

# HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE



Edition 125 – April 2025

Produced by: Harcourt Progress Association Inc

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

## When All is Said and Done ...



Photo: Lou Citroën

**...it was a great concert**



Photo: Lou Citroën



Photo: Robyn Miller

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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.



## Level Heading

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## COMMUNITY DIARY

**Thursday April 10:** 7.00 pm Landcare Meeting, Harcourt Heritage Centre.

**Wednesday April 16:** 7.30 pm AGM Winter Carpet Bowls, Harcourt District Leisure Centre.

**Sunday April 27:** 10.00 am Landcare Working Bee. See the website for information.

**Sunday April 27:** 2.30 pm, Concert, Harcourt Uniting Church, Buckley Street, Harcourt.

**Friday April 25:** ANZAC Day march and ceremony. At 2.30 pm, meet at the Heritage Centre; 3 pm Ceremony at Stanley Park War Memorial.

**Community House:** Open Wednesdays 10.00 am to 2 pm.

**Carpet Bowls:** 7.30 pm Wednesdays, Leisure Centre, Bingham Road, Harcourt.

**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 on the first Sunday of the month at 9.15 am. Contact: Captain Andrew Wilson for further details 0428 387 339. CFA is located at 56 High Street, Harcourt.

**CWA:** First Thursday of the month, 1.30 pm at Harcourt Leisure Centre, Bingham Road, Harcourt.

**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 14  
[www.harcourtbowlingclub.com.au](http://www.harcourtbowlingclub.com.au)

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



## Have your say on a proposed speed limit change along Harmony Way

Mount Alexander Shire Council is inviting residents to have their say on a proposed speed limit reduction along a section of Harmony Way in Harcourt.

The proposal aims to improve road safety and includes:

- ▶ an extension of the 60km/hr speed zone north of Twyford Street (500 m)
- ▶ an 80 km/hr transitory zone to the cemetery (1.1km)
- ▶ 100 km/hr to the Calder Freeway (3.5 km).

These changes will increase travel time by 22 seconds along this stretch.

"Our community's safety is a top priority for us at Council," said Cr Tony Cordy.

"We worked with technical experts from Transport Victoria to come up with the proposed change, which fits within the Speed Zoning Guidelines."

"We're committed to improving road safety across our shire, and a new speed limit along a section of Harmony Way would be a positive step in this direction."

The proposed speed limit reduction follows a petition from a number of Harcourt community members as well as general community feedback.

"I'm pleased that Council is responding to community concerns about the speed limit along Harmony Way," said Cr Cordy.

"I think the proposed changes will be well-received."

### Have your say

Have your say on proposed changes – it's a quick and easy process.

- ▶ Review the proposed change and share your feedback at [www.shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au](http://www.shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au)
- ▶ Email your feedback to [info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au](mailto:info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au)
- ▶ Call 5471 1700.

**Community consultation is open until Monday 28 April.**

*From a Shire press release.*



## ANZAC Day in Harcourt

**Friday 25th April**

Castlemaine Highland Pipe Band and HVPS Children will be in attendance.

2.30 pm meet at Heritage Centre (ANA Hall) for afternoon tea.

3.00 pm proceed to Stanley Park war memorial for ceremony and wreath laying.



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## A thousand thanks.



At the March 24th wrap-up meeting after the 2025 Harcourt Applefest, it was learned that some 3,300 people had passed through the gates of the Harcourt Recreation Reserve to enjoy the market, the entertainment and the children's activities, making it a highly successful community event.

Harcourt Applefest 2025 was held in a new location this year at the Harcourt Leisure Centre and Recreation Reserve. The new venue was a resounding success: a safe, spacious and well-kept facility. It is believed that the numbers through the gate were probably the largest one-day crowd that had ever attended the Recreation Reserve. Several of the older folk working behind the scenes at Applefest had been instrumental in the building of the Leisure Centre more than thirty years ago and said that the day was a total fulfilment of their initial vision of providing a facility where the life of the community could flourish.

Those who are responsible for the upkeep of the premises can take pride in the fact that the grounds looked as immaculate at the end of the day as they had at the start.

No fewer than seven of the Harcourt Valley's not-for-profit groups were the beneficiaries of the day, so that our volunteer community groups will face the future with a good bank balance and a happy sense of having successfully worked to pull off what is a major undertaking.

The organising committee of Harcourt Applefest 2025 wishes to thank all those who voluntarily carried out the many tasks necessary in staging a massive community event. Your dedication, communication and perseverance in organising and running this event contributed to a wonderful success. The community of the Harcourt Valley has been enriched by your efforts.

Thank you to one and all.



## Councillor Comment

Hi all

I have just spent the past two days at Council doing detailed work on the budget. Council faces huge challenges going forward, and finding the funds to deliver essential services is very tough. We have sorted through many requests for projects and services and have developed what we believe is a fair and responsible budget. The draft budget will go out for community consultation shortly. I am sure we will get plenty of feedback.

Our staff and counsellors have worked very hard to deliver a responsible budget. During the process I have raised concerns about the level of services provided to rural ratepayers, and this remains a concern.

The other thing that is currently drawing attention is the Emergency Services Volunteer Fund Levy. As it is proposed, it will impact heavily on our farming community – will this be the straw that breaks the camel's back? What will the folk in the city do when there are no more farmers? I don't think the politicians supporting this levy have any idea of its impact. Many councils have pushed back against collecting the levy. When we rely on the state and federal governments for grant funding, you might ask, what good will that do?

Since I last wrote, another birthday has passed. All getting older as we speak. I guess we all have to be thankful if we enjoy good health. For those less fortunate, we share a smile and lend a hand when we are able.

In the last few weeks, four substantial trees have fallen in close proximity to my house. Usually there is no warning, but, if you have trees that are a hazard, it is better to seek expert advice beforehand.

A big shout out to our local fire brigade volunteers for their work over many years responding to emergencies and keeping us safe.

Best wishes

A G Cordy

## The new Emergency Service and Volunteers Fund

From 1 July 2025, the Fire Services Property Levy (FSPL) will be replaced by the Emergency Services and Volunteers Fund (ESVF).

Information on the Department of Treasury and Finance website states 'It will help support a broader range of emergency services and for the first time include VICSES, Triple Zero Victoria, the State Control Centre, Forest Fire Management Victoria and Emergency Recovery Victoria, as well as the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV).

This will bring Victoria's funding arrangements for emergency services into line with other states.'

**For further information go to: [www.dtf.vic.gov.au/emergency-services-and-volunteers-fund](http://www.dtf.vic.gov.au/emergency-services-and-volunteers-fund)**



## Harcourt Lions Club

# CONGRATULATIONS



*Amy receives the Award from Harcourt District Lions Club Vice President Mark Mitchell.*

The Harcourt District Lions Club was very happy to announce the recipient of the Community Member of the Year, Amy Simmons. Amy was presented with her Certificate on Saturday 8 March at the Harcourt Applefest by Vice President of the Lions Club, Mark Mitchell.

"Amy works tirelessly for the Community of Harcourt, especially the children also in the Castlemaine Secondary School canteen where she works and chats to the students helping them to make good food choices. Amy also volunteers for the Harcourt Cricket Club and assists with coaching the U/13 team, scores and encourages the children to be involved and develop their cricket and social skills, and in winter the Harcourt Football Netball Club. She manages the canteen, runs the Junior Football Department; is a senior trainer, also cooks player dinners and so much more. Amy's kind and gentle nature ensures the children trust and respect her and are grateful to have her within the community. Without Amy, the children of the Harcourt community would be without another adult that truly has their best interests at heart."

Unfortunately, no nomination for the Junior Member was received by the closing date though I am sure there are many worthy of mention for achievement/encouragement for sporting, academic etc in the Community of Harcourt. So please consider making an encouragement nomination for a Junior 25 years old and under in the future.

Harcourt Lions once again had their BBQ at Applefest and thank our many customers for a successful day which, in turn, assists Harcourt community members. The next BBQ will be at the Mount Alexander Vintage Engine Club at Muckleford on 12 and 13 April 2025.

**At a loose end then come join an organisation that benefits your Community in many ways.**

**Applications to Harcourt District Lions Club P.O. Box 100, Harcourt 3453 or talk to members at our next BBQ. Members meet 3rd Thursday at VMR at 6.30 for a shared meal and a general discussion from 7.30.**





# Harcourt CFA It's all about timing

## Smoke Detectors

April is the time that daylight saving finishes and also the time to replace the batteries in your smoke alarms if you have the older style ones. The newer detectors have a battery that lasts for the ten years' life span. Whichever one you have, remember to give it a check, dust off and check that it has not expired. The expiry date is generally marked on the back. CFA also now recommends the installation of smoke detectors in sheds especially when e-bikes, e-scooters and lithium-ion battery power tools are recharged and stored.

## Fire Danger Period is still in place

At the time of writing, the Fire Danger Period was still in place and there was no date set when it would end. It is pleasing to see some rain falling in our area and the green tinge appearing. Keep an eye on social media, local newspapers, the CFA website or the QR Code on this page for notification of the end period for whichever shire you reside in. Do not become complacent as the ground remains dry and there are still areas that have sufficient fuel loads.



## Applefest

Thank you to all who took the time to visit our community education stand and also our very popular squirty trucks for the kids, both big and small. The location worked very well for us. A callout prior to the start time did interrupt our set-up time, but we were ready to go just in time.

## CFA Service Delivery Standards (SDS) – Turnout Times

Depending on a brigade's Hazard Class, each brigade had a Service Delivery Standard to meet. Our brigade had six minutes to turnout the first vehicle from the time of notification for primary code one emergency events. This is not always possible due to time of the day or whether we have enough members close enough to the fire station. The second part of the SDS is travel time to the emergency. It is very pleasing to see the cooperation from the travelling public when they see us coming with our flashing lights and/or siren. This not only allows us to arrive on scene earlier, but hopefully means we also limit the size of the fire and the amount of damage done. The key is early detection and reporting to Triple Zero (000) as soon as possible.

## Winter Home Plan

As we transition from summer to winter, now is the time to review your home fire plan. Check your plan for things that have changed or need to be added. Taking the time to test your plan will highlight what parts work and what parts need to be changed, refined or redone. Now is also the time to prepare your home for the cooler weather. Ensure all forms of heating whether it is an open fire, a wood burner, an electric or gas heater is clean and in good working order. This also includes checking the electric blankets before putting back on your bed if you still use them.

## Turnouts for March

We had three turnouts in the first nine days of the month, a quiet period in the middle and then three more towards the end of the month. We started off turning out to a smoke sighting, which was the result of a vehicle doing burnouts. Unfortunately, there is a lot of this activity that takes place in various locations around our area. The fact that the primary vehicle lost control and then got stuck in the drain, meant that there was further danger on our local roads as a pickup vehicle sped away from the scene. We trust that the police have been successful in dealing with this illegal activity.

The second event was the day of Applefest to investigate a smoke sighting, which was burning off during the fire danger period. This was followed by us supporting the Castlemaine brigade to the Castlemaine railway station where a smoke alarm was operating. There was no fire and a new battery and reset resolved the situation. (Everyone needs to check their smoke detectors.)

The afternoon of the 24th resulted in multiple calls to a fire on the side of the Calder Freeway north of the roundabout. Fortunately, the fire was burning slowly and was quickly extinguished. Some of the calls did not give the same location, which meant we had to be sure that there was only one fire and also decide which location to go to first. This is why it is important when reporting an incident to be as accurate as possible on the location. There are phone apps such as Emergency Plus that can assist you as well.

On Friday the 28th, we supported Castlemaine with a shed/bungalow fire that was determined to have started by E-bikes. The fire took hold very quickly and therefore the first brigades on scene needed to take immediate action to stop the fire spreading to the nearby house. While the contents and the structure were extensively damaged, the fire was contained to the one building. On Saturday morning of the 29th, we once again attended a two-car accident at the Calder Freeway / Fogartys Gap Road intersection for a wash away.

March has been a busy time for the brigade along with our normal activities. Hopefully, April will be quieter. When fire restrictions do end, there is generally a period of higher activity as burn-offs escape or are not logged with the burn-off line. Please ensure to plan and check before carrying out any fire or heat activity, and be prepared in case things go wrong.

Thanks for taking the time to read this and stay safe.

Tyrone Rice

Brigade Community Safety Coordinator

## 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

# Free comedy show sharing a story of hope

People living in Bright, Bendigo, Wangaratta and Wodonga can attend a free, one-of-a-kind comedy show this month. Murray PHN (Primary Health Network) is funding four community events to help normalise conversations around mental health and encourage people to seek help earlier.

Murray PHN CEO Matt Jones acknowledged that men's mental health issues often go unrecognised. "We know that men are disproportionately represented in suicide statistics and there are a range of barriers that prevent them from seeking support. "What we need are different approaches so that mental health is recognised as being just as important as physical health. Involving those with lived or living experience provides hope, through shared understanding and awareness," Matt said. "Humour can also help to break down barriers."

The free shows are being delivered by South Australian comedian and suicide prevention advocate Marc Ryan, who is also known as 'The Beautiful Bogan' after featuring on ABC's *You Can't Ask That* (Bogans episode) – one of the most watched in the series. Drawing from his own mental health struggles, Marc uses comedy to address the often taboo subjects of post-traumatic stress disorder, severe anxiety, depression, and living with thoughts of suicide stemming from childhood trauma.

While the topics may seem heavy and could be triggering for some, Marc's performances blend humour with heartfelt stories in the hope of encouraging others to get the help they need and to remind them that they're not alone in their struggles. Marc says that living with mental illness for more than 27 years has shaped his life. "I've navigated marriage, fatherhood and fostering children while battling internal struggles. By telling my story, I hope to help others understand that mental health is an experience that many of us share. It's time we remove the veil of shame and have real conversations to help with the healing. We need to be comfortable to talk about the tough stuff because it's real and affects us all," Marc said.

The performance is suitable for audiences aged 18+ due to containing strong language and discussing living with thoughts of suicide. Event booking details (and registration links):

[murrayphn.org.au/news/free-comedy-shows-with-a-difference](http://murrayphn.org.au/news/free-comedy-shows-with-a-difference)

- ▶ 11 April | The Pavilion, Bright
- ▶ 12 April | Wangaratta Performing Arts Centre, Wangaratta
- ▶ 13 April | The Cube, Wodonga
- ▶ 16 April | National Hotel, Bendigo

Taken from Murray PHN media release



Use the QR code to book for the Bendigo event. Tickets are **FREE**.

## HARCOURT CARPET BOWLS ASSOCIATION INC.

### ANNUAL MEETING WINTER BOWLS

**WEDNESDAY 16TH APRIL 2025 at 7.30PM**

**HARCOURT DISTRICT LEISURE CENTRE,  
Binghams Road, Harcourt  
(In the kitchen/ meeting room)**

No restrictions - Anyone from 8 years old up can play the game and will be made most welcome. Past, current and any interested new members, whether singles or families are most welcome to attend.

The meeting will decide if we have enough interest to continue the Harcourt Carpet Bowls Association for another year. If you are thinking of joining the Carpet Bowls Association, please come along, or let us know of your interest so you will be included.

**Further information - John 5474 2226 - Loretta 5474 2453.**

#### NOTE

**Summer Bowls will be finalised on Wednesday April 26 with a supper. We will have a break and commence the Winter Competition in May on a date to be decided at the Annual Meeting. Updates on the Summer Competition will be in the May Core.**



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# Water storages in good position despite a hot, dry summer – but use water wisely

Coliban Water says the region's water resources remain in a good position despite a 25% jump in summer water consumption and lower water storage levels compared with last year.

Executive Manager Corporate and Assurance at Coliban Water, Adam Crameri, said the dry conditions this summer had resulted in low inflows to the Upper Coliban, Lauriston and Malmsbury Reservoirs.

Despite a drier summer this year, Mr Crameri said "Coliban Water's good water resource position means customers would not see any water restrictions this year.

"We continue to invest in a range of operational and water efficiency initiatives that are improving the reliability of our networks and their resilience in the face of changing climate conditions and population growth.

"We also have a team of skilled water resource experts who manage our water holdings across our network to responsibly balance the region's water supply and meet customer demand.

"But we are also calling on our customers to play their part in the responsible use of our precious water resources. That's particularly important when the weather is dry," he said.

"Our residential customers account for 70% of water consumption, so even simple measures to use water wisely around our homes can add up to a significant saving if we all do our bit."

*Taken from Coliban Water media release 2 April 2025*



**AEC**

Australian Electoral Commission

## Australia is going to the polls on Saturday 3 May 2025

### Enrolment

If you are an Australian citizen and over 18 years of age, it is compulsory by law to enrol and vote. If you have missed the enrolment date of Monday 7 April, you should consider enrolling or updating your details via the AEC website in readiness for the next election.

### Postal voting applications

Applications for postal votes are now open on the AEC's website. You are eligible to apply for a postal vote if you are

## EV Insights



The electric vehicle market in Australia is now developing quickly, with more manufacturers, a wider range of models, longer driving range and increased price competition. The switch to EVs is noticeable in central Victoria, with dozens of our clients now driving EVs from MG to Mercedes and everything in between.

Seeing EVs in the showroom is one thing, but talking to the owners of the vehicles also provides a valuable insight. It is instructive to hear first hand about their choice of vehicle, their driving patterns, their charging routines, and the pros and cons of the EV in question.

Our monthly series of EV Insights feature a particular EV on display in the shop and a discussion with their owner about all aspects of their EV experience. Sessions are held once a month on Saturday mornings throughout the year. To provide an opportunity for a close encounter with the vehicle (minus any showroom sales pitch) and the owner we can accommodate a maximum of 20 guests per session.

Our May EV Insights session will be held on Saturday 3 May and will focus on the BYD Seal with owner Sasha Bursac.

**Tickets are free but bookings are required. Details and booking information at Humanitix:**  
<https://events.humanitix.com/ev-insights-may>

EnviroShop Newstead  
49 Lyons Street, Newstead  
03 5472 4160  
[enviroshopnewstead.au](http://enviroshopnewstead.au)

unable to get to a polling place on polling day. Voters are encouraged to consider their eligibility and apply for a postal vote as early as possible. Remember that postal delivery timeframes may mean voters who wait until the final week of the election period to apply – especially voters in regional areas – may miss out.

### Voting Options

Australia's access to voting options is significantly better than most democratic nations. You can vote on election day, during the two weeks before election day, interstate, in-person overseas, overseas via international courier, via domestic post, through a mobile voting team at some hospitals and residential care facilities, via a remote area voter services team and via phone for people who are blind or have low vision. Full details of voting options will be made available on the AEC's website, as they are confirmed.

# Recycling rigid plastic containers

Empty, rigid plastic containers from the kitchen, laundry and bathroom go in the mixed recycling bin.

Unless you have access to a dedicated soft plastic recycling service, place plastic bags, polystyrene (styrofoam), foam meat trays, take away coffee cups and other soft plastics (codes 3, 4, 6 & 7) in the rubbish bin.

\*Visit [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/My-Property/Waste-and-recycling](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/My-Property/Waste-and-recycling) for lid recycling programs



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## Tell us what matters to you and help shape the future of our shire

What are three things that matter to you most now? What are three things you're thinking about for the future?

Your input will guide what we do and how we do it over the next four years, shaping three high-level Council documents.

These documents, along with our budget, drive our big picture direction and spending.

We last developed these documents four years ago. We know life changes, and your input is crucial to make sure we are all on the same page.

There are a number of ways to get involved – choose the right option for you.

"It's important that we hear from as many people in our community as possible on this."

### Get involved in planning for the future

[shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/community-vision-and-council-plan](https://shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/community-vision-and-council-plan)

"The more people we hear from, from right across our shire, in all different stages of life – will help us create the best Council Plan possible for our community and Council."

"Don't think that your voice doesn't matter – we're here, and we're listening."

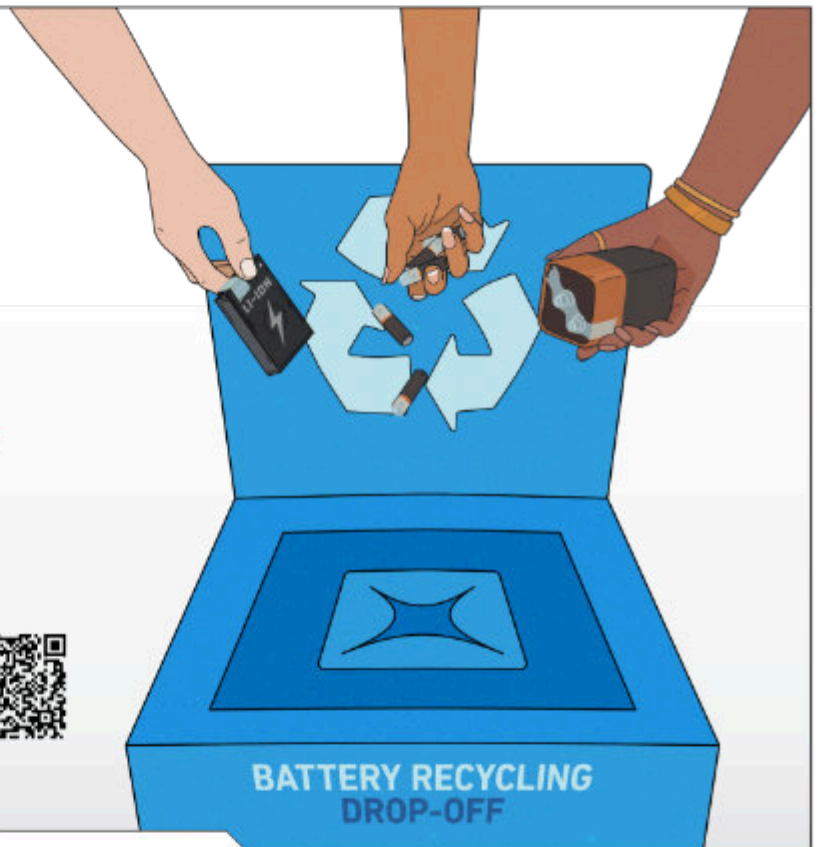
Mayor Rosie Annear



## Small acts make a big impact.

Take used batteries to the Castlemaine and Maldon transfer stations.

Disposal for recycling is free.



# KNIGHTMOVES

R n B = 4 Piece Band  
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**BOOKINGS**  
Trev: 0421 957 168  
Tony: 0439 742 434  
Lou: 0416 146 417  
[knightmovesband@gmail.com](mailto:knightmovesband@gmail.com)

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HARCOURT VALLEY  
VINEYARDS

# Harcourt Valley Community House News



**Commencing Wednesday 23 April, we will be open on Wednesdays during Term 2 from 10.00 am – 2.00 pm. Remember, we are closed during the April school holidays.**

## Healthy Food on a Budget

We will kick off the term with a **Healthy Food on a Budget Workshop** run by Ingrid Button (from Free Food Foragers) on **Wednesday 23 April at 11.00 am**. Learn how to make delicious and nourishing meals on a budget. Our teacher, Ingrid, will show you ways to reduce your food bill with simple, easy to prepare recipes that anyone can cook. Cost is \$15 (full) or \$10 (concession).

**Bookings are essential at [www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1377647](http://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1377647) or by email [harcourtvalleych@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtvalleych@gmail.com) or use the QR code.**

**Please note: we reserve the right to postpone this event if we don't achieve a minimum number of bookings (5), as significant preparation time and costs go towards setting up this course. The closing date for bookings Wednesday 16 April. Payment is required to secure your place and a full refund will be given if the class does not go ahead.**



## Community Morning Tea

We will host a community morning tea on **Wednesday 30 April at 10:30 am** and hope to see you there, particularly so you can let us know what you would like to see happen here at YOUR Community House. Board games will be made available for anyone wanting to have a game after the morning tea.

The Harcourt Valley Community House is for everyone!

The HVCH has been open for at least one day a week (excepting public and school holidays) since October 2024 staffed exclusively by volunteers.

Unfortunately, we have not been very successful attracting the interest of our community, and programs offered have included topics that our volunteers have had the skills or capacity, to run for free e.g. morning teas, board games, basic sewing, craft in company, cooking etc. Obviously these topics have not attracted community

members, or perhaps the timing of these programs has just not suited those who may have been interested and, finally, we take responsibility for not being as "sharp" with our promotions as we could have been.

## Participation Survey Results

In the 2024 November Core, we published a Participation & Interest Survey. We sincerely thank the six (6) people who responded.

Though we certainly need more input from the community to know what to offer, the results of the two critical questions were:

### What activities are you interested in?

Art/wine Shows (1), After School Activities (1), Board Games (2), Book Swap (2), Car boot sale/indoor market (5), Carers Support (1), Community Choir (3), Community Lunch (2), Cooking (2), Drop-in, cuppa & chat (4), Foodshare (1), Information (1), IT (like website building, using a smartphone) (2), Meeting space for hire (2), Painting/drawing (1), Services (like public access to computers, photocopying or scanning) (2) and Yoga/health (2).

### Your Availability

No answer (2), Wednesdays (1), Thursdays (1), Friday (1), Saturday (3), Sunday (1) and Public Holidays (1)

If you would still like to submit a survey, your answers would be enormously valuable and we encourage you to follow the link <https://forms.gle/UwFypVALo2r7KcrT6> or ask for the survey to be sent to you by emailing us at [harcourtvalleych@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtvalleych@gmail.com)

If you have limited time, just focus on our two critical questions: What activities interest you and when are you available? Please leave your contact details if you would like us to keep in touch with you.

If you are particularly interested in some of the suggestions above (e.g. car boot sale, community choir, drop-in cuppa & chat, etc) PLEASE let us know and we can follow-up on these ideas! Only two of our six respondents left contact details. Please email us at [harcourtvalleych@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtvalleych@gmail.com) if you would like to go on an 'interest list' for these events.

## Room Hire Available

Are you a part of an interest group? Are you involved with an art group, a sporting club, like to play online games,

or need a place to meet for any reason? Perhaps you are looking for a venue for a private function like a small\* wedding, a party or you need a place to demonstrate some aspect of your business (like a party plan).

**\*We have a great facility with an official capacity of about 30 people (we are working on increasing that). We can offer great facilities, including ample tables and chairs, crockery and cutlery for up to 40 places, whiteboard, overhead projector, on-site Wi-Fi, heating and cooling, and a fully functional kitchen with stove, microwave, fridge and dishwasher.**

Book an appointment to tour the Harcourt Valley Community House to see if we meet your venue needs, by phoning Jeanette on 0438 579 987 to arrange an inspection.

Room hire rates vary depending on length of time needed and if you require it for a community, private or business purpose. Perhaps you would like to co-share some office space? Independent (security access) can be arranged so you are able to come and go at your convenience while setting up and packing up.

If you would like the answers to all of these questions about venue hire at Harcourt Valley CH, please drop us a line at [harcourtvalleych@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtvalleych@gmail.com) or call Jeanette on 0438 579 987.

## Volunteers

As always, we are seeking volunteers to be a part of our H-Team (House Team = operational team). Our next planning meeting is on **Wednesday 23 April at 9.00 am**. You are welcome to come along to hear if it is something you would like to get involved with or just jump in "boots and all" and get involved – we would love to have you join the H-Team!

## Contact Us

**Drop in at 23 Station Street, Harcourt on Wednesdays 10.00 am–2.00 pm (except school and public holidays).**

**Phone 4417 8742 (leave a message) or 0438 579 987**

**Email us at [harcourtvalleych@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtvalleych@gmail.com)**

**(Please note we are no longer using [communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au](mailto:communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au))**

**Follow us on Facebook:**  
[www.facebook.com/HarcourtValleyCommunityHouse](https://www.facebook.com/HarcourtValleyCommunityHouse)

Happy Easter Holidays Everyone!

Cheers for now,  
Ingrid, Jess, Rena & Jeanette (The H-Team)





# Dhelkaya Health

## Healthier Together

### Programs & Services

#### Children, Youth and Family Services

Developmental challenges in children are more common than many parents realise, but early intervention is key to preventing more serious issues later on.

Dhelkaya Health's team works with children aged 0-17 years to address developmental delays and disabilities.

The Dhelkaya Health team visits children and families at home, at playgroups, childcare centres, kindergartens, and schools, offering support during critical transitions, such as moving from kindergarten to school.

Services include speech pathology, physiotherapy, podiatry, occupational therapy, dietetics, continence, nursing and access to a paediatrician.

T. 5471 3575

### Events

#### Cooking for Blokes

Learn to cook for yourself, improvise with what you have in the cupboard and use seasonal produce to prepare nutritious meals. This 4-week course helps men build everyday cooking skills and gain confidence in the kitchen.

**Date:** Wednesdays (23 April to 14 May)

**Time:** 10.30am - 12pm

**Where:** Castlemaine Community House

**Cost:** \$35 (Full) / \$25 (Concession)

**Bookings:** Call 5472 4842

#### Appeals

A dedicated team of cyclists are tackling a 120km route across Mt Alexander, Mt Tarrengower and Mt Franklin in April. It will push the riders to their limits, but it's all in support of a great cause!

Donate online at:  
[dhelkayahealth.org.au/donate](http://dhelkayahealth.org.au/donate)

### Opportunities

#### Work Experience Program

We offer Year 10 & 11 secondary school students first-hand exposure to a wide range of roles within the healthcare sector through work experience.

T: 5471 3234

#### Out-and-Out Club

A unique social and activities club for people with disabilities living in Mount Alexander Shire. It is delivered as a group program, with individual activities, and an emphasis on skill and capacity building to encourage independence and confidence.

Trained staff and volunteers ensure that participants are safe, engaged and supported.

T: 5471 3566

[dhelkayahealth.org.au](http://dhelkayahealth.org.au) | (03) 5471 3555



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# March

Marching forwards ~ in the midst of slow filling March.

I must further myself [in order to] be > forwards.

To march across the round's moon of March, I prevail against "all odds".

To march forwards – to move > ~ in a forward's "decline".  
> To peddle "backwards", engaged by a sickening feeling of self-combustion. She is listening...

I (as in) the self-identification that I "be" – will permit and embrace these past days, dragging slowly across [time] itself.

Marching inside of "this" time stamped "month", the moon continues to circulate, and I (as) in "me" – I "feel"

slowly, and

ever so sluggish - to end [this] journey.

I just want to *feel* free...

May this month become the way I need to be a new me. To bring forwards a month that causes *her* to be no longer a "factor" – but an actual real living energy.


March is slow to start but quick to end [this] entire part of my story.


Months are a casualty. March makes me march slow and patiently waiting for my freedom.

I want this month to bring newness. I pray March is a moving month which results in me becoming *her*

March – slow moving – patience = *her* transitioning into me...

*black3star*  
21st March 2025

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## Music Doesn't Lie

(quote by Jimi Hendrix)

an afternoon of music and story

Sunday 27 April at 2:30 pm

Harcourt Uniting Church, Buckley Street Harcourt



Weebill photo by Geoff Park

**Local musicians and story-tellers**

**Song – Solo, choir**

**Story – Happy endings?**

**Instrumental – Strings, wind, brass**

**Light Afternoon Tea – Harcourt Church**

**Donations for Asylum Seekers Welcome Centre**

Book early to avoid missing out:

[solway@mmnet.com.au](mailto:solway@mmnet.com.au) or 0410 799 297

## CONCERT IN HARCOURT

Music Doesn't Lie, from a quote by Jimi Hendrix, seems an appropriate title for our April 27 concert in the Harcourt Uniting Church. From very early human times, music may well have been a means of communication, a gathering together of community, and a calming source of recreation.

Words too, often fit this description, although in our current times misinformation and lies often replace truthful transactions.

We are welcoming back two groups of musicians, the brass quartet Brasslemaine, playing much-loved numbers, and an ensemble led by Jennifer Lehmann playing Baroque and Early Music.

Some local Harcourt artists will perform here for the first time, Kerrie Maguire with folk-songs, James Brown with traditional Irish tunes, and hopefully, children from Harcourt Valley Primary School singing under the leadership of Katrina Hood.

A tradition established a year or so ago is to have stories interspersed between the musical items. We will hear Kate Nannestad reading excerpts from her published works, and Robyn Yeoward will entertain us with a short story or two.

The afternoon will be capped off with a light afternoon tea in the hall, giving everyone a chance to meet the artists and get to know each other better.

The concert starts at 2.30 pm on Sunday 27 April.

Harcourt Uniting Church is in Buckley Street Harcourt, two blocks over from Harmony Way (the former Calder Highway).

Book early to avoid missing out –

[solway@mmnetcom.au](mailto:solway@mmnetcom.au) or 0410 799 297



# New Homes for Phascogales in Harcourt

There was a buzz in the air as Landcarers and community members recently gathered at Harcourt Valley Primary School to learn how to construct nesting boxes for Brush-tailed Phascogales, also known as Tuans.

Expert nest box maker, Miles Geldard, led an enthusiastic group of all ages eager to learn about Harcourt's Phascogale population and their need for new homes. By way of introduction, Miles said, 'The chief requirement for the survival of this threatened species is tree hollows. In addition, they need to be able to move between trees which are connected by fallen leaf litter, logs and tree stumps.' He continued, 'A tree can take up to 100 years to develop hollows. The clearing of land and the felling of old trees significantly reduces their habitat. Essentially, when we make a nesting box, we are providing a threatened species with emergency housing.'

While the range of phascogales in Victoria has been considerably reduced, and they are listed as threatened under the Victorian Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988, the good news is that the Mount Alexander region has been identified as a

stronghold.

Harcourt Valley Landcare is keen to protect this special species, along with a number of other endangered species including Bibron's toadlet (also known as the brown toadlet) and the golden sun moth, as well as habitat for the Victorian Temperate Woodland Bird Community, members of which have been recorded in Harcourt.

Miles supplied all the materials required – participants brought along drills and safety gear. After the comprehensive introduction, attendees enthusiastically began construction of the nest boxes. In all, 20 boxes were made to be taken home. The morning concluded with a delicious lunch provided by The Coolstore.

This special event was organised by Harcourt Valley Landcare member, Bron Willis, and made possible with funding from the Victorian Government's 2023 Victorian Landcare Grants.

As part of the Harcourt Christmas Gather, Bron also arranged the Brush-tailed Phascogale Storytime with Castlemaine Library's much loved Storytime presenter David Holmes. Bron has also organised a very attractive brochure on Phascogales which will be found inside this edition

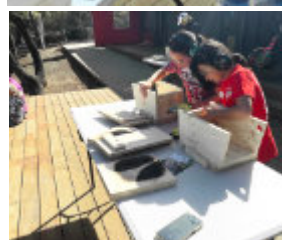
of The Core and it will be available on request from Harcourt Valley Landcare; contact [info@harcourtvalleylandcare.org](mailto:info@harcourtvalleylandcare.org)

## Back to Barkers Creek

The working bee for the month was a 'back to'. In fact, the group has had years of 'back to's' on this site. Continual work at clearing weeds and planting has paid off in some areas and others continue to be a bit more challenging, which is somewhat of an understatement. The biggest weed threat along the creek is broom and gorse. This time around the volunteers worked at slashing, clearing and piling the gorse.

The area is accessed by the bridge opposite the fire station. Harcourt Valley Landcarers organised the refurbishment of the bridge several years ago and regularly work to keep the path clear alongside the creek. A new picnic table recently installed by Mt Alexander Shire Council adds to the enjoyment of the flat beside the creek.

Take a walk, have a look, and consider joining Harcourt Valley Landcare! See: [www.harcourtvalleylandcare.org](http://www.harcourtvalleylandcare.org)







# Harcourt Bowling Club



## Pennant

The Harcourt bowling season has been very successful this year with both Midweek and Weekend Pennant sides contesting finals and one team, the Midweek Team, winning the Grand Final!

## Midweek Pennant

Harcourt Midweek Division 4 played out their Grand Final game against South Bendigo at Eaglehawk on Monday March 3 and returned home as jubilant winners! It was a fairy tale finish to their season just getting into the four by percentage. The team determinedly went about winning both the Semi Final and Preliminary Final rounds, eventually facing the top side South Bendigo. In front of a strong crowd of supporters, Harcourt came out victors by six points. Well done Harcourt! (See attached photo of the winning team)

## Results of the Midweek Grand Final

Harcourt 55/12 defeated South Bendigo 49/4  
Judy Ewing (skip) 17/23 – Wayne Walsh, Ron Douglas, Russell Maltby

Les Harding (skip) 24/11 – John Grant, Chris Anderson, Kaye Grant

Heather Braid (skip) 14/15 – Ken Tribe, Kathy Harding, Vinka Maltby.

## Weekend Pennