

# HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE



Edition 111 – December 2023

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

## Our Local Eyesore



Every now and then, Harcourt residents build up a head of steam about the appalling condition of the roundabout that serves as the main entrance to our small town. In 2017 that is exactly what happened when residents could no longer see oncoming traffic due to the height of the trees. And to compound matters, cars and trucks were using the land flanking the roundabout as a parking area.

The then Secretary of Harcourt Progress Association, Jacqueline Brodie-Hanns, approached VicRoads to improve the roundabout ... and the second iteration of the roundabout was begun.

VicRoads had a small amount of money that was made available to HPA. Under the project management of Jacqueline, an agreement was brokered resulting in the

*Continued on page 3 ...*

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### DEADLINES & PUBLICATION DATES

We aim to publish online 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.**



**MERRY CHRISTMAS**  
& a Happy New Year  
From all at The Core



# An Open Letter

Dear friends,

The state government has just released its DRAFT Kangaroo Harvest Management Plan 2024-2028 for comment which must be submitted by Monday December 11, 2023. Here is the link: [www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/wildlife-trade/comment/vic-kangaroo-harvest-management-plan-2024-28#daff-page-main](http://www.dcceew.gov.au/environment/wildlife-trade/comment/vic-kangaroo-harvest-management-plan-2024-28#daff-page-main) and the email address for making comment is: [wta@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:wta@dcceew.gov.au)

There are two important and very concerning points to note:

The draft plan does not exclude Mount Alexander Shire despite council's letter of July 28, 2023, calling on the government to remove the shire from the plan, and it has added many more shires throughout Victoria;

The draft plan proposes that kangaroos can be killed on public land. This means that shooters will now be slaughtering kangaroos in Mount Alexander Shire's parks and reserves — the one last remaining safe haven for these animals. This will further increase the cruelty and risks to residents' and visitors' safety and peaceful amenity.

This change is a clear indication that this industry has wiped out so many kangaroos across the state that they have to resort to targeting these animals in areas that should be a place of safety for all protected Australian wildlife. When mass killing of wildlife occurs in state and national parks in Victoria, the gates are locked and the activity occurs during the night and out of the gaze of the general public.

Once approved, the KHMP will be in place for the next five years and there will be no further opportunity for input. So it is vital you respond to the invitation to comment on this draft before December 11, 2023.

To assist the Minister in considering comments, the department encourages you to provide comments under the following headings:

Sustainability of the harvest	Licensing
Monitoring	Welfare
Quota setting	Other

Note that Mount Alexander is to be in the Loddon Mallee shooting zone.

Under no circumstances are public lands within the shire to be included in the plan.

In September, 2,600 people signed my petition Save Mt Alexander Shire's Kangaroos.

*Thank you, Katherine*

For further information:

[www.creativecowboyfilms.tv/earth/victorian-kangaroo-harvest-management-plan-2024-2028](http://www.creativecowboyfilms.tv/earth/victorian-kangaroo-harvest-management-plan-2024-2028)

# Harcourt Primary Schools' Reunion of Prep classes of 1962



Front row: Julie McHale, Faye Hards, Joy Wright, and Dianne Bertoini. Back row: Ken Ellery, Tony Cordy, Judith Mactier, Jeff Gartside, Geoff Baker, Nick Quirk.

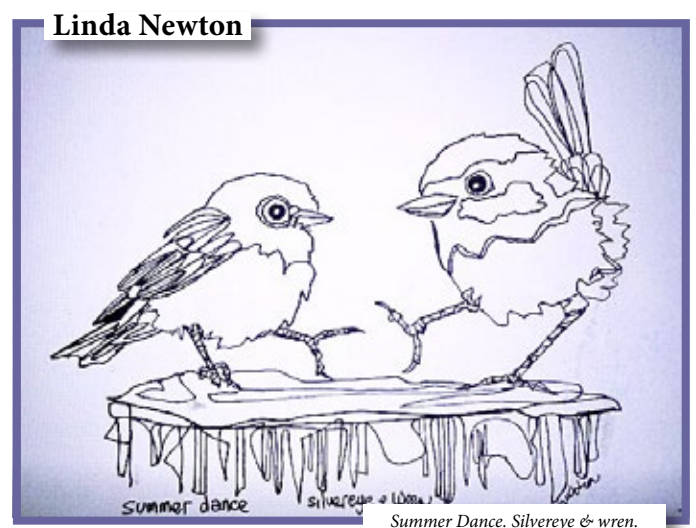
There was another get together for the Harcourt Primary School Prep class of 1962. We invited Harcourt North this time because it was a smaller school with fewer prep students. When we were at school we used to have Harcourt North and Barkers Creek join us every Monday so we could get to know each other, and it enabled us to have a bigger group to participate in events.

Ken and Nick were from Harcourt North. Wayne Mitchell, also from Harcourt North, joined us later in the afternoon but missed out on being in the photo.

Our teacher, Mrs Peter Harris (Miss Elaine Maple), was unwell on the day and could not join us this time. We look forward to her joining us again next year.

This year, we held the event at Faye Hards' house. Andrew Blake, the Principal of the Harcourt Valley School opened the school so we could tour the new building. This was very much appreciated by all of us. We commented that when we went to school we were never congratulated for any achievements; we only got the strap for misbehaving. How things have changed!

We had afternoon tea and we had many stories to tell each other, with the last to leave at 8.30 pm. What a day! We look forward to next year.





## Our Local Eyesore

... From page 1

arrangement that VicRoads would forward to HPA: a list of pre-qualified landscape design consultants; a letter outlining the grant and required deliverables. HPA was to manage the invitation to quote for landscape design, conduct community consultations once designs were received, oversee the final design under the oversight of VicRoads and begin the construction works which were to be completed by June 2018. Long-term maintenance of the roundabout was to be agreed between MASC, VicRoads and HPA and a new parking area to be determined between MASC and VicRoads.

Many willing hands, over several weeks in 2018, helped clear the roundabout, lay down the gravel, arrange the rocks and plant hundreds of natives. Most people thought the roundabout looked great and an improvement on the long-neglected previous version. The maintenance, however, proved to be beyond the capacity of Harcourt volunteers and the amount of work had been vastly underestimated in the original plan. Over the ensuing months and years, the weeds became more prolific, and the roundabout seemed to grow in size as the numbers of volunteers dwindled.

Finally, HPA said, 'enough is enough, the roundabout needs to be maintained by Regional Roads Victoria.' RRV has made some desultory attempts to maintain the roundabout since that decision, but it is always left looking sad and neglected. HPA has had several meetings with Regional Roads Victoria about the roundabout and last year a new design was developed. Sadly, whilst Regional Roads had the money at the time to develop the design, we were informed a couple of months ago that it no longer has the funds to implement it.

A new group of volunteers willing to maintain the roundabout have been denied access to the roundabout on the grounds that it was due for maintenance. As most of us will have observed recent 'maintenance' means a cursory trim around the edges.

**So, is it time for a public meeting, a petition, a delegation? Watch this space and the HPA Facebook page.**

## Council office hours and bin services over Christmas

The Castlemaine Civic Centre will be closed from Monday 25 December and will reopen on Tuesday 2 January.

### *Changes to kerbside bin collection*

There will be changes to kerbside bin collection over the Christmas and New Year period in Mount Alexander Shire.

Monday 25 December collection will take place on Saturday 23 December.

Monday 1 January collection will take place on Saturday 30 December.

As usual, Council recommends that residents place their bins out the night before collection day to ensure they're out in time for collection early the following day.

Normal Monday kerbside collection services will resume from Monday 8 January 2024

**Please note – this will only impact residents who have their bins collected on Mondays. There will be no changes to kerbside collections on any other days over this period.**



**Harcourt  
Christmas Carols  
& BBQ  
Sunday December 17  
3pm to 7pm  
Stanley Park  
Craft • Entertainment  
BBQ • Santa  
Thompsons Foundry Band  
Carols**

RSVP:  
[alison.curtis@harcourtprogress.org.au](mailto:alison.curtis@harcourtprogress.org.au)



Supporting your community  
**Community Bank  
Maldon & District**  
**B Bendigo Bank**

03 5475 1747  
[MaldonMailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au](mailto:MaldonMailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au)



**HARCOURT VALLEY VINEYARD**  
Visit Bendigo's Most Awarded Winery

- Weddings, events and functions
- 2021 Brides Choice Awards winner

Open Sunday 12–4 pm or by appointment only  
Bookings please call Marie on 0431 996 515  
Harcourt Valley Vineyards  
3339 Harmony Way, Harcourt, Vic 3453  
P: 03 5474 2223





# WALKING TOGETHER Towards Makarrata

*Makarrata is 'coming together after a struggle, facing the facts of wrongs and living again in peace.'*

## Human Rights and UNDRIP

Djaara history is embedded in the landscape here and embedded in 'Country' as a broader concept. This year I had the privilege of being guided by senior Djaara Elder Uncle Rick Nelson – winding through streets, through coppiced forest, along rocky slopes, and along remnant wetland. Locally, this place is sometimes referred to as 'upside down country', a reference to the aftermath of mining, but First Peoples' history pre-colonisation, is still told through the earth, rock, trees and other life and by First Peoples who have survived settler colonialism. Ancient and more recent knowledge is shared and culture is continued.

Djaara are here caring for people and Country, having never ceded sovereignty. I walk with respect for Elders past and present, their efforts towards self-determination and the love they put into young people and future generations.

Human Rights Day, on December 10, honours the United Nations General Assembly's adoption and proclamation, in 1948, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The day's theme this year is:

### *'Consolidating and Sustaining Human Rights Culture into the Future'*

Learning about Australian history over my years growing on this continent, it has long been made clear that Australia, land of the 'fair go', as has been so often asserted, often did not reflect the realities of ongoing colonialism. I've lived for most of my life in a settler colonial state. Makarrata and conciliation requires that settler colonialists unlearn persistently dominant false narratives, and listen to, not only stories of survival, but also of culture; what once was and what still is. Truth Telling requires listening to First Peoples as they continue the culture and resistance of their ancestors, strengthen communities, and share their deep connections to Country.

The UN has long marked the failure of Australia's national agreement

to Close The Gap - gaps which have broadened in many areas since that agreement was made.

While human rights are universal rights, the UN adopted the Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007, having acknowledged that there are specific areas of need affecting the fulfilment of indigenous people's rights. The very substantial negotiations towards the declaration included voices of indigenous peoples from around the world. UNDRIP was endorsed by the Australian government in 2009 but there is much to be done for Australia to live up to this declaration.

### *The central themes of UNDRIP include:*

- the right to self-determination
- the right to be recognized as distinct peoples
- the right to free, prior and informed consent
- the right to be free from discrimination

There is a marked need to include UNDRIP in our legal and political systems. The path towards Voice (constitutionally enshrined or not), Treaty and Truth complements the principles embedded in UNDRIP. So far, five Australian states and territories have committed to Treaty processes since the release of the Uluru Statement.

At a state level in Victoria, Voice is marked by the First People's Assembly formed in 2019. The need for Truth Telling then saw the establishment of the Yoorook Justice Commission in 2021. Processes towards a statewide Treaty and more localised Treaties are also underway.

Djaara (Dja Dja Wurrung People) achieved Registered Aboriginal Party status through self-determination in 2013 when the historic Recognition and the Settlement Agreement with the state government was signed. Through Djaara, many great things have since been accomplished. In November, Djaara celebrated the ten-

year anniversary of that agreement.

Yapenya (Dja Dja Wurrung) – to sing, to dance, to gather, to reflect, to celebrate

*'We are creating positive outcomes for our community, in our local community. When Dja Dja Wurrung People are empowered, great things happen – not just for our own communities, but for all. As we come together in November to celebrate, we do so in honour of our Ancestors, with gratitude for the wisdom of our Elders, and with a profound commitment to creating a brighter path for the next generation.'*

*Djaara*

### *Links*

**Australian Human Rights Commission (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice)**  
[humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice](https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice)

**UNDRIP**  
[humanrights.gov.au/our-work/un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples-1](https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/un-declaration-rights-indigenous-peoples-1)

**First Peoples Assembly**  
[www.firstpeoplesvic.org/](http://www.firstpeoplesvic.org/)

**Yoorook Justice Commission**  
[yoorookjusticecommission.org.au](http://yoorookjusticecommission.org.au)

**Djaara - Settlement Agreement**  
[djadjawurrung.com.au/galka-our-organisation/yapenya](http://djadjawurrung.com.au/galka-our-organisation/yapenya)

Floria Maschek is an ally and member of Friends of Nalderun (FoN). FoN members are guided by Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation and are diverse individuals and representatives of many local community networks, supporting Nalderun's visions and work. Nalderun Education Aboriginal Corporation supports the Aboriginal Community and is led by Aboriginal people while providing many learning and cultural opportunities to the broader community. Nalderun is a Dja Dja Wurrung word meaning 'all together'.

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





# Chatting with Harcourt CWA

Hello everyone. Well, this is our last chat for the year and, after re-reading previous posts, hasn't there been a lot to chat about? We have

had three very successful fund raisers, guest speakers attending our monthly meetings, visits to other Branches and places of interest, visits to local cafes and restaurants whenever we can and our monthly craft sessions – a lovely time to sit and talk together while showing our creative side and, of course, lots of birthdays to celebrate and eat cake.

If you would like to join us next year, do pop in and say hello, stop for a while and have a cuppa and a chat with us. We meet on the first Thursday of the month at 1.30 pm at the Harcourt Leisure Centre in Bingham Road.



*From our "Christmas in July" event this year. Almost as good as the real thing.*

On behalf of us all at Harcourt CWA, may I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

*Lyn Rule  
Publicity Officer, Harcourt CWA*

## Harcourt Carpet Bowls.

The Carpet Bowls members have started the Summer Season of bowls with a small but enthusiastic group of players.

We would like to have a few more come to join us at 7.30 pm at the Harcourt Leisure Centre.

We will pause for the Christmas season on Wednesday night 13 December 2023 with a supper and recommence on Wednesday night 17 January 2024, playing until Wednesday 27 March 2024.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all.

## A Note from the School Bus Driver

You may have heard we have had an interesting start of the week on the bus.

On Monday, I had a truck and trailer coming towards me and the trailer moved a bit, so I moved a bit. I ended up just off the road and hit a branch which lodged a portion of it in the upper left windscreen with a loud thud.

I investigated it at the next safe stop and felt it was safe to continue.

At school, Mr. Blake and I discussed the situation and had a chat with all the children. Good questions were asked, and all were answered with the known information.

I would like to thank the students on board for their care of other students and their attitude. I would also like to thank the parents the next day checking in with me to make sure I was fine and how the company handled it.

## Mount Alexander Shire Council Waste Management Strategy 2023-2033

Working together for a healthy, connected shire



For more information on the Shire's Waste Management Strategy:  
[www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Council/News-and-updates/Council-adopts-Waste-Management-Strategy](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Council/News-and-updates/Council-adopts-Waste-Management-Strategy)



*Spotted in the garden.*

2023  
This has been [a year] of  
frustration  
loneliness, of “companionship” ~ waiting ~

To ‘be’ - found  
[waiting] to ‘be’ heard.  
Waiting; to be “seen”

“Forever”??? - end date???  
[that has] never actually quite “fitted in”.  
[or]  
being; stamped out [in a “way”] that has  
allowed me ~ to feel;  
free  
liberated  
- unchained by a sense of “needing  
to” “become”.

The  
endless  
countless  
insufferable  
[that] has tried many times to;  
derail me.  
subject me.  
[to this terrified feeling] of “not being good  
enough”.

[12 months]  
of a “year”  
that has surpassed ~ into becoming the very  
beginning [of] The END.

Countless days  
of “counting down”  
staring back at [a clock] of ‘Time’ itself,  
telling me what the “time” [actually is];

Time; for laughter.

Time; for tears.  
Time; for innocence and romance to  
bloom...

Time; for challenges beyond [time] of  
waiting | still.  
so perfectly [still], and  
just continuing to wait - again and again  
and again....

1 year - of 12 points.  
inside a mind-numbing | stand still.  
[that]  
continues to move ~ without force,  
without real physical “evidence”  
[of]  
the actual momentum itself.

This “momentum” is now finally at an  
ENDING.  
at the ending of this one “year”  
which will always be remembered as  
‘2023’.

Where have I come in all of “this”?...  
‘WHO’ have I “become” ~ across these 12  
“months”?  
of a journey that shall continue ~ ...

The contrast between [then and now] is  
confronting.  
It is an unavoidable chain of events,  
that have now officially transpired into  
this “ending”.

One glimpse of my energy takes me back  
into [self-reflection];

an eye can see these 12 points,  
these 12 “months”

[that] have now (round up) into ~ a sim-  
ple one still image of “me”.

I look at my image.  
I look at me.

And after 12 months of battling a journey  
that has become the deafening of [perfect  
still]

I can honestly say that I can see the “after  
effects”.

;  
I am more aware and understanding [and  
patient] to this entire “journey”  
[in which] it technically began the day I  
was born.

but  
this sense of crescendo - it all came to  
affect [and] became so physically appar-  
ent - right smack bam- in this time frame  
called ‘2023’.

Had I not received and accepted this  
“calling” out to ‘me’,  
had I never lived through this entire  
12-month catalyst,  
then I would not “be” the readiness that I  
AM; right now, today.

As I farewell 2023,  
I prepare for absolutely everything,  
[that] is now officially on its way...  
and  
I would not “Be” who “I am” right now  
without .... 2023.

Community Bank  
Maldon & District

Bendigo Bank

## Free Wildlife Kits available in Maldon & Dunolly

It’s that time of year when the days  
are getting warmer, and our wildlife is  
moving around during the cooler dusk  
and dawn hours. It’s part of rural life,  
and we can drive to the conditions,  
but wildlife can be unpredictable and  
become victim to life-threatening  
injuries from road traffic.

Community Bank Maldon &  
District have free wildlife kits, kindly  
put together by the volunteers at Red  
Box Wildlife Shelter. These kits are a  
terrific addition to your car (pop one

under your seat) so that you have all  
the information you might need in  
an “injured wildlife emergency”. The  
kit includes a laminated card full of  
practical and helpful information as  
well as contact details for experts able  
to provide guidance and support when  
needed.

Kits are available at our Maldon and  
Dunolly branches, they are free, just  
pop in and grab one for your car – and  
maybe another for your neighbour/  
partner/work car!



Community Bank Maldon & District staff  
member, Emma Karst sharing the helpful  
wildlife kits available at Maldon & Dunolly  
branches (photo: Tarrangower Times)



## Councillor Comment



Hi, All.

Well, we arrived home safely after our trip to the news that a new granddaughter had arrived. My brother pointed out we did not even have to boil the water!

On Tuesday evening we had one of the longest Council meetings I can recall. Congratulations to Mathew Driscoll, our new Mayor, and Rosie Annear, our new Deputy Mayor. Mayor Driscoll had a large contingent of family to witness the event. You have heard my thoughts on this before, but we have an excellent Council and wonderful staff. This is not always the case in other municipalities. For those who want to know more about Council, our monthly meetings are open to the public and we do set aside time for questions from the gallery. The more the merrier at our meetings.

One of the strongly debated items at the meeting was whether we should allow dogs on the playing surface of the Western Oval.

The decision was made to allow dogs on the Western Oval. However, I don't support any further changes to our local laws by extending this to other venues where organised sport is played. Of course, people love their dogs, but they must be under control when out in public, and they are not allowed on the playing surface of our main ovals.

