

# HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE

Edition 76 – October 2020

Produced by:

Harcourt Progress Association Inc

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

## Opening in October



*We're excited! The Willis family is just one of many local families looking forward to the opening of Harcourt's new playspace. While the youngest member of the family, Kit was wondering what the fuss was about, his brother Sonny, Mum Bron and Dad Terry are eager to begin using Harcourt's newest facility.*

THE HARCOURT COMMUNITY AND VISITORS will be delighted with Harcourt's new play space which is opening to the public earlier than expected. With construction proceeding quickly, the playspace is expected to be opened by mid-October.

Local parent, Bron Willis, said, 'It's been great watching the playground come to life; its opening has been highly anticipated in our house! I'm pleased that Harcourt parents and kids will have another setting for their friendships to grow. We love the pool for the same reason – we bump into friends and there are always other kids for our sons to play with. Even though we don't go to the local school, local friendships are still really important to us. The playground provides a great opportunity for that. It also offers visitors another tourism experience. It gives couples with kids the option of sharing child

care – one can relax with a coffee or get the barbecue lunch ready at the playspace while the other tries out the mountain bike trails at La Larr Ba Gauwa or has a swim at the pool.'

This exciting new playground, designed to reflect Harcourt's heritage, includes the iconic 6 metre tower which appears to be made of apple bins with the names of well-known apple varieties printed on their sides.

Two other unique features are a half-apple footstool and a carved oak leaf chair. The granite surrounding the space speaks to the town's history of granite quarrying and the granitic land in which the Harcourt Valley is situated.

Much of the play equipment is designed to be accessible and, in a first for Harcourt, we now have a wheelchair accessible barbecue.

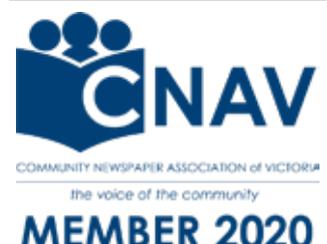
*Continued on page 2*

### INSIDE

- HPA-2
- HVPS Turns 25-3
- My First Big Trip -4
- Harcourt CWA-6
- Harcourt Uniting Church-7
- HVPS-8
- Harcourt CFA-9
- Community Banking-10
- Organic Farming Co-op-11
- Vale Barry Johansen-12
- Pioneers of Harcourt-13
- Councillor Comment-14
- Harcourt Bowling Club-15
- Castlemaine Health-16
- CHIRP-16
- Walking Together-17
- Shire News-17
- Gardening-18
- Crossword-20
- Weather and Water-21
- Harcourt Valley Landcare-22
- Connecting Country-23

### DEADLINES & PUBLICATION DATES

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





# Harcourt Progress Association

## Update

### Some Progress on the Roundabout

This will be a quick update as the HPA is spacing our meetings out a little more during the current COVID situation. There have been some vigorous discussions on Facebook regarding the roundabout, which led to Regional Roads Victoria (RRV ex VicRoads) doing a grass cut that was extra to their regular maintenance. Please note that if you feel the grass on the roundabout or on the verges leading to the roundabout is getting too long, you can contact RRV directly and ask them to assess the grass for safety concerns. We have also had further meetings with Mount Alexander Shire officers, in particular Jess Howard, Director Infrastructure and Development, and Parks and Gardens Manager, Cath Olive, and have discussed designs that are easier to maintain. So we are hopeful that RRV and MASC might come to an agreement where RRV will do the work to redesign and rebuild the roundabout landscape making sure that the ongoing maintenance is an easy task for the MASC parks and gardens department.

### Twilight Market

With continued support for the Harcourt Twilight Market on its Facebook page, the HPA is looking into options to either restart this market or something similar when the COVID restrictions are lifted and we can once again gather in numbers to celebrate our community. This is a fun project that has a very positive

input to our community, but it also requires a fair bit of work, so if there is anyone who is interested in being part of the crew, please get in contact with the HPA.

### AGM

With November fast approaching, the requirement to have our AGM in that month, coupled with the likelihood that current restrictions on large gatherings might still be in place, the HPA Executive is considering seeking an extension to the AGM until the new year.

*Michael Henry  
Acting President  
Harcourt Progress Association*

## Playspace to Open Soon

*Continued from page 1*

Coliban water has installed a drinking fountain near the barbecue and there are two picnic tables as well as a number of other seating options. Indigenous plantings have been incorporated into the design and it is anticipated that Aunty Julie, a local Dja Dja Wurrung elder, will hold story-telling sessions from time to time in the space.

The new fencing will provide an effective visual barrier for all who use Stanley Park and to passing motorists. One tree had to be removed because it was unsafe, but in its place a number of oak trees have been planted on the western side which will give welcome shade in summer. The oaks mirror others on the eastern side of the park. Bike racks are being installed at the entrance to the park.

The public will have access to the playspace before the official opening.

At this stage, the date of celebrations to mark the opening of the playspace is being decided. Local MP Maree Edwards is expected to open the park and lay a plaque on behalf of the Minister for Community Sport, the Hon Ros Spence. The naming of the playspace is with the Dja Dja Wurrung Corporation.

Harcourt Valley Primary School Principal, Andrew Blake said, 'We hope that before the end of 2020, depending on COVID-19 restrictions, the whole school can go to the playspace for a picnic.'

An advisory committee consisting of representatives from the Harcourt Progress Association, Harcourt Valley Primary School and community members has worked in a consultative role with Mount Alexander Shire since late 2018. The park has been funded by the state government and the project has been supported and developed by the Shire of Mount Alexander. Harcourt Progress Association contributed \$6,500 by way of a grant from the Maldon District Community Bank, which was used to fund the construction of the barbecue.

Designated members of the committee have the responsibility of sourcing a company to make a promotional video about the playspace. This work has commenced and it is hoped it will be ready within the year and definitely in time for the official opening.

**HARCOURT  
GOLDFIELDS  
TRACK CAFÉ**  
ESTD 2016

**PARMAS, PIZZA, PASTA,  
BURGERS & MORE**

Available from 5pm to 8pm Thursday to Saturday  
TAKEAWAY OR DELIVERY  
PHONE: 5462 5514  
Follow us on Facebook  
Printable menu at [gtcafe.com.au](http://gtcafe.com.au)

**Thursday Parma Night \$20 Phone orders only**

- Classic with napoli, ham & cheese
- Hawaiian with napoli, ham, pineapple & cheese
- BBQ meatlovers with napoli, ham, bacon, salami, bbq sauce & cheese
- Irish with mashed potato, cheese and gravy
- Italian with salami, napoli, olives, capsicum, onion & cheese
- Mexican with jalapenos, capsicum, onion, corn chips, cheese, salsa & sour cream

All parmas are served with chips & salad

**Desserts \$10**

- Choc hazelnut budino with praline crumb & double thick cream GF
- Hotcakes with cinnamon butter, maple syrup & vanilla bean ice-cream
- Doughnuts – 4 small homemade raspberry jam filled balls of love
- Harcourt spiced apple crumble with vanilla bean ice-cream
- Sticky date pudding with caramel sauce

Menu is subject to change without notice

# The New Harcourt Primary School is 25

**Due to COVID-19, the celebration to mark the 25th Anniversary will be held later in Term 4.**

Harcourt Valley Primary School was officially opened 25 years ago, on 6 October 1995, by the Victorian Minister for Education.

Three local primary schools in Harcourt, Harcourt North and Barkers Creek had amalgamated after a period of negotiation, adjustment and community activity.

About three years earlier, in a landmark policy statement called Quality Provision the Victorian Education Department sought to make the case for reducing the number of small schools in the State.

The three local schools had about fifty, forty and fifteen pupils at Harcourt, Harcourt North and Barkers Creek respectively. The school communities were required under Quality Provision to commence discussions on their future. Rural communities elsewhere were having the same discussions.

The policy did not prescribe specific actions or solutions, or guidelines on amalgamation, merger, takeover or even closure. But it was clear that primary

education of the children should take place in a newly constituted school.

Community reaction to the policy, and its implications for the future was mixed.

The regional education office offered no hint of a preference for continuing provision, and may not have had one. It was clear, though, that no action by the schools was not an option.

Some suspected that a default position was to cease primary provision in the Harcourt area and send children to Castlemaine. Like other speculations, this was never acknowledged, but it strengthened resolve in the school communities to find a way for schooling to continue locally.

The school communities embarked on three major exercises: establish a new school through amalgamation, select a location, and build a new school.

After amalgamation was agreed upon by the respective school communities, the new Harcourt Valley Primary School operated for several months on separate sites at the former Harcourt North and Harcourt schools.

It is fair to say that site selection for a new school was the most difficult process. None of the three former sites was large enough to meet the Departmental land area requirements for a school with the projected school population. The regional education office expressed no view or guidance on siting beyond agreeing to acquire the present site once the school community confirmed that it was the most suitable choice. Agreement on the best site wasn't universal, but the community recognised a location had to be settled upon.

The school community worked hard on site layout – building the sporting ground, paving, laying garden beds and other landscaping. The open air central courtyard in the former layout was supported strongly.

It is a tribute to community strength and energy that so many school improvements and celebrations became integral to school life from the outset of the new school. The opening on a sunny day in October 1995 was a welcome celebration, particularly after a long and sometimes arduous journey.

*Stephen Carthew*

*These photos and captions were kindly supplied by the Harcourt Heritage Centre.*



*Barkers Creek PS No 1607 in approximately 1909 with Mr Dempster (Head Master). The photo shows the children with their Head Teacher in the flower garden which had previously won them an award. (Caption from: Barkers Creek, Birthplace of the Mount Alexander Goldfields by Howard A Carr.) This photo is kept at the Castlemaine Art Gallery and Museum.*



*Harcourt PS approximately 1865 – Photograph black and white (copy of original glass frame) depicting a large group of school children and two adults.*



*Harcourt North PS in approximately 1925 with Miss Kent.*

# My First Big Trip

This piece was put together by Franca Frederiksen (nee Vescovi) as a record for her children. Her father Giovanni Vescovi's story was told in the August edition of *The Core*.

The tradition of ringing church bells to mark the time of day or special occasions remains strong in villages across Italy. They were rung when my family was farewelled by relatives and friends outside the church of our village, Camporovere, nestled in the Altipiani di Asiago (High plains near Asiago) in northern Italy near Venice. Mum said you could hear the bells as we wound our way down the twisting mountain road as we began our journey to a new life on the other side of the world. It was 1953. I was just two and a half years old.

Our surname is Vescovi. According to the reference book *Antiche Famiglie di Asiago*, the Vescovi name is recorded as far back as 1320. How impressive is that! And now, our branch of the family was planning to leave: Dad (Giovanni, but everyone called him Nino), Mum (Angelina née Zampese), my two older sisters (Marisa and Mirella), who were the eldest of the siblings, next was my brother Valentino (called Tino for short), Giuliana, Sergio and lastly me, Franca, the baby.

Like many migrants before us, our family left behind everyone and everything we had ever known to look for a better life in a new country. Camporovere then had a population of about one thousand people – everyone knew everyone and many were related. We lived in a typical 'town house' with kitchen and living room on the ground floor, steep stairs up to two bedrooms and more stairs to an attic that was used as a third bedroom. The bathroom was a tub of hot water in the kitchen, and the toilet was about thirty metres down the paddock. The altipiani is above the snow line – wooden shutters kept out the cold in winter and the wood burning stove was our heating. Our closest neighbours were either side of the adjoining walls. The front door opened onto a very narrow street, via Venezia. Comari (godparents), zii (uncles), cogini (cousins) and paternal nonno e nonna (grandfather and grandmother), as well as good friends and neighbours lived in the village. And everyone knew pretty much everything about everyone!

