

HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE

Edition 78 – December 2020

Produced by:

Online: harcourt.vic.au/news

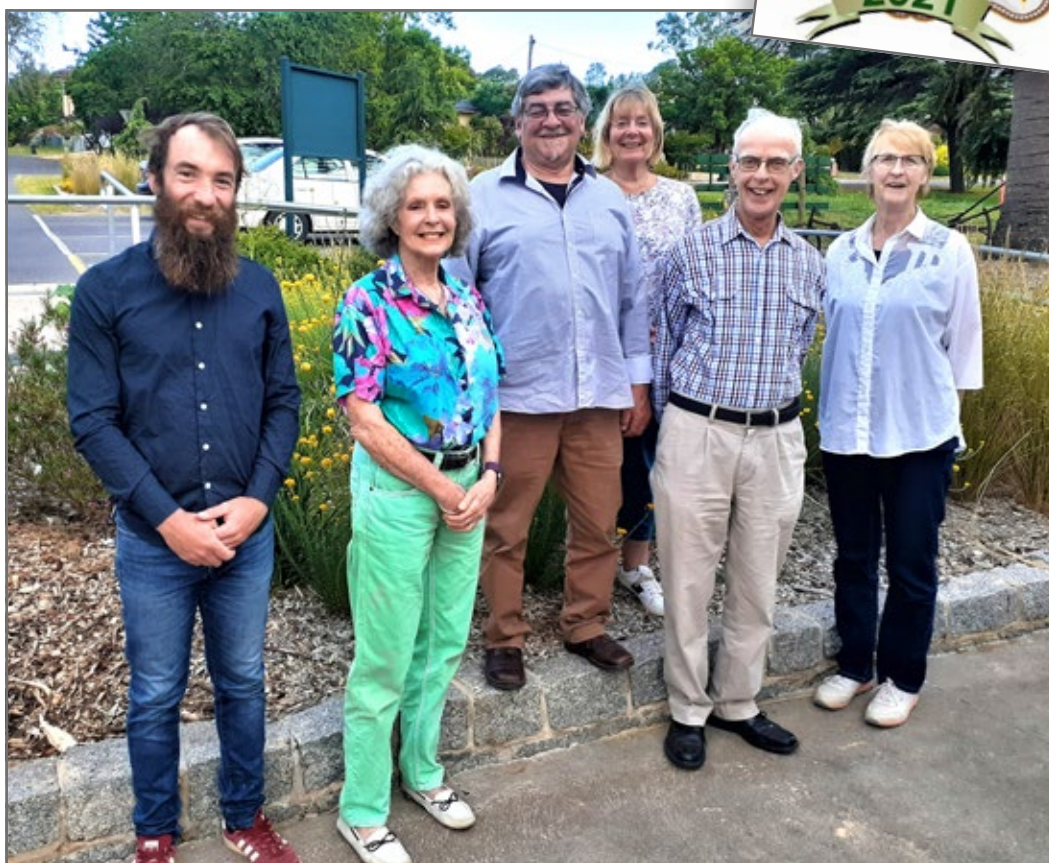
Harcourt Progress Association Inc



Merry Christmas



Applefest 2021 A Month of Celebration



APPLEFEST 2021 answers the question: What can be done when there are doubts about holding one major event on one day? The Applefest Committee and associates – the HPA, CWA and others – have been faced with this question due to COVID-19.

Applefest 2020 was our best yet, and we all enjoyed getting together for that one day for a super-sized festival. BUT ... Next

year's Applefest promises a *month* of fun, entertainment and surprises. Organisers are preparing a calendar of events for the month of March, commencing on the long weekend from Friday night, 5 March. The organisation for some of these events is underway right now.

Businesses, entertainment providers and community groups are being approached to

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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.**



MEMBER 2020



Harcourt Progress Association Update

Roundabout Progress

The Harcourt community will have the opportunity to respond via HPA to the proposed concept plan for the roundabout.

The HPA is pleased to report that, since our meeting with the Council Officers and Regional Roads Victoria, progress has been made towards developing a new concept for the roundabout. Cath Olive, Manager Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities, Mount Alexander Shire Council has developed a preliminary plan based on our discussion. Cath reports that she has consulted with Council's Parks and Gardens team to make sure that what is ultimately delivered is fit for purpose and maintainable. Once the plan is revised after Parks gives their feedback, the plan will be available for comment from both HPA and Regional Roads to further refine the concept. The HPA will hold a public meeting as soon as possible after we receive the concept plan so that we can make informed observations and suggestions based on community input.

Ultimately, the finalised concept will then be provided to Regional Roads for detailed design and construction.

Launch of HPA new Website on December 6

The HPA will launch its new website on December 6. There's plenty of information about the HPA and its proceedings. You'll also find the new home of *The Core*, where you can read online, subscribe and more. (You will still find *The Core* on the Harcourt Valley website – the sites will link). David Foley, who is also driving the new IT set-up for the HPA Committee has put many hours into the new site which will of course be a work in progress.

HPA's Driving Role in the Play Space

The following demonstrates that dedication and determination to a cause pays off.

The Harcourt Progress Association, through various leaders and members, has devoted time to this project for 7 years. And the work of those people should be acknowledged. The project began in 2014 when the Harcourt community, led by HPA, responded to the Shire's Play Space Strategy. As a result, the first amount of \$15,000 was registered in the Shire budget for the design of a new play

space for Harcourt. Our first Chair, David Heath, had a strong vision that Stanley Park should become a green space in the centre of the town. In 2015/16 David's engagement with Coliban Water and the Shire was not initially successful, but has now come to fruition with the installation of irrigation and the drinking fountain in the park. We especially thank Darren Heritage, Coliban's Manager of Community Relations for supporting the project from the inception.

Jacqueline Brodie-Hanns continued her advocacy for this project from the very beginning and should be acknowledged for her fundraising efforts and her tenacity in pursuing the project through to the end. Jacqueline, on behalf of HPA, secured the funds from the Maldon and District Community Bank which were used to fund the accessible barbecue now available for all in the play space.

After initial debates and changes of direction – and let's face it we, that is, the Shire and the community had some strong exchanges about where the play space should be sited. The site in Stanley Park, with natural links to the Pony Club, the swimming pool and the trail bike track, was eventually chosen.

The Shire and the Harcourt community began work in an organised fashion in 2018 – at last we were 'all on the same page'. The establishment of the Play Space Working Group with Shire representatives and community reps enabled the project to come to fruition. The work of the previous and current Shire Officers must be acknowledged as must be the community members of the Working Group: Bryan and Tricia Balmer, Kirshy McAinsh, Jacqueline Brodie-Hanns, Veronica Budnikas and Robyn Miller.

When the community is keen on a project, sometimes the progress seems slow, however, Shire Officers duly set about raising the required funds and dealing with the legal and planning issues, and kept the Working Group members well informed, while we all put our heads to the task of developing a play space that reflected and contained unique elements of Harcourt. One thing that is apparent from this process is that Shire consultation with the community ultimately resulted in a successful outcome. The process of sharing decision making between the Shire and community representatives ultimately resulted in a successful outcome. We would recommend the Terms of Reference guidelines developed by Jacqueline and the Shire, as a model for other community organisations who wish

to work on a project with the Shire. These will be posted on the new HPA website..

We now have a facility for Harcourt which is unique and attractive and which we already know is extremely popular, given the crowds using the play space, from the very first day.

The process was challenging, but the outcome was worth it.

Unfortunately, HPA had to limit its activities in 2020, but will hold its AGM in the New Year and has a number of new projects for development. If you are up for a challenge, consider joining us in 2021.

Robyn Miller, Deputy President HPA



A Month of Celebration

Continued from page 2

organise an event at their venue which will be pre-booked, ticketed and slotted into the month's program under the auspices of Applefest.

Some of the events suggested are:

- A long lunch
- Applefest Art Show and Awards
- Indigenous Star Gazing
- Harcourt Twilight Get-together – Music and Food at James Park
- Orienteering at La Larr Bar Gauwa Mountain Bike Park

This is our chance to put Harcourt back on the map after a quiet year. If successful, the month of celebration will help strengthen our community through showcasing the talents of our business and arts and crafts people, our musicians, our growers and produce and the culture of Harcourt.

If your group or business has not been contacted yet and you have a cracking idea and would like to choose your date in the calendar, contact the Applefest Committee on info@harcourt.vic.au by December 11.

The New Harcourt Play Space Is Fun to the Core

Member for Bendigo West, Maree Edwards officially opened the new Playspace at Stanley Park North, made possible by a \$350,000 investment from the Government and \$264,000 from Mount Alexander Shire.

Maree said, 'The Play Space is a community hub for the residents of Harcourt, and the design of the new play equipment reflects the district's fruit growing history in the six metre high tower which uses an apple crate theme. The all abilities playground includes an indigenous meeting place for storytelling and a new path to the Harcourt dirt bike

park, swimming pool, public accessible toilet and shower, and pony club.'

Ms Edwards acknowledged Mount Alexander Shire Council, Maldon Bendigo Community Bank and the Harcourt Progress Association for their contributions and commitment to the project.

For more information about sport and recreation infrastructure grant opportunities available through the Victorian Government, visit www.sport.vic.gov.au

From a Press Release



Hooray!! Attendees at the official opening of the Harcourt Play Space included Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards, Mayor Tony Cordy, Uncle Rick Nelson, Aunty Julie McHale and representatives from Harcourt Play Space Working Group, Harcourt Progress Association, Coliban Water, Maldon Community Bank, Harcourt Valley Primary School and Mount Alexander Shire Council.

The mood was light as speeches were made by guests at the official opening of the Harcourt Play Space. Families have been accessing the space for a few weeks now, and it is certainly proving popular.

To open proceedings, Uncle Rick Nelson performed the Welcome to Country in language and then lit a small smoking bucket which was used by those gathered to 'wash' in the smoke.

Harcourt local, Aunty Julie McHale, an honorary Dja Dja Wurrung elder,

also performed a Welcome in the Palawa language which is the language of her people from Tasmania. She said, 'What a wonderful location and it's not just because of the play equipment, look around and see the large trees and listen to the birds. Even having the water fountain as a source of water and the creek nearby is important to Aboriginal people. I am looking forward to using the gathering place regularly to tell stories, and simply as a place where we can be together.'

Recently elected Mayor Tony Cordy was proud to say that he is, 'Harcourt born and bred.'

'I have been impressed with the number of people using the Play Space already. I want to give credit to all involved. Thank you to Maree and the State Government for providing two lots of funding totalling \$350,000, to the Council Officers and the HPA for working on this together, to the Maldon Community District Bank for the grant money which paid for the barbecue, to Coliban Water, to Klein Landscape Architects and Sentient Design, and to Adventure Plus who constructed the play equipment.'



Amina's Thoughts on the Play Space

At the official opening of the Play Space Amina, a local primary school student, spoke about what the facility means to her.



I think that this new playground will be particularly good for our Harcourt community.

About a month before the Play Space opened, I started to ride my bike here every day to check if the fence had come down. I didn't know when that would be, so I wanted to be there when it did.

Since it's been open, I have been here almost every day, and so far I have even seen 4 or 5 birthday parties and several social gatherings.

Thank you to the State Government, Council and the Working Group for making this happen.

Thanks for coming and have a great day. 😊

'We are all aware of the slide, who could miss it! But there are other items here which distinctively express Harcourt. For example, the oak leaf chair and the apple star stool by Artist Linton Torr, who is located at Spring Gully. Thanks again to all involved.'

The park location has been landscaped around the edges behind the new fencing. Eventually the play space will be well shaded from the western sun by specially selected Turkish oaks, chosen because there is a fine specimen already on the eastern side.

While, to adults, physically playing in a playground is a distant memory, young Amina, who had the last word, gave the crowd an insight into the importance of play. Her speech which is reproduced near her photo says it all.



Councillor Comment

With the recent Council election there has been a significant change with four new Councillors elected. It's no surprise that the Council decided to go with a returning Councillor as the Mayor. I was formally endorsed as the Mayor of Mount Alexander Shire Council last Tuesday. It is a huge honour to be the Mayor in the community that I grew up in and where I have lived most of my life. I know a few of the older generation will be pleased.

Being Mayor appears easy when things are going well, but I can assure you it is hard work, and there is always the unexpected. Who would have thought we would be dealing with the pandemic in the past 12 months? Hopefully it will be a better year for all in 2021. Regardless of what comes our way, I will do my very best to represent our community.

It is great to see our new playground in use. When I drive through Harcourt I enjoy seeing how many people are gathered there.

Best regards to all, Tony

AG Cordy
0439742434

CAROLS
in the Park
Sunday 20 December, 7pm
Stanley Park (opposite the Service Station)
Thompson's Foundry Band will be playing traditional carols.
Kerrie Maguire, an a cappella singer, will provide some contemporary Christmas songs.
A bit of light relief will be provided by a specially written Harcourt Carol using a traditional tune.
This is a very family-friendly night and not a late night for children.
BYO rug or chair.
Plenty of room to safely social distance.
Conducted by the Harcourt Uniting Church in aid of 'Act for Peace'.



New Harcourt Preschool Project Update

In an exciting update, construction is progressing well for the new Harcourt Preschool, which is on track and ready to open for the Harcourt community in Term 1 2021.

The two-room modular kindergarten was delivered onsite by Grove Group in October. Construction is now underway on the all abilities outdoor education space and car park. Designed by local architects Thomson Hay, the outdoor education space is designed to match natural surroundings, featuring a new timber quad swing, sandpit, mud kitchen and cubby house, rock maze, musical rock, tepee and a stage area for children to explore.

You will see some vegetation being removed from the front of the Preschool in the coming weeks. This vegetation removal is a direct result of the fire rating applied to this site.

Purpose built modular kindergar-

tens are high quality and long lasting, relocatable facilities that can be produced in a matter of months and flexibly deployed where needed.

The new preschool will be co-located onsite at the south-east corner of Harcourt Valley Primary School. The relocation to the primary school site will provide greater access to early childhood education and support the transition between early childhood education and the first years of school.

A communal outdoor space shared between Harcourt Valley Primary School and Harcourt Preschool will help strengthen the important partnership between the preschool and the primary school.

Despite the disruptions presented by COVID-19 this year, the Project Control Group (PCG), including YMCA Early Years Manager Carina O'Neill, Harcourt Valley Primary School Principal Andrew Blake, Harcourt Preschool Teacher Lisa

Gray and Parent Advisory Group members Natalie McCarthy and Sarah Allen, and Mount Alexander Shire Council representatives, have continued to work closely with the Victorian School Building Authority and Department of Education and Training over the last few months to ensure the Harcourt Preschool project continues smoothly.

The PCG and Harcourt Preschool would like to formally thank the Uniting Church for hosting the Preschool over the previous decades, as well as for the warm wishes expressed for its relocation.

Further information on this project can be found at: www.schoolbuildings.vic.gov.au/schools/Pages/NewHarcourtEarlyLearningCentre.aspx

Dyanna Leslie, A/Manager, Three-Year-Old Kindergarten Infrastructure, Early Childhood Infrastructure, Victorian School Building Authority



Harcourt Valley Primary School

By the time this edition of *The Core* is printed there will only be a few more weeks of school left before the summer holidays begin. Principal Andrew Blake reports that the students have adjusted well to onsite learning, there are no known staff changes for next year and there will be enough students for five classes next year. Now all we need is no COVID closures. The last day of school is Friday the 18th of December. Term 1 of 2021 begins on Thursday the 28th of January. We wish all the students and staff a happy, COVID free, safe, relaxing holiday.

Prep students have been transitioning into school and thirteen Grade 6 students are transitioning into high school. We congratulate the Grade 6 students on their graduation and wish them well in their transition and future studies. A graduation ceremony will be held for them on December 14 (the format is yet to be decided). Parents have been briefed about the graduation via Webex Transition meetings. To date, seventeen students are enrolled in next year's Prep class.

COVID restrictions meant that a maximum of ten people were allowed to be present at the school at any one time for the Prep transition days – five parents and five students in four separate groups. Mrs Turner spent time orientating the Prep students while Andrew provided parents with information about the school and Prep class routines. Andrew said that the transitions meetings went very well.

The easing of COVID restrictions has meant that some normal school activities could go ahead this term.

- School photos were able to take place in the first half of November,
- Grade 6 students were able to lead the Remembrance Day commemorations outside in front of the school. To mark this occasion, a Gallipoli oak seedling, donated by the National Trust and nurtured by the Mere family, was handed over to the school. It will be planted near the flagpole.
- Staff organised a Flash Mob Dance at lunchtime on Tuesday November 27. Students doing the Monster Mash dance were filmed, and there is a link to the video on the school website. What a great whole of school activity that was in a year when activities that engage all school students have been scarce.
- NAIDOC week with the theme, 'Always was, Always will be', was celebrated from in the week from 9 to 13 November. As



The theme for NAIDOC Week 2020 was, Always was, Always will be.

The students used this as a starting point to think about their prior knowledge about the Torres Strait and Aboriginal Peoples. During term 1 the students heard about Bunjil the Creator and had the opportunity to delve into the Dreamtime stories. To celebrate this week, the students used crepe and tissue paper to create Aboriginal flags and Bunjil collages. The students also created a NAIDOC Week display in the main school building. (From the school website).

part of this, students from all classes undertook special art projects relating to the theme.

- As a way of marking the 25th anniversary of the opening of the Harcourt Valley Primary School, students have been undertaking art work relating to the occasion. This work will be displayed in the ANA hall as part of the Applefest Art Show.

Work on the new Preschool continues at a steady pace. No official opening date has been set, however we have been assured that it will be ready for next year's preschool classes. A couple of weekends ago I was walking past the preschool with my ten-year-old granddaughter who said, 'I wish my kindy was like that', and I thought her kindergarten was just fine. I am sure that all children and staff will really appreciate the new facilities and parents will like the ease of having their children's preschool and primary school so close together. (See report, page 4.)

It looks like 2021 is shaping up to be a better year.

Lois Denham



Bobcat - Tipper - Mini Excavator
Sand, Soil, Gravel, Post Holes
House & Shed Sites, Rubbish Removed
Driveways, Ditch Witch

Brian Nunn
0409 834 449

29 Bingham Road, Harcourt, Vic 3453
ABN 98 370 744 852



94.9 MAIN fm

DIVERSITY
COMMUNITY



Harcourt CFA

From COVID Restrictions to Fire Restrictions

NSW Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation

The Premier of NSW has awarded a Bushfire Emergency Citation to recognise the outstanding contribution of volunteers and service personnel who played a significant role in the emergency response to combat the 2019-2020 bushfires in NSW. (See story page 7.)

Help Your Brigade – Parallel Parking in High Street

With the opening of the new Play Space, parallel parking is now required along High Street between Market Street and Bridge Street. Some visitors (hopefully no locals) have been angle parking instead of parallel parking, leaving their car's backsides sticking out onto the road.

High Street is a narrow road and the bridge works in Eagles Road have closed the 'pool' end of Bridge Street. This means that options for a fire truck leaving the station in an emergency are limited, and parking on an angle further impedes the trucks. If you observe someone doing the wrong thing, a courteous prompt to that person would be appreciated by the brigade. We have been advised that Council Bylaws Officers will be doing random patrols of the area.

How Children react to the Fire Siren

If you are attending the Play Space with your children and the fire siren goes off, please ensure your children remain where they are and that they do not run over to the side of the road. Driving a fire truck under emergency conditions requires a lot of concentration and skill. Anything that can be done to reduce the risk of an accident as the trucks leave the station will be appreciated.

From COVID Restrictions to Fire Restrictions

With the relaxing of some of the COVID 19 restrictions in Victoria, fire restrictions for the 2020/21 Fire Danger Period (FDP) have started in our area.

The City of Greater Bendigo commenced at 1.00 am on Monday 30th November (along with Central Goldfields Shire Council). For Mount Alexander Shire Council, the set start date is a week later on Monday 7th December and further south, for the Macedon Ranges Shire Council area on Monday 14th December.

Once the Fire Danger Period comes into effect, CFA and Victoria Police have a zero-tolerance approach to any fires caused by negligent behaviour. The CFA can issue permits for certain circumstances during the FDP, with very strict conditions attached. Lighting a fire in the open during the FDP without a permit is an offence and can bring a penalty of over \$19,000 and/or 12 months imprisonment. Barbeques and fires for cooking and warmth do not require a permit, but must be lit in properly constructed fireplaces and properly extinguished before leaving. The CFA's 'Can or Can't I' guide available from cfa.vic.gov.au/can will answer any questions about restrictions during the Fire Danger Period and on days of Total Fire Bans.

Early detection and early reporting is going to be very important this fire season, as it is predicted that due to the grass growth and density, grass fires will be faster moving with higher heat levels. Removal of excess grass and other fine fuels

around your home and assets should have been completed by now, but it is not too late to take action, just take all precautions. Also any regrowth from previous slashing and mowing will need a recut to further reduce the hazard.

Turnouts

There were three turnouts by the brigade since last month's report. The first was to assist Ambulance Victoria to a snake bite victim on the Leanganook Track on Mount Alexander. The patient was ultimately winched out by helicopter.

We also turned out to Ravenswood South to a burn off that had been registered, but the time period had expired. The third turnout was to support Castlemaine Brigade to a structure fire, but the brigade was not required as the fire was quickly extinguished by Castlemaine.

With the relaxing of COVID restrictions on most (but not all) CFA activities, we are now able to do more training and members are honing their skills in readiness. Standard precautions need to be adhered to, and cleaning and sanitising is carried out afterwards. November also saw us conduct our first brigade meeting back at the fire station since lockdown commenced.

As we approach the Christmas/New Year holiday period, I trust that you and your family will enjoy time together with family and friends in a less restricted environment. Take the necessary steps to ensure you and your family are safe, just as we have been doing during the COVID pandemic, and we will get through this fire season together.

Tyrone Rice

Brigade Community Safety Coordinator

Rosemary Cordy
Piano Tuition in Harcourt
for all ages, beginners to Licentiate
& Conservatorium level
ph. 0428 100 348
Also offering AMEB Theory & MusicCraft tuition
Summer school
(blitz your exam prerequisites!)


Federal Member for Bendigo
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NSW Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation



Members of the Harcourt CFA have recently received the NSW Premier's Bushfire Emergency Citation for assisting in the 2019–2020 fires in New South Wales. Each member received a cap, badge and certificate for their service in NSW. Members who assisted were: Back row: Lieutenant Tyrone Rice and Captain Andrew Wilson; Front row: Raewyn Rice, Lieutenant John Jenkin and Colleen Marchant. (Absent: Matt Friedrich also received the award).

Having experienced such a mild and wet spring, we have to cast our minds back to November last year, when New South Wales erupted in flames.

Harcourt Brigade members John Jenkin and Raewyn Rice were some of the first to be sent to help. On November 10, the first group drove Harcourt Tanker 1 to the Singleton Army Base (north of Sydney) as part of Strike Team 0208 (5 tankers and a Forward Control Vehicle [FCV]). John Jenkin said, 'ST 0208 was one of eleven Strike Teams from across Victoria deployed to assist NSW that week. We were there for two nights. Our arrival was timed for a very dangerous day, and the authorities were expecting arsonists to take advantage of the conditions. Sure enough, at about 4 pm, a number of fires sprang up. Following this day, the Strike Team was redeployed to Glen Innes. We returned home in just under a week, flying home in a RAAF A330 200 Multi Role Transporter but the tanker remained for six weeks.'

Captain Andrew Wilson and Fire Fighter Matt Friedrich were in the second contingent which was flown to Armidale via

Sydney before arriving in Glen Innes by bus on 14 November. Captain Wilson said, 'For the next three days we worked out of the Glen Innes base camp. Each day we were travelling approximately 140 kilometres to the town of Ebor to assist with asset protection, as the town and surrounding area were under threat from an approaching fire. After three days we had successfully protected the township and surrounding properties without losing a single asset. On the 18th of November, we were relieved by crews from District 14 and were flown home to Tullamarine Airport on a RAAF Boeing C-17A Globemaster 111.'

'Tanker 1 returned to Harcourt in early December after clocking up 5,500 kms.

'In addition to crewing our own tanker, Tyrone Rice, Matt Friedrich (2nd deployment) and Colleen Marchant also assisted with crewing tankers from other districts in the following weeks. Tyrone and Matt were flown from Tullamarine to Coffs Harbour on a Qantas chartered flight on November 26 and then bussed to Armidale before being sent daily to the Red Range fire northeast from Glen Innes to assist NSW Rural Fire Service with back burning and containment before returning home on November 30.

'Colleen was based at Braidwood out of Canberra and spent most of the time around Mongarlowe blacking out and back burning from the 12 December for four days.'

Not a bad effort for a rural fire brigade! The other thing which stands out in this story is the astounding amount of organisation which has to be put in play when an emergency such as last year's bushfires arises.



Community Bank Maldon & District

TAFE & University

2021 Scholarships

Applications now open

(close 31 January 2021)

\$2,000 major scholarship

\$1,000 minor scholarships (two available)

Scholarships are available to support young people (aged 25 years and under) from the Dunolly, Maldon, Newstead, Harcourt and Mount Alexander districts starting or continuing a TAFE or undergraduate tertiary course in 2021

Apply at www.maldoncb.com.au



Base camp at Glen Innes Showgrounds.



Harcourt Bowling Club

The Bowlo is Back!

Harcourt Bowling Club is slowly getting back to some semblance of normality with Pennant games in full swing and Club championships on the go.

Friday nights are back on with Members Draws and the ever popular raffles. It is expected that the Friendly Friday Foodies will soon be back as well. Please watch out for notices around town and an email advising of this.

Harcourt Bowling Club is ready and keen to welcome new Social or playing members, so if you haven't done so, call in for a chat on a Wednesday or Friday night. You will find that we are a friendly and welcoming club.



Men's and Women's Club Single championships are well underway and will be completed by mid-December. The Winners will then proceed to Bendigo to compete for the Division Championship.

On Wednesday 25th November, Midweek Pennant bowlers were treated to a great display of bowling by Carrol Frost and Mary-Anne Doyle as they competed in the first semi-final of

the Women's Singles Championship. The game went for 3 hours over 36 ends, with the lead changing many times. At 24-all Carrol took the win by 2 shots with 3 perfect bowls on kitty taking her into the final. The second semi-final will be between Judy Ewing and Heather Braid, with the winner of that game to play Carrol for the hotly contested title.

- The 100-Up Club championship draws have been done and will need to be underway early in January to be completed by end of March. We are expecting (hoping) there will be no further delays in play because of COVID-19. It was disappointing for many to have had last year's competition cancelled before it was completed.
- Planning is well under way for the Club Christmas breakup on December 19, and contingencies are being arranged to fit with COVID guidelines.
- We also hope that after Christmas we can again start having the Barefoot Social Bowls on Tuesday evenings.

Pennant

Our Weekend and Pennant teams are slow to get any big wins on the board as yet this season.

With our club being closed for so long and 2 of the teams playing in higher grades, it would seem that it is taking a while for everyone to settle back in. Followers of the Harcourt Bowling Club know that we have a big heart, so we can expect a lift over the next few weeks and into the New Year.

The year 2020 has been a difficult one for all Victorians – indeed all nations – so it will be hoped that the new year is bigger and brighter for us all.

We wish all of our community a happy and healthy Christmas season and New Year and look forward to seeing you at the Club.

The Latest from Thompson's Orchards

Like many agricultural industries in Victoria, local orchards are finding that, leading up to the harvest season, they are short-handed due to the effects of COVID-19. Harcourt Manager at Jeff Thompson's Orchards, Cameron Bennett, recently had some good news. 'Because of some media coverage which was seen by people in Bendigo and surrounds, we are expecting 8-10 new workers over the next week or so. We need to put the temporary netting on our trees, and because of the good winter rains, the trees have a huge crop which requires thinning, so skilled

and unskilled labour is welcome. At this time of year, much of the work is done by young overseas travellers and, of course, they are in short supply at present.'

Two people who have taken up the call for more workers are Nadine and Darcy. Nadine hails from Mandurang South and is experiencing her first Australian summer. Darcy was travelling but due to COVID-19 'got stuck' in central Victoria.

Cameron is very happy with the latest venture into a new apple variety for the orchard. 'The other bit of good news is that we have just completed planting 14,000 trees of a new variety called Dazzle which is licensed to us. These have been planted over two blocks in Dann's Road. Older and less productive trees were first removed while we kept the young trees in cool storage to prevent them growing. Now they are in the ground and the weather is warm, we expect to see some quick growth. In amongst the Dazzle are 2,000 Gala pollinators. Eventually, the blocks will be permanently netted.'



Nadine and Darcy in the orchard



Two 80 metre Platforms for VMR



Work is underway on the footings of the two 80 metre long platforms at the Victorian Miniature Railway site. Andrew Mierisch, President of VMR said, 'The preparation for inspection of the footings includes marking and digging the footings. However, that's not as easy as it sounds. The platform closest to the station is mostly clear of granite, and the footings are nearly complete. However, the second platform area is full of granite not very far below the surface. The drilling rig (in the photo) is drilling holes into the rock for charges to be laid in preparation for blasting it out of the way so the footings can be dug.

'You will notice that the clocks have been fitted into the tower and are working. That was a great day for my father Colin when they went in, as he made the clocks which are powered by a 240V (50 hertz) clock movement which controls the speed. The clocks are behind glass and are hinged to open internally for cleaning and for re-setting the time. Anybody who works up there will get a great view!'

On the day *The Core* called in, Andrew was working on the hillside above the platforms, putting the soil batter back so the hill is at a good slope. He was also cleaning up the old water channel which is part of the required preparation as it directs the water away from the platforms.

Andrew said, 'Our daughter Deanna has just finished her Year 12 exams and has her hopes pinned on history at Melbourne University as she is very interested in the Baltics, Germany and Europe generally. In the meantime, she is helping me fix pizza ovens during the week and helping out here at the weekends. Today she is driving the tractor and slashing the paddocks getting ready for the fire season.'



VMR at Applefest 2021

Despite all the planning and construction to be done in the coming months, Andrew is still keen for the club to participate in next year's Applefest. He said, 'We are looking forward to Applefest 2021 and we want to be part of it. We may have a display at the clubrooms. One of our members has a portable circle of track which could be put on the flat and we could possibly have a train running on that.'

Andrew concluded, 'We must be the most advertised non-open railway ever! We really value the Harcourt community's support and, in the meantime, the work on the footings goes on, with the deadline looming for inspection in December. Other work under way at the moment is the construction and preparation of the frames ready to support the platform canopy roofs. They are huge! When they are bolted in along the platform there will be an instant look of success.'

Remembrance Day 2020

On November 11 this year, at the appropriate time, a small and solemn crowd literally materialised around the cenotaph. Diana Cork of the Heritage Centre had previously decorated the monument with poppies. The staff of the Produce Store turned off all the machines and lights and stood to attention along the verandah while those of us in the Memorial Park turned inwards away from the bustle of the traffic which continued around us. There was no ceremony as such; however, George Milford laid a small posy of flowers, and at 11.00 am, all were silent for a minute.

Robyn Miller





Harcourt Uniting Church

Wow, at last we can have 150 at a Church Service – but it might be a bit of a squeeze in our Harcourt Church! After four weeks of ringing members to check who would be attending a service (so as to comply with 20 people in our Church), we can now resume some measure of 'COVID normal'.

We have begun the planning process to build a small extension to the back of our Church. Wurl Eco Architects have been employed to draw up a design. The new area will include a kitchenette, toilet and meeting area. It is in the very early stages of planning, but at least it's happening!

Christmas seems to have crept up on us this year, what with all the COVID restrictions creating 'change' in our lives. In the Christian Church, Christmas is a very special time of the year when we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

Advent (meaning 'coming' in Latin) is the season leading up to Christmas and is celebrated on the four Sundays prior to

Christmas. At Harcourt we have an Advent Wreath with four candles around the edge and one larger central candle. This year, Advent commenced on November 29 when first candle of Hope was lit, then the following weeks the candles of Peace, Joy and Love are lit. The central candle, the Christ candle, will be lit on Christmas Day.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas, from all of us, at Harcourt Uniting Church.

Carols in the Park

This wonderful family celebration will be held on Sunday 20th December at 7 pm in Stanley Park (opposite the Service Station). This is a very family friendly night and not a late night for children. The Thompson's Foundry Band will provide the music. BYO rug or chair; there will be plenty of room to safely social distance.

Christmas Day

8.30 am at the Harcourt Uniting Church – everyone is most welcome to join us, and the early service gives you plenty of time to cook the Christmas meal afterwards.

A mother took her 4-year-old child, Lucy, with her to visit an elderly friend for Christmas. Lucy was intrigued by the walking stick, walker and mobility scooter. The mother noticed Lucy staring at a pair of false teeth soaking in a glass of water. She braced herself for the usual questions when Lucy looked up in amazement and whispered: 'Wow the tooth fairy will never believe this!'

Jan Jenkin



Testimonials
2020 graduates

"feeling empowered to make decisions about my business"

"being able to see my business more objectively without getting stuck in the day-to-day detail"

"confidence to work on the business with real knowledge"

"motivation to be more focused on my business"

Applications now open

Small Business Action Plan Program 2021

7 interactive sessions
1:1 mentoring
with Sorted.'s Clare Fountain

Limited to 16 local businesses
Applications close 7 February 2021
Program commences March 2021

For more info: www.maldoncb.com.au

Community Bank
Maldon & District

 Bendigo Bank



Apply now for Community Bank Tertiary Scholarships and Business Program

TAFE and University Scholarships

Three scholarships are on offer in 2021 to support young students in our region to study at university or TAFE.

'The Community Bank is pleased to open our scholarship program, with a \$2,000 scholarship, as well as two minor scholarships of \$1,000 available,' said Karly Smith, Maldon & District Community Bank's Executive Officer.

'We know it can be expensive to study at university and TAFE, or to pursue an apprenticeship. The Community Bank's scholarship program makes a real difference to the students' ability to start a course or continue their studies.'

The scholarships are designed to offset course fees, travel costs, rent, purchasing computers, books, equipment or other resources associated with their course, particularly for those experiencing financial, health or social challenges. The scholarships have made a big difference to local students from around the region since they were launched in 2018.

Applications are open to young people aged 25 years or under starting or continuing a TAFE-based apprenticeship, a TAFE Certificate course, a diploma, advanced diploma or university undergraduate degree. Applicants must come from the area covered by the Maldon & District Community Bank, which includes Maldon, Baringhup, Dunolly, Newstead, Harcourt and the Mount Alexander district; or have attended a secondary school in this region.

Applications are now open and close on 31 January 2021. To apply, see: www.maldoncb.com.au/investing-back-community/sponsorships-grants/



Flynn Leeson receiving his major scholarship alongside Adam and Karly from the Community Bank.

Supporting small businesses – action plan program

The Maldon & District Community Bank has launched a new round of business coaching to support local small businesses in 2021.

The program will be delivered by Sorted's Clare Fountain, using a combination of live interactive sessions and 1:1 mentoring. The program will engage, educate and support up to 16 local small businesses.

Clare will work with each business to deliver a tailored viable business plan for your business, increase confidence, identify new opportunities, and support collaboration between businesses in the region. She has over 20 years working

with regional small business owners to plan for and achieve success.

Maldon & District Community Bank is subsidising this program for 16 local businesses. Small businesses from across our catchment area, including the towns and districts of Harcourt, Barkers Creek, Maldon, Dunolly, Newstead, and Mount Alexander region, are invited to apply for the program. Applications are now open and close Sunday 7 February 2021. The program will commence in early March.

Nineteen businesses from around the region graduated from the first program in 2020, including three Harcourt-based businesses – Pauline's Real Estate, Blumes Historic Bakery and Goodness Flour. Graduates reported higher confidence, feeling more empowered to make decisions about their businesses and greater motivation and focus after completing the course.

Apply online for the business action plan program at www.maldoncb.com.au

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Save the Date – Community Christmas Day Lunch



Castlemaine Community House is pleased to invite you to Christmas lunch on Friday 25 December.

Families and individuals are welcome to join this free community lunch to share a delicious meal with some good company.

If you are feeling lonely or would like to share Christmas with others, save the date and register your interest now.

What: Community Christmas Lunch

When: 12.30pm to 2.00pm, Friday 25 December

More details, including the venue, will be available soon. For more information and bookings call CCH on 5472 4842 or email: reception@cch.org.au.

Castlemaine Community House is working in partnership with community groups and organisations to host this open, non-religious event in the Mount Alexander Shire.

If you would like to volunteer your time to help out, contact us at CCH.

If you are doing it tough this Christmas and need help to celebrate with your loved ones, you can also reach out to the Salvation Army.

The Salvos may be able to assist with food hampers, presents for the kids or provide other assistance if you are facing financial difficulty.

If you require this type of help, contact your local Salvos on 5470 5389, call the Salvos Assistance Line on 1300 371 288 or visit www.salvationarmy.org.au

Kerrily (Kez) Jennings

Community Development & Learn Local Coordinator

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Grab your Swimmers and Head to the Pool!



Outdoor swimming pools in Castlemaine, Harcourt, Maldon and Newstead will open on Saturday December 5 and continue throughout summer until the end of the Labour Day long weekend in March 2021. So, get ready to cool down and make a splash.

Aqua Aerobics will return to Harcourt Pool

There are plenty of activities to choose from, and pool manager, YMCA Victoria, has worked with Council and the pool committees to come up with fun programs across a range of age groups.

Opportunities include aqua aerobics, junior lifeguard program and aqua playgroup. Girls Make Your Move will also return, which will provide young women aged 12 to 18 limited free entry to the pools during February.

Book for VicSwim Lessons

Harcourt will have the VicSwim program from 11–15 January. For bookings go to: booking.vicswim.com.au

Bookings can also be made for lane hire and birthday parties.

COVID-19 Conditions

- Under current COVID-19 requirements, patrons outdoors who can socially distance are not required to wear a mask. However, a mask must be carried and worn when indoors, including the change rooms.
- To assist with contact tracing, patrons will be provided with a unique QR code that can be used throughout the 2020/2021 pool season. Registration can be done online or in person. The maximum capacity limit at each facility is 300 people.
- At this time, public access equipment and toys will not be available, unless in a programmed class where appropriate sanitisation of equipment will take place.

Supervision of Children

Qualified lifeguards work at each pool to provide safe supervision. To ensure further safety, Council follows the Victorian Government's Watch Around Water requirements. The requirements are compulsory for public pools and govern the number of children that adults are able to supervise. One adult can supervise two children under five or four children aged five to nine years.

From a press release



Harcourt Heritage Centre

I Will be Your Woolly Aphis

On Tuesday 25 June 1912, to the astonishment of the Harcourt postmistress, the morning's mail bags contained 103 letters, all originating in England, addressed to just one individual.

The letters, of all shapes and sizes, and in every conceivable style of handwriting, were for

Mr F. J. Smith,
C/- Major R Gartside,
'Elands'
Harcourt. Victoria*

F J Smith was, at the time, a resident of Maldon. During the previous autumn he had been employed to pack Major Gartside's crop of apples into barrels ready for export and sale in England. Each apple was to be individually wrapped in tissue paper.

Unbeknown to his employer, young Smith had taken up his pen, dipped it into the inkwell, and written in his best handwriting that he wished the finder of this letter to write to him, as he hoped to make the acquaintance of an English lassie,

I hope the one who gets this apple,
will be a nice little English girl of
about 16, 17 or 18 years of age. I
want a nice little English girl, the
Australian girls are no good.

Next morning, with the ink safely dry, the hopeful young writer wrapped the letter around the rosy cheeks of an apple and covered it up with a layer of tissue paper, then covered it with the next layer of apples, only breathing easily when he saw the lid of the barrel secured.

In due course, the barrel arrived at Blackwell, a town in north-central England. The person who found the letter saw its potential as a huge joke and handed it to the local newspaper for publication. Other newspapers copied the letter, and girls from all over England, Ireland and Scotland wrote to the Australian hopeful.

Borne across the leagues of ocean,
Was the magic of his words
And the answers came back flying
Like a flock of white-winged birds.

By July, over 300 letters addressed to FJ Smith had arrived at the Harcourt post office. The *Mount Alexander Mail*, in telling the story, said that Smith came to dread the sight of a postman. Some of the letter-writers asked FJ Smith to start a correspondence with them, and some offered to emigrate, if he would help them.

I will be your Woolly Aphis
And I plight you now my troth:
Let me bask beneath your
sunshine,
Like a sportive Codlin Moth**

The *Mount Alexander Mail* said,

'It only shows what a number of girls there are in the world who are willing to change their state of life with a person they have never seen.'

Then comes the crushing conclusion,

'It is hardly likely any of the poor lassies who are pining for an Australian husband will have their wishes gratified as Smith is at present only 18 years of age, and has no intentions in that way at present.'

By now you will be asking the obvious questions. Who was FJ Smith? Who did he marry? If FJ Smith was aged 18 in 1912 he must have been born in 1893 or 1894. Family history buffs would direct us to the search facility in Victoria's Births, Deaths and Marriages website. A glance at the web page reveals that only three Smith children born in Victoria in 1893 and 1894 had the initials FJ – Frederick John or Frederick James. Three men named Frederick James Smith married in Victoria between 1915 and 1920. Only four men named Frederick John Smith married in Victoria between 1915 and 1920. Without spending lots of dollars to obtain the marriage certificates for each of the seven possibilities, we are none the wiser.

Did our young man enlist with the first AIF? Historians would say, 'Have a look at the WWI Nominal Rolls.' A search of rolls of those who enlisted during WWI reveals that a lot of men named Smith joined up. Seventy-eight of these were named Frank Smith or Fred Smith.

- 29 men named Francis (Frank) Smith,
- 4 men named Francis James Smith,
- 3 men named Francis John Smith 3,
- 1 man named Francis Joseph Smith,
- 30 men named Frederick (Fred) Smith,
- 2 men named Frederick James Smith,
- 8 men named Frederick John Smith,
- 1 man named Frederick Joseph Smith (killed in Action 7 August 1915).

When scrolling through the WWI service records for these men, it appears that most were older than our mystery fruit

packer. None seemed to fit the known facts of age and occupation of our young orchard lad.

After devoting a lot of time looking at those websites, the researcher is none the wiser.

Maybe FJ Smith wasn't born in Victoria. Maybe FJ Smith didn't enlist. Maybe he moved interstate. The *Mount Alexander Mail* made merry with the incident. All the laughs and comic verse in the papers must have caused our 18-year-old to blush as red as any apple. Maybe FJ Smith changed his name to escape the notoriety.

If any reader of *The Core* can throw some light on the identity of 'young Smith the orchard boy', the researchers at Harcourt Heritage Centre would be delighted to hear from you. We would like to learn more about this young man who stirred the hearts and raised the hopes of countless English girls in the (northern) summer of 1912.

One thing is certain, FJ Smith's simple act of wrapping a letter around an apple destined for export to the old country helped to make Harcourt apples famous in Great Britain.

This is another in a series of thumbnail sketches prepared for *The Core* from the files of Harcourt Heritage Centre's CH James Collection.

* The Midland Highway/Calder Freeway interchange now Endnote occupies the site of the 'Elands' orchard property of Robert Gartside.

** The rhymes came from 'Zekle' writing in the *Mount Alexander Mail* of 1912. They were part of a twelve stanza verse ribbing FJ Smith.

"WILL YOU BE MY WOOLLY APHIS."

HARCOURT ORCHARD LAD ASKS.
ENGLISH GIRLS RUSH HIM.
BUSHELS OF APPLICATIONS,
HARCOURT LAD IN A DILEMMA.

A very interesting sequel to the apparently common practice locally of advertising for a life partner by placing a letter in a case of apples consigned to England was witnessed at the local Post Office (writes our Harcourt correspondent) on Tuesday morning, when, to the astonishment of the postmistress, two mail bags arrived.

Mount Alexander Mail, 28 Jun 1912.
Via Trove



Harcourt Locals: Help Manage La Larr Ba Gauwa

Harcourtians are encouraged to get involved.

The La Larr Ba Gauwa Committee of Management is the group dedicated to the stewardship of La Larr Ba Gauwa Park, including the native flora and fauna, the facilities, the mountain bike trails, the camping area in the old pine plantation and the Oak Forest.

Applications to join the committee will be opening up soon. If you have ideas about how to help manage the park to make it even better for locals and visitors, make sure you put your hand up.

The volunteer committee is appointed and empowered by a state government minister and supported by the good folks at the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). The membership of the committee is refreshed every three years. Some members might stay on, some will bid farewell, and new members will definitely be welcomed. Early 2021 will mark three years since the park officially opened to the public, so it's time for some fresh faces.

There's a real need for eager Harcourtians to get involved in the park. Community voices are valued and much needed to lead the management and direction of this incredible community asset. The La Larr Ba Gauwa Committee of Management is all about managing existing facilities and resources to get the best outcomes within the park boundaries, both for the land and for the people who enjoy it.

That's not to say that the committee shies away from what goes on outside the park. We have direct connections to council and the Dja Dja Warrung, and working relationships with other volunteer groups around town. Sometimes, the committee is asked for opinions or endorsement of projects and other things happening outside the park. We can and do offer our perspective, but our power to take direct action extends only to the park boundary.

These days, committee members meet once a month to discuss arising issues and decide actions. Initially, the committee met much more frequently, but now processes and roles are in place and understood, monthly seems to be the sweet spot. Committee members can contribute individually on a day-to-day basis too, but the monthly meetings get everyone on the same page.

During the committee's formative times, we established internal processes, had specific State regulations put in place, applied for grants to better maintain the landscape and facilities,

The management of La Larr Ba Gauwa Park is set for a refresh, and local

and established groups to manage applications for events within the park and the upkeep of its trails.

Areas of expertise that have proven particularly valuable are maintenance, tender writing and event facilitation. On that last item, the committee itself doesn't run events, but it is responsible for evaluating and approving events proposed to take place in the park—that's pretty important. People who spend time at the park and who want to get involved in social media management also have an important part to play.

Ultimately, the committee manages a public asset. Seeing that the public can and do enjoy it helps make the role fulfilling. If you're eager and able—and especially if you're a Harcourt local—you should apply.

The process for new applications will kick off soon—before the next issue of The Core. Look for announcements on social media and print newspapers. Information will also go up on the community Facebook page, Hardcore Harcourt, to make sure that the cream of the Harcourt crop know when the time is ripe.

David J. Ling

Current member of the La Larr Ba Gauwa Committee of Management & local Harcourt resident.





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HVPS Included in State Government Funding for Small-Scale School Building Projects

Victorian schools will receive a funding boost to deliver small but important upgrades thanks to the Andrews Labor Government's \$70 million Minor Capital Works Fund.

Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards MP and Jacinta Allen, State Member for Bendigo East today announced three local schools have been allocated a total of \$930,370 across Mount Alexander Shire, as part of the fund to fast-track priority projects, supporting local jobs through Victoria's economic recovery.

Funding will go towards:

- Harcourt Valley Primary School for exterior building works – \$15,120

- Campbells Creek Primary School playground upgrade – \$454,125
- Castlemaine North Primary School playground upgrade – \$461,125

Maree said, "Every student should have a great school, no matter where they live. That's why we're investing in hundreds of small but important projects that will make a big difference for schools and create jobs for Victorians."

From a Press Release



AUSTRALIA DAY 2021 COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS

Tuesday 26th January
8:00 am–10:00 am
Stanley Park Harcourt

Free Community Breakfast

8:00 am – 9:00 am

Followed by:

Welcome
Australia Day Awards
Flag Raising Ceremony
Guest Speakers
Local entertainment

Proudly organized by the **Harcourt & District Lions Club** with the support of the following business:

Harcourt Auto Wreckers
Hot & Crusty Country Bakery
Bendigo Property Plus

Goldfields Track Café
Little Red Apple Harcourt
Victorian Miniature Railway



Harcourt Australia Day Celebrations 2021



The Harcourt Lions Club will be continuing the tradition of organising an Australia Day celebration in Stanley Park in Harcourt.

The celebrations will take place on Tuesday the 26th January 2021 and commence with a free breakfast. A selection of cereals, egg and bacon sandwiches and local juices will be served from 8:00 am onwards.

Australia Day Awards will be presented the Harcourt & District community members after 9:30 am.

The Harcourt Lions are now calling for nominations for **Youth of the Year** and **Community Member of the Year** Awards. Details of eligible persons are listed below.

Please submit all nominations by no later than Monday the 18th January 2021 to the Harcourt Lions Club.

Nominations can be sent by post or by email to the address details below.

If you have any queries, please contact the Club Secretary, Di Selwood on 0488 148 358.

All members of the public are invited to join in celebrating Australia Day in 2021. Please help us to thank those very special members of our Community who have made such valuable contributions in 2020.

NOMINATION FORM

2021 HARCOURT & DISTRICT

YOUTH OF THE YEAR & COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Nominations are open to residents of Harcourt Valley, Taradale, Sutton Grange, Metcalfe, Faraday and Elphinstone who are Australian Citizens and have lived in the district for at least 2 years. They must have made a significant contribution to their Community in the past or present.

Youth of the Year is restricted to residents under 25 years of age. The Award is for outstanding achievement in the last 12 months. It can be for academic, sporting or community service.

☐

Youth of the Year

☐

Community Member of the Year

Nominated Person:

Residential Address:

Phone/Mobile:

Email:

Person making Nomination:

Address:

Phone/Mobile:

Email:

Signature:

Second of Nomination:

Signature:

Reasons for nominating (attach extra sheet if needed)

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M: PO Box 100 Harcourt VIC 3453

E: harcourt@lions201v1-4.org.au

W: www.harcourt.vic.lions.org.au

A Community of Writers

One of the things which I think is very special about *The Core* is that we have so many people who believe in their group or club to such an extent that they are prepared to write every month and share activities and milestones with the wider community.

I want to thank every one of our contributors on behalf of *The Core* team, because you pull our community together and make it stronger. We should all be proud that we are a town of writers. Many of you have put pen to paper for every edition – that's 78 of them – for 7 years! So, well done and thank you.

COVID has 'upset the applecart' for *The Core* team this year, but our group has shown great resilience. Thank you to our team members: Bernie our Graphic Designer who does a wonderful job with the layout of the paper; Pauline Wilkinson who looks after the advertising and *The Core* accounts, Sha Cordingley who assists with editing, and Lois Denham who has taken on reporting about Primary School events. Our team of folders and distributors had their work cut this year because of the lockdown, but we hope we will be able to gather together again soon to work together.

From this edition onwards *The Core* will be available electronically in two places: the new Harcourt Progress Association website and the Harcourt Valley website. If you would like to subscribe to *The Core* and receive a PDF copy each month, you will be able to subscribe on the HPA website. There'll be more information about this next year.

New contributors and team members are always welcome. Please contact: news@harcourt.vic.au

The Core Team and our contributors will take a well-earned break until February 2021. We wish you, our readers, a very happy and healthy Christmas and New Year.



Country Newspaper Association of Victoria (CNAV) Conference

The CNAV Association aims to improve and celebrate the professionalism of non-commercial newspaper publishers across the country.

The Annual Conference and Awards for 2020 was a one day gathering in November using Zoom. (We normally meet for a weekend in October once a year.) Speakers are often professional journalists or members of the Association who share their experiences, bloopers and all, with others – it's a big learning experience and we always leave a conference being better informed and cheered by the amazing work and achievements of our colleagues who run country newspapers.



This year, we were excited to be Finalists in two categories of the awards.

George Milford was a finalist in the Best History category for his story which appeared in the November 2019 edition of *The Core*, 'Thomas and Betsy Facey a Truly Fortunate Life'. The Facey's, who were Albert Facey's grandparents, arrived in Barkers Creek in the 1850s. Albert Facey wrote the very important and popular Australian history book, *A Fortunate Life*.

I was a finalist in the Best Feature Story for my piece about the young Goshawk which made its home on our property in the summer of 2016 and learnt to hunt and kill. The article was called 'Training Ground for a Killer' and was included in the October and November issues of 2019.

If you are interested in reading these, back copies are available on the Harcourt Valley website.

Robyn Miller
Editor



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Property Consultant
Castlemaine & Harcourt

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Chatting with Harcourt CWA

Harcourt CWA Celebrates after a Tough Year

There were times when we thought that restrictions would never end, that borders would never open and that loved ones would not be with us for Christmas, but it's now beginning to look a lot like a normal Christmas, and all of us at Harcourt CWA wish you and your family and loved ones a joyous festive season.

There were no monthly meetings during the year, so members were kept up to date with Branch affairs through a Monthly Newsletter – the brainchild of Robyn McConville – and, of course, emails and phone calls helped to keep us connected, but we were so pleased when November arrived, COVID restrictions were eased, and we were able to hold

our Annual General Meeting and vote in Office Bearers for 2021.

We are a pretty sociable lot and missed out on many morning teas and luncheons throughout the year, so we were delighted to see restrictions further lifted, which then allowed us to have our December meeting and Christmas Lunch at the Five Flags at Campbells Creek.

Thanks to President Helen, Secretary Lynette and Treasurer Robyn, we all sat down to a beautifully decorated table and did what we had not been able to do for nine months. Emails, phone calls, Skype and Zoom are all very well, but nothing beats a good old face to face chat with friends. And chat we did.

Dot Farley, one of our long term members, is celebrating her 90th Birthday this month, so what a perfect opportunity to sing Happy Birthday and wish her all the best for her special day. And what a great idea from Robyn McConville – a Birthday Cake made from those all-time favourites, cup cakes.

We even had a Secret Santa who had popped in earlier and left a

basket of goodies, one present for each member. Thanks Santa.

Back in March, the Central Victorian Group Creative Arts Exhibition was held in Maldon. Our Branch members did themselves proud by contributing 117 entries. Here are three of our creative



Some of our winners from the Craft Exhibition, Judy Kent, Marlene Thompson, and Marie Twyford.

ladies who delighted visitors and the judges with their sewing, needlework, cookery and other craft skills.

After attending this luncheon, I could see that after what started out as a normal year, then became the year in which we all learned that toilet paper was the one item that we can't do without, we were now back on track again. We hope that you are all back on track again and we look forward to chatting again in 2021.

Have a very Merry Christmas from us all.

*Lyn Rule
Publicity Officer
Harcourt CWA.*



Helen Hand (President), Lynette Carter (Secretary), and Robyn McConville (Treasurer).



Marlene Bell, Alma Chaplin, and Iris Howarth enjoy catching up.



Robyn McConville congratulates Dot Farley on her 90th birthday.



Mary Tigg receives a gift from Santa's Little Helper, Lynnette Carter.



Melva Graham, Marlene Bell, and Jill Looorham toast to a better 2021.

Our two most recent working bees have been at the wetland in Victoria Road. The aim of these was to protect the young trees. Organiser of the activities, Trent Gibson said, 'We are really pleased with the strike rate.' (The strike rate is the number of living plants compared to the number planted.) 'What hasn't been so great is that the kangaroos are chewing the tops out of the trees as soon as they get above the plastic plant sleeve. We hit upon a solution which is to replace the small sleeves with tall chicken wire guards held by extra-long stakes. And it's worked!'



Vanessa and Sue got stuck into swapping over the guards while Judy was busy folding and stacking the used plastic guards.



It works! When Landcare members returned for the second working bee, they were delighted to see the new growth on plants which had the wire guards fitted at the first working bee.

Connect Mount Alexander

Together we thrive

Election results

The Victorian Electoral Commission has announced the results of the 2020 Mount Alexander Shire Council election. Congratulations to the following councillors: Anthony Cordy (Calder Ward), Rosie Annear, Bill Maltby and Gary William McClure (Castlemaine Ward), Christine Henderson (Coliban Ward), Matthew Driscoll (Loddon Ward) and Stephen William Gardner (Tarrenower Ward). For more information visit www.vec.vic.gov.au.

Go Local First

Council is encouraging the community to buy and shop local to help support local businesses and provide a much needed boost to economic recovery in the shire. There are many ways you can support local businesses, producers, makers and traders. We have joined neighbouring councils in the Go Local First campaign. Look out for Go Local First stories in local news and social media featuring local businesses, including a competition to encourage everyone to get involved. #golocalfirst #mountalexander

Cool off at the pools

The pool season for Council managed swimming pools will start on Saturday 5 December. We are working with pool managers YMCA Victoria to understand how COVID-19 restrictions will impact our pools. For more information including operating hours, activities and entry fees visit www.mountalexanderpools.com.au.

Council services during Christmas period

We will close our offices at 3.00pm on Thursday 24 December and reopen at 8.30am on Monday 4 January 2021. For emergencies regarding roads and drains, maternal and child health or stock and animal control (excluding wildlife) call 5471 1700 and follow the prompts. Due to public holidays residents who normally have their bins collected on a Friday will have them collected the following day on Saturday 26 December (instead of Christmas Day) and Saturday 2 January 2021 (instead of New Years Day).

We wish everyone a happy and safe holiday period.

Civic Centre
Cnr Lyttleton and Lloyd Sts
P.O. Box 185 Castlemaine VIC 3450

t (03) 5471 1700
e info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au
w www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au





WALKING TOGETHER

Towards Reconciliation

An Inventory of Firsts

Scar trees, rock wells, cave paintings and arrangements of stones are just some of the evidence in the landscape of a way of life that existed in the lands now called Australia before colonisation. For First Nations people, Country is more than just the landscape that meets the eye: all of creation is a living entity, of which the people are a part. Culture, law, ceremony and spirit are all connected to the land and the people. To sit on the country where you belong is to feel whole.

For tens of thousands of years living on Country, the First People developed ways to survive and flourish and to nurture the environment in each place. They used the materials available at each location, both durable and biodegradable - stone, wood, grasses, vines and other plant material, animal skins and bones, hair, water and clay.

By careful observation of weather, seasons, plants and animals they built a sustainable economy. They stored food when there was a surplus, manipulated vegetation to make hunting and harvesting easier, catalogued in song the position of water holes and observed the stars and planets to assist with navigation. They recorded their vast knowledge of the night sky, as they did of the Country, through dance, ceremony, song and more.

They were the first farmers, botanists, explorers, navigators and astronomers in Australia, the first scientists and the first conservationists.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were the first to build houses. They were Australia's first engineers, setting up dams and wells, eel and fish traps, storage sheds, paths and terraces, ceremonial structures. The first artisans and artists, they made boats, tools - needles and axes and knives - weapons for hunting and battles, nets, pottery storage vessels, woven baskets, carved timber dishes, as well as more personal items such as possum skin cloaks and everyday clothing like shoes, skirts, cloaks and hats, paintings and clay figurines.

But what was made out of timber, grasses or animal skins has long since perished. We have evidence from the journal writings and publications of early explorers and colonists describing what they saw as they passed by - without comprehending what a thriving and integrated economy it represented. They were looking with Eurocentric eyes, and saw no resemblance to the farming practices, food storage,

houses and household goods, modes of and reasons for travel, with which they were familiar.

Used to formal religious ceremonies separated from secular life, they had no notion that the songs and dances of the Aboriginal people were tied in to teachings about every aspect of life: practical methods of maintaining abundant food supplies and celebration of that abundance, stories about the landscape to explain, teach, memorise and entertain and songlines which could also guide people along safe routes between the lands of different nations.

As we Second Nations people begin to realise how much more knowledge of land management we need to save the driest continent on Earth, let us also consider how embedding the Aboriginal world view and notion of Country into mainstream Australia would benefit the lives and livelihoods of all Australians.

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

These Businesses Support the Core



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QUEENSLAND FRUIT FLY

Season calendar of BACKYARD JOBS

SPRING

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

SUMMER

December	January	February
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Net your vegetable garden or bag individual fruit Pick up fallen fruit everyday Check tomatoes for sting marks Heat treat fallen and infested fruit and vegetables to kill QFF maggots 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trap and monitor QFF population levels weekly Spray high risk fruit if appropriate and always follow label instructions
<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.		

AUTUMN

March	April	May
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pick up any fallen fruit to break the QFF lifecycle Heat treat fallen and infested fruit to kill QFF maggots 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor for QFF and check traps weekly Continue to spray high risk fruit if appropriate and always follow label instructions
<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).		

WINTER

June	July	August
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prune fruit trees to a manageable height for ease of fruit picking and netting 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Replace unwanted QFF host trees with non-host plants Pick up fallen fruit
<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.		

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

Fruit fly - summer reminder

Monthly Home Garden Tips from Janyce



Hi Everyone

As the months warm-up and we come up to Christmas, Queensland Fruit Fly (QFF) could continue to ruin your hard work. As always, we need to be vigilant and look for signs in our crop. A great source of information about QFF can be found at the Mount Alexander Shire Council website: www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FruitFly.

Another great source of information is the calendar of seasonal jobs that can be followed to minimise the spread of QFF. You can find this on the previous page.

What can you do to prevent the spread of QFF?

The first thing you can do to help is to regularly check and maintain your QFF traps. Replacement wafers and sticky pads for BioTraps can be found at Mount Alexander Timber and Hardware, Macdonalds Nursery and Bendigo Wholefoods. Call ahead to check for stock availability.

If you find QFF in your fruit or a trap:

- Photograph it and call Mt Alexander Shire Council on 5471 1700.
- Strip your tree of all fruit straight away.
- Treat the fruit by freezing it for 2 days, microwaving or boiling it until the larvae are dead, or placing the fruit in a sealed black plastic bag and leaving in the sun for at least seven days.
- Dispose of the fruit in the rubbish bin.
- Do not put infected fruit in the compost or in green waste.
- And lastly, PLEASE DON'T SHARE INFECTED FRUIT WITH ANYONE. This is how it spreads and becomes a much bigger issue.

It is also important to remember to maintain your garden hygiene practices to prevent your yard turning into a breeding ground for QFF

You can help to ensure that fruit fly doesn't become widespread in our shire, and that our fruit-growing way of life can continue.

Also remember the 3 Ps to maintain your trees and monitor QFF in your area.

1. **Pick** – pick fruit as soon as it's ripe. Don't leave fallen fruit on the ground.
2. **Prune** – keep trees to a manageable height so you can pick, net and check fruit.
3. **Protect** – monitor for fruit fly using traps (check weekly). Install white netting.

Please stay safe and enjoy your garden which for many of us has been our refuge.

Cheers

Harcourt Valley Fruit Fly Action Group

Hello Garden lovers,

For the moment though, the garden is flourishing and moisture has not been a problem. It is still a good idea to start preparing for the hotter, drier weather before it arrives, even though we are not expecting a summer as severe as 2019–20. Preparation may include testing irrigation systems and flushing drip lines. It may also include getting irrigation timers out of storage, installing new batteries and setting days and times ready for use. It is also a good idea to check garden hoses for leaks and perishing.

The end of spring and its lush growth and prolific flowering prompt the removal of the first flush of flowers and any long and heavy branches. We will be pruning Salvias, deadheading roses and trimming daisies with the aims of promoting a second flush of flowering and tightening up the foliage.

We will also remove many dead Iris flowers before they seed and spread too far. The Iris were spectacular this year and really added some beautiful height and colour to our garden. We have enough Iris in our garden for the moment, but it is always possible to retain one or two flower heads to permit seeding for storage and use later.

It is a lovely time to be in the garden. Before the real heat of summer, it is a great time to do some last planting to add colour to your garden. I heard someone say recently that they buy plants in flower throughout the year as a way of ensuring that their garden always has something in flower. While it is not recommended to plant plants while they are flowering, if you removed the flowers this system could be very effective. Removing the flowers at planting time, allows the plant to concentrate its energy on settling in and producing new roots. At this time of year, it is also important to water regularly and well to compensate for a new plant's limited root system.

This month we are:

- Watering new plants'
- Staking and feeding the tomatoes'
- Deadheading the roses,
- Tying down soft new branches of espalier fruit trees,
- Harvesting cherries, and
- Watering peaches and apricots.

Happy Gardening,

Janyce

CAFÉ OPEN!

ASQ Skydancers Café has reopened and is offering a range of hot and cold drinks, delicious cakes, slices and biscuits!

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Early Summer Fruit Tree Care

Hi everyone,

Many people have used 2020 to spend more time in the garden. It's felt like the right time to focus on fruit trees, vegetable gardens, and growing your own food and it's also the perfect antidote to the uncertainty and weirdness in the world. In fact, gardening has loads of proven benefits for mental and physical health, so it's a very appropriate COVID-response! Our aim is to make abundant, home-grown organic fruit a reality for all, so despite the challenging conditions we've all faced Grow Great Fruit has gone gangbusters, and it's been a great joy for us to be able to help many more people with their fruit trees this year.

Stone Fruit Trees have not enjoyed the Wet Weather – Special Online Workshop

One of the things we're hearing a lot about this season is curly leaves and spotty fruit on fruit trees. Most pests and diseases have loved the conditions this spring. We've been inundated with questions about them, so we're offering a special organic pest and disease control online workshop – you can register here: growgreatfruit.com/pest-and-disease-webinar.

You may be noticing a few other things on your fruit trees. First – there's a good chance you had some Leaf Curl on your peaches and nectarines. Quite possibly some varieties got it much worse than others, so if that's the case have a look and make a note. (Curly leaves on other trees are more likely due to aphids, as the fungal disease we call Leaf Curl only affects peaches and nectarines).

Many people are reporting a small crop, or none, on their apricot trees. That's because it rained pretty much every day when the early varieties of apricot were flowering, so even if you were really on the ball with your spraying, there's still a good chance your trees got Blossom Blight. It's a nasty fungal disease that makes the flowers rot on the tree. If you have later varieties (like Rival, Goldrich, Trevatt or Moorpark) you might be a bit luckier. The weather had cleared up a bit by then, and those varieties generally have a much better crop on them this year.

Why you should have Multiple Fruit Varieties

These are beautiful illustrations of why it improves your food security to have multiple fruit varieties in your garden, even within the one tree type. Each variety reaches bud-swell and flowers at a different time, so will be differently affected by the same weather event, like when it rains for a solid week.

Another thing you may be noticing on your trees is various kinds of spots on your fruit. There's lots of Freckle on the apricots this year, a bit of Brown Rot is showing up in the stone fruit, and lots of apples and pears have Black Spot. If your fruit is spotty don't panic, there's still something you can do to stop things getting worse. Though the main danger period has passed, your fruit trees are still vulnerable to some diseases at this time of year, so keep a close eye on them. Visit them once a week or so, so you notice any problems that appear and aim to keep a 'cover spray' of wettable sulphur on your trees.

Fruit fly is in Bendigo

Fruit fly emerged very early in Bendigo this year, so you should definitely have at least one fruit fly monitoring trap out in your garden by now. The best type at this time of year is one that attracts male fruit flies, e.g. the Biotrap. It contains a male pheromone that is specific to Queensland Fruit Fly, so there's a bigger chance that anything you catch in the trap will be a

QFF. Other types of traps (e.g. the sort you can make yourself) will attract lots of different types of insects, which makes it much harder to know for sure whether you've actually caught a fruit fly. They're surprisingly difficult to identify.

If you do think you've caught a QFF, make sure you get a positive ID

Get in touch with council at mountalexanderfruitfly@gmail.com and they'll be able to help you with the identification process. If it turns out you get a positive identification, that will then trigger the Fruit Fly Emergency Response – there's more info about it all on the Council's fruit fly page – www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FruitFly, and you can also download a free Fruit Fly Resource Pack from our website – growgreatfruit.com/product-category/free-stuff.

If you're planning to net your fruit trees, then the sooner the better

Surprisingly, white nets can help against fruit fly as well as birds – even if the holes are big enough to let flies through! They're not enough on their own though, so you do need to trap as well. If you're buying net, buy it with holes of 5 millimetre or less, as this has now been mandated by the Victorian government, and will come into play from September 2021. This law only applies to households, not farms.

Fruit fly is a whole-of-community issue, so help to prevent it getting into our community by learning about it, talking about it, and taking action.

If you've got fruit trees that you can't look after, then please remove them

The most important thing we can all do (and luckily also the easiest) is Don't Bring Fruit to Harcourt! Remember the old fruit-dumping bins that used to be on the road to Mildura? Let's agree there's an imaginary border around Harcourt and we won't let any fruit from outside cross the line, particularly if it's coming from an area (like Bendigo, or Maldon) where we know fruit fly is already established.

Fruit fly can't actually fly very far, so the main way they travel from one area to another is in infected fruit, carried by people! The best defence we have against fruit fly getting established in Harcourt is *you*, so please think about what you might be accidentally bringing into town.

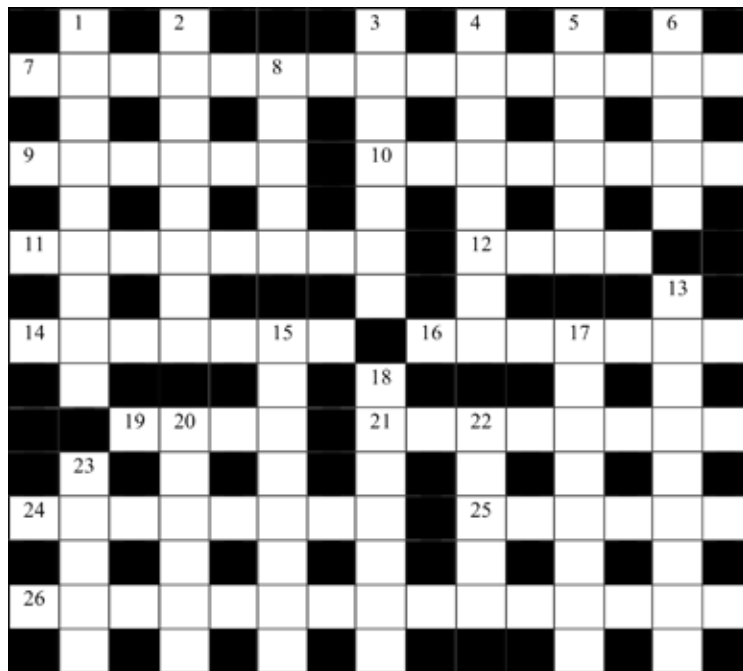
Watch out for pear and cherry slug this month.

If you notice them as soon as they appear on your trees it's relatively easy to kill them by folding the leaf in half and squashing them (without pulling the leaf off the tree). They normally go through two or three generations each season, so the more you can get rid of early on, the easier it is to interrupt their normal life cycle.

There are so many pests and diseases to watch out for! We've tried to make it less overwhelming to manage in our pest and disease workshop by summing it up with something called the Grow Great Fruit technique which applies to all pests and disease. It makes it easier to plan an action of attack.

Hugh and Katie Finlay are certified organic orchardists and offer Grow Great Fruit organic home fruit growing courses. They're also founding members of the Harcourt Organic Farming Co-op. Head to growgreatfruit.com to sign up for their free Weekly Fruit Tips newsletter, and register for one of the free online workshops.

December 2020 Xword ©McW December '17



Down:

1. It's only anger, but we won't put up with it from now on! (3,6)
2. In some musicals, they may be part of the 12. (8)
3. The most indistinct New Wave way. (7)
4. Misdemeanours, major or minor, to do with barriers? (8)
5. What caused the girl from New Natchez to tear her skirt? (6)
6. Avian justification for US writer sticking his neck out? (5)
8. K-salt found up in powder-tin. (5)
13. Dress, less parts. (9)
15. To entice is to employ subtleties. (8)
17. Said to 23 one's scope, or to increase one's 22 if a silent replacement for the lead were made. (8)
18. Deliver kid, parcels, maybe a bomb, and go to sleep... (4,3)
20. Indigenous negotiators might approach this a la 25... (6)
22. Jack of a certain persuasion, or a different bird from 6. (5)
23. (See 17) (5)

Across:

7. Soon rearrange neat furniture, eh? (2,3,4,6)
9. Cartel skews market into the red. (6)
10. Lost the bird, we hear, but still used in plastics. (8)
11. Units of reproduction required for black balls? (8)
- 12, 25. What the nervous angler might do? (4,6)
14. Writer's style-cover early in alphabetical line-up? (7)
16. Single out plaintive apology for my tardiness. (7)
19. Pointless Stoic jumble: hear hear! (4)
21. Yankee bum breaks apart genuine argument to give the lie to it. (8)
24. When a pest dies, tip seeds on it to get around. (4-4)
25. (See 12.)
26. After a shower, etc., few creators hate the end of the news. (7,8)

November Xword 2020 solution ©McW December '17



Down:

1. Algorithm like an anaesthetist [he/she who numbs...] eating a Violet Crumble? [Well? I like this one!]
2. Cryptic clues? [Sorry: these days, 'IQ' is not punctuated properly (not to mention anything else... 13ac for instance. Don't get me started!)]
3. Peroxide to clue you up? [Well?]
4. Where the fielders are, and what they comprise... [Well? The side not 'in'...]
5. What 16 did, metaphorically? [sorry...]
6. Pally, French, you=to throw your headgear [cap] up if you're a radical vocalist. (5)
7. Reportedly beyond 17?? [Well? The 'pale'...]
8. These days elder harassers turn up before the show! (5,9)
15. Pianist [telling 'No!'] to black, brown, beige critics. (9)
17. Bombshell, pop singer, comic strip. All fair... [Well?]
18. An opal I found on a player of note (7)
19. And Richard [Gere] stepped in, quite riled.
20. It has an Oz air about it, but it's not... (7)
22. Put off marketing device. [Well?]

Across:

1. One obvious effect of extended question time? [Well?]
9. What you turn into when the witch reaches across from the passenger seat and touches your knee? [Well?]
10. Horny fish? [Well?]
11. The road ahead isn't tough for amiable chap. [Well?]
12. Blokes produce cracks in fissures. (5)
13. They can be 25s on the way to employment. (3)
14. Avant-garde cruciverbalist? [Well?]
16. CBD rampant, but pretty laid-out? [Well?]
20. A shame [that this is] left post-fire. (3)
21. In kitchen of 24? [Well?]
23. Only an ingrate would fail to appreciate this place. (9)
24. 21 bark, say? [Well?]
25. What 13s are regarded as by job agencies? [Well?]
26. Grand Panjandrum aims to be immanent as well as apocalyptic [Well?]

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	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

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The Harcourt News/The Core is Published by the Harcourt Progress Association Inc.

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Weather and Water

We have seen some big variations in temperature and wind during November. The Weather Bureau says this will continue over summer with thunder storms as well. We had only 38.5 mm of rain over two days making November the third lowest month for rainfall this year. We have had some beautiful days followed by strong winds but not much associated rain. After every wind storm there is a fair bit of cleaning up to do in the garden with leaves and branches scattered about. Some of our large trees are still dropping branches which died in the 10 year drought.

On Monday 23rd November, I literally sprang out of bed because of one the loudest claps of thunder I have ever heard. Miraculously the power didn't go out and the household appliances survived. The last time we had such loud thunder was at the end of one recent summer, when lightning struck the Mount and started a fire. It was extremely difficult for the CFA to reach.

Reservoir levels are close to capacity (97.8%) which is a very pleasing way to start the summer irrigation season.



At the end of November I started to notice quite a few butterflies in the garden. They are rather boringly called the Brown Butterfly, but they are interesting to watch and difficult to photograph as they are very 'flighty' and never rest for long. They are sometimes hard to see because when they land on the ground or a tree trunk, they close their wings, which is an effective method of disguise.

Current Reservoir Levels

Storage	Capacity at full supply	Current volume		Volume same time last year	
	megalitres	megalitres	% full	megalitres	% full
Upper Coliban	37,770	37,492	99.3%	34,840	92.2%
Lauriston	19,790	19,030	96.2%	18,690	94.4%
Malmsbury	12,034	9,617	79.9%	7,390	61.4%
Total to December 3	69,594	66,140	95.0%	60,920	87.5%
Total to November 4	69,594	68,091	97.8%	63,626	91.4%

Data from: www.coliban.com.au/about-us/reservoir-levels – 3 December 2020

New Boat Ramp and Tagged Cod at Barkers Creek Reservoir

As part of its continuing program to improve boating infrastructure in regional communities, the Andrews Labor Government has announced the opening of a new boat ramp at Barkers Creek Reservoir and the Upper Coliban Reservoir. Minister for Fishing and Boating Melissa Horne and Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards were at Barkers Creek on December 1st for the announcement.



Minister for Fishing and Boating, Melissa Horne (left) and Bendigo West MP Maree Edwards assist with releasing one of the tagged cod at Barkers Creek Reservoir.

In addition to the new boat ramp at Barkers Creek Reservoir, additional car parking with defined bays and a new entry point from the road have been provided. To further assist boaters and fishers, petrol powered outboard engines can now remain on boats, but cannot be used. Only paddle power or electric motors are permitted on the water. (Barkers Creek only.)

Among the catchable cod at Barkers Creek and Upper Coliban will be a number of tagged fish worth up to \$10,000 as part of the re-launched Golden Tag competition.

Both reservoirs are popular freshwater fisheries and have shared in substantial stockings of Trout (107,000), Murray Cod (36,000) and Golden Perch (77,000) over the past two years.

Local Member Maree Edwards said, 'The investment in the new boat ramp at Barkers Creek is welcome news for both locals and visitors who love coming to this great fishing spot.'

From a Press Release

OUT & ABOUT

Eagles Road Bridge

In October this year the Shire announced the planned replacement of the Eagles Road Bridge near the swimming pool. 'We are excited to invest in this new bridge for the community, which will be built to last more than 80 years,' said Jess Howard, Director Infrastructure and Development, Mount Alexander Shire Council.



Above: the bridge earlier in 2020 and below: the bridge as of 27 November, 2020



As we well know, the road has been blocked since construction began, however we have some hope: Ms Howard said, 'If the weather does not disrupt our plans we expect to have it open by Christmas.'

'The construction team will work six days a week to complete this project on time,' she said.

The replacement bridge includes a pedestrian footpath on the eastern side. New extended guard rails will be installed and crash terminals provided. In addition to reducing the risk of vehicles entering the creek, this will also provide protection for pedestrians as they approach the bridge.

The waterway will be widened slightly to increase water flow under the bridge and reduce the risk of flooding. Rock beaching will help to prevent erosion.

'Harcourt is growing, and the bridge will more than adequately cater for an increase in traffic from future development on the northern side of town,' said Ms Howard.

Once the new bridge is constructed the current 20 tonne load limit will be removed to ensure safe access for heavy vehicles including firefighting and emergency vehicles.

Council awarded the \$621,000 contract to construct the bridge to Kilmore-based North-Vic Constructions Pty Ltd.

For more information about this project contact Graeme Barnes, Project Engineer on 0458 628 448.

Molly Drive Development



Out of interest and to see the speed at which modern houses are constructed, these photos were taken in 2020. The top photo was taken in February and the bottom photo in late November. We can expect that by the end of next year Molly Drive will be well settled and established.



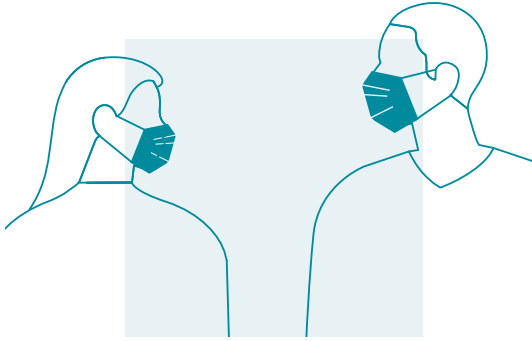
You Can't See Us!

This delightful photograph was taken by Vanessa Chiang. The parent and baby Tawny Frogmouth were in the remnant bush along the back of Pippin Court. Vanessa said, 'We heard the magpies making an incredible racket and wondered what was going on.'

As we live in a rural area, it is very apparent that leaving natural habitat around developments allows continued use by our native animals who (most of the time) give us humans a lot of joy.



EVERYTHING WE'RE DOING IS KEEPING US ON TOP OF THIS VIRUS



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Keep catching up outdoors.



Keep washing our hands.



Keep getting tested if we have any symptoms.

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