on the night was the Lorna Davey's team with Moira McLennan, Les Harding and Kath Harding (see attached photo)



Barefoot Bowls winners Moira, Lorna, Les and Kathy.

## COVID-19 (Corona Virus)

Unfortunately, after the joy and success at the Club, the Board were compelled to make important decisions to ensure the safety of members and visitors to the Club.

On Tuesday 17th March the Board issued the following statement:



Dear Members and Friends of the Harcourt Bowling Club

The Board have considered recent advice from government bodies, health officials and Bowls Australia in regard to COVID-19 (corona virus). We want to act both responsibly and proactively in the best interest of our community, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Therefore we are postponing all upcoming events/activities being facilitated by Harcourt Bowling Club including Friday Night social events until further notice.

We do not take this decision lightly and do so with the best interests of our community in mind.

The Board hopes you all remain safe and well.

We will be in contact further when the current situation improves.

This means that the previously advertised Programs run by the Club (listed below) were not able to go ahead:

- Barefoot Bowls
- Friday Foodies
- Men's Champion Gough (Drawn) Pairs
- Grant Pairs Tournament
- Ladies' Champion Drawn Pairs
- Kidman Invitation Mixed Fours
- Rice Triples Tournament
- All Club 100-Up and Men's and Ladies Pairs Championship
- The CHIRP Move It Program at Harcourt Bowling Club has also been cancelled.



## WALKING TOGETHER –

### Towards Reconciliation THE ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER COMMISSION (ATSIC)

The Labor Government under Hawke set up ATSIC in 1990 so Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people could be formally involved in the government processes affecting their lives, in an effort to remove inequalities.

The new peak body, among other functions, was to coordinate the development of policies and proposals, but it had no executive authority from Prime Minister and Cabinet, whose activities often contradicted ATSIC's stated policies and intentions.

#### *Why was ATSIC not a success?*

Criticisms included its lack of autonomy from Government, lack of engagement with, and support by, Indigenous communities, and the accusations of sexual misconduct and embezzlement that hit the headlines in 2003. A review of ATSIC then concluded that it was not serving Indigenous Australians well, because socio-economic statistics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples still showed large levels of disadvantage.

The Government legislation to remove the peak Indigenous body was passed swiftly in 2004 without consultation with Indigenous peoples, and ATSIC was formally abolished on **24 March 2005**. It was nearly a year since Howard had pronounced 'the experiment in elected representation for Indigenous people' a failure. Suggestions to re-form it and rectify the deficits were largely ignored.

Some critics ask whether axing ATSIC was a way of silencing dissent because the body was strongly critical of the Government's position on Native Title and on Human Rights.

Since then, there has been no national voice to advocate on Indigenous policy positions. This leaves many Indigenous people feeling excluded from debates about policies and programs that are going to impact directly on their lives, families and communities.

Two centuries of White Supremacy and refusal to listen will only be overcome when non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal people work with each other and with the Government to bring harmony and equality to the whole nation.

Nalderun is a service that supports the Aboriginal Community, led by Aboriginal people. Many people and organisations in the Mount Alexander Shire contribute to Nalderun; the name is a Dja Dja Wurrung word meaning "all together".

More information can be found at [www.nalderun.net.au](http://www.nalderun.net.au)



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# Weather and Water

While we had 32 mm of rain in March, 30 mm of that fell in 24 hours up to March 4. This set us up to believe we had an early autumn break, however the final 2 mm came towards the end of the month, so by that point everything was dry again. We also noticed that after the 30 mm there was absolutely no run off into our dam.

Storage capacity at the Coliban Reservoirs reflected the dry weather by decreasing slightly in volume (see the table below).

The benign autumn weather ensured a fabulous Applefest and has probably helped us all endure the COVID-19 crisis, as many of us are confined to our homes.

We have enjoyed the recent weather, but we were pleased to receive the rain today (April 2) and were surprised to find 21 mm in the gauge from last night's falls.

## Summer and autumn visitors

I have been observing the local wild life as the weather gradually changes. Over summer we have had regular visits in the evening from Perron's tree frogs and marbled geckos. Both species sit high on



The marbled geckos which visit us are quite pink, but I understand they can change colour to blend in with their surroundings. Picture by Matt Clancy – Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license. From Wikimedia.



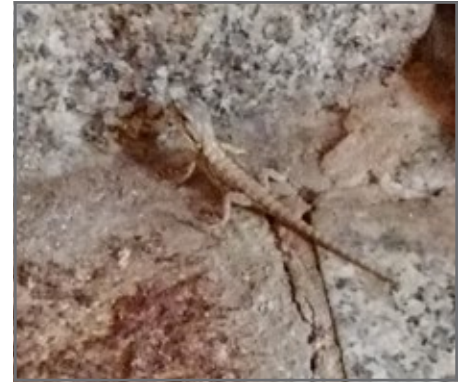
A Perron's Tree frog on one of our windows. Note the distinctive black cross in the eye. There are also faint aqua/green marks scattered inside the circle of tiny bumps on the back.

the windows, taking advantage of the lights inside the house. Most nights we have two geckos and at least one frog; they mainly seem to catch moths.

The Perron's tree frog is common here and is sometimes confused with the Growling grass frog which is much rarer. The Perron's have a noisy call, but it sounds quite different to the growler. A quick listen to an audio file on the web will confirm this as the calls are very different.

The marbled geckos which visit us are quite pink, but I understand they can change colour to blend in with their surroundings.

In the garden I have recently heard



The Jacky Dragon. This is the first one I have ever seen either outside or inside the house.

and seen spotted pardalotes among many other small birds. Recently we had a visit from what I believe is an urban pigeon – the call is exactly what I heard every day growing up in suburban Melbourne.

Yesterday, a lone Currawong paid a visit. Ibis, blue crane, cormorants and ducks have taken advantage of our dwindling dam from time to time.

Snakes have not been evident near the house, but we did have a Jacky Dragon visit one warm summer's day. I tried to catch it in a tea towel, but it escaped and I left the door open hoping it would go out. I didn't see it again, and I hope I don't find it when I finally get around to cleaning behind a cupboard!

Now at night the lights attract wolf spiders inside the house. I make use of one of the children's toys which I've kept for the purpose. It is called a bug catcher, and I can catch and release most species of spider using it. I'll be on the lookout for huntsman spiders any day now.

Soon we will be lighting fires and hunkering down for winter, but we will miss being able to watch the footy on cold nights!

Robyn Miller

## Current Reservoir Levels

Storage	Capacity at full supply megalitres	Current volume megalitres	Current volume % full	Volume same time last year megalitres	Volume same time last year % full
Upper Coliban	37,770	32,025	84.8%	27,725	73.4%
Lauriston	19,790	14,300	72.3%	13,880	70.1%
Malmsbury	12,034	1,214	10.1%	1,648	13.7%
<b>Total to April 2</b>	69,594	47,539	68.3%	43,253	62.2%
<b>Total to March 6</b>	69,594	49,330	70.9%	45,812	65.8%

Data from: <https://www.coliban.com.au/about-us/reservoir-levels> – April 2, 2020



### Coronavirus COVID-19 update

We understand there is much concern about coronavirus and are doing what we can to help reduce the impact and spread of COVID-19. Council is working to continue to deliver essential services and support our community, staff and volunteers at this time. The situation changes daily so check for service updates at [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/coronavirus). We encourage residents to stay home, remain calm, and follow the precautions to minimise the spread and infection of COVID-19. Remember to look out for each other and check on your family, friends and neighbours that might need assistance. Buy or shop local where possible. For more information about coronavirus, call the coronavirus hotline on 1800 675 398 or visit [www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus).

**Customer and Visitor Services** - Our Customer Service Centre and Visitor Information Centres are closed to the public. You can still contact us by phone, email or lodge a customer service request via our website.

**Aged Care Services** - Council is working to support the most vulnerable members of our community. Public health and safety is our priority and any service alterations have been made in the best interest of our clients, carers, volunteers and staff. For queries contact our Community Wellbeing Team on 5471 1766.

**Works and maintenance requests** - We are aiming to deal with as many requests as possible while operating with reduced capacity in our Works Unit. The priority for the team is road hazards, followed by maintenance tasks.

**Maternal and Child Health Services** - The National Immunisation Program for children up to six years is continuing by appointment only. Please do not attend the centre unless you have spoken to a nurse on 5472 1364.

**Castlemaine and Maldon Transfer Stations** - Please delay nonessential visits. Payment at the Castlemaine facility is by EFTPOS/card only. Heavy items and mattresses are not accepted. Kerbside bin collection is running as usual.

**Community facilities and events** - Council events are cancelled. Venues, recreation and community facilities are closed to the public. While parks and reserves remain open for essential activities such as exercise within public gathering rules, public playgrounds, skate parks and BMX parks are now closed.

**Business support** - Find out about the economic response for businesses at [www.business.gov.au](http://www.business.gov.au) or on 13 22 15.

**Community support** - For food packages or support call the Salvation Army on 1300 371 288, Red Cross on 1800 733 27677 or the COVID-19 hotline on 1800 675 398. For crisis support and suicide prevention services call Lifeline Australia on 13 11 14, Beyond Blue on 1300 224 636 or Kids Helpline on 1800 551 800.

**Civic Centre**

**Corner Lyttleton and Lloyd Streets**

**P.O. Box 185 Castlemaine VIC 3450**

**t (03) 5471 1700**

**e [info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au)**

**w [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au)**

## Council announces initial support measures

Mount Alexander Shire Council has announced some initial relief measures to help the community and local businesses manage some of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Councillors have agreed the following initiatives can be implemented straight away to help reduce the financial burden:

- Provide ratepayers with a one month extension on the due date for the fourth rates instalment, to June 30 2020.
- Establish a Council COVID-19 financial hardship policy including provision for the development of payment plans and consideration of interest waivers on overdue rate payments – for eligible ratepayers that can demonstrate hardship as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.
- Put a temporary hold on following up unpaid animal registrations (due mid-April).
- Pay all suppliers as quickly as possible in weekly payment schedules, regardless of payment terms.
- A reduction of commercial rents in Council-owned buildings until 30 June 2020, for businesses significantly impacted by COVID-19. Assessments will be on a case by case basis.

It is important that residents ensure their pet is registered by the due date of 10 April. However, registration fees can be made until 30 June 2020.

Mount Alexander Shire Mayor Christine Henderson said there will be more support measures to come.

“Councillors recognise the pandemic has been a huge disruption to our lives and people are feeling the burden in many ways,” said Mayor Henderson.

“We will continue to work with the CEO and staff to develop the support package and work through other options to reduce financial pressures in the medium to long-term,” she said.

“The measures we are putting in place aim to provide some initial relief while supporting the larger contributions of the state and federal governments.

“We encourage everyone to make the most of the stimulus and support packages announced by other tiers of government to help reduce the impact of COVID-19 and keep the economy going.

“At the same time, Council staff are supporting local businesses during this transition, and are liaising with people across the many sectors to work out what kind of support we can provide.

“Our aim is to keep as many essential services running, and support and connect our community to ensure it will thrive when we come out the other side,” she said.

*From a Shire Media Release*

# Grow Great Fruit

## Fruit Fly – unconfirmed in Castlemaine

At the time of going to print we have a single (as yet unconfirmed) case of fruit fly in Castlemaine, but none in Harcourt this season. It's easy to panic, but in the words of Landcare's Terry Willis (who heads the Harcourt Valley Fruit Fly Action Group) "Everyone take a deep breath and let it out slowly. Do that two more times. And say we are doing the best we can do with limited time and resources." So don't panic, but also don't relax just yet, and please keep monitoring your traps until the very end of the season.

## Growing your own food

Another thing not to panic about is COVID-19. It's certainly highlighted the importance of growing your own food, both as a means of maintaining a stable food supply in insecure times, but also because it's a wonderfully calming and healthy activity. So, keep looking after your fruit trees and vegetable garden, and if you don't have any yet but have been meaning to get around to it, now's definitely the time!

## So, to this month's tips: It's time to remove nets over fruit trees.

If you've finished picking your fruit for the year, now's the time to put away your nets if you used them on your fruit trees over summer, because they break down and wear out much faster if they're left out in the weather. They slip off more easily if you remove them while your tree still has leaves, so don't wait too long to get the job done. Of course if your apple or pear tree still has fruit, leave the nets in place for now, because the birds are out in force this year (as usual)!

If you've used drape netting (as opposed to having put up some sort of frame to hold the net off the tree) a handy tip is to remove your nets with a broomstick – or a very tall friend – to help you push the nets off the tree, being careful not to damage the ends of the limbs if possible. Disentangle any twigs or rotten fruit before you pack them away, and if you can store them so they're rat-proof, you'll thank yourself next summer when you go to put them out again! If the net has accumulated any holes (from persistent kangaroos, for example), your future self will thank you very much if you repair the nets now, before you put them away. This is usually a simple matter of sewing the holes up with UV-stable nylon thread, or even tying the edges together with cable ties or hay band.

## Are your fruit trees flowering now?

On another note, if you're noticing some of your fruit trees flowering (despite the fact that it's not spring and we'll soon be descending into winter) don't panic. It's not uncommon for fruit trees to have a last ditch attempt to produce some fruit, and though it might be an indication of a sick or stressed tree, it can also happen in perfectly healthy trees - it's just the genetic drive to reproduce. The flowers or tiny fruit that form will most likely just drop off as the weather cools down.

Hugh and Katie Finlay are certified organic orchardists, members of the Harcourt Organic Farming Co-op and teach organic home fruit growing. They offer a free Weekly Fruit Tips newsletter, and a free online workshop called "The 5 Key Steps to Growing Great Fruit". They also offer more than 50 online short courses and the year long Grow Great Fruit Home-study Program - visit [growgreatfruit.com](http://growgreatfruit.com) for details.



  
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## ASQ Plant of the Month Banksia 'Birthday Candles'

*Banksia spinulosa*, commonly known as Birthday Candles, is a small shrub which grows to approximately 0.6m high by 1.5m wide.

The dense foliage looks spectacular year round, but the best of this plant is shown in autumn when the golden flowers bloom.

Birthday Candles thrive in a full sun to part shade position in well-drained, acidic soil with a low pH.

Requiring little water makes them a drought tolerant and cost effective plant, as well as being ideal for low maintenance gardens across the region.





Mass plant them in your garden for a striking display, use them as a low growing hedge or grow them in containers on your patio.

Banksia Birthday Candles are an easy to grow, beautiful plant that will thrive in most gardens.

Visit ASQ Skydancers this month to see our display!



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## Month by Month Tips for Gardens in Harcourt – Janyce’s Column Returns

Readers may remember Janyce McMurtrie’s garden columns which ran for about three years, concluding in 2017. Due to requests from a number of new residents about advice for planting and care of a garden in Harcourt, the *Core* approached Janyce who has agreed to update these where necessary and have them published again. Janyce is expert in the use and care of indigenous plants, but readers will find that her garden is not rigidly confined to Australian plants.

New readers and new residents will find Janyce’s columns extremely useful, and those of us with established gardens can always do with a bit of a reminder and some inspiration.

Autumn is the time to tidy up the remains of our summer gardens and start preparing for winter. It is time to trim back summer perennials, removing spent flowers and flowering stems. Deadheading and feeding roses may also result in a last burst of colour before the winter dormancy.

Autumn is a great time to rejuvenate or modify your garden. Given the current situation where many of us are limiting our time outside our property boundaries, why not choose a project to enhance your garden?

There are many additional elements that can add colour, style and character to a garden. A little creativity with metal art, timber, stonework, sculptures, paint and water can enhance your garden and give different areas individual character and purpose. Hard and soft elements can also assist with tackling difficult areas where you have trouble growing plants. For example; building a stone or timber wall can change the feel, height and shape of an area, but it can also provide an opportunity to introduce additional topsoil.

Introducing large or colourful pots can have the same multiple benefits. Other artistic structures such as climbing frames and pergolas can add height, as well as adding shade, style and colour. Who knows, maybe even a fence to keep a dog off the garden could also be an art piece to add value.

Even if you don’t want to add extra features to your garden, getting outside in the garden, whether it’s for relaxation or maintenance can always do us good.

Autumn is also a good time to weed and feed lawns. For summer grasses such as Couch and Kikuyu this will capitalise on the last of summer with a burst of growth and extension. For winter grasses such as Rye, this will give them a head start as they start to grow.

This month we are:

- Deadheading the roses and feeding them with Sulphate of Potash;
- Pruning back summer Raspberries;
- Taking some cuttings;
- Preparing to add in some new gravel paths in our back garden; and
- Considering sculptures.

*Happy Gardening  
Janyce*

## EPA MEDIA RELEASE Old tyres – a Fire Hazard You Can Remove without Burning

Environment Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) says with weather easing and fire restrictions lifted in some areas, farmers conducting hazard reduction burns should also consider removing any stacks of old tyres on their land.

EPA North West Region Manager Dr Scott Pigdon says a pile of waste tyres is a fire hazard and a threat to the environment.

“You can stockpile up to 40 tonnes or 5,000 standard passenger tyres without needing a permit from EPA, but there are common sense reasons for most property owners to get rid of old tyres,” Dr Pigdon said.

“A stack of waste tyres is a pile of chemicals waiting to burn; it doesn’t catch fire easily, but if it is overrun by fire it will generate toxic smoke, and burning tyres can be very difficult to extinguish,” he said.

Any abandoned stockpile of waste tyres is also an environmental hazard; providing a breeding ground for vermin; while the tyres begin to decay and contaminate the soil and groundwater.

“Past practices of using old tyres to contain soil erosion or around newly planted trees are no longer accepted, and it’s illegal to burn or just dump them,” Dr Pigdon said.

EPA urges landholders to inspect any tyre stockpile and make a decision to either manage it properly for the good of your farm and your community or send the tyres for recycling or legal disposal in landfill.

EPA’s website has good advice on how tyres can be used on farm land or other private property, at:

[www.epa.vic.gov.au/-/media/epa/files/publications/1652.pdf](http://www.epa.vic.gov.au/-/media/epa/files/publications/1652.pdf)

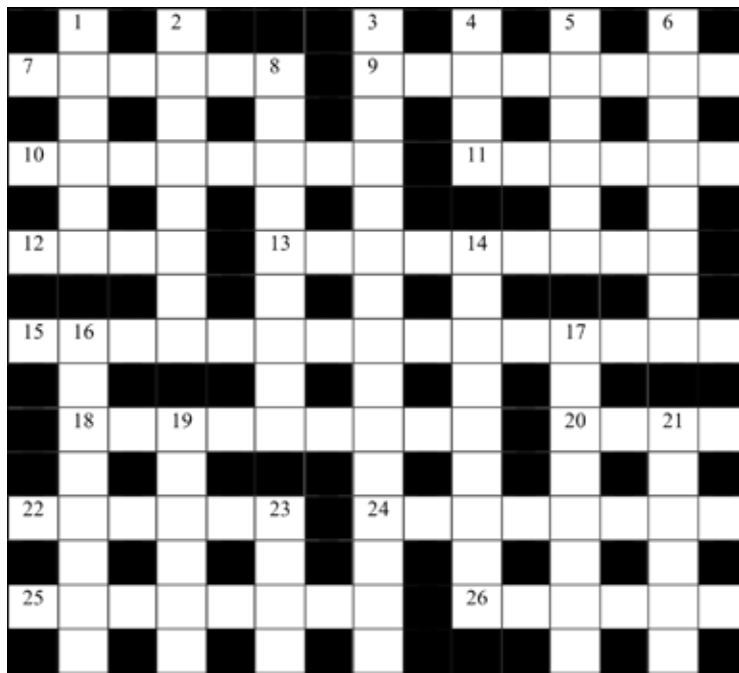
The tyre stockpile regulations are also available online, at: [ref.epa.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry/guidelines/waste-guidance/storage-of-waste-tyres-in-victoria](http://ref.epa.vic.gov.au/business-and-industry/guidelines/waste-guidance/storage-of-waste-tyres-in-victoria)

**If you suspect someone is illegally stockpiling or dumping waste tyres, contact EPA’s 24-hour pollution hotline on 1300 EPA VIC (1300 772 842) – the offenders can face a fine of more than \$8,000, or hundreds of thousands if the case goes to court.**

### Castlemaine Bus Lines Harcourt Services Monday to Friday

	am	pm	pm
Market St/Harmony Way (Harcourt)	8:55	12:10	2:25
Coolstore Road/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:56	12:11	2:26
Coolstore Road/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:57	12:12	2:27
Blackjack Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	9:03	12:18	2:33
Halford St/Barker St (Castlemaine)	9:05	12:20	2:35
From Castlemaine to Harcourt Monday to Friday			
Castlemaine RSL/Mostyn St (Castlemaine)	8:45	12:00	2:15
Wimble St/Barker St (Castlemaine)	8:48	12:03	2:18
Blackjack Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:53	12:08	2:23
Coolstore Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:54	12:09	2:24
Market St/Harmony Way (Harcourt)	8:55	12:10	2:25

# April Xword 2020 ©McW October '17



### Down:

- Certainly old money, often, on Australia Day. [6]
- What the last bit of 17's anagram might have to do to become a solution? [8]
- How ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ becomes "Know Thyself", or one of the processes used. [15]
- How Greeks read 3 on January 26th? [2,2]
- Cocktail? Put it into Austin Powers' libido and serve it on Australia Day! [6]
- Rich apes are cheap, sir, but their smiles are beatific... [8]
- By rights, man, this injury grants him the opportunity to scratch... [9]
- If you rub coal in your left eye you won't have this vision, but you can rub oil in it to restore it. [9]
- "Perv" (noun) not demonstrated to be suitable for Australia Day. [8]
- A priest might attempt to banish the collywobbles, but one might prefer to use sex, or ice in the mix... [8]
- Corrupt aristocratic adjective by bringing in the second-rate, on Australia Day. [6]
- Finally the cobbler puts tools away and shuts up shop for Australia Day. [6]
- This info. rocks evenly in a secluded corner on January 26th. [4]

### Across:

- Way to quell a raging thirst on Australia Day may prove futile against the fires of Hell... [6]
- Islamic State losers should make things like hamburgers on Australia Day, instead... [8]
- Myra Fern requires his services to get across on Australia Day. [8]
- April's downward (or upward, as the case may be) trajectory goes round and round (obviously not on Australia Day). [6]
- It could be that by teaching computer knowledge we uncover the basic unit. [4]
- Border-tax collection hut a little like a highwayman on Australia Day? [4-5]
- Disrupt penitences under/oversight. [15]
- Gay Prince delivers grave speech about crying ape, perhaps, on Australia Day. (9)
- Lyon backflips but once on Australia Day. [4]
- Popping up for Dorothy H on Australia Day? [6]
- Cate lets a 'sect' tale, or maybe one about a steel cat, into a free-to-air dissemination on Australia Day. [8]
- Hoi Polloi dwell too far from them on January 26th. [4-2-2]
- How Polly might jump back on Australia Day? [6]

# March Xword 2020 solution ©McW September '17



### Down:

- [Stomp my]evidence, Doc! (7)
- A.D [C.E....] over messy engine [train] is set in concrete [metaphorically speaking].
- Clear [cute ex-pal] (9)
- Odd sendup of [sap] for [daff] (5)
- There's a direness about it, and one could question Hamlet's saner side, but he does think it's everything ["...R is all"] in Act V.
- Go down [pit, children, dig out the black stuff...] (5)
- Look at [spine CT] scan. (7)
- [Amy] offers pardon by incorporating avian home. (7)
- Supplies with too few rifles where a stink might be kicked up. [Well?]
- Agent [jabs demon] (9)
- Without supporting evidence, it won't fly... [Well? Zero pinion...]
- Exit to everything there? [Well? The "out" door leads to all that's not in...]
- Nervous mannerism [tic] underwater grows in it or lives near it. (7)
- Benevolent Shiraz for rellies? [Well?]
- Cowboy failed to get up in his event [Well?]
- Narrow [V.int.] back to hospital for the returned. [Well? the Repat.]

### Across:

- Type of rags-to-riches story. [Well?]
- That caliper is only a copy of the real one on the vehicle, but it's a good one! (7)
- It's not even: m<sup>1</sup>e<sup>2</sup> o<sup>3</sup>etc-n roof, cocooning the refugees [=the 'evens'?] from the African state.
- [Art is an] obvious problem these days, for a craftsman... (7)
- Early naming of PNG kcart by a liar to a [T]
- [Well? Kokoda Trail — Kokoda Track more recent... There's a track winding back...to Gundagai: v. Aussie]
- [This false] mob of infidels can be the flashiest! (9)
- [I am true, in] all respects, to the original, just a different size. (9)
- Place to tie painters [of boats] up can't be without peer [pier], they say. (5)
- Danger-zone? Erogenous—? Time-zone? Smokeless—? No way—just clean air! (5)
- [Bird makes] for a way off the boat. (9)
- If I do this, I'm prettier in a translation.
- How he'll treat the heroine after he's spun a flight line? (5)
- Tidily arranged so as to be tidily arranged. [Well?]
- Let port expose the schemer—In vino... (7)
- After melanoma, with sun over head, I'm anxious. [Well? a rather brutal anagram...]
- [Crude] newsman [Ed] abraded somewhat. (7)



# Council investigates possible fruit fly outbreak

## Harcourt Valley Fruit Fly Action Group plays a Vital Role

Mount Alexander Shire Council is investigating a possible outbreak of Queensland fruit fly in the southern part of Castlemaine.

A resident discovered an adult fly with markings consistent with Queensland fruit fly in a monitoring trap. The fly has been sent to Agriculture Victoria for identification.

“We are taking this seriously and have implemented our Queensland fruit fly emergency outbreak plan,” said Tracey Watson, Coordinator Public and Environmental Health, Mount Alexander Shire Council.

“The plan involves working closely with the community to monitor other instances of fruit fly and reduce the likelihood of it taking hold in our shire,” said Ms Watson.

“We expect to have the identification results back next week from Agriculture Victoria. In the meantime residents are busy dropping off monitoring traps to households in nearby streets to see whether this is a one-off or if similar flies are active,” she said.

Over the last 12 months Harcourt Valley Landcare and Council have handed out 400 free Queensland fruit fly monitoring traps.

“Now is the time to check your traps! We want everyone to take a look every day or two and keep an eye out for Queensland fruit fly,” said Ms Watson.

Queensland fruit fly are small – about 5mm to 8mm long. They are brown and have reddish eyes with yellow

‘shoulder pads’ and other markings including a yellow triangle at the base of the mid-section.

Council will keep the community informed on the identification results.

“So many members of our community love growing food in our backyard. Queensland fruit fly can quickly take hold and destroy all your harvest – we definitely don’t want them in our shire,” said Ms Watson.

Harcourt Valley Fruit Fly Action Group developed the emergency plan last year. The plan is thought to be the first of its kind to take a community-led rather than commercial-grower approach to manage the pest.

The outbreak plan includes five stages:

- Confirm the identity
- Destroy infected fruit
- Alert the community
- Monitor with traps
- Eradicate and exclude (with nets, baits and traps)

For more information on the plan and photos to help identification visit [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FruitFly](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FruitFly).

*From a Shire Media Release*

## Editor’s note:

Dear readers, this month we will only print 225 copies of *The Core* due to the limited opportunities for distribution at various venues.

You will find more copies than usual at the Harcourt Service Station and the Post Office. A copy will go on the Harcourt Valley Website, and if you would like to be included in the notification of when that becomes available, please email [news@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:news@harcourt.vic.au). A PDF copy will also be available to read or print at home. If you would like to receive a PDF copy, please email: [news@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:news@harcourt.vic.au) or send me a text or phone: 0467 670 271.

Regards, Robyn Miller, for the team at *The Harcourt News, The Core*.

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Circulation is currently 450, and copies can be obtained at the Harcourt General Store, the Harcourt Post Office, the Harcourt Service Station, Harcourt Valley Primary School, ASQ Skydancers, The Little Red Apple and in Castlemaine: Run Rabbit Run, Castlemaine Library, Castlemaine Hospital and Castlemaine Visitors’ Centre plus a number of other sites.

A full colour version of *Harcourt News/The Core* is available on the Harcourt Community website: [harcourt.vic.au/news](http://harcourt.vic.au/news)

**The views or remarks expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the Editor, nor of the Steering Committee of the Harcourt Progress Association. No endorsement of service is implied by the listing of advertisers, sponsors or contributors.**



## Councillor Comment

Hi all,

I hope you are all well, and I trust you have all reduced travel and going out to an absolute minimum. It is hard to believe how quickly life as we know it has changed and the uncertainty of how long it will last. Everyone is affected, and my thoughts are with those that are frontline workers in our health system and also the elderly and frail in our community. At Council, we will be working out how we can maintain services, particularly those that support people.

From a Councillor perspective, things have changed already, with Councillor Briefings happening electronically. Thank you to the staff who made that happen. The formal Council meetings still have to happen, and at this stage we are required to meet. We will maintain physical separation as much as possible, but, of course, attending a meeting is a risk to all present.

On the positive side, at our March Council meeting we approved extra funds for the Stanley Park playground. I look forward to seeing this project completed. Some projects take longer than others, but I think we are trying for a record with this one! Persistence will win through in the end, so watch this space.

Many of you will be aware that our Council elections are normally held in November. Let's hope COVID-19 is under control before then. My view is that our elections will most likely go ahead as planned. Because our election is a postal vote, it will not be affected to a great extent.

The new Local Government Act was passed last week. The changes will be rolled out progressively, with one significant change being a redrawing of electoral boundaries in Mount Alexander Shire. This will not happen for this election but the following one, which is four and a half years away. There will be a lot of other changes as well, so there's a lot of work ahead for the next Council.

In this year's elections, a number of Councillors will not seek re-election. The new Councillors will face many tough decisions as our community faces unprecedented challenges. In my view, our present Council works very effectively. We have a diverse cross-section of the community, and there is always robust debate. Working with the Councillors is always interesting, and it is great to hear the differences in opinion come out in the debate. In the end, all the decisions are taken in the best interest of the entire community.

Please feel free to contact me directly if you have issues or concerns relating to Council matters. I am nearly always available and happy to assist where I can.

Stay safe, wishing you all the very best for the future,

Regards, Tony  
0439 742 434

# LIMERICK by The Bard of North Harcourt

I flew to my friend's home in Devon,  
Arriving at half past eleven.  
The sun, it was shining,  
When we started dining,  
I knew I had landed in heaven

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# Rabbit Reduction Workshop Barkers Creek Landcare

Are you a property owner wondering how to manage rabbits on your land? Read on to find the best method of rabbit eradication in this area.

More than fifty people attended the Agriculture Victoria (Ag Vic) Rabbit Buster Workshop in Barkers Creek on February 16. It was part of Ag Vic's annual Rabbit Buster month programme and was hosted by Barkers Creek Land Care Group, at 'Haven on Barkers'.

Ag Vic personnel presented background information on rabbit management and control, and Harcourt local, Jarrod Coote, gave a practical demonstration of how to safely use baiting stations. North Central CMA and Connecting Country were also involved in the organisation of the event.

The destruction that rabbits cause is easy to see, but it is more alarming to learn that a single pair of rabbits can breed up to 180 rabbits in 18 months! Natural predators are not enough to keep them in check.

It is estimated that rabbits cost over \$200 million in lost agricultural production each year, and fewer than one rabbit per hectare can prevent native vegetation regeneration, thereby reducing biodiversity. Rabbits feed on short vegetation within 300 meters of their warrens but will travel much further when food and water are scarce.

One of the main reasons rabbits have bred successfully is because they live in burrows or warrens which protect them from predators and environmental extremes. Rabbit kittens are susceptible to climatic extremes, so warrens are essential to their survival. If warrens are not available, rabbits can inhabit fallen timber, rock piles, thickets of native shrubs or woody weeds (they love blackberry bush and gorse) or any heaps of debris. They are not deterred

by human activity and can be found under water tanks, houses and sheds.

Therefore, as part of rabbit management it is advisable to destroy warrens or any place they may inhabit. In our hilly local environment, warren destruction is seldom possible, so other measures need to be considered. These 'other measures' were what was discussed at the workshop, however the main emphasis was on the use of baiting stations.

Jarrod demonstrated the use of bait stations, which he has been trained to use and has successfully used for over ten years. Jarrod answered many questions from participants about the effects of bait on pets, native animals and the rabbits. His experience, and that of other users, is that it rarely affects native animals or pets if used properly and the guidelines are followed. It is considered one of the more humane ways to eliminate rabbits.

Other participants have used shooters and ferreters to control rabbits on their properties. Colisi virus releases have also been used by people licenced to release it.

Jarrod and the Ag Vic presenters emphasised that whatever measure people decide to use, it is best done if all land holders in a given area participate in an eradication process.

Participants, who at the end of the workshop chose to use bait, were provided with a bait station (funded by Vic Ag) and a letter of participation which entitled them to a discount on Pindone bait from State Wide Irrigation in Castlemaine. All participants were provided with a list of local ferreters and shooters (one of whom attended the workshop).

At the time of writing, it is a month since the workshop was conducted and we have some results to report from Daryl Colless,



Jarrod Coote

the president of Barkers Creek Landcare and Wildlife group, who was one of the main organisers of this event.

Prior to the workshop, he had observed that rabbits were in plague proportions along White Gum Road in Barkers Creek. Since then, many of the residents of White Gum Road have participated in a variety of rabbit reduction activities and now, instead of seeing hundreds of rabbits there are only one or two to be seen.

That is a great community effort, and a great outcome for the environment. Well done White Gum Road residents.

Lois Denham



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**Beautiful Harcourt**

I always enjoy reading the Children's Page. I live in a picturesque valley surrounded by mountains. Near our Harcourt North school is the reservoir, which is a beautiful site. There are numerous swans and ducks there. On the slope of Mount Alexander, there are three granite quarries.

We have two schools, one at Harcourt and one up here. We have a new pine plantation at our school. We have noticed quite a number of wild flowers blooming. I attend the Harcourt North State school, and I am in the eighth grade.

Annie Ellis ("Spring Grove," Harcourt) wins a "Smile."

*Weekly Times March 1, 1930. Via Trove.*



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## QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY

# Season calendar of BACKYARD JOBS

### SPRING

September	October	November
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove QFF host plants if you are not going to control QFF in your garden</li> <li>Design your vegetable garden layout and cropping cycles so that QFF populations don't build up</li> <li>Set up traps to monitor for QFF and check traps weekly</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pick and dispose of any excess ripe citrus especially grapefruit and late season oranges</li> <li>Pick up and dispose of any fallen loquats</li> <li>Spray high risk fruit if appropriate and always follow label instructions</li> </ul>
<p><i>Remember!</i> In SPRING high risk fruits are late season citrus such as grapefruit and early ripening hosts such as loquats.</p>		

### SUMMER

December	January	February
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Net your vegetable garden or bag individual fruit</li> <li>Pick up fallen fruit everyday</li> <li>Check tomatoes for sting marks</li> <li>Heat treat fallen and infested fruit and vegetables to kill QFF maggots</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trap and monitor QFF population levels weekly</li> <li>Spray high risk fruit if appropriate and always follow label instructions</li> </ul>
<p><i>Remember!</i> In SUMMER high risks fruits are stonefruit such as cherries, apricots, peaches, nectarines and plums. High risk vegetables are tomatoes, capsicums and chillies.</p>		

### AUTUMN

March	April	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pick up any fallen fruit to break the QFF lifecycle</li> <li>Heat treat fallen and infested fruit to kill QFF maggots</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to monitor for QFF and check traps weekly</li> <li>Continue to spray high risk fruit if appropriate and always follow label instructions</li> </ul>
<p><i>Remember!</i> In AUTUMN high risk fruits are pomefruit such as apples, pears and quinces, early citrus such as mandarins, also other fruit such as pomegranates and ornamental fruiting plants such as feijoa (pineapple guava).</p>		

### WINTER

June	July	August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prune fruit trees to a manageable height for ease of fruit picking and netting</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace unwanted QFF host trees with non-host plants</li> <li>Pick up fallen fruit</li> </ul>
<p><i>Remember!</i> In WINTER the risk of QFF fly is lower but winter fruits can provide a food source for overwintering fruit flies. These include apples, pears, quinces and pomegranates left hanging on trees and ripe winter citrus such as oranges, mandarins and grapefruit.</p>		

DPI QFF factsheets for the home gardener are available: [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/insects/qff](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/agriculture/pests-weeds/insects/qff)