Dad was a skilled quarry mason and ambitious. He'd started a small cooperative to quote on jobs but was not winning many contracts. Those holding many of the government and municipal positions had been members of the resistance and communist party, and they considered anyone who'd been in the army to be fascists. Dad felt this worked against his group, and wanting more than what was on offer in a still struggling economy, he was looking for change. Occasionally migrants would return and share stories of opportunities for the taking in Australia, which was developing big civil works projects. So, when Jack Silvagni, Dad's brother-in-law, encouraged him to migrate, he was immediately open to the idea. 'Nino, a man like you can do really well in Australia.' This statement by zio Jack has become part of our family's folklore. Mum, who was happy living amongst her family and friends in the tightknit community, agreed with Dad's sentiment, 'If we don't leave with the kids, they'll leave us looking for a better life.' And so, planning began.

It was agreed that Dad would go ahead to check out this



*L-R Back row: Mirella holding me, Nonna Madelena, Nonno Francesco (Mum's parents), Marisa holding cousin, Graziella; front row: cousin Loredana, Elena cousin, Giuliana, Sergio; seated: cousin Gianni (lives in USA), Tino.*

lucky country and, presuming everything was as he'd been led to believe, find work and send money home to enable Mum and six children to follow. Delaying his departure by six months until I was born to ensure both Mum and I were okay, Dad left for Australia in July 1950, believing we'd be following within a year. He was excited to be setting out on his journey to the land of opportunity, get established and realise his and Mum's vision for our future. Which is indeed what they ended up doing.

Dad was contracted to mine granite in a quarry on Mount Alexander, soon buying the lease. He worked extremely hard to finance our trip. The cost was huge – government assisted migration hadn't begun. However, there was a combination of an incompetent migration certification doctor who caused unnecessary expense by way of an incorrect diagnosis (which Mum had the medical board take him to task on), and the slowly turning wheels of bureaucracy which conspired to slow down the issue of the necessary documents. As a result, it was two years before the final papers were stamped and we packed our bags. Thankfully, Mum was a very capable person, and with help from the older children, relatives and friends, managed everything involved in closing down our house and getting the essentials ready for our trip.

We left our home in the mountains in early January 1953 – destination, Genoa. We were picked up by Muraro, one of the few villagers to own a car, from outside the church where everyone had gathered to say goodbye. He drove down the mountain to either Vicenza or Canove (no-one's sure anymore) to catch our train west to the port from where the ocean liners departed.

But before sailing away, we had to say goodbye to Mum's family who lived in Aosta, near the Great Saint Bernard Pass on the French-Swiss border.

Mum was the eldest of eight and the first of the family to move to the west from Lusiana, a town not far from Camporovere. Mum's father refused to support the Black Shirts, a right wing group in the 1930s, and as a consequence, lost his position at the town council leading to his ostracisation and difficulty in finding work. The resulting financial hardship meant Mum, a good student, had to leave school at thirteen and help at home. At eighteen, she moved west to Triverno in the Piedmont region,

where she worked for Zegna, then a fledgling clothing company, at first in the typing pool and then as a secretarial assistant. Her earnings went home to help the family, and after six years and finding jobs for the older siblings, all the family joined her. Mum's father Francesco, mother Madelena and seven brothers and sisters settled in Aosta.

After a couple of days with the family in Aosta we caught the train to Genoa. We didn't expect to see our relatives, friends or the village again or certainly not for a long time. Happily, this proved to be wrong.

Given that the furthest any of us had travelled from home would have been perhaps 50 kilometres, and our ages varied from two and a half through to sixteen, and we were travelling with all our personal luggage (plus some), this trip across Italy was an extraordinary undertaking for Mum to manage. We hadn't even left the country yet!

Where is this 'Australia', and what is it like? These are some of the thoughts of my siblings at the time we were leaving Italy:

Giuliana (7 at the time) had made her First Holy Communion and Confirmation at the same time because we were going to a pagan (that is, English, therefore not Catholic) country. 'We knew it was very far away and that we had to travel on a large passenger liner to get there, that it was hot and dry which would be good for Tino's health.'

Marisa (16 at the time), 'I had seen pictures in a magazine showing three Aboriginal men standing holding spears, so I thought that's how it would be.'

Tino (10 at the time), 'My school geography text book had various world areas coded in different colours. Australia, and everything in it, was green, so when we got to Perth I was very disappointed to not see any green people.'

Mirella, who was fifteen at the time, made a common mistake, which is made even today; she thought we were going to Austria. She said, 'I knew that wasn't that far from Italy.'

Sadly, my second brother, Sergio, passed away when he was twenty-eight, so I can't include his comments.

Genoa! Now the real journey was about to begin. Our ocean liner was called the *Neptunia* and this was its maiden voyage. The trip would take 33 days, during which time Mum would have at least had a bit of a rest as she didn't have to cook and clean. We had two connecting cabins, thankfully, just above the waterline and with portholes. Marisa and Mirella were excited to see there were lots of other young people, and boys, on board! Tino, who had made friends with an Indian boy, spent most of his time exploring the ship. 'If Mum had known, she'd have been terrified we'd fall overboard.' I'm told I mostly played with my brothers and sisters ... in between afternoon naps.

The trip through the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal and the Red Sea was uneventful, but my siblings' faces lit up when talking about the stop at Aden describing it like so:

'We were excited to see men paddling boats to our ship – boats full of bananas to sell to passengers. In Campoverere, bananas were a luxury – Mum would buy one at a time to be shared between those of us with health issues. But these were cheap, fresh and delicious. Baskets with the agreed payment were lowered by rope to the boats and the fruit hauled up. There were dozens of boats and a carnival atmosphere. It was so exciting.'

Then there was the long haul across the Indian Ocean and some stormy weather before reaching Fremantle.

Finally we were on the last leg of our journey – around the southern coast to Melbourne.

Dad and Zio Jack met us when we disembarked at Station Pier, Port Melbourne on 12 February 1953. 'We spotted Zio Jack first in the huge crowd that had gathered on the dock,' remembers Tino, and then ... DAD! There was great excitement

and much hugging. It was so good to see Dad again. We'd all missed him a lot.'

After a rest at the Silvagni's in Carlton, we all piled in Zio Jack's work truck as there was still a way to go before getting to our rented farmhouse in North Harcourt, near the quarry. Five excited kids piled into the open back of the truck along with the trunk and other luggage. Three adults – and me, being so small – were squeezed in the front. Somehow, we all fitted, and the overloaded truck made the one hundred kilometre drive north from Melbourne.

It was very hot. 'Home' was an old weatherboard house sitting in the bush on the side of Mount Alexander. It didn't have power or running water. Our nearest neighbour was down the hill and across the road. The nearest 'village', Harcourt, was about three kilometres away. There was no family support nearby, no amiche (girlfriends) for Mum to chat with and share the daily ups and downs of life. No paesani (people from the same area) who knew your part of the world and spoke your dialect. There was just the bush. Nothing was familiar. And ... we couldn't speak English.

But we were lucky. We had the kindest, most helpful neighbours, the Quirks, who told us years later that they were excited to have us nearby as, 'We thought the world had come to our doorstep.' They had already befriended Dad and became (and remain) our friends, helping us settle into our new life.

My parents achieved their goal, building a successful life in Australia and, after we'd all grown up and left home, regularly returned to the village from the late 60s, and then annually from the 70s until age and health issues prevented them from travelling. They had been able to keep our family home in the village, kept a little car there and lived between two worlds. They loved to visit, but always said they'd made the right decision to migrate to Australia. Over the years, various family members continue to visit our village and the house remains in the family today.

I first returned to our village in the 70s with my husband, David, and with our children on a couple of occasions, as well as with family and friends over the years. Of course, I didn't really know anyone, as I was so young when I left. But they remembered me. In recent years, after both my parents had died, I decided I needed to mark their passing, somehow, in the village. I settled on the idea of having a Mass said for them, as they always went to church when visiting, and to share our family's migration story with the congregation. However, first I had to convince Padre San Germano, an old-school priest who was not exactly enthusiastic about the idea. 'Hmm, you won't speak for long will you?' He was clearly unhappy about sharing his 'stage'. But I got the go-ahead.

I speak Italian reasonably well but sometimes confuse our dialect, Veneto, and 'high' Italian, but decided to not worry about it, relax, and give it my best shot.

I gathered up my support team, husband David and friends, Carolyn and Richard, and headed off to church. I was taken completely by surprise and moved, as the church was full. Mass seemed to go on and on. Finally, I was invited to come to the pulpit to speak. After introducing myself and explaining, 'Italiano e la mia seconda lingua.' (Italian is my second language) and to forgive any grammar slip-ups, I took a deep breath and launched into my family's story. The response was extraordinary. Everyone stood and clapped and shook my hand as I walked back to my seat.

It was clear my story had resonated, as many families had been affected by post-war migration, and had farewelled their sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunties and whole families, like ours.

My story was also their story.

*Franca Vescovi*



# Harcourt CWA

## What's not to Love about Rhubarb?

Thinking of growing rhubarb? You'll be surprised to know that you just need to plant it once, treat it well and it will

continue to produce gorgeous edible stalks for you to use in a variety of ways. You'll need a little bit of patience, though, as harvesting takes place from the second year. Rhubarb is typically grown from crowns in winter or early spring, but it can also be grown from seed. Once established you will always have some available. In my garden I can now pick it all year round.

And it's not hard to grow, even in pots.

Choose a sunny or partly shaded spot, protected from the hot afternoon sun. Loosen the soil and enrich it with blood and bone or dynamic lifter.

If growing rhubarb from crowns, plant it so that the roots are under the soil but the 'eye' (from where the shoots will emerge) is at ground level.

Feed the plants weekly with your favourite liquid fertiliser during the growing season and to retain moisture use an organic mulch like sugar cane or pea straw around the base of the plant.

Wait until the second year before harvesting. Harvest by pulling stalks away from the main stem – don't cut them, as exposed stems can cause rot. Continually harvest to promote new growth, and remove any flower stalks.

There you have it, have a go, and soon you will be eating your very own home grown Rhubarb Crumble.

Marie Twyford, a long-time member of Harcourt CWA, and her husband Bob know a bit about rhubarb. Bob grows it to perfection and then hands it over to Marie to create delicious desserts for the family. Here is one of Marie's favourite rhubarb recipes for you to try ...



Marie Twyford and her Rhubarb Patch.

### *Rhubarb Cake (Dessert)*

#### **Ingredients:**

- 125g butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 cups plain flour sifted with 1 tsp bicarb soda
- 2 cups finely chopped rhubarb
- 1 egg
- 1 cup sour milk
- Pinch salt

#### **Method:**

Cream butter and sugar, add egg. Mix well, add dry ingredients with milk and stir in rhubarb. Line 8" pan with baking paper up the sides so that topping is not disturbed when lifting out.

#### **Topping:**

- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 tblsp cinnamon

Combine sugar, walnuts and cinnamon, rub in 60g butter. Sprinkle on top of cake mixture.

Cook 50 mins at 180°C. Let cool in the pan. Can be warmed for serving. Serve with dollops of cream or yoghurt.

.....

And, if you are looking for something savoury, this rhubarb relish is hard to beat.

### *Rhubarb Relish*

A quick and tasty relish. Good with cold roasted meats.

- 2 cups finely chopped rhubarb
- 2 cups brown vinegar
- 1 dessertspoon cornflour
- ½ teasp salt
- 2 large onions finely chopped
- 2 cups brown sugar
- 1 dessertspoon curry powder

Put the rhubarb, onions, vinegar and sugar in a large pot. Bring to the boil, then lower the heat and cook for 20 minutes, stirring now and then.

Mix the cornflour and curry powder with a little vinegar and add to the pot, stirring it in. Cook for 2 minutes until the mixture thickens. Bottle and seal.

**Thank you to The Country Women's Association of Victoria Inc. for this recipe.**

.....

Other uses for rhubarb — add some to your favourite muffin mixture, add a few chopped stalks to a lamb or beef stew for extra flavour

It seems that there may be a glimmer of light at the end of the COVID-19 tunnel, so why not think about joining us when things return to normal. Keep an eye on the *Core*, and we will let you know when our meetings will be starting again.

Lyn Rule  
Publicity Officer  
Harcourt CWA



# Harcourt Uniting Church

Still we wait to be told when we can meet at Church again. The current restrictions allow 10 to meet outdoors, however it would be a bit chilly outdoors at 9 am on a Sunday morning at present, and we do have more than 10 members at the Harcourt Uniting Church.

Many Church members have been watching services online or reading hard copy services prepared each week, however, it's not the same as being able to worship together in person.

I have just learnt that October 1st is International Coffee Day! Not being a coffee drinker, it didn't mean much to me. Uniting, the fundraising arm of the Uniting Church in Victoria and Tasmania, works with people experiencing a crisis, vulnerability or disadvantage. From October 1st Uniting challenges us to find a coffee cup and each week put in the cost of a cup of coffee (or a smaller or larger amount). On Pancake Day, 16 February 2021, all the funds will be collected to support Uniting in their work. Some of us at Harcourt Church will be accepting the challenge.

## History of the Harcourt Preschool

It's exciting to see the land being prepared at the Harcourt Valley Primary School in readiness for the new purpose-built Harcourt Preschool. Since 1951, the Preschool has operated at the Harcourt Uniting Church – formerly the Methodist Church. Members of the Methodist Church formed the



Harcourt Preschool 1959.

Harcourt Kindergarten Ladies Committee in 1948 to fundraise for the proposed building. The original idea was to build a kitchen onto the existing Church Hall, however it was then suggested that the building include a Preschool room.

In Sept 1950, a meeting was held to appoint the first Preschool Committee with the name of the centre to be the Harcourt Preschool Play Centre. The Harcourt Kindergarten Ladies Committee had raised £300 which was then handed over to the new Preschool Committee.

The Preschool was officially opened by the Hon Clive Stoneham MLA on July 1st 1954. The finances had been provided through a Government grant (2:1), the Methodist Ladies Committee, house-to-house collections and a loan from the Methodist Church. The first Play Centre leader was Miss Winsome Ely, and sessions were held in the Church Hall until the building was completed.

The 66-year-old building posed many problems when the recent Committee planned some renovations. the Synod (Head office of the Uniting Church Melbourne) offered the Preschool the opportunity to purchase the whole block at a favourable price, however the cost to repair the ageing building meant it was not a viable proposition.

We will miss having the Preschool as part of the Church property, but having been a teacher at the Preschool, I know all who work at or attend the new Preschool will enjoy the new purpose-built facility (without the white ants!) and will be able to enjoy developing a new play area.

COVID-19 has certainly been a difficult time for us all. As they like to keep reminding us – it's unprecedented! Children are looking forward to being able to return to school to be with their friends again. No doubt parents are as well! Many have commented that their children are becoming frustrated, bored and are sometimes challenging their parents with their misbehaviour!

Little Billy was misbehaving, so his mother told him to go to his room and wait until his father came home from work. He ran upstairs and crawled under his bed. His father arrived home and was told to go and speak with Billy. He went upstairs and looked around the bedroom. He then knelt down and looked under the bed. 'Hi Dad,' the boy whispered. 'Is Mum after you too?'

Jan Jenkin



# Harcourt Valley Primary School

## Lessons Learnt about Home Schooling

What a year it has been for us all and especially parents and teachers in Victorian Schools! They certainly have had to be very patient, adjustable and resourceful. In previous *Core* editions, HVPS art teacher Mrs Hargreaves and parents Christine and Anthony Webb shared their experiences of home schooling and remote teaching. In this edition I thought that I would check in with Christine and Anthony to see how they have gone this time around.

To begin with, Christine said, 'We were part of the collective sigh that went out across regional Victoria with the announcement of home-schooling 2. Well, it was a chance to put into practice the things we said we could do differently if we had to home-school again.' She reported that this time around was a smoother ride and that it was easier to slip into a family rhythm of the 'new normal'.

I asked what things they did differently? Christine replied that there were several. The main one was being more realistic about what could be achieved and how to make the most of the time that was available between working from home and other family commitments. Most effective was moving Ada's desk into the kitchen/dining area of the house so Mum and Dad could supervise her school work while doing household chores. They aimed to get the majority of the more academic school work done while younger sister Billie was at preschool. Art and music were then done with all the family in the afternoons when Billie was home from preschool and it was (mostly) the calmest and more relaxing time of the day.

The school had also tweaked the way they delivered online learning, which Christine said made the process easier. Each student had packages of handouts and other resources for all the subjects. Worksheets were ready to use and there

was a regular programme which parents and students could easily follow. Maths classes were conducted online in small groups, and Christine said that this worked well. Regular virtual reading to grandparents also worked well and was, 'a great way to connect, as real life visits have been few or non-existent due to COVID'.

The most challenging aspect of home schooling, as per last time, was the logistics of keeping the children happy and of working from home. The most interesting and rewarding experience was observing how the school taught narrative writing skills and then seeing how this helped to develop Ada's imaginative and writing skills.

Meanwhile, life goes on and Billie is getting excited about starting school next year and enjoyed the process, with the help of her parents, of doing a virtual school tour developed by the Grades 5 and 6 students.

Currently, teachers, parents and students are enjoying a well-earned break. By the time this *Core* is published in October all HVPS students will be back at school. This will be such a relief for parents, students and teachers and in particular the students in Year 6 who will be preparing for their graduation from Primary School. Castlemaine Secondary College and other local High Schools have already been enrolling students for next year. Other students including, preschool students are enrolling in Primary School.

When school resumes, everyone entering the school will be required to follow social distancing rules and strict hygiene procedures. Parents will be dropping children off at the school gates, and children will need to ensure that they bring their water bottles to school as they will not be allowed to use the bubblers.

Despite all the challenges of this year, the building of the new Harcourt Preschool is on schedule. If you have

driven down Bingham Road recently you will have noticed that ground work on the new preschool has begun. It is great to see it finally under way with the assurance that it will be ready to be used by next year's students. I am sure it will be a great asset to the community.

On the HVPS website is some information and a link to a valuable Department of Education resource, the Raising Learners Podcast (see below), which we think will be helpful for all students and those supporting students in this very challenging year.

### Raising Learners Podcast

'The Department of Education and Training has funded a 10-episode podcast series through the Raising Children Network called "Raising Learners". It features parenting experts from organisations including the Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Career Education Association Victoria, as well as the Australian eSafety Commissioner, Julie Inman-Grant. Raising Learners provides parents with practical advice, tips and ideas for supporting children's health, wellbeing and engagement at school and at home. Topics include how to connect with your child's school and community, how to best support your child's learning, what to expect for VCE and VCAL students and how to keep your child safe online. These topics were drawn from common questions that parents raised with the Department's coronavirus (COVID-19) hotline and Parentline.

'The first three episodes will be available from 1 September, and the rest throughout terms 3 and 4. Raising Learners can be accessed via podcast apps and Raising Children Network website.'

Stay Safe and Keep Well.

Lois Denham

  
Federal Member for Bendigo  
**LISA CHESTERS MP**

PO Box 338 Bendigo 3552  
Cnr. Williamson & Myers Sts, Bendigo 3550  
T: 03 5443 9055 • F: 03 5443 9736  
E: Lisa.Chesters.MP@aph.gov.au  
@LMChesters • /LisaChestersBendigo

**HARCOURT**  
Auto Wreckers  
EST 1955

WRECKING ALL MAKES & MODELS

We buy most cars and utes  
Free old car removal

5474 2432 HARCOURTAUTO.COM



# Harcourt CFA Spring Creates Change

As we move into the middle of spring, the seasonal outlook for the coming fire season is looking like it may start a little later than last year. Winter and early spring rainfall in most areas of Central Victoria is slightly below average, but Bureau of Meteorology predictions for late spring indicate a strong chance of above average rainfall. This may also lead to some localised flash flooding. This is of course dependent on the indicators continuing on their current trends. Regardless, we are seeing good spring growth in the grasslands which in turn will cure and dry out and become fuel load for fire.

September was promoted by CFA as the month to start preparing for summer and this work will need to continue through October so that we are well prepared.

Brigade activity is also increasing as we now have some restrictions lifted. This will enable brigade members to do compulsory pre-season training for burn-over protection drills in October. (A burn-over is when fire engulfs a truck with brigade members on board.) Members will continue to participate in weekly online training presentations on a variety of topics, to not only refresh our knowledge but keep us up to date with any changes or new requirements.

Four turnouts for the month of September, an increase on previous COVID lockdown months, consisted of two primary and two support incidents. An unregistered burn off, which was reported as a structure fire because it was behind a building, highlighted the importance of registering any burning off, no matter what size it is. Unfortunately, the second call-out to a structure fire was the real thing and on arrival the shed was well alight. The protection of surrounding assets was part of the initial attack plan, and with assistance from our neighbouring brigades of Castlemaine and Elphinstone, the fire was contained to the shed. The two support turnouts consisted of a chimney fire at Ravenswood (a reminder to ensure chimneys and flues are kept clean) and a motor vehicle accident in Castlemaine.

The public donations CFA received as a result of the 2019–2020 fire season have been allocated to assist brigades. The Harcourt brigade has decided to put this money towards a second defibrillator (to be on the second tanker) and portable lighting. Along with this bonus we have been advised by CFA that a purchase order has been placed for the cab/chassis that will replace tanker two. This will then be built into a fire truck and should be ready towards the end of the 2019–2020 fire season.

While we were experiencing the cold blast of weather late in September, the top of NSW had fire districts with very high fire danger risk, and some had total fire bans declared. This is yet another reminder for we Victorians that the time to prepare is now. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, it is undetermined at this stage what public engagement will be allowed by CFA to assist communities in preparing for the coming fire season. There is plenty of information available on the CFAs website, including how to create a fire plan. If you already have your fire plan, now is the time to do a review to ensure it is up to date. Recent discussions between CFA and other emergency services have highlighted that, while each agency has been promoting having a plan relative to the emergencies they deal with, it is time that these were consolidated into one emergency plan. No one knows what emergencies we may individually face in the future, but being prepared will ensure the decisions we make will lead to better outcomes.

Be prepared and stay safe.

*Tyrone Rice*

*Brigade Community Safety Coordinator*



## History Month

Many years ago I was given a badge, just two words: History Matters. Now this can mean HISTORY matters or history MATTERS. In the former, all history subjects matter; in the latter, it is important to acknowledge history. Either way the overall subject of history can be considered important on a personal or community level. October is classified as History Month – various authorities hold talks and seminars at related avenues. Most of these will be considered as not important and passed over by most of the public.

Like all subjects, we take notice when the subject is relevant to us. As you will have realised I have approached this subject from the photographic treasures in your personal box of memorabilia.

Television production companies, such as Ancestry, have developed this idea of personal history with two programs revealing family history. It was not going to be long before Apps would be developed. For example, the following is a Melbourne company that stores and catalogues your photographs: [www.memories.com.au](http://www.memories.com.au). Their slogan of 'Memories keep on living' is why history is important and why your box of photos is also important. We are witnessing world changing events today and your accessible photos will give future generations a glimpse into you and your generation.

Drop in to the ANA Hall to glimpse the past of your community of Harcourt.

*Diana*

*Harcourt Heritage, ANA Hall*

*Open Wednesdays 9 am–3 pm.*



**Di Selwood**  
Property Consultant  
Castlemaine & Harcourt



Mobile: 0488 148 358      148-152 High Street  
Phone: 03 5474 2807      Kangaroo Flat Vic 3555  
Fax: 03 8677 9033  
Email: [di@bendigopropertyplus.com.au](mailto:di@bendigopropertyplus.com.au)

*For all your banking needs*

**Maldon & District**

**Community Bank® Branch**



**03 5475 1747**

**#weareyourcommunitybank**

For all your banking needs

# Maldon & District Community Bank® Branch



03 5475 1747

## Stronger local businesses in action

Goodness Flour is Harcourt resident Liesl Malan's latest venture, officially launching this month. Liesl has turned her talents to creating small batch, freshly milled wholegrain flour, and producing delicious biscuit, cake and muffin premixes for baking.

Liesl recently graduated from Maldon & District Community Bank's Business Action Plan Program. The specially designed program was delivered by Sorted's Clare Fountain to 19 businesses in the region, including fellow Harcourt businesses Pauline's Real Estate and Blumes Historic Bakery. The program offered training and mentoring to support local small businesses to revitalise and rebound during and post-COVID-19.

The timing of the course was perfect for Goodness Flour, providing guidance and oversight as Liesl prepared to launch her new business.

'In my case, working through each aspect of the program before I launched helped me to develop the right business model from the start,' said Liesl.

'The workshops were respectful and collaborative, with participants genuinely looking for opportunities to cross-promote and support each other.'

Contributing to a strong local food economy is important to Liesl. The business name reflects the intent of the new venture and signifies the 'nourishing qualities of wholegrains.'

'It also acknowledges the work of regenerative farmers who are producing healthy food, grown in naturally fertile soils. Good food, grown by good people in healthy soils,' said Liesl.

Local collaboration is key to the Goodness Flour model. Most of the grains are sourced from this region and milled in Harcourt, which both supports and showcases local farmers and producers.

Maldon & District Community Bank has confirmed funding for a new round of business training and mentoring in February 2021.

'We're delighted to offer a further 16 businesses the opportunity to undertake the Business Action Plan Program to support their ongoing viability and success. We'll be calling for applications later in the

year. Sign up to our newsletter at [www.maldoncb.com.au](http://www.maldoncb.com.au) to find out more and be the first to hear all our community news,' said Branch Manager Adam Balzan.

'The Maldon & District Community Bank is definitely the bank of choice for local small businesses, offering a competitive range of products and services. The Business Action Plan Program is just another way that the Community Bank supports local businesses. We know that building stronger local businesses strengthens our local economies and communities.'

For more information on Goodness Flour go to [www.goodnessflour.com.au](http://www.goodnessflour.com.au).

### Invitation to the Community Bank's AGM

Come along and hear all about the Maldon & District Community Bank at its AGM on Wednesday 28 October at 6pm. The AGM will be a hybrid meeting this year, which means you can 'attend' online or in-person (subject to COVID-19 restrictions at the time).

In what has been a year like no other, the Maldon & District Community Bank branch and board would like to thank the community and our customers for their continued support of the local Community Bank that services communities throughout the Mount Alexander and Dunolly regions.

Despite a challenging year due to the pandemic, the Community Bank achieved strong business growth and made significant contributions to the community. Over \$80,000 was injected back into our communities in the past 12 months, returning the profits from our banking and financial services directly to community groups, sporting clubs, schools and health services. It's a simple way to support your community, just by banking locally.

If you'd like to come along to the AGM, either online or in person, get in touch with Executive Officer Karly Smith on 04784 435 110 or [executiveofficer@mdcb.cm.au](mailto:executiveofficer@mdcb.cm.au) to receive a formal invitation.



### Grow Great Fruit

More than 50 Ways to Take the "Bad Luck" Out of Your Organic Fruit Growing

[growgreatfruit.com](http://growgreatfruit.com)

**FREE RESOURCES**

**Webinar**  
"5 Key Steps to Quick Success with Fruit Trees"  
[growgreatfruit.com/webinar-landing/](http://growgreatfruit.com/webinar-landing/)

**Newsletter**  
Weekly Fruit Tips (sign up on website)

**READY FOR NEW SKILLS?**  
50+ short courses  
Grow Great Fruit Home-study Program

# Spring at the Harcourt Organic Farming Co-Operative

Just up the road in Harcourt there is a busy little farming property. Its not like most farms you know of and it's also not like any co-operative you will have heard about. We're doing things a bit differently at the Harcourt Organic Farming Co-op (affectionately know as HOFC, not the sexiest acronym, but what can you do!?)

Here's how it works ... one property, multiple distinct farming enterprises all running their businesses as members of a co-operative structure. On a property which once housed one amazing organic orchard business (Mt Alexander Fruit Gardens) there are now four different organic farming businesses, each owned and run by different farmers. These enterprises include a market garden (Gung Hoe Growers) run by Sas and Mel, a micro-dairy (Sellar Farmhouse Creamery) run by Tessa Sellar, an orchard (Tellurian Fruit Gardens) run by Ant Wilson and a bare-rooted fruit tree nursery (Carr's Organic Fruit Tree Nursery) run by Merv, Katie and Lizzie. There is room for more complementary enterprises to join.



We do this for many reasons. Firstly, most of us are young farmers who don't have the capital to buy our own land to farm on, and this is a way we can get started. Secondly, it makes a lot of sense to us to work together towards caring for the land on which we grow while also producing food for our local community. None of us wants to run five businesses, but we can each run our own business really well and find ways to pool our efforts and resources and cross-pollinate businesses, for example by making collective decisions about how best to manage the land or by sharing a market stall at the weekly Farmers Market in Castlemaine.

Now that spring has sprung, the activity on the farm at HOFC is starting to change pace. Mel and Sas are busy turning in their winter crops and preparing beds ready for all the delicious summer crops, dreaming of the first ripe tomato of the season! Their garlic crop will be ready to pull in a month or two, and in the meantime, there will be plenty of leafy greens, spring



onions, broad beans and snow peas to pick. Their very first intern has just started, learning the ins and outs of running your own market garden.

Under the careful guidance of Merv Carr, his daughters Katie and Lizzie are practicing the art of fruit tree grafting and propagation of 'root stock' trees from seed, cuttings and stool beds. Katie has been at it for over 20 years, but Lizzie is new to the game, learning all the details of growing a fruit tree from scratch.

The spring rains have been great for the growth of lush pasture and Tessa's small herd of dairy cows is milking beautifully as a result. She has recently started selling creamy yoghurt in returnable glass jars alongside the milk that she already sells by subscription or at the Wednesday weekly Farmers Market in Castlemaine.



While the rains have been good for pasture and veggie growth, it has not been great for the blossoming stone fruit crop in the orchard. Ant is carefully watching his developing crop for signs of the fungal diseases that wet conditions often herald.

The beauty of a mixed crop orchard is that not all your eggs are in one basket. Even if one crop doesn't do so well, more than likely other crops will do well, hopefully balancing out across the season. This year's apricot crop is looking a little light on, but just wait for those plums to start coming through! This year, Ant is also welcoming his first intern who will work with him for six months through the summer and autumn seasons, learning the art of organic orcharding.

For more info and updates on the goings on at HOFC go to [hofcoop.com.au](http://hofcoop.com.au)

# MCDFNL pays Tribute to Barry Johansen

*This tribute to Barry Johansen from the Maryborough Advertiser was published on 15 September 2020 and sent to the Core by Ashlyne McInnes, Journalist.*

The Harcourt FNC and indeed the wider Maryborough Castlemaine District FNL community lost one of its most dedicated stalwarts in August, with the passing of former Lions president Barry Johansen.

A Harcourt boy born and bred, Barry passed on August 3, 2020 and is survived by his wife Irene and their children and grandchildren.

Barry was responsible for reigniting the fire at the Lions' den in a particularly tough time for the club in the 1980s and 1990s and made great contributions to the MCDFNL through interleague, the introduction of netball and rule changes to clean up the sometimes scrappy nature of country football.

For this, Barry was awarded life membership at his beloved Harcourt and also the MCDFNL.

His on-field days were limited, playing in the early to mid-1960s before he moved away to complete national service and then he later worked at a bank.

Twenty years down the track Barry purchased the Northern Hotel in Castlemaine and found himself on the Harcourt FNC committee. Barry also purchased the Harcourt Motel and developed it into a hotel and restaurant and was President of Harcourt Applefest for a number of years.

Barry went on to become President of the club from 1984 through to 1999, with Norm Jenkin, who was Secretary for 10 of those years, by his side.

Norm, a club and league stalwart himself, couldn't speak any higher of Barry and his dedication to the mighty Lions and his ability to 'think outside the box.'

'Barry was a Harcourt boy through and through, who was raised on an orchard. He was a lover of football and a lover of Harcourt,' Norm said.

'Barry's aim was to get Harcourt back playing finals football and to see the club successful. After winning the 1971 premierships we lost a lot of players and it wasn't until 1988 that we got back into the elimination finals. By the mid to late 1990s, we were regularly playing finals football.

'When Barry first came on, he decided that the club needed to get a coach from out of the area. We did get a coach in 1985, but unfortunately the club parted ways with him half way through the season and that's when Barry stepped in and did both the Senior Coaching and the Presidency.

'Later that year, coming up to the last part of the season Harcourt hadn't won a game all year. So Barry linked in with 3CCC (now Fresh FM) to find out what it would cost to get the game broadcast live. It would be the first game in the MCDFNL to do so. He got sponsors on board and made it happen and Harcourt actually went on to win against Campbells Creek that day in their first win of the season.

'Barry always thought outside the box when it came to celebrating the club, getting players and coaches and fundraising.'

In addition to his dedication to the senior football side of the club, Barry helped instigate the comeback of junior football for the club. He also helped plant the seed which would see the then MCDFL, changed to the MCDFNL through the introduction of netball.

'In the start of 1987, Barry got junior football back up and

running again after several years lapse and that continued right through to the mid-2000s,' Norm said.

'That junior pathway was really important in making sure that we had players for the future. Even now in the current group of senior footballers there are a number of players who played their juniors at Harcourt and who have come back with the aim to win a premierships for the club.'

'Barry was approached by a parent of a footballer and a netballer, Val Blake in 1986 who was wondering whether the league would be interested in adopting the sport of netball. She and Barry then went along to an early season meeting to address the delegates and by 1987 netball was formally introduced to the league, with Harcourt coming runner-up to Carisbrook in the first ever MCDFNL netball grand final.'

'He also saw the club to its first ever reserves premierships in 1987 and celebrate the clubs centenary in the late 1980s.'

Outside of the Lions' den Barry had a profound influence on the MCDFNL as a whole, pushing heavily for interleague success as the Program Coordinator and also implementing a rule which would clean up the rough and tumble nature of football in the 20th century.

'At league level, Barry oversaw the running of interleague for quite a number of years which culminated in the MCDFNL beating the Loddon Valley league at Serpentine in the mid-1990s,' Norm said.

'Barry was right behind interleague football; he believed that it was crucial for the league to showcase what they had to offer. And most of the time under his supervision, you got the better players from clubs putting their hand up to go and play.'

'Another thing that Barry was really passionate about was the introduction of the order off rule. This happened after the 1987 Maldon versus Chewton tough and rough grand final, he and a number of other delegates pushed for the rule to bring football back to its original roots as a family-friendly sport.'

'If a player has behaved in a way that's unsavoury to the game through throwing a punch or starting a fight, the umpire is allowed to send them off for 15 minutes and they cannot be replaced in that time. If the incident is really bad they might be ordered off for the whole game.'

'It cleaned up local football and made it a bit more of an athletic spectacle rather than a game for thugs.'

Things weren't always sunshine and rainbows for the club while Barry was at the helm, however he always kept positive and Norm believes this culture is what led to Harcourt's success later on down the line.

'Everyone knew how passionate Barry was about the Harcourt Football Club and as long as the coach said the team did the best job that they could, Barry was happy.'

'I can tell you now, it was one of the best times off field I've had at a footy club in my time.'

'In his time as President his aim was to get the club back on top of its finances and keep the club afloat and that really benefitted the club for the future.'

'In the early 2000s we featured in five grand finals in seven years and that wouldn't have been possible if the club wasn't kept afloat by Barry in those years beforehand. We were very lucky to have him.'

*Ashlyne McInnes, Journalist,  
Maryborough District Advertiser*



# Harcourt Heritage Centre

## John Callaghan – The Harcourt Murder

Things looked bad for John Callaghan. The Harcourt murder had been listed for trial before His Honour Judge Redmond Barry. Judge Barry had already handed down some severe sentences in this sitting of the court.

John Callaghan was brought into the dock to stand trial for murder. The *Mail* reporter took advantage of the time involved in jury selection to walk the one and a half town blocks to file his copy at the *Mail* office in Mostyn Street. He had heard all the evidence previously, twice before in fact – first at Hugh Griffiths' inquest and again at John Callaghan's committal hearing. There was no doubt about it. Witnesses at the committal hearing had positively identified John Callaghan as the one who had wrestled Hugh Griffiths to the ground and chopped at his face with a piece of granite. Even more damning was the fact that John Callaghan had absconded to avoid arrest and had been at large for over eighteen months. This, in the mind of the reporter, was as good as a plea of guilty.

No doubt about it, with the mood His Honour Judge Barry was in, this trial would end badly for the prisoner. The trial would be a mere formality, the prisoner would be returned to a cold cell at Castlemaine's newly built gaol, and the hangman's noose would be put to use once more.

With the reporter back at his desk and the jury settled into its box, John Callaghan was indicted that he, in the month of October 1859, did kill and murder one Hugh Griffiths, at Harcourt. The prosecutor, Mr. Smyth, laid out the facts of the case. To the reporter they were facts, not just allegations.

The incident had occurred two years before, during a brawl in the garden of Harcourt's Talbot Hotel. The brawl had started on the Sunday morning in the taproom where a group of Welshmen were having a drink. A lot of Irishmen came in and ordered drinks. Hot words were exchanged, alleging that one of the Welshmen had been seen at a quarry operated by the Irish at the Porcupine railway works. Accusation and denial led to a fight. A burly Welshman was seen to strike Hugh Griffiths several times on the head. On the morning after this first affray, Hugh Griffiths had his eyes – to use the expression of the witness – 'bunged up'. It is characteristic of the Welsh that they do not walk away from a fight, even when they are losing. Griffiths recovered partial sight and when another disturbance occurred the same afternoon, he took part in it, but was knocked down. A witness

called Groat swore that he saw the prisoner sitting on the prostrate man, whom he knew to be Hugh Griffiths. The prisoner was 'chopping his face, forehead, nose and eyes, with a piece of granite.' Groat went to interfere, but, as he attempted to stop Callaghan, two young Irishmen warned him off by drawing a knife. After the scuffle Griffiths was carried into the hotel and was eventually taken to the Castlemaine hospital where he died in December.

Other witnesses were called. The journalist was bored, and he felt (and reported) that the case occupied a long time. John Callaghan, just a youth really, would be found guilty. What on earth could his defence counsel, Mr George Leech, put to the jury? This hiring of Mr Leech was another indicator of the hopelessness of Callaghan's position. At the committal hearing, eight days earlier, the recaptured man had been defended by his countryman, Mr Flanagan. To have brought in a fresh counsel was a sign of the desperate nature of the defence.

When he rose to his feet, Mr. Leech submitted that there was no case to go to the jury. He then examined the medical evidence. The cause of death was proven to be an abscess of the brain occasioned by blows on the head. Was it the blow that had 'bunged up' Griffiths' eyes in the morning or the assault by the prisoner? The reporter thought that this was just 'going through the motions' by a barrister anxious to prove that he had earned his fee in defending a hopeless case. Why didn't Mr Leech get to the description of the fight – sow a few seeds of doubt – after all, it was a melee, so who could be certain of identification? But Mr. Leech persisted. The medical evidence of Dr. Young had not made a connection between the fractured forehead of the deceased and the abscess in the brain. The abscess had been caused by some form of concussion. But who inflicted the causative blow?

At this stage, his Honour Judge Barry intervened. From his lofty seat, Her Majesty's Justice said, 'I concur with Mr Leech. There is sufficient room for doubt as to the cause of the abscess. The Crown had not clearly proved its case. As there was a doubt, the jury should not speculate on the cause of death.'

The prisoner was quite bewildered by all of this and was waiting for Mr. Leech to get into the detail of the fight. All this talk of the medical evidence was beyond him. The members of the jury looked puzzled, too. John Callaghan was nudged by the policeman who told him to stand.

'Prisoner at the bar', the judge was saying, 'your counsel has submitted that the jury cannot be beyond all question satisfied as to your guilt or innocence. There is no case, therefore, to go to the jury. Therefore, you are discharged.' Turning to the jury he said, 'Gentlemen, thank you for your time. You may stand down.' His Honour then stood. 'This court is adjourned!' cried the clerk. 'Bow to the judge – you are free to go' said the policeman. John Callaghan still stood motionless. It was all over.

This thumbnail sketch was compiled by Harcourt Heritage Centre from the rich resources of the C H James Collection. The reader is referred to 'Murder by Granite' which may be found at [harcourt.vic.au](http://harcourt.vic.au)

*Bendigo Advertiser*, 13 Dec 1859.

**LATE ASSAULT CASE AT HARCOURT.**  
On Wednesday, the Coroner held an inquest on the body of Hugh Griffiths, who died in the hospital from the effects of injuries he received in the row at Harcourt on the 50th October, supposed to have been inflicted by one Thomas Jones, who had been committed for trial on a charge of assaulting deceased.  
Dr. D. S. Young deposed: Deceased was led up to me, with his eyes bunged up; he was unable to see; I lanced his upper and lower lids four or

**THE LATE AFFRAY AT HARCOURT.**—A warrant has been issued for the apprehension of John Callaghan, against whom a verdict of "Wilful Murder" had been pronounced at the inquest on Hugh Griffiths on Tuesday last, but on the officer proceeding to serve it, it was found that he had absconded. Callaghan, who was a labourer employed on the railway at Harcourt, is supposed to have fled in the direction of the Ballarat and Geelong line. He is only 21 years of age, and is described as being 5 feet nine inches in height, rather stout build, fair complexion and hair, and with no whiskers. A man named Thomas Jones was committed to take his trial for assaulting Hugh Griffiths, with intent to do him grievous bodily harm. This was before the unfortunate man died. Jones will now be brought before the Police Court on the 26th

October last. Callaghan, who was a laborer employed on the railway at Harcourt, is supposed to have fled in the direction of the Ballarat and Geelong line. He is only twenty-one years of age, and is described as being five feet nine inches in height, rather stout built, fair complexion and hair, and with no whiskers.

His Honor concurred with Mr Leech, and said that from the conflict of medical evidence as to the origin of the abscess which caused death, he was of opinion that there was no case for the jury to take into consideration. The whole of the medical evidence was brought on behalf of the Crown, and it had not been clearly proved that the wound in the forehead had occasioned the abscess, so there was at least a doubt as to whether the blows received in the scuffle in the earlier part of the day in question. As there was a doubt, the jury should not speculate on the cause of death. They must be beyond all question satisfied, which they could not in this case be.

The prisoner was then discharged. This case closed the criminal sittings, which were then adjourned sine die.

*The Argus*, 13 Dec 1859.

*The Star (Ballarat)*, 10 Dec 1859.

*Mount Alexander Mail*, 26 July 1861.

All clipping via Trove.

Congratulations to Councillor Tony Cordy who has been returned unopposed to the Calder Ward



## Councillor Comment

Hi all,

Council is in caretaker mode at present. We will still meet in the next three weeks, but we will not make any big decisions that the new Council may have concerns about.

Thankfully, I have been re-elected unopposed, which is a great honour. I have enjoyed being on Council and look forward to seeing who will be part of the new Council.

I wish the outgoing Councillors well, as they are a great bunch. Something I have learnt on Council is that you learn from those with different backgrounds and opinions. Imagine how boring it would be if we were all engineers singing from the same song sheet.

I do look forward to the opening of our new Stanley Park playground. It is nearing completion and will be open soon. An official opening will be planned with Maree Edwards our state MP. Maree has been very supportive of Harcourt in recent years and has worked very hard to secure funding for our projects.

The new Council will get down to business in November and will be extremely busy in the lead-up to Christmas. There will be a lot of work to do on getting our community back to what will be the new normal.

I trust everyone stays well, and I look forward to seeing you all in the coming months.

Best regards Tony  
AG Cordy 0439742434

## Myra Frankling's Ginger Beer Scones 🍴 with handy tips

### Ingredients

- 3 cups self-raising flour
- 1 cup ginger beer
- 1 cup cream

### Directions

1. Have a hot oven ready – 220°C
2. Have a greased tray or trays ready.
3. Mix all ingredients into a dough and when together, knead with the knuckles (🍴 This aerates the dough better than using the finger tips).
4. Using a small cutter, cut into rounds (🍴 Don't twist the cutter, otherwise the scones turn out lopsided).
5. Pick them up with a spatula and place on a pre-prepared tray.
6. Cook for about 15 minutes.

🍴 Using the small cutter, this recipe makes about two dozen scones.

# LIMERICK by The Bard of North Harcourt

My shop isn't making much money.

I only sell eggs, cheese, and honey.

I tried selling pokers

And cards without jokers

But nobody thought that was funny.

## These Businesses Support The Core



Got a property that you are looking to rent out?

I have recently successfully leased this immaculate property in Harcourt and have other potential tenants looking for somewhere to call home in the area



Call me today to discuss how I can help you lease & manage your property



PO Box 62, Harcourt, VIC, 3453  
sales@paulinesrealestate.com.au  
www.paulinesrealestate.com.au

Pauline Wilkinson  
0468 543 589

MRN 006 589 32373  
Real Estate Agent's Licence 8771776

## Level Heading

Proofreading • Copy Editing • Book Layout

memoirs, family history, oral history  
novels, short stories, anthologies, e-books  
negotiable prices

Bernie Schultz  
p: 03 5472 3952  
m: 0409 52 43 54

e: bernsch@gmail.com  
w: levelheading.com.au



# Harcourt Bowling Club

## Green Ready – Bowls to Begin

### Annual General Meeting

The date for the Harcourt Bowling Club Annual General meeting has been set as Sunday October 4th.

It will be preceded by an amended version of the end of last season and the Opening of the New Season commencing at 10.30 am. The AGM is expected to commence at 11.00 with strict observance of COVID rules as determined at that time.

A report and outcome of the meeting will be in the *Core* next Month.

### Club Tournaments Cancelled

At the September Board meeting it was decided, because of restrictions, to cancel the usual club tournaments held prior to Christmas. The closing of the clubrooms since March and this decision will have a negative effect on the club finances, however, the health and safety of visitors and members must take priority. We have high hopes that by the time this goes to print we will be able to open our doors again.

Welcome news for Bowlers in late September was that our bowling green was ready to be used.

It didn't take long for members to dust off their bowls and get into practise for the upcoming season. The new look of course will be that we will all be wearing masks.

### But Pennant Season Continues

It would appear at this stage that the Pennant Season will continue as planned. That is, commencement for Midweek Pennant on Monday 26th October and Weekend Pennant on Saturday 7th November. The exact format is still to be confirmed, but it was mooted earlier that we will be playing 21 ends without the ½ lunch/tea break ... more about that later, I think.

### Thank you to Grounds Volunteers

Thanks to our volunteers for maintaining and preparing the green, the grounds and gardens. Special mention and thanks to Iain McGibbon (affectionately known as Mr Mac) for his work in establishing the extension of garden beds along the driveway into the carpark and for the upkeep of these gardens during the year.



Masked bowlers Kay Francis, Mary-Anne Doyle, Judi Miles, Fran Corstorphan at front

# ASQ Skydancers October 2020

Treat yourself this spring with locally made produce, candles, artwork, jewellery, plants and more from ASQ Skydancers!

They stock a large range of delicious produce including Castlemaine Honey, Maldon Lolly Shop, Bendigo Fine Foods, Jamie's Fine Dressings from Lake Boga and Billson's Cordial from Beechworth.

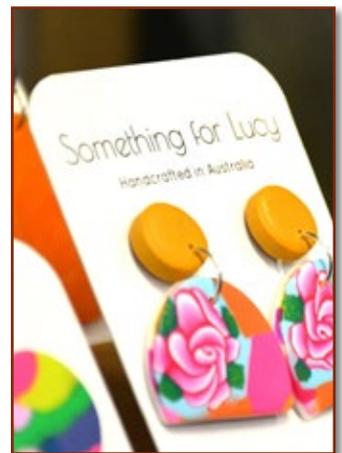
ASQ Skydancers also has a great selection of giftware that is sure to put a smile on anyone's face!

Their range of Australian-made and hand-poured soy candles by Urban Rituelle are a treat for the senses with fragrances including white lotus, geranium leaf and bergamot and black amber, rosewood and cedar among the best sellers.

Pick up a beautiful print by Bendigo-based wildlife artist and illustrator Cleo Rowland, or browse the range of eclectic, handcrafted polymer clay jewellery by Harcourt's own Something for Lucy.

Or give a gift of a beautiful orchid grown by Castlemaine local Gary Sobey or an indoor plant from Dan's Plants in Heatherton.

So, no matter the occasion, drop into ASQ Skydancers this spring and be inspired by their great range of local gift ideas!

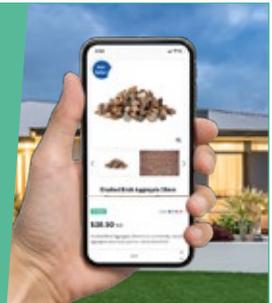


## SHOP ONLINE!

Shop your favourite landscaping materials from the comfort of your own home.

From sand and soil to bark and mulch, decorative pebbles, road base, firewood and more, you can now order everything for your landscaping project online.

Visit [www.asq.net.au](http://www.asq.net.au) and start your spring shopping!



[www.asq.net.au](http://www.asq.net.au) | Where your great outdoors begin!  
a Corner of Langslow and Martin Streets, Castlemaine  
p 03 5472 4053 | e [castlemaine@asq.net.au](mailto:castlemaine@asq.net.au)

## October Reopening of Castlemaine Maternity Service

Maternity services at Castlemaine Health are one step closer to re-opening with the framework for the new model of care on track to be in place by the beginning of October.

The Castlemaine Health Maternity Services Operational Model of Care Working Group, who have been meeting since August 2020, now have a clear, overarching view of the service and are building in the details.

“We’re well on our way to re-opening our maternity service,” says Castlemaine Health CEO, Ian Fisher.

“One of the things we’re especially pleased about is that consumers have had a real seat at the table where the decisions are being made.”



## CHIRP Achieves Rainbow Tick Accreditation

CHIRP Community Health have met national Rainbow Tick accreditation standards for organisations that are committed to safe and inclusive practice, and service delivery for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Gender Diverse, Intersex, and Queer (LGBTIQ) people.

‘This is a fantastic feat of our organisation. Congratulations to our Rainbow Tick Committee and the LGBTIQ Community who have worked tirelessly on helping us to achieve each of these six Rainbow Tick standards, and to all CHIRP staff for their continued great work facilitating better health for the LGBTIQ community,’ says Quality Manager Michael McMahon.

The findings of the most recent Victorian Population Health Survey show that mental health and general physical health are poorer for LGBTIQ adults compared with non-LGBTIQ adults, and a higher proportion have two or more chronic illnesses. Three measures of social capital were significantly lower for LGBTIQ adults, as were food security and home ownership.

‘Community health centres offer effective preventative care, but stigma and discrimination may be barriers for LGBTIQ people to access the health services they need. Rainbow Tick makes it clear to the LGBTIQ community that we are a safe and inclusive place to attend. CHIRP Community Health is committed to ensuring that LGBTIQ people in the Mount Alexander community have access to quality health care,’ said Michael.

‘Our Rainbow Tick Committee will continue working together to ensure our organisation remains committed to LGBTIQ inclusiveness. We also have just recruited a new worker from the Working for Victoria strategy to assist directly with this Committee and its goals,’ said Michael.

Find out more about CHIRP Community Health services and programs on their website: [chirp.org.au](http://chirp.org.au)

### Contact information

Michael McMahon  
Manager- Housing, Family Services, Quality  
CHIRP Community Health  
Ph: 5479 1000  
Email: [mmcmahon@cdch.com.au](mailto:mmcmahon@cdch.com.au)

## Community Consultation on Integration Plan

Mount Alexander Shire communities have the opportunity to have a say on the future of local community health and services.

The Boards of CHIRP Community Health and Castlemaine Health are developing a plan for the integration of community services to ensure the continued provision of accessible and responsive community health services for local communities, and are inviting community input.

Community and staff consultation on the integration plan is being undertaken from 28 September to 6 November 2020.

Lexi Randall-L'Estrange, Chair CHIRP Community Health said, ‘A detailed plan for integration is being developed. It will consider the governance, financial, service, human resource and legal impacts of integration. Community consultation is an important part of this process and will inform the plan.’

Peggy Ronnau, Chair Castlemaine Health said, ‘We encourage everyone to participate in the consultation options. We want to know what is important to you, to strengthen services and shape the future of community health and services in Mount Alexander Shire.’

‘It is important to note that all our staff are valued, and community health and services will be enhanced. Integration would result in the combination of staffing and services currently delivered by both organisations.’

The plan to integrate community health and services aims to:

- Ensure future sustainability
- Enhance access to community health and services across the Mount Alexander Shire
- Strengthen services to better meet the evolving needs of the community
- Share the burden of compliance and ensure that our funding can be targeted to direct services as much as possible
- Enhance opportunities for staff development/training/skill sharing and best practice

### Have your Say

A range of consultation opportunities are available:

#### Fill in a Survey

The survey will be open from 28 September to 30 October:  
[www.surveymonkey.com/r/CHIRPandCHCommunitySurvey](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CHIRPandCHCommunitySurvey)

#### Attend a General Community Online Consultation Session

A range of focus group sessions are being planned for community groups, organisations, service users, staff, volunteers and the general community.

To register to attend a consultation session, please contact Claire Marshall (Senior Consultant, Cube Group) on 0430 305 124 or by email: [Claire.Marshall@cubeigroup.com.au](mailto:Claire.Marshall@cubeigroup.com.au).

Dates for these meetings by Zoom: 20 October, 21 October, 22 October, 27, 28 and 29 October.

#### Contact us at:

Communication and Marketing Manager  
Castlemaine Health, PO Box 50, Castlemaine, VIC 3450  
Email: CHIRP: [chair@cdch.com.au](mailto:chair@cdch.com.au)  
Castlemaine Health: [JMcCarthy@castlemainehealth.org.au](mailto:JMcCarthy@castlemainehealth.org.au)  
Phone: CHIRP Community Health (03) 5479 1000 or  
Castlemaine Health (03) 5471 3505.

### More information

As we move through this process, we will keep people informed and engaged via the website, social media, local media, letters, meetings and consultation opportunities. For more information visit [www.castlemainehealth.org.au/integration-plan](http://www.castlemainehealth.org.au/integration-plan)



# WALKING TOGETHER Towards Reconciliation

## The Tragedy of John Pat

A memorial day is observed each year by Aboriginal people around Australia for a young man who died on 28 September 1983 in the remote north-western town of Roebourne WA. John Pat's death sparked the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, established nearly four years later on.

On the night 16-year-old John Pat died, he had joined in a fight between several Aboriginal men and four off-duty police officers and an Aboriginal police aide. He was badly injured in the fight, as well as on arrival at the police station. When police went to check about an hour later they found he was dead.

The Royal Commission investigated 99 deaths that had occurred either in the custody of the police or of prison and juvenile detention authorities in the eight and a half years to

1989. The final Report, released in April 1991, stated that no deaths were found to be 'the product of deliberate brutality or violence by police or prison officers'.

There have been at least 437 Indigenous deaths in custody since the Royal Commission Report. Aboriginal people are still being taken into custody at a rate far higher than non-Aboriginals. About two-thirds of the report's over 330 recommendations have been implemented.

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

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



Connect  
Mount  
Alexander

Together we thrive

### Coronavirus update

Regional Victoria is now in the Third Step of the Victorian Government's coronavirus (COVID-19) roadmap to reopening. That means there are no restrictions on reasons to leave home, although you must work from home where you can.

Groups of up to ten are able to meet outdoors. Regional households can form a social bubble with one nominated household, allowing up to five visitors. Restaurants and cafes can open, mainly in an outdoor capacity, with a group limit of 10 people and density limits. A face covering is still needed when leaving home, unless you have a lawful exemption.

For more information visit [www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/third-step-restrictions-regional-victoria-covid-19](http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/third-step-restrictions-regional-victoria-covid-19).

### Council elections

The 2020 Council elections will be conducted by postal vote in October. Voters will receive a ballot pack in early October. Council is in caretaker period until 6.00pm on Saturday 24 October to ensure an open and fair election for all candidates. For more information visit [www.vec.vic.gov.au](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au).

### Help is just a call away

If you are feeling lonely or isolated, help is just a phone call away thanks to the Victorian Government's Community Activation and Social Isolation (CASI) initiative. Call the Coronavirus Hotline on 1800 675 398 and press option 3 to speak with a volunteer from the Australian Red Cross who can talk to you about your needs. They can also put you in touch with a local community connector at Council who can organise extra social, emotional or practical support from a network of services and organisations in the community. You can also call our COVID-19 support number on 1800 512 446 to access local support.

### New General Local Law

Council passed its new General Local Law 2020, which is in effect for the next 10 years. Read the law on our website under Local Laws.

### Events grants now open

Our Events Grants Program is now open for events to be held in 2021 and beyond. Applications close on Monday 12 October. For more information or to apply visit [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Grants](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Grants).

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

t (03) 5471 1700  
e [info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au)  
w [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au)



# Managing Weeds under your Fruit Trees

## *Wet Weather means Blossom Blight on Apricot Trees*

Spring seems to be coming a little early this year. While the rain has been generally good, the timing was not good for apricots in Harcourt, unfortunately, providing exactly the right conditions for the dastardly Blossom Blight fungal disease to take hold. Have a look at your apricot tree and check the flowers – by now (depending on the variety), most of the flowers should have fallen off to reveal tiny apricots in their place. If instead you're seeing shrivelled flowers that have stuck on the tree, and possibly even some dead shoots, then you can be fairly sure of the culprit.

## *The Simple Message is that Bare Soil is BAD!*

Meanwhile, the ground is warming up, and weeds have started growing. To decide how to manage weeds around your fruit trees, you first need to think about the cost/benefit analysis. The 'cost' of weeds is that they can look messy, they can make it harder to work around your tree, and they can provide a 'ladder' into the tree for annoying, fruit-eating insects like earwigs. Tall grasses can also be competitive with the tree for water and even nutrients.

However, other plants under your fruit trees can actually be beneficial. Two online classes we hosted recently have really negated the idea that weeds compete with the tree for water and nutrients, and reinforced that the benefits of weeds are huge!

The masterclasses were presented by Dr Christine Jones, a world-renowned Australian soil scientist who lectures and teaches farmers all around the world how to get their soils working and healthy. We've always been in favour of growing 'weeds' or understory plants under fruit trees, but after understanding more of the science behind why plants bring so many benefits to the soil, we've become raving fans!

If you missed them, we recorded them both and put them on our website – you can access them here: [growgreatfruit.com/?s=christine+jones&post\\_type=product](http://growgreatfruit.com/?s=christine+jones&post_type=product).

The simple message is that bare soil is BAD! It heats up (to at least 60°C in summer), loses moisture, loses carbon and the microbes die – in short, it becomes a sterile desert very quickly. The idea that weeds under fruit trees take moisture away from the trees is a myth. The soil needs total ground cover all the time to stay healthy – a tall order in our climate, but in fact there's lots of evidence showing that's what the environment was like before European settlement.

We've known for a long time that healthy microbes (bacteria, fungi etc.) are needed in the soil to convert nutrients into a plant-available form – it's called the Natural Fertility System (NFS). The latest science is showing that the microbes actually live inside the plants for part of their lifecycle, so they are even more important than we knew.

Weeds help to increase the amount of carbon in your soil, they increase the amount of water your soil can hold, they provide a habitat for the all-important microbes, they keep the soil cool in summer (which conserves water), and they provide food for worms and other lovely underground garden helpers.

## *Throw a few edible weeds in your salad*

In the two classes, Christine explains some new science that is showing that the greater the diversity of plants you grow in your garden or paddocks the better. And it turns out that the need for diversity in our diet is true for humans as well, and that our over-simplified and over-processed diet is doing us harm. One study showed that those who regularly include more than 30 different vegetables, herbs and fruits in their diets suffer few autoimmune diseases compared to people with a simple diet. Think about how many different fruit and veggies you normally buy – for most of

us, it's way fewer than 30. Luckily, many weeds and flowers are edible, so chuck a few in the salad, juice or smoothie to increase your weekly intake (just make sure you know which ones are edible!) Even small amounts can make a big difference.

Some weeds are also very good at 'mining' the soil for nutrients and making them available to your fruit trees, particularly the ones with a deep tap-root. Flowering weeds also provide important habitat for insects in the garden (particularly yellow and white flowering plants).

Can you tell we like weeds? For all but the youngest fruit trees, we reckon the balance is firmly in favour of having 'living mulch' under your fruit trees.

However, they still need managing, and three good strategies to keep them under control are:

1. mow them occasionally (but not too low),
2. plant the things you want to grow there, like flowers, herbs, or vegetables, or
3. use animals (geese, sheep, chooks, guinea pigs ...) to mow them for you!

## *Mulch with Care*

Mulching is also popular, and is better than bare soil, but plants are 5-30 times better at building soil carbon than mulch, so living plants win. If you do decide to mulch instead, be aware that it can be just as effective at stopping water soaking into the soil as preventing evaporation. It's also a great idea to put some compost or worm castings underneath your mulch before you lay it, to help kick-start the biology in your soil. And a word of warning – don't mulch until after any frost risk has passed.

**Hugh and Katie Finlay are certified organic orchardists, and also teach organic home fruit growing. Their offer a free Weekly Fruit Tips newsletter, and free weekly online workshops called 'The 5 Key Steps to Growing Great Fruit' – sign up at [growgreatfruit.com/webinar-landing](http://growgreatfruit.com/webinar-landing). They also offer more than 50 online short courses and the year-long Grow Great Fruit Home-study Program - visit [growgreatfruit.com](http://growgreatfruit.com) for details.**

**Hugh and Katie Finlay are founding members of the Harcourt Organic Farming Co-op, and offer Grow Great Fruit organic home fruit growing courses. Head to [growgreatfruit.com](http://growgreatfruit.com) to sign up for their free Weekly Fruit Tips newsletter and register for the free 5 Key Steps to Happy, Healthy Fruit Trees webinar.**

## Castlemaine Bus Lines Harcourt Services Monday to Friday

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

# Look after Your Soil in Spring

This local garden advice from Janyce McMurtrie, which was first included in October 2016, holds true for this spring – it's been another wet year so far.

Hello Garden lovers,

We have had so much rain in the past two months that it is important to consider and protect your soil structure. When the soil is so wet, it is easy for it to become compacted. This creates issues for soil health and therefore plant health. It is best to be gentle with the soil and to disturb your garden beds as little as possible. This means little or no digging until the soil dries out a bit.

Being gentle with soil doesn't stop us from preparing for spring. It is a great time to fertilise garden beds and lawns in preparation for spring growth. It is also the perfect time to feed bulbs that are finishing flowering. Adding composted manure or compost at this time allows bulbs to take up all those good nutrients to store energy for next year's growth and flowering before they become dormant.

If you haven't already done so, it is still a good time to stake or label your bulbs to help you locate them after they have died down. While small stakes are quite subtle, it is not always pleasant to have labels floating around the garden. They can detract from the display and can also get lost and displaced. It is helpful to know where and what your plants are though. So, an alternative to labels is to keep a record of what you plant.

I know that I struggle to remember all of the plant names, so I keep a record. This is usually a list or a simple sketch for each garden bed. Having information available helps us when it is time to make decisions about infill planting

or garden bed renewal. We can refer to our records to help remember the names of plants that are thriving so that we can buy more of the same or similar and avoid others that have not been so successful.

The garden is just flourishing at present with so much rain and a few warm days. The soil is yet to warm up, but it won't be long now. It is a wonderful time for gardening.

*This month we are:*

- Infill planting;
- Planting early spring vegetables; and
- Covering frost tender plants.

Happy Gardening

Janyce



solar power | battery storage | hot water |  
insulation | eco lighting | paints and oils |  
eco products for house and garden

49 Lyons Street, Newstead 3462 Tues-Sat from 10am  
t: 5472 4160 e: newstead@enviroshop.com.au  
www.enviroshop.com.au

ADVERTISEMENT

## Maree Edwards MP

STATE MEMBER FOR BENDIGO WEST

Listening Posts are postponed until further notice.  
My office is still available for assistance, please  
contact us on 5410 2444 or  
maree.edwards@parliament.vic.gov.au

Address: 16 Lockwood Road (PO Box 1238), Kangaroo Flat, Vic 3555

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

Funded from Parliamentary Budget



KN249729

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

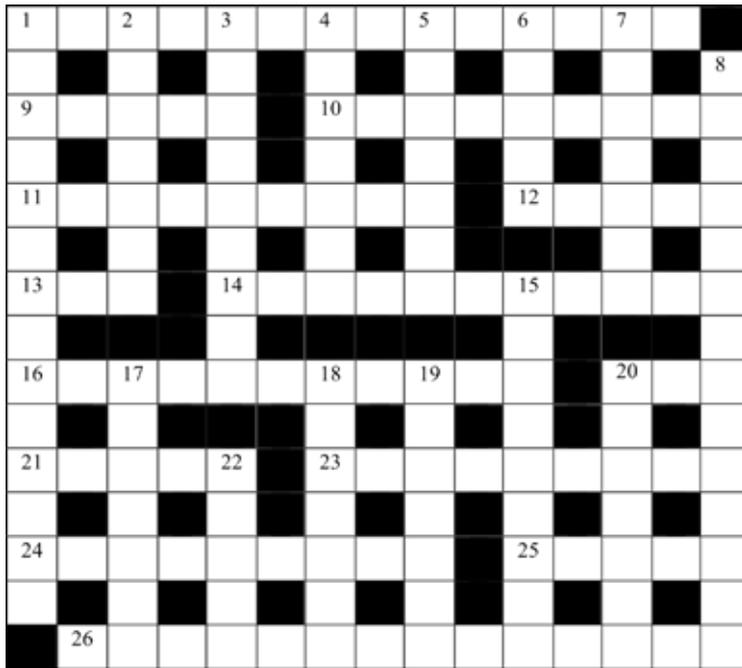
For inclusion in *Harcourt News/The Core* contact the Editor Robyn Miller 0467 670 271 or email: [news@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:news@harcourt.vic.au). Contributions of news items, articles, photos and letters are welcome, as are advertisements which help to cover production costs. For placement of advertising please contact Pauline Wilkinson via email at: [advertising@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:advertising@harcourt.vic.au).

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

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

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

# October Xword 2020 © McW December '17



### Down:

1. Coming from the south at the crossroads, what he does to avoid Northerners gives him a new lease of life. (5,3,6)
2. Finish of listening devices ingratiates... (7)
3. If he errs under attack, he might re-run reds or go for an alternative arrangement. (9)
4. This caliper doesn't fit, even though it's identical to the original. (7)
5. What's expected if the TPP gets to swap the Toyota for a Porsche. (5,2)
6. A bother for him/her, not you? Not second-rate, either... (5)
7. Same as up to task? (5,2)
8. Horrors! I engage an ogreish groaner to hear singer or go for one of four... (6,8)
15. Horseless cowboy twinkles still. (5,4)
17. Does harmony of this sort involve martial arts? (7)
18. A drink that Henry used to round up outlaws? (7)
19. Messy Augustine or Thomas might provide gambling tips. (7)
20. One problem connecting a nail bed. (3,4)
22. Sane learner gets into swimming rows. (5)

### Across:

1. You can traverse routes on this rough map, and maybe find them. (8,6)
9. Coming or going it's the same—wallopers will get you. (5)
10. Globe-trotting with dolls and small furniture here? (4-5)
11. Yearned for in a thin period of busy work? (5,4)
12. King measures up against the page. (5)
13. It's possible that queen's conveyance even shames those conveyed by it sometimes. (1,1,1)
14. Raison d'être useful more than once? (4-7)
16. If a telecom swore faithfully to have us connected and then reneged, we'd be put in an invidious position because there'd be no distance communication... (11)
20. Kyabram is the central support system for milk producers. (3)
21. Best idiocy to be had outside Sydney? (5)
23. Person who cares ponders how to be the person who shows it. (9)
24. I feature in sex event with lots of coverage. (9)
25. '70s travel jaunts on sofas? (5)
26. Before he sculpts a region, he might practise on lugs. (7,7)

# September 2020 Xword solution © McW November '17



### Down:

1. [Let client]decide how to frame reasoning faculty. [9]
2. [Dustier]4-WD has the [right] to be more robust. [8]
3. [Togetherness] for offspring in tertiary studies? [6]
4. Result of heavy downpour on the kennel? [Well? It rained cats and dogs...]
5. Endless [noise] mixed in back-flipping [star] for big burner. [8]
6. Plain herb: subject/predicate x lea. etc. [6] [medicinal herb='simple'; also 'simple' sentences contain single subject and predicate—cf 'compound' sentences with more than one clause/subject/etc.]
7. Jack-pulses? [Well?]
13. Mix-up [gave beers] out. [9]
15. Poor chap could be north-east Vic MP, perhaps? [Stood for seat of Indi...]
17. A new [manic era] is ushered in by him. [8]
18. Avoid the bloody chorus, or bits at the ends of lines... [7]
20. Utopian to a 'T', and one of which it has us in? [Well? Rob without the 'T'...]
22. Lettuce [cos] persuades when split by inappropriate tool. [6]
- 23, 11ac. French wizards' union? [Nod to the Alliance Française...]

### Across:

8. Would you, in a modern university, enrol in a [unit on "Foolery"], taught by [one loony fruit? No way!!] [3,2,4,4!]
9. Brides like Smetena's [Battered Bride] might end up like this, especially if the first 'r' is replaced by a second 'r'... [6]
10. Backward marketers [PR] mixed up in [doping]scandal are actively letting charges lapse. [8]
11. (see 23dn)
12. Apple's idea of a good lie down gets goat... [Well? A cup of tea, a Bex, and...]
14. Bitter top card [ace] mangled [crib]. [7]
16. [Late]donkey among students' texts. [7]
19. Taken to court about the type of car sold. (4)
21. Over the ante for previous [ex-] sown lawn?
24. He ducks his share with a [lame grin]. [8]
25. Can I, male of the species, really accept this classification? (Ironically, only by dropping my ends...) [6]
26. This [is not nice, dear], [insincere toad] causes [desecration in] the work place. [13]



## Weather and Water

This year's rain total to the end of September was a bumper 539.5 mm! This is 220 mm above the total rainfall at the same time last year. We still haven't achieved the 2016 total of 723.5 on 30th September of that year. That was the year the extreme run-off at the foot of the dam drowned the jasmine planted there. It has taken us 4 years to re-establish 3 screening jasmine plants in the same spot. This year, so far so good, although it's 'squishy' underfoot, and the lower leaves of the plants have turned brown. If the rain keeps up in October, we might be looking for an even hardier climber in that spot.

Reservoir levels in the Coliban system are at 89.5% which is comforting for those of us relying on irrigation, but it's also good to know that township water is secure.

Yes, it's spring and the local wildlife is on the move. We think this echidna was very young as it came so close to us as we sat on the dam bank. It must be true that they have poor eyesight because it didn't react to our large shapes looming over it. It did however, react to movement and sound. By sitting very still we were able to observe it closely. It tried to burrow a couple of times, but the weeds in the bank appeared to defeat it. We let it be, and it was nowhere to be seen half an hour later.

Now is the time to keep a look-out for echidnas and native tortoises crossing our roads – particularly on Reservoir and McIvor Roads. These roads unfortunately have higher speed limits but because of the Barkers Creek Reservoir and the many dams on Reservoir Roads these animals are frequently seen in spring.



### Current Reservoir Levels

Storage	Capacity at full supply	Current volume		Volume same time last year	
	megalitres	megalitres	% full	megalitres	% full
Upper Coliban	37,770	36,625	97.0%	37,612	99.6%
Lauriston	19,790	17,840	90.1%	19,460	98.3%
Malmsbury	12,034	7,854	65.3%	9,862	82.0%
<b>Total to October 4</b>	69,594	62,319	89.5%	66,934	96.2%
<b>Total to September 3</b>	69,594	60,842	87.4%	64,334	92.4%

Data from: [www.coliban.com.au/about-us/reservoir-levels](http://www.coliban.com.au/about-us/reservoir-levels) – 4 October 2020

## Re-invigorating a Rural Property

The Core chatted with Ann Coffey about the experience of living on a rural block of land.

Ann and Brian Coffey bought 55 acres in Coopers Road in 2015 and moved in two years later. Ann said, 'I can see we have a prime opportunity to make this property a haven for plants and birdlife.' Ann quickly joined the Harcourt Valley Landcare Group. 'I have found the contacts available in the group most useful and I will be reaching out for more advice for a good while yet.'



Having bought a house with a wonderful view but with an abandoned orchard, Ann and Brian set about doing the right thing – that is, to remove the orchard and restore the pasture. They realised that having an untended orchard leads to 'fruit fly heaven', and so 25,000 trees were bulldozed and piled high for burning. The follow-up required to establish pasture is the next big challenge for these busy folk who have owned Castlemaine Timber and Hardware Store in Barkers Street Castlemaine for 30 years.

'We have cut and painted (with poison), 50 roadside fruit trees which were near our property. We were pleased when the Council came along and pulled out the rest of the trees by the roots. Our other challenges include: rabbits, foxes, weeds (including gorse and cape weed) and small gum trees growing in the dam bank.'

'We plan to stock the area that was planted in orchard to help keep the grass down, but the really special areas are where the property joins Mount Alexander. Here there are magnificent trees and rocks, and we particularly want to preserve this for wildlife.'

'We have to learn on the job; this is a challenge for us, but we are still enthusiastic about being here, and I have many ideas which I want to put together in an overall plan for this beautiful place. We originally lived in Mandurang before we moved to Castlemaine, but Harcourt and this property is the perfect home for us and our extended family.'



# Wildflower Walk

The Landcare group had a treat on the last Sunday in September. Members enjoyed a Wildflower Walk with local botanist Bonnie Humphreys who identified 23 species in the space of less than an hour at the Harcourt Flora Reserve.

Through the months of spring there is a cycle of wildflowers, and a walk once a month is recommended at this special area in Bingham's Road, south of the Harcourt Leisure Centre.

The common names of the species identified were:

- ✿ Billy Buttons
- ✿ Cats Claw Grevillea
- ✿ Climbing Sundew
- ✿ Common Shrub Myrtle
- ✿ Creamy candles – scented and attracts moths
- ✿ Early Nancy (male)
- ✿ Grey Everlasting
- ✿ Gross Bitter Pea
- ✿ Hairy Stylyewort – insect eater
- ✿ Hedge wattle
- ✿ Honey Pot
- ✿ Milkmaids
- ✿ Ploughshare wattle
- ✿ Rice flowers
- ✿ Sweet Bursaria – this is the plant which has the symbiotic relationship with the Eltham Copper Butterfly
- ✿ Sword Sedge
- ✿ Tall Sundew – insect eater
- ✿ Scented Sundew – insect eater
- ✿ Shiny Everlasting
- ✿ Stork's Bill
- ✿ Waxlip Orchids
- ✿ Yam Daisy – also known as Murnong

October's Working Bee on Sunday 25 October will be held at the wetland in Victoria Road, where there is much weeding to be done. Anyone who wishes to join is most welcome; see the Secretary's contact details below.

October is also the month for the AGM of the group which will again be by Zoom.

Secretary  
Robyn Miller  
0467 670 271



*Pink Bells (Tetradlea ciliata).*



*Creamy Candles (Stackhousia monogyna Labill.)*



*Primrose Goodenia (Goodenia blackiara).*



*Grey everlasting (Ozothamnus obcordatus).*



*Hairy Stylewort (Levenhookia dubia).*



*Waxflower (Philothea myoporoides).*



*Stork's bill (Pelargonium rodneyanum).*



# Birdwatching for Beginners

Connecting Country has teamed up with local birding legend, Damian Kelly, to invite the community to our next event, Birdwatching for Beginners, to take place on Saturday October 17.

The COVID-19 lockdown period has seen a ten-fold increase in the number of new birdwatchers around the country, with a similar trend here in central Victoria. People are craving nature and the outdoors, prompting them to navigate their way through the maze that is bird watching and enjoying the challenges of how to differentiate some of the trickier species.

Connecting Country is excited to have local author and bird enthusiast Damian Kelly present an overview and introduction to bird watching. Damian is the author of the terrific book *Castlemaine Bird Walks*. Copies of this book will be available to participants.

The beginner's event will take place over two sessions on 17th October: an online presentation with Damian Kelly from 11 am to 12 pm, followed by a practical session in person in the afternoon, from 1.30 pm to 4 pm. The practical session will involve a team of 4-5 beginners teaming up with an experienced local birdwatcher to conduct some field bird surveys on public land across our region. This is an excellent opportunity to visit some great bird watching sites, with an experienced mentor to guide you through the afternoon. Participants will have a chance to ask questions and learn directly from mentors.

**When:** Saturday 17 October 2020.

**Theory session with Damian Kelly:** 11:00 am to 12:00 pm

- 500 tickets available
- Online event
- All welcome
- Targeted to adults but suitable for all ages and abilities
- To book – see the web link below.

**Practical session with mentor:** 1.30 pm to 4.00 pm

- 30 tickets available
- Field event
- Targeted to participants 15 years and older who are keen to learn bird watching in a small group setting
- Requires a basic level of fitness and involves walking over uneven ground
- Copies of Connecting Country Woodland Birds brochure and 'Castlemaine Bird Walks' book available for attendees
- To book – see the web link below.

**Cost:** both sessions are free of charge

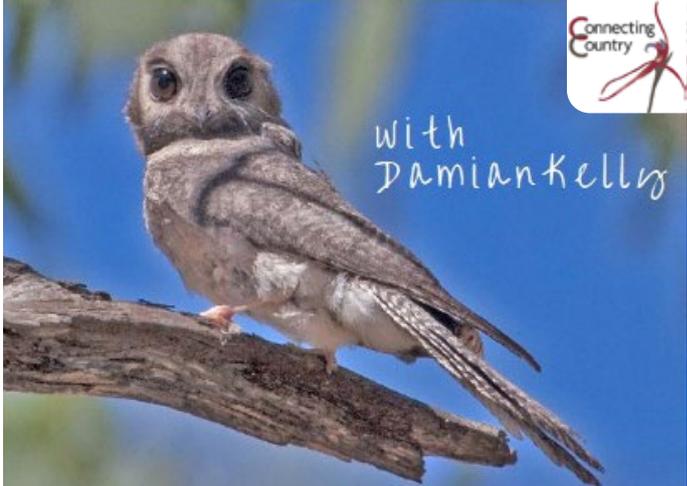
**Please use the link below, for more information and contact details:**

[connectingcountry.org.au/get-set-for-birdwatching-for-beginners-17-october-2020/](http://connectingcountry.org.au/get-set-for-birdwatching-for-beginners-17-october-2020/)

Ivan Carter  
Connecting Country

Connecting Country presents

## BIRDWATCHING FOR BEGINNERS



With Damian Kelly

SATURDAY 17 OCTOBER 2020

THEORY SESSION: 11AM-12PM  
PRACTICAL SESSION: 1.30PM-4PM

THIS EVENT IS SUPPORTED BY THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT: COMMUNITIES ENVIRONMENT PROGRAM.

**PLEASE REGISTER:**  
[CONNECTINGCOUNTRY.ORG.AU/EVENTS](http://CONNECTINGCOUNTRY.ORG.AU/EVENTS)

# HOUSE PAINTING PLUS



HELPING CREATE BEAUTIFUL HOMES  
INTERIOR & EXTERIOR

David Jeffries: **0414 262 488**



## EVERETT

Plumbing & Gas

- Residential • Industrial • Commercial

Ryan Everett  
0419 875 664  
[ryaneverett@bigpond.com](mailto:ryaneverett@bigpond.com)  
Licence no: 47827



# “The people coughing, the people gasping for air - it was terrifying.”

Sam was admitted to the COVID ward, struggling to breathe, to the sound of others around him coughing and gasping for air. One by one, he watched patients get taken into negative pressure rooms, sealed off by multiple doors, with no support network.

As a healthcare worker who's now recovering at home, Sam's hope is that in this fight against coronavirus, we all understand that we are the front line.

We all have a part to play by staying home to help stop the spread of the virus. If you have symptoms - please get tested. Payments of \$450 are available to help you stay home and wait for your test result.

STAYING  
APART | KEEPS  
US | TOGETHER

To learn more of Sam's story go to  
[vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS](https://vic.gov.au/CORONAVIRUS)

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