A planning matter before Council involved subdividing an existing house off a farming property. The officers recommended refusal and Council agreed with that recommendation. Some of the planning matters that come before Council are complex and don't always go the way people want. As most of you will be aware, VCAT is the appeal body that you go to if you are not happy with the outcome when Council determines a matter.

On a local issue, fire season is well and truly with us. Please exercise care when working outside. I am in hay mode on the farm at present. My hay mower set the paddock alight yesterday. I was lucky to get it under control using the extinguisher on the tractor. A puff of wind and I would have been in all sorts of trouble. Today I have the fire trailer handy, so better placed to deal with potential fires.

Best regards to all,

Tony

AG Cordy, 0439 742 434

**PLUMBER**  
Bruce A. Rae  
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Mobile: 0408 371 885 Email: brucerae3@bigpond.com

## New Tanker for Harcourt CFA



Members of the Harcourt CFA with Minister for Emergency Services, Jaclyn Symes (second from right), Maree Edwards (middle) and Jason Heffernan, Chief Officer of the CFA (far right).

Minister for Emergency Services Jaclyn Symes recently visited the Harcourt CFA brigade to announce the 2023–24 Victorian Emergency Service Equipment Program (VESEP) grants, which will help volunteer emergency services agencies across the state to purchase equipment and improve their emergency response capability. Local MP Maree Edwards was also on hand to lend her congratulations to the brigade and said, 'The Harcourt CFA is an integral part of the community and is family oriented and contributes so much here and across the Mount Alexander Shire. I am also aware that they assist in emergencies within the state and sometimes interstate. They have a great record of service.'

The Harcourt brigade received a new medium tanker that was purchased with a \$320,000 VESEP grant, just in time for the summer season.

Jason Heffernan, Chief Officer of the CFA made the introductions and said, 'Local CFA groups are the heart and soul of the CFA. A brigade has been at Harcourt for 80 years, which is a mighty achievement. Harcourt is a small but strong brigade with a strong family orientation. They have been key supports in many district fires and, in particular, have been first on the scene to motor accidents in the vicinity.'

Jason then introduced Minister Symes who said, 'Our selfless emergency services volunteers are there when we need them most, and these grants are all about helping ensure they have the latest equipment to do what they do best – protect communities and save lives.'

*Some information is taken from a Press Release.*

**KNIGHTMOVES**  
R n B - 4 Piece Band  
60s 70s 80s +  
BOOKINGS  
Trev: 0421 957 168  
Tony: 0439 742 434  
Lou: 0416 146 417  
knightmovesband@gmail.com



# Harcourt CFA

## Telecommunication Outages?

The recent Optus outage and Telstra's Harcourt tower work signal disruptions reinforces the importance of not relying on a single source to get emergency information during a telecommunications outage. Never rely on one source of information, and plan ahead to ensure you are prepared if you are unable to access the VicEmergency app or social media emergency pages. Emergency broadcasters will provide information, including updates and, if needed, both TV and radio programming will be interrupted for emergency warnings. Information can also be accessed through VicEmergency's Hotline number (100 226 226) during and after major incidents. For more information on what to do during an outage, please visit the following link: [emergency.vic.gov.au/prepare/#outages-and-disruptions/telecommunications-outages](https://emergency.vic.gov.au/prepare/#outages-and-disruptions/telecommunications-outages)

The outages also confirm the need to have an up-to-date fire plan. Recent survey data shows that 30 percent of Victorians do not have a fire plan. If you are part of the 30 percent, you need to rectify this now. Do not wait! The recent large fire in Hattam Street Golden Square that destroyed a tooling outlet is an example of not only how quickly a fire can develop, but also how quickly it can change from one type of fire to a different type of fire requiring a change of strategy and fire fighting methods. Residents needed to evacuate at short notice. Not having a fire plan means that some residences would have been caught off guard and left home without all the essentials required.

### Community Meeting

Our Fire Safety Essentials community meeting saw 22 residents attending (some first timers and some returning from previous years for a refresher) for an informative session that, while it went a little overtime, allowed many questions to be answered and a wealth of information was shared.

Thank you to those attendees that took the time to learn how to best prepare for this fire season. Currently, we are experiencing a change of weather with rain, wind and temperature variations. Parts of Victoria are experiencing storm damage and flooding. The seasonal outlook still indicates that we will experience an above average temperatures summer. The recent rain will contribute to this by causing a regrowth of vegetation meaning our mowing days are not over yet.

### Ongoing Recalls

The solar battery storage system recall is ongoing for the LG Energy Solution models RESU 3.3, 6.5, 10, 13 & RESU 7H, 10H and SolaX X-Cabinet & SolaX Power Station Opal Storage. Affected batteries are at risk of overheating and fire, potentially resulting in property damage, injury or death. Incidents have occurred and caused damage to property. If you have an LG home battery please call 1300 677 273. If you have a SolaX or Opal Storage solar + battery system call 1300 476 529.

There is also a recall on all Adria brand towable caravans built between early 2021 and October 2023. The notice

revealed excess sealant used in refrigeration vents located close to the gas burner could ignite and start a fire within the caravan. Owners are advised to isolate the gas supply to the burner and to contact supplier AMH Products to arrange for the fridge to be repaired.

### A Busy November

The month of November resulted in the brigade being paged to eight incidents starting on the 9th to support Sutton Grange to a grass fire as a result of a lightning strike from the electrical storm the day prior. This was followed by an escaped burn-off on the 10th in North Harcourt and a grass fire at dawn on the 12th at Bubbs Lane Elphinstone. It was surprising how well it was burning during the cooler period of the day. Unfortunately, this fire appears to be the result of a campfire not being put out properly. With the introduction of fire restrictions, there was a turnout to a burn during the fire danger period followed by a response to a Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) in Faraday. The Harcourt brigade was called to assist at the structure fire as part of the fire in Golden Square on the 19th. There was a grass fire in Blakely Road Barkers Creek on the 22nd and on the 24th we were paged to support Castlemaine to another MVA on the Midland Highway, but were not required. These incidents have given some of our newer members the opportunity to utilise the skills they have learnt and gain some valuable experience.



We also had the pleasure of hosting the 2023/2024 VESEP funding announcement by Minister Jacklyn Symes along with local member Maree Edwards and CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan at our station. The opportunity was taken to officially hand over the keys to Harcourt Tanker 2, which was provided under the VESEP funding program. For more information, see page 7.

As the Christmas season approaches, keep in mind those Christmas decorations and lights. Check all electrical cords and lights for damage before using. Never leave candles burning if you are leaving the house.

Stay safe this summer and be prepared.

*Tyrone Rice*  
Brigade Community Safety Coordinator





# Harcourt Uniting Church

## Christmas Preparations

Just in case you haven't realised – Christmas is only a couple of weeks away! The questions being asked seem to be: 'Have you done your Christmas shopping?' or 'What are you doing to celebrate Christmas?'

At Harcourt Uniting Church we begin the Christmas season of Advent in the four Sundays leading up to Christmas Day. An Advent wreath with four candles around the edge and one larger candle in the centre will be the centre of our worship each week. Each Sunday a candle will be lit to remind us of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love until, on Christmas Day, the centre Christ candle will also be lit reminding us of the birth of Jesus.

Advent is derived from the Latin meaning 'coming' or 'arrival' so we are waiting and preparing to celebrate the birth, the coming, the arrival of Jesus into the world, together with so many people around the world. We will be praying for the troubled countries of our world in the hope that they may experience some hope, peace, joy and love amongst the conflict.

On Christmas Day at 8.30am we invite everyone to join us at the Harcourt Uniting Church in Buckley Street to celebrate Christmas. Our service is nice and early so you can be home in time to put on the roast or light up the barbie and open the presents.

Church can seem a daunting place to many people. The sermon, usually given by a minister, could be described as a speech based on a passage from the bible. When I was a child

THE VERY FIRST KING-SIZED BED



THANK GOD FOR THAT BED AND THE BABY WHO SLEPT THERE

the sermon seemed to go on forever. Well, our Christmas service won't go on forever so don't worry.

Even though we seem to be caught up in the rush of preparing for Christmas, we hope that it will be a special time of sharing in the love of your family and friends as we remember the true meaning of Christmas.

**There was a young nervous minister giving his first Christmas sermon to the congregation when he suffered a mental block. He remembered being**

**told in his training that if this happened – 'just repeat the last sentence until you remember where you're up to' so he said: 'Behold I come, behold I come, behold I come,' and each time, he thumped the pulpit. All of a sudden the pulpit gave way and the nervous minister fell onto the lap of the old lady in the front row. He apologised most profusely, but the dear old lady replied: 'Don't be sorry; you did warn me that you were coming!'**

*Jan Jenkin*



## 2024 Classes Released

U3A Castlemaine's 2024 Class Prospectus was released on Friday 1 December.

There will be an amazing array of sixty courses offered in 2024, including thirteen (13) that are brand new.

The Prospectus is available online at [u3acastlemaine.com](http://u3acastlemaine.com) and class listings can also be viewed online through our website at [u3acastlemaine.com/courses.html](http://u3acastlemaine.com/courses.html)

Printed copies of the Prospectus are available at Harcourt Post Office, Castlemaine Visitor Centre at the Market Building and Castlemaine Library in the foyer.

U3A Castlemaine is a volunteer-run organisation offering learning, participation and activity opportunities for retired and semi-retired people.



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# Jeff Gartside – The Last Railway Employee at the Harcourt Station



**T**he Core talked with Jeff Gartside who spent eighteen and a half years working for the railways in Victoria. He was located mainly at Castlemaine and Harcourt, but also did stints at many other stations in the region. The railways must be in Jeff's blood as his great, great grandfather, James Gibson Gartside, worked on the construction of the Melbourne to Bendigo Railway Line from 1859 until early 1862, when the line known as the Sandhurst line was opened. After this James became a stationmaster at Windermere near Ballarat and at Ivanhoe. The story of James Gartside was told as one of George Milford's Thumbnail Sketches for the Heritage Centre in The Core of December 2018.

The discussion with Jeff has revealed the changes in technology and working roles at the railways since the early 1970s.

Jeff said, 'I began work at the Castlemaine Railway Station in January 1974 at 16 years of age. I started as a junior station assistant. This involved cleaning the offices and the platforms, barrier duties and selling tickets, which I did on the island platform for people travelling to Bendigo. Barrier duties meant that once the call for "All aboard!" was made, I had to lock the barrier gate and ring the bell. The barrier gate was closed to prevent late comers rushing to the train and possibly having an accident. The Melbourne platform had the large barrier; Bendigo had the small gate. These days of course people are let onto the platforms to wait and there are no locked barriers,

but a safety check is done before the train departs.

'In the very early days, when the train was at the platform I would make a rough count of people on the train, starting at economy, and then first class; there were two classes of carriage in those days. At the end of the week I would work out the percentages of each class travelling on each train in both directions and report the numbers.' Counting of passengers is now done through the electronic recording of ticket sales, Myki trips and conductor checks. Jeff continued, 'I also swept the subway, helped to load trolleys with parcels and moved the trolleys between the platforms.'

'I was taught how to "break up a goods train". When a train came in to the station the goods trucks could be separated and joined to others. For example, a train would come to Castlemaine, but the trucks were to be sent to Bendigo, Tottenham, Geelong or Melbourne yard. The weight of the train would be recorded, where it was going, with an estimate of the engine power with a 30-ton tolerance. This information would be passed to Melbourne and a copy given to the guard. When I was being taught how to separate the trucks at the Castlemaine yard, I caused a crash. I 'lost' a couple of goods trucks and they separated and ricocheted repeatedly and hit the buffer stop and destroyed it! I took the blame even though I was under supervision. I've seen railway trucks ride over the buffer stop and finish up sitting in the car park. They were craned back onto the tracks. One of my other regular duties was to carry out a 'yard check'. Every truck was recorded as to where it was and where it was going to. This information was then compared with an existing sheet to establish how long they had been in the yard.

'In 1975 I went to Melbourne to Flinders Street to learn "Safe Working and Train Running" and after that I could operate the gates and the signals. During the training I would write up all the notes for the day, so that others could catch up when they couldn't attend.

'I worked in the Castlemaine A and B Signal Boxes. B Box was located at the gates which was where 20 point and signal levers were, plus a large wheel similar to a ship's wheel, for the function of the gates.

Signal Box A was on the island platform at the station. There were 80 levers in the frame, but only approximately 56 were operational. The levers were used to switch the points on the tracks, directing the trains so they could pass or go to a siding, for instance, and of course they were used to prevent trains colliding. These days that is all done electronically, but the principles are the same.'



'When the points became electronically powered I worked the panel inside the station which controlled the tracks. This was a large board with reversible switches with indicator lights and a diagram of the tracks. If a light was off, it meant that a train was on the track, so the operator couldn't switch to that line. It was possible to follow the passage of a train by the lights going on and off.

'I also worked the signals which by then were electric light signals. Originally, I worked on signals using kerosene lamps, but more on that later.

'The Safe Working Certificate gave me the ability to work at Harcourt Railway Station on my own as a Signals Assistant. I was offered permanency in February 1976, and could cover other employees' annual leave and emergencies. I spent twelve months in Harcourt from early 1976 and returned to Castlemaine in 1977, when Harcourt was deemed to be



closed and a caretaker was appointed. I turned 19 while I was at Harcourt.

In its heyday (well before my time) Harcourt had a small ticket box on the Coolstore Side and tickets would also be sold from the main building. The station had two passenger platforms, plus two sidings (the island wharf), and a crane which could load outwards going wool and granite, and apples for export. The remnants of the crane can still be seen on the Coolstore Road side. There was a hedge on the main platform, to the north of the station building, trimmed so the word Harcourt stood out. The hedge won an internal railways award in 1958. I tried to revive it when I was there, but it was too far gone. It has since been removed.



'The signals at Harcourt were kerosene filled lamps with wicks. The lamps had to be filled regularly to prevent the kerosene running out. I had to maintain the lamps, clean the glass and check the wicks. I worked in the lamp room, which had spare wicks, glasses and a store of kerosene.' (The lamp room has recently been restored with a replica of the original door as part of the station renovation.) 'I used a ladder to access the signals which were placed up high poles, so they could be viewed easily by the driver. There were seven sets of signals either side of the station: three to the north and four to the south. I would ride the station bike, holding a big tin of kerosene out from my side. At Symes Road, the signal was so tall it would swing with my weight against it.

When it was dismantled it was discovered that it was full of white ants!

'While Harcourt was operating, there were three departmental residences, all in Station Street: the station, the second (occupied by various railway families), and the third was occupied by Geoff Haddock who was the Assistant Station Master of Ravenswood, and spent most of his time there and had an overseer role at Harcourt. While I was at Harcourt, Geoff would call in a couple of times a week to check and balance the books. I also worked at Ravenswood after Harcourt, supervising train running: changing train crews, putting a train away to let another through, and putting a train aside if there were track works.

'Harcourt was bad for snakes. I remember one day as I was doing the signals towards Castlemaine, I saw a big tiger snake coming down the bank. I had to keep an eye out for them, and I didn't come to any harm.

'I operated the signal levers which were outside on the main platform and there was one signal lever on the other side - these were all chained and padlocked for safety.

'On my return to Castlemaine, I also helped at Ravenswood, when it became a minor station with a siding platform only. The large platforms were dismantled and taken away. In the early 1900s it was a huge station and the large platforms received the picnic trains which used to come from Bendigo and there would be a band and dancing at a park near the station. Ravenswood was a much busier place in the early days, with smaller farms and a school.

'My work was based at Castlemaine until I retired from the railways in April, 1992. I was working there on the night of the first fire at the woollen mill in the early 1980s. I remember the bells ringing to indicate the location of the fire in the town. The fire was so hot it blistered the paint on Signal Box B at the gates. The

side of the mill facing the yards had a dye house office and the slates on its roof were exploding and flying through the air. The mill "went up" because of all the lanolin on the equipment inside. The fire truck crane came from Bendigo and pumped water from Lake Joanna.

'When I finished at Castlemaine, I was a Special Class Signaller and had worked at Macedon, Gisborne, Clarkefield, Elphinstone, Ravenswood and the Kyneton signal box. My railway career positions went from: Junior Station Assistant to Station Assistant, Signal Assistant, Acting Yard Assistant, Acting Leading Shunter, Signaller Class 4, Group Signaller, and Special Class Signaller

'In the early 1990s, at the time of privatisation there were four signallers at Castlemaine. Only three were needed, so I left. I regret leaving the railways, but took my chances and worked at the bacon factory for twenty eight and a half years. I had a number of jobs where you had to think on your feet. I was a forklift driver and ran some of the largest and most difficult machines in the original plant. Towards the end of my time there, COVID struck and I was called in to prepare the chemicals for conducting a deep clean. It was a surreal experience to be in the plant before the cleaning. All the lights were on; the televisions in the canteen were still going. The entire plant, which is huge, was completely empty and devoid of any people except me.

'I'm fully retired now and enjoy living in Harcourt where I have lived for the majority of my life, having attended Harcourt Primary School, then Castlemaine Technical College (as it was then) and then working locally at the railways and the bacon factory or Don KR as it is now known.'

*Robyn Miller*

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# Biodiversity Audit Before Housing Development in Harcourt

Work is underway on the second stage of a biodiversity audit that aims to find out more about the creatures and plants that call the Harcourt Valley home, thanks in part to the advocacy work of local Landcare group, Harcourt Valley Landcare (HVL). The audit, which HVL believes is the first all-of-town biodiversity audit to be completed as part of a strategic plan for a regional town, was called for by the Victorian Planning Panel after a 2021 hearing.

The Landcare group has been calling for an on-ground audit to be completed before ‘Plan Harcourt’, a strategic planning project by Mt Alexander Shire Council, could proceed. Stage 1 of the audit found the need for on-ground surveys to occur.

‘We’re relieved to know that our voices have been heard and that Council are pushing on with the second stage of this audit,’ said HVL President Terry Willis. ‘We can’t protect the plants and animals that share our beautiful valley with us if we don’t know what they are – and neither can Council. We believe that deep environmental understanding about the landscape should be a fundamental and early part of any town planning process.’

‘We’re pleased that we’ve contributed not only to a better understanding of our local biodiversity, but to the way that councils will approach planning in the future,’ said Terry.

Plan Harcourt is the document that will guide the development of Harcourt, which has been earmarked for substantial growth. Features of the planning process include rezoning land that has historically been zoned farming to allow

for development, and consideration of environmental protections. Harcourt Valley Landcare is advocating for the protection of waterways such as Barkers Creek and its tributary Picnic Gully Creek, together with wildlife corridors such as Elys Lane, Douglas Lane, Leafy Lane, Shady Lane, Eagles Rd and Craigie Street.



‘The River Red Gums, Long-leaved Box and Grey Box trees along these laneways are just beautiful,’ said Terry. ‘They’re so important for our native animals, but research tells us that they’re also incredibly important for our own health. Trees reduce temperatures and mitigate climate change. Studies have also shown that crime rates are lower in areas near trees.’

Harcourt Valley Landcare says the trees along these lanes provide hollows for creatures like the Brush Tailed Phascogale, a small mammal whose population is in good health in the area surrounding Leanganook, according to research by Latrobe PhD graduate Dr Jess Lawton. Her 2022 paper found that while the range of the Phascogale has

shrunk significantly across the state, Mt Alexander Shire is a stronghold.

Environmental consultants, Ranges Consultancy, successfully tendered for the audit and have begun visiting key sites with the assistance of HVL. One of their focus areas is to assess whether the proposed growth area includes habitat for three threatened species identified in Stage 1 of the audit (a ‘desktop review’). These include the Brush Tailed Phascogale, The Brown Toadlet and the Golden Sun Moth.

The audit is due for completion in June 2024, after which time HVL hopes the Strategic Planning team at Council will apply the new knowledge to ensure the best possible protections in the next version of Plan Harcourt.

Harcourt Valley Landcare member Bron Willis led the group’s advocacy with Council.

‘Sometimes we feel powerless in the face of all the bad news that keeps coming about environment and climate,’ said Bron Willis. ‘But the antidote to that is getting vocal in our own backyard to protect what we have. The Harcourt community has a really great opportunity to let Council know they are passionate about the natural values of our valley.’

‘We’re grateful for the relationship we’ve been able to form with Council. But it’s what we should expect – they need to know the community is paying attention.’

**This article, which was previously published in the Midland Express, is reprinted here with permission.**

**Photo of phascogale provided by Dr Jess Lawton.**



Landcare members celebrate a good year at their favourite working bee site on Barkers Creek. This year, the group added new pollinator plants to the area. The pollinators were kindly donated by Connecting Country Castlemaine as part of their promotion of pollinator plants and creatures which are pollinators. Most people firstly think of honey bees as ‘the’ pollinator, however, there are a number of other bees, including the blue-banded bee and the resin bee which also pollinate native plants. Others include moths, butterflies, hoverflies and wasps. Take a look in your garden and see what insects are buzzing around your plants. You might be surprised at what you find!



# YOUTH OF THE YEAR & COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR for 2023

The Harcourt Lions Club has decided not to hold the Australia Day Breakfast, but we feel it is still important to recognise the achievements of our youth and the contributions made by members of the many clubs and organisations in and around Harcourt. These community members give of their time and energy and work tirelessly to make our community better with no expectation of reward.

you feel deserves recognition for their efforts within your club or organisation so the community can hear of their efforts OR the achievements of one of our youth, so they will be encouraged to continue in their chosen field.

The awards will be presented at the 2024 Harcourt Applefest celebrations on Saturday 9 March 2024 (Labour Day Weekend).

Members of the community are invited to join us at the main stage to see these awards presented and congratulate them.

Please take a little time to fill out the form nominating someone

Please submit nomination forms by no later than Thursday 15 February 2024 to Harcourt District Lions Club, Post Office Box 100, Harcourt, 3453



## HARCOURT & DISTRICT LIONS CLUB INC. NOMINATION FORM

The Harcourt District Lions Club are calling for Nominations for YOUTH OF THE YEAR or COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR for 2023.

Details of eligible persons are listed below.

### COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD.

Reasons for nominating: (attach extra sheet if needed):

Nominations are open to residents of Harcourt Valley, who have lived in the community for at least 2 years.

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They must have made a significant contribution to their club or community organisation in the past or present.

### YOUTH OF THE YEAR.

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

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Community Member of the Year

Youth of the Year

Nominated Person: .....

Residential Address: .....

Phone/Mobile:.....

Person making Nomination: .....

Address: .....

Phone/Mobile: .....

Email: .....

Signature: .....

Seconder of Nomination: .....

Signature:.....

Return this nomination form by 15 February 2024 to:  
Harcourt District Lions Club Inc.  
PO Box 100 HARCOURT 3453.



# Harcourt Valley Primary School

## The Year is Slipping By ...

It has been another busy term for HVPS. Students and teachers are looking forward to Christmas and their summer holidays, and so am I. By the time this *Core* is published, there will be just two weeks of term left, and the twelve enrolled Prep students will have almost completed their transition to school! Preps began their transition to school on November 21 with a gentle introduction of just one hour.

During that time, parents and caregivers had the opportunity to meet Mr Blake and each other over a cuppa. Their last transition day is on December 12 when they will have attended a full morning of school.

Before that, parents and caregivers of Prep students will have had the opportunity to attend an information session at the school on November 27.

Meanwhile Year 6s are preparing for their graduation, to be held on the afternoon of December 18. The graduation dinner with their families and teachers is scheduled for that evening. The following day is their Big Day Out at Bendigo Jump and the Break Out Room.

Last month, Year 6 students gave an excellent presentation at Remembrance Day where they spoke about why this day is celebrated and the role Australian soldiers have played, not only in war but also in peace-keeping deployments.

I will be attending their graduation to announce and present *The Core* Literary Award prizes. Susan Green, a published children's author, is once again judging the awards. I am glad it's her job and not mine, as I have had the privilege of reading the four finalists' works and I am very impressed by them all. *Core* readers will have to wait until our first edition in February next year to find out who they are. Each of the four submitted stories are worthy of being published.

Books and the library have had quite a focus at the school in the past month. Mr Walters organised the Scholastic Book Fair which was held at the school from November 8 to 10. During that time, students were able to choose and buy reasonably priced books before and after school. On Monday November 27, the Year 5/6 class gratefully received a



number of donated books from Peter and Ron who belong to the Castlemaine Old School Boys Network.

The other significant event associated with the library is the retirement of Mrs Rice who has been the school's Library Technician and Integration Aide for the past 23 years. On behalf of the Harcourt Community, we wish you a happy retirement and thank you for your help and support to many Harcourt students and teachers over those years. Before Mrs Rice leaves, she will be busy closing down the library for the year and making sure students have returned their books.



STEM subjects continue to challenge students. Year 5/6 students in Mrs Maddaford's class have enjoyed exploring kinetic energy. Students were paired up to take part in the 'Slow Ping Pong Run Challenge'.

Mrs Maddaford explained that the challenge was to produce a 'ping-pong ball run' from no more than 30 sheets of paper and some tape in one and a half hours. The winner was the pair with

the slowest run. We time the run and then multiply the seconds by four and subtract the number of sheets of paper used. The task required an entry point of at least 25 cm and an exit of 2.5 cm.

Mrs Maddaford reported, 'What appeared to be a simple task proved to be quite challenging; balls got stuck sending groups out of the competition and others ran out of time.' Try it at home!

On the morning of November 24, students were treated to a visit from Cassidy McLean from the Bendigo Lady Braves basketball team.

She ran a short basketball clinic, spending fifteen minutes with both the junior classes and the senior classes.

That day they also received a visit from Chloe McKern from the McKern Foundation. The McKerns generously donate fruit to students for the school's Friday lunches.

Before the term finishes, students have several fun and exciting events scheduled. On December 4, Katrina Hood, the music teacher, will be taking the school choir on an excursion to the Castlemaine Hospital nursing homes to perform various songs for the residents. This will be followed by a picnic lunch in the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens.

The Camp Quality Cancer Puppet Education Program will be visiting the school on Wednesday December 6. Two shows have been organised with show times commencing at 10 am for the Year 5/6 students, and 11:30 am for the Years Prep to 4 students.

On the December 7, from 2 pm, students will be participating in an activity to raise funds for the school. A Colour Fun Run has been organised by the school community. Students are seeking support for their participation in the run. Students are keen to raise as much money as possible, because if they raise over \$100 they will be eligible to go in a draw for a giant Cadbury's Milk Chocolate bar. At the conclusion of this event around 3.45pm, there will be a BBQ.

Finally, all classes are looking forward to being bussed into Bendigo on the December 14 for a cinema excursion.

*Continued on the next page ►*



# HVPS

From the previous page

The school community is no doubt pleased to have the shade sails for the outdoor classroom installed. Now they are collecting suggestions for ways to surface the area. Also, new flags were presented to the school by Lisa Chesters on Monday November 20.

The end-of-year school reports have been distributed, and parent/teacher interviews will be conducted on-line or in person with the relevant teachers. The Parent/Guardian Opinion Survey conducted earlier this year provided positive feedback to the school (see below). Percentages relate to positive endorsement comparing HVPS with state wide averages.

	hvps	state
Parent Community Engagement	90%	78%
Connection & Progression	91%	86%
School ethos & Environment	82%	80%
Student cognitive engagement	83%	79%
Student development	85%	80%

It's all very encouraging for the school community. Well done.

So, on that positive note, on behalf of *The Core*, I wish all staff and students a happy Festive Season and safe, relaxing fun-filled holidays.

Lois Denham

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# Where was the First Harcourt General Store?



Walter a descendant of the Walter family which at one time owned the store. The article records the closure of the store and the history of its ownership. It also shows two photos of the store. The earlier one shows two buildings joined together, the

next photo shows three buildings. Sandra said, 'I was often there at the store and I painted the Butcher sign on the front of the building, which can be seen in Joan Ledwich's 1975 painting done just before the store was demolished to make way for the Calder Highway.'

The Calder Highway effectively split the town in half as traffic was allowed to travel at reasonably high speeds through the centre of the town. It was not until the Calder Freeway was built and Melbourne to Bendigo traffic was diverted away from Harcourt at the controversial roundabout that Harcourt became a quieter place, more suited to pedestrian movement.

It took some effort by the Harcourt Progress Association in its early days, to get the speed limit cut to 60 kph. Some would argue that it should be cut again. The town is awaiting the results of a recent traffic study by the Shire. Many will note that there are now extended 50 km/hr speed limits leading past the new developments at Pippin and Molly Courts.

Until 1975 when the Calder Highway was put through, High Street was the main road through Harcourt with the service station, motel and pub, and post office as the prominent businesses.

The Produce Store, as we now know it, is on the site of the Harcourt Shop located on the defunct Calder Highway (now known as Harmony Way), which once ran through the centre of the town.

A transcription of the newspaper article can be found on page 16.



## Sometimes a great photo plays second fiddle





The cover of last month's *Core* displayed a collage of photos celebrating the get-together at VMR. One of the smaller pictures is a stunner. It's an image taken by Sam Daly in just the 'right place at just the right time'. As you can see above, it is of the VMR miniature in the foreground with a full-size Vline train in the background as it crosses Vicks viaduct.

### You Can Help ...

If you know someone who would like to get a copy of *The Core*, either in print or online, but is having difficulty accessing it, let us know. We can make sure they get their preferred version – we can have it put in their letterbox, or we can send a copy by email.

Let us know by sending the person's details to: [news@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:news@harcourt.vic.au)



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*From the newspaper cutting:*

## Old Walter Store Closes at Harcourt: March 31, 1975

Harcourt and Barkers Creek won't seem the same.

That's because the family store of Walter has finally closes its doors.

The Walters have supplied the two districts for 120 years with household goods, including newspapers.

Harcourt historian, Hedley James, pointed out some interesting facts about the Harcourt Store which closed its doors on March 31.

He said, 'It was built in 1907 by John M. Ely and his son Chas. O. and L. H. Rash, a son in law to Mr Ely, snr.

'It was then leased to Mr H. Freshfield and was later taken over by a Mr W. Baldwin.

'Later the store was purchased and run by Mr C. Wilson and Co., and then later run by W. J. Quirk.

In 1922, The Walter family bought the business and residence from C. V. Wilson.

Mr James says: 'It is interesting to note that the Walter family have been serving the district from Barkers Creek to Ravenswood since 1853.'

The present store and site have been taken over by the Country Roads Board for highway alterations.

The owner was Mr Bob Walter, a grandson of the founder of the family business at Barkers Creek. His grandfather was Mr John Hopkins Walter who ran the Old England General Store at Barkers Creek.

The family business was later owned and run by Bob's father, Alex.

Bob and his family still live at Barkers Creek.

He said: 'I'll be able to spend a bit more time racing greyhounds.'

## MARK THE DATE







# Harcourt Heritage Centre

## They Worked at ‘The Foundry’

On still, frosty mornings, up until the year 2000, it was commonplace to hear the foundry steam whistle sounding throughout the Harcourt valley. Until steam was replaced by compressed-air, the foundry’s routine signals became the sub-conscious framework of the entire day.

The woodcutters of the Harcourt valley would have been the first to respond to the existence of Thompsons. With steam engines in general use and, with extensive stretches of nearby bushland, many men became timber cutters supplying ‘five foot wood’ to dredges, sluicing plants, Castlemaine Woollen Co, Thompson’s Foundry, the Castlemaine Hospital and the Benevolent Asylum.

At the Foundry, the timber fed the boiler furnaces to generate steam and drive the engines which in turn drove the line shafts which provided power to the machine tools and fans for the melting cupolas.

Historian Mike Williams tells us that, in one year in the late 1880s, Thompsons used about 930 tons of wood. Timber getters from all sides of Castlemaine delivered dray loads of wood to the Thompson’s yard foreman who made sure that it was stacked neatly eight feet high.

The contractor was paid by cubic measure, ‘by the cord’. One yard of the length of the 5’ x 8’ stack was reckoned to be one ton (120 cubic feet) of firewood. Older residents will recall the wood stacks at Thompsons, row after row covering many acres in the foundry woodyard on the west side of Barker Street in Castlemaine. Records of the wood trade are scant, but Harcourt Heritage Centre is aware that the Peeler family of Barkers Creek held a wood contract with the foundry for a long time.

Barkers Creek men (and later on, Harcourt residents), soon found employment at Thompsons. An historic photograph from the Thompson’s collection is of Joe Normington standing in the boiler shop in the mid-1920s. Joe is wearing a canvas apron and no hearing protection, no safety glasses and no hard hat. The men working near Joe are constructing a condenser shell. The man next to Joe in the picture is using a pneumatic rivetter. Delivering several hundred blows per minute and reverberating within the condenser shell, the noise of the rivetter would have been

deafening. Joe Normington walked to work from his home in Specimen Gully. In later years, Bill Peeler (the fourth of that name) rose to become the foreman of the Thompsons boiler yard.

The most common method of travelling to and from the Foundry was by bike, enabling men from farther afield to hold down a job at the engineering works in North Castlemaine. Fifteen-year-old Ern Ely started work at Thompsons in 1943 when the Ely family was living at Blight’s Quarry (in what is now Coopers Rd).

To keep his hands warm as he cycled to Castlemaine on frosty winter mornings, Ern would pour boiling water into the handlebars and plug up the ends with a cork.

The bitter winter cold was always a problem. The workers were liable to develop chilblains on their ears and cracked skin on their hands from handling cold metal objects. They washed off the grime with Solvol and applied Barrier Cream to their hands. Overalls helped to retain body heat, but, from time to time, the workers had to warm themselves by the nearest pot-belly stove.

Bicycles were a popular means of travelling to work until at least 1965. One former employee of Thompsons recalled,

‘After WW2 that there were not many cars, but bikes, though, bikes, oh yes, bikes. Bike racks at the works housed hundreds and hundreds of bikes. At lunchtime and after knock off time, Barker Street and Kennedy Street were a sea of bikes. The town had two or three bike shops, those of Mr Pensom, Vin Whaley and ‘Chicka’ Paull (he sold Malvern Star bikes).’

The commute became easier as the twentieth century advanced, with many travelling to work by car or motor bike. David Milford made the daily journey from Harcourt on his Matchless motor bike with its distinctive winged “M” tank badge. Ernie Robins drove a Ford Cortina to his work in the drawing office. The compiler of this ‘sketch’ was Ernie’s passenger. Ernie had just one speed – flat out!

Like many another apple-eater, Ern Ely and David Milford started their working life at Thompsons as apprentices. Boys who had been given their secondary schooling at Castlemaine High School

might start work as office-boy or as a junior clerk, but those who had attended Castlemaine Technical School were channelled into a drafting position or taken on as a trade apprentice.

The firm advertised for apprentices in August or September each year. The boy had to apply by letter and, after a while, he was called in to take a test – simple mathematical and mechanical questions. If he passed the test, he was called in for an interview with the supervisors and given a short tour of the works. The apprenticeship generally lasted five years, of which the first four years involved some time at trade school.

Many Harcourtiens took employment at Thompsons, working at tasks far removed from what they grew up to expect in the family orchard or in the household of a quarryman. There was scope for almost any type of skillset. Thompsons’ workforce, which had swollen to 800 employees during WW2, included patternmakers, moulders, machinists, fitters, blacksmiths, forge hands, carpenters, semi-skilled and unskilled trade assistants and labourers. Then there were managerial, clerical or drafting occupations.

Archie Johnston was the son of Harcourt’s barber. Archie’s career at Thompsons took him from office boy (via accountancy studies) to managing director.

For each of Thompsons’ employees there was always a great pride in being part of a small-town business which could send high quality products around the nation and overseas.

Individuals named in this sketch serve as examples only, there were many others who had similar experiences. There is not sufficient space to list all those from Harcourt who made a career and gained a decent living from Thompsons. It is intended that this sketch provokes happy memories from many, now retired.

From the early years of settlement, most Harcourt residents earned their livelihood from the land. Dairying, market gardening, fruit-growing, quarrying, sluicing and timber cutting were the chief sources of cash income. In the seventy years 1939–2009, steady employment at the nationally significant engineering works of Thompson and Co in North Castlemaine made a major contribution to the economy of Harcourt.



# Harcourt Bowling Club

## Club Booklet

Thanks to Ruth Hay for once again volunteering her time and expertise and producing the annual Bowls Club Booklet and Members' cards.

## Pennant

All of the Harcourt pennant teams have shaped up well for the first half of the season with both Midweek and Weekend Pennant sides holding commanding ladder positions.

Harcourt has been fortunate to recruit both some experienced and novice bowlers. We must also congratulate Cheryl Maddern on her first game of Pennant for Harcourt. We hope she continues in her father's (Grahame Hill) and husband Garry's tradition of long time bowling at Harcourt.

The Midweek Pennant will break for Christmas on Monday 11 December and resume on Monday 15 January 2024. Weekend Pennant will break from Saturday 16 December and resume on Saturday 20 January 2024.

## Ladies' Champion Pairs Final 2022-2023

Last season, the Ladies' Champion Pairs final was unable to be completed due to illness, so it was played out on Tuesday 31 October. Congratulations to both pairs on reaching the final. Competing were Mary-Anne Doyle and Fran Corstorphan against Judy Ewing and Diane Marsh. It was a highly strategic and competitive game, played in great spirit, which mesmerised the onlookers for three hours. Congratulations to the winning pair, Mary-Anne Doyle and Fran Corstorphan.



Nominated pairs competitors Fran, Judy, Wendy and Mary-Anne.

## Annual Ladies' Triples Tournament

Harcourt Ladies' Triples Tournament was held on 23 November with fourteen teams from across the state competing. This annual tournament has been sponsored by Di Selwood Property Plus for a number of years and is always well received. Teams played three games of eight ends and was followed by the usual delicious afternoon tea. Winners of the Ditch to Ditch were: Leads, Mavis Lea Golden Square; Seconds, Cath Birmingham Kyneton; Skips, Judy Brown Golden Square. Overall winners of the day were the Harcourt team of Carrol Frost (skip), Fran Corstorphan (second), Kay Francis (lead). Runners-up were the Eaglehawk team with Kaye Rowe (skip), Pam Hughes (second), Jan Robertson (lead). Third place getters were Aileen Fiedler's White Hills 2 team with Mary Sawyer and Roz Sheen. Ladies' Vice President, Heather Braid thanked all for attending and Kaylene Disher from Property Plus for presenting the prizes. Thanks also to the organising committee Judi, Mary-Anne and to all who contributed to the raffles and the afternoon tea.



The winners (top) & runners-up (below) with Heather Braid and Kaylene Disher

## Kidman Mixed Fours Tournament

Unfortunately, the Annual Kidman sponsored Mixed Fours tournament, which was to be held on Sunday 29 October, had to be cancelled.

## Friday Social Nights

### Friday Night Barefoot Bowls

Harcourt Bowls Social Committee will hold barefoot/social bowls on Friday nights on 1 and 8 December. It is planned for play from 5/5.30pm to 7.30pm with a break around 6.30pm for drinks, the members draw and raffle draws. These are expected to finish at 7.30pm with a sausage sizzle. Cost to non-members is \$5.00. Please have names in by 5.00pm. All welcome. If these nights are successful, it is proposed to continue in the New Year.

An invitation is extended to anyone who would like to join us – New social and bowling members are always welcome.

## Memberships

New Social or Playing members are always welcome at Harcourt Bowling Club. Applications for Membership can be collected from the Bowling Club or downloaded from the website at [www.harcourtbowlingclub.com.au](http://www.harcourtbowlingclub.com.au)

## Coming up

### Christmas Party

16 December – Dinner, music and dancing.

### Proposed Charity Round

January – Harcourt Charity is Breast Cancer – bowlers to wear pink.

Date to be confirmed.

### Sponsors Nights

February dates to be confirmed.

### Tournaments

Men's Fours: Sunday 4 February.

Ladies Fours: Thursday 15 February.



# Grace Church

*This is a statement of faith from Grace Church.*

On Sunday December 10, at about 1.45 pm, I will be baptising a young lady named Claire in the Golden Point Reservoir. Here is your invitation to attend!

Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. Claire has chosen an outdoor setting for her baptism, thus following in the Master's footsteps, literally!

**Baptism in water is a physical experience:** There is a going down into the water. There is a moment under the water and the rising up out of the water. Thus, the individual is identifying with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection. The experience is a physical act. There is no question of whether an individual has been baptised – you either have or have not been baptised in water.

**Baptism is a witness to others:** Being a physical experience, baptism is also a very definite public witness. The person going through the waters of baptism is making a very clear statement. It is a statement about their individual relationship with Jesus. It is a statement of obedience to what Jesus says to do. It is a statement of repentance towards God.

**Baptism is an act of obedience:** Jesus states that we should be baptised. Baptism impacts on the individual who is being baptised by bringing a sense of being washed clean. The act of being obedient to what Jesus asks us to do brings with it a breakthrough to many individuals. Breakthroughs of being released from sinful habits that have been hard to break. God chooses to move powerfully within a person who chooses to move in this step of obedience. Baptism symbolizes a cleansing or washing clean of sin. It is not unheard of for the recently baptised person to be radiant for days afterwards.

I hope to see you there!

*Ps Roger Thurecht, Grace Church*

## Grace Church

Service: 11.00am Sunday  
All Welcome

Pastors: Roger & Glenise Thurecht  
0422 605 897  
[gracecastlemaine.org.au](http://gracecastlemaine.org.au)

30 Buckley Street, Harcourt

## Harcourt's Little Library

Harcourt's Little Library is outside the ANA Hall  
It's available any time.

Leave, Borrow  
or Take a Book



## Weather & Water

### Warmer Temperatures Expected this Summer

November featured many fine and calm days with 'comfortable' daytime temperatures and cool nights, with one or two exceptions when the temperature was in the high teens. Two days were over 30o. The month finished with wet and windy weather.

As the temperature dropped leading up to the rainy days, we lit the open fire twice and then the wood stove when the wind became fierce. We received 42 mm of rain over the month, with 24 mm on November 24, followed by 15 mm on the 28th and 3 mm on the 29th. We only got a taste of the nearly continent-wide rain event, and, sadly for eastern Victoria, the rain intensified and caused severe flooding.

Before the rain, fine weather brought many birds to the bird baths and the garden. The feijoa came into flower which attracted small and large birds (currawongs) alike. There were 'battle' scenes between our two resident kookaburras and a visiting white faced heron. The birds were fighting over worms and other bugs in the still moist lawns. The heron strutted around outside the main window and, from time to time, the kookaburras would swoop. The heron would squawk, crouch down and raise its feathers in defence, then depart for a while. Later, it would be back checking that the coast was clear and then begin foraging again. This went on for about three weeks.

This long-range forecast overview was issued by the Bureau of Meteorology on 30 November

- ▶ December to February rainfall is likely to be below average across much of the north and west of Australia.
- ▶ December to February maximum and minimum temperatures are likely to very likely to be above average for Australia.
- ▶ December to February maximum and minimum temperatures are at least 2.5 times more likely than normal to be unusually high for much of Australia. Unusually high temperatures equate to the warmest 20% of December to February periods from 1981 to 2018.
- ▶ The long-range forecast is influenced by several factors, including the active El Niño and positive Indian Ocean Dipole events, and record warm oceans globally.

### Reservoir Levels

Upper Coliban:	98.8%	as at 26 November, 2023
Lauriston:	94.5%	"
Malmsbury	74.1%	"
Barkers Creek	89.8%	"

*Data sourced from Bureau of Meteorology and Coliban Water websites.*



# Katie Finlay's Fruit Growing Tips



## So many pests – so many solutions

Hi everyone,

After a couple of dodgy years, it's looking like being a great fruit season. At our place, we're already eating cherries, berries, strawberries, loquats, mulberries, apricots, and the first peaches. Enjoying delicious summer fruit is a great reminder of why it's worth planting a diversity of fruit trees in your garden. In a good year, you get a wonderful diversity of fruit, and in a bad year (which seem to be happening more often), you still get something!

Our pick-your-own fruit season has also kicked off at the beginning of December. You can visit our Farm Shop every Friday and Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm right through summer. There are loads of apricots to pick, and cherries are available to buy in the shop. We'll also have plums, apples, and pears to pick as they ripen.

Remember, this year you can become a CSA (that stands for Community Supported Agriculture) member and buy your fruit in advance to get a discount. Check out the details and join up through the Orchard Keepers website: ([theorchardkeepers.com.au/csa-subscription](http://theorchardkeepers.com.au/csa-subscription))

We love talking about fruit trees and helping people feel more confident with them, so we'd like to thank *The Core* for giving us the chance to have a chat with you all each month. Our aim is to make abundant, home-grown organic fruit a reality for all, so it's been a great joy for us to be able to help many more people with their fruit trees this year.

The season looks like it's running early this year, and so are some of the bugs. One of the things we're hearing a lot about this season is curly leaves and spotty fruit on fruit trees. Aphids are everywhere, and the pear and cherry slug has already made an appearance.

If you're noticing curly leaves on your trees, have a look inside the leaves to see whether you can spot the black aphids. They are the main culprit for curly leaves on fruit trees (except for peaches and nectarines, when it's often caused by leaf curl). If there are aphids on your trees, see if you can also spot any ants. The ants protect the aphids, and even move them from place to place. The first step to getting rid of aphids is to exclude the ants from the tree if possible. A sticky barrier around the trunk will often do the trick.

Keep an eye on your cherry and pear trees for the dreaded pear and cherry slugs. It's easy to spot them on the leaves because they leave calling cards of bare patches on the leaves they've eaten. Luckily, they don't damage the fruit, but they can give the trees a hard time by eating all the leaves. As soon as you notice any on your trees, squash them by folding the leaf over (but don't pull the leaves off). It's quite easy to get rid of them on a small tree as long as you squash them every few days. On a bigger tree, you might need to dust the tree with wood ash a few times to help beat the slugs.

Another thing you may be noticing on your trees is various kinds of spots on your fruit. There's lots of freckle on the apricots this year, a bit of brown rot is showing up in the stone fruit, and lots of apples and pears have black spot.

If your fruit is spotty, don't panic, there's still something you can do to stop things getting worse. Though the main danger period for infection has passed, your fruit trees are still vulnerable to disease spreading at this time of year. Visit them regularly so you notice any problems that appear and aim to keep a 'cover spray' of wettable sulphur on your trees before the rain.

Did you know that all these pests and diseases are more attracted to unhealthy trees? No matter what problem your fruit tree is experiencing, the first and best solution is always to work on creating healthy soil. Adding really good, home-made compost or worm castings is a great thing to do at the start of summer – or any time!

You should definitely have at least one fruit fly monitoring trap out in your garden by now. The best type at this time of year is one that attracts male fruit flies, e.g. the Biotrap. It contains a male pheromone that is specific to Queensland fruit flies, so there's a bigger chance that anything you catch in the trap will be a QFF. You can buy new traps, or re-use last year's traps and just buy new inserts and lures for them (you can buy them from Mt Alexander Timber and Hardware in Campbells Creek).

You can also make your own traps, but they're not nearly as good. The bait tends to go off really quickly and need replacing, and they also attract lots of different types of insects, which makes it much

harder to know for sure whether you've actually caught a fruit fly, as they can be tricky to identify. If you do think you've caught a QFF, try to get a positive ID. Try visiting Council's fruit fly page: [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FruitFly](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/FruitFly). If you need a fruit fly refresher, download a free Fruit Fly Resource Pack from our website: [growgreatfruit.com/product-category/free-stuff](http://growgreatfruit.com/product-category/free-stuff).

If you're planning to net your fruit trees, then the sooner the better as this will also help prevent fruit fly. As soon as you've finished fruit thinning the nets can go on. Surprisingly, white bird nets can help provide some protection against fruit fly, even if the holes are big enough to let flies through. However, this is not foolproof, so, if you can afford it, use nets with holes small enough to keep out the fruit flies.

Fruit fly is a whole-of-community issue, so everyone can help to prevent it. If you've got fruit trees you can't look after, it's best to remove them. The most important thing we can all do (and luckily also the easiest) is don't bring fruit to Harcourt from other areas, particularly places like Bendigo or Maldon, where fruit fly is more established. If you can't stop well-meaning friends from bringing you fruit or vegies from their garden, check it carefully, and if there's any doubt about whether it might have larvae in it, don't just dispose of whole fruit that you don't eat, or scraps, in the compost or the rubbish. It's really important to make sure any larvae have been killed before the fruit is disposed of. Putting it in a black garbage bag in the sun for a few days will do the trick.

So many pests and diseases to watch out for at this time of year!

Happy holiday season everyone, and we hope you'll be enjoying some delicious, organic, home-grown fruit for Christmas.

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







## Cr Driscoll elected Mayor

Cr Matthew Driscoll is the new Mayor of Mount Alexander Shire Council. Councillors elected him Mayor for a one-year term at the November Council meeting.

Cr Rosie Annear is the new Deputy Mayor.

Read details at [mountalexander.vic.gov.au/News](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au/News).

## Bin collection over Christmas

There will be changes to kerbside bin collection over the Christmas and new year period.

Monday 25 December collection will take place on Saturday 23 December.

Monday 1 January collection will take place on Saturday 30 December.

Find out more at [mountalexander.vic.gov.au](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au).

## Working together for a healthy, connected shire

[mountalexander.vic.gov.au](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au) (03) 5471 1700

## Make a splash this summer!

Outdoor pools in Castlemaine, Harcourt, Maldon and Newstead are open until Monday 11 March.

Find out more at [mountalexanderpools.com.au](http://mountalexanderpools.com.au).

## Australia Day – Survival Day

Join us for our Australia Day – Survival Day community event on Friday 26 January.

The event starts at 10.00am with a Welcome to Country from Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Uncle Rick Nelson.

The day includes a citizenship and award ceremony, and a concert programmed by Uncle Rick.

Visit [mountalexander.vic.gov.au](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au) in the coming weeks to see who's performing!



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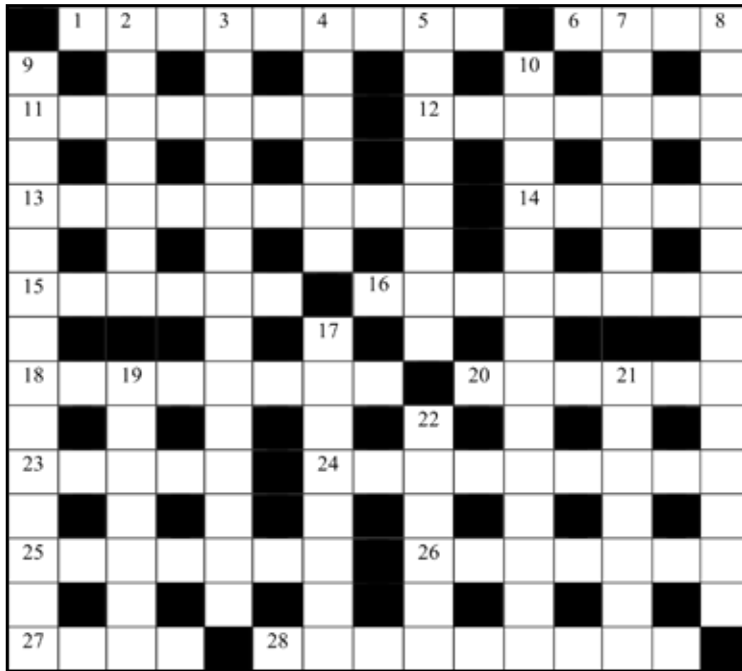
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# December 2023 Xwd © McW June '19



**Down:**

2. If I'm put on the list, I'll do this—uproariously! (7)
3. Snipping angles expedites journey, sloppily... (7,7)
4. Squalid, but fixed up, we hear. (6)
5. Second-rate journos' vehicles? (8)
7. A Four 'n Twenty might put a bit of lard on the child-bearing features of these flower-children... (7)
8. A mere cheapness on supermarket shelves will not do justice to the Italian staple... (8,6)
9. Third-person shrub? (10,4)
10. Oo! Ribs contract at the thought of it! (3,11)
17. Do-it-yourself = 'sorer' (don't start me on 'hit thumb'...): so unimportant as to be ridiculous... (8)
19. Desert Gaye? (7)
21. Each chart comes back in jumps to facilitate passage of air. (7)
22. Dateless lure might catch the outlaw? (6)

**Across:**

- 1, 6. When Madam does it, it's enough to wreck this chap... (6,3,4)
11. One who emits takes nothing at first and leaves things out... (7)
12. Read aircraft... (7)
13. He might turn in his grave if he knew the Kylie Mole types who inhabited his place... (2,7)
14. In wrongdoing a century of frost... (5)
15. One crashing takes on the Ag. Dept for blue-flowered plant. (6)
16. Places for catamites of old and pecs and abs of new... (8)
18. Moses, a son, found in this sort of bed—thought-through. (8)

20. Take the fact of being "T" out of an entry in a year-book and get interference... (6)
23. Long for 365 + pole... (5)
24. Dead in an iFriend? (9)
25. Endure sunken leave. (7)
26. Storm-water passages Tony would have seen Julia in? (7)
- 27, 28. What the murdering seamstress on tenterhooks might do as the jury ponders its verdict? (4,2,1,6)

# November 2023 Xwd Solution © McW January '19



**Down:**

1. [Stopgap mates] provide the wherewithal to ride the Snail... [Well?]
2. What Rolf probably wanted [needed?] before he became Jake the Peg? [Well? Tie me kangaroo...]
3. You say it's complete bosh? OK. Um... maybe it is... ['tosh' would have worked as well...]
4. [Dare to not] provide the means to terrorise the plaza. (9)
5. Fleece castle bird? [Well?]
6. 3D round? If you grasp her, I call it 3D round... (9)
7. Aphrodite is the 22 name. [Well?]
9. Water-boarding? [The contentious one...]
13. [Rats! I gits] pretty annoyed comin' down with this! (9)
14. [Cute field] provides [fetid clue] but it's shifty... (9)
16. [Eric] works out in [Essex]. (9)
20. Dorothy [Parker] got up, saying it [a rose...] is what it is! (5)
22. (See 7.)
23. [William] ends his sermon half-way. (4)

**Across:**

1. Black wicket? [Well?]
4. [Idj] Amin, scoffing [Adj.], gets a [serve]...
8. Won't persevere with anything, but won't let anything—even morality or the law—get in the way? (5,2,7)
10. (See 15.)
11. He claimed he was just being playful, but #MeToo found him guilty of [risky] behaviour, and hiding it. (6)
12. [Elon] Musk fence opening stretched out?
- 15, 10. [A cuter mangler] of logic might beat a glum recanter, but a [cruel mega-rant] surely does not constitute a simple, reasoned case? [But the letters do...]
17. Aggressive vehicles [stink] in past [-tense] from first [letter] to last... (5)
18. Crucial point for someone: is witness about [=re] to gather [=collect] facts? (9)
19. [Graeme's] contribution was slight... (6)
21. [I covered] for the bloke who ditched the missus! (8)
24. Backside of underwater trench? [Well? That deep one...]
25. When Gandhi lapsed it was public, but when [Ron] had a [lapse] it was private... (8)
26. Neglected by O2? [Well? Oxidised...]



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For placement of advertising please contact *The Core* via email at: [advertising@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:advertising@harcourt.vic.au)

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## 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

## Community Diary Dates

**Sunday December 17:** 3–7 pm, Harcourt Christmas Party, Stanley Park. Craft and entertainment, Santa, barbecue, and Thompson's Foundry Band and carols.

**Sunday December 24:** 10.30 am Parish Service at Harcourt which is a combined service with Castlemaine & Harcourt congregations.

**Christmas Day, Monday December 25:** 8.30 am at Harcourt Uniting Church, Buckley Street, Harcourt.

**Saturday December 30:** Gather Harcourt for details see poster in *The Core*.

**Thursday February 15:** Nominations close for Citizen of the Year and Youth of the Year. See page 13 for the entry form.

**Wednesday January 17, 2024:** Carpet Bowls recommences. (Finishes 13 December.)

**Carpet Bowls:** 7 pm Wednesdays, Carpet Bowls, summer and winter, Leisure Centre, Bingham's Road, Harcourt. Summer season commences Wednesday November 8.

**CFA:** Brigade meeting night is the third Monday of each month starting at 8.00 pm; Sunday morning equipment checks and maintenance runs starts at 9.00 am; siren is tested at 9.15 am. Contact: Captain Andrew Wilson for further details 0428 387 339. CFA is located in Bridge Street, Harcourt.

**CWA:** First Thursday of the month, **1.30 pm** at Harcourt Leisure Centre, Bingham's Road, Harcourt. *Note new time*

**Grace Church:** Tuesdays at 10.30 am: Morning tea and prayers; Sunday Service at 11.00 am; 30 Buckley Street, Harcourt. Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm: Zoom Bible Study: A Christian discipleship course covering the basics of the faith. All welcome, you can commence at any time. Please contact the Pastor for a link:

**[pastor@gracecastlemaine.org.au](mailto:pastor@gracecastlemaine.org.au)**

**Harcourt Bowls Club:** See page 18

**Harcourt Lions Club:** Third Thursday of the month at the Victorian Miniature Railway, Harmony Way at 6.30 pm for dinner (something to share) followed at 7.30 by general planning and discussion.

**Heritage Centre:** Every Wednesday at the ANA Hall from 9.00 am–3.00 pm or by appointment: 0400 916 527.

**Pony Club:** Second Sunday of the month. Contact Peggy Mills, 0419 902 400. The Pony Club is located next to the swimming pool.

**Uniting Church:** Sundays at 9.00 am in the Uniting Church, Buckley Street, Harcourt. The service is followed by morning tea. All welcome. Donations of food and other household needs for St Vinnies can be left at the Church door on Sunday mornings 9.00–10.00 am or contact, Jan 5474 2226, to arrange for collection.

**Walking Group:** Monday and Thursday at 9.30 am. Meet at the ANA Hall. The one hour leisurely walk is usually followed by morning tea, and new members are always welcome.

*Gather*  
Harcourt  
**SUMMMER**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**December 30, 4pm–9pm  
James Park, Harcourt**

**Street Food      Market Stalls  
Drinks              Live Music  
Children's Entertainment**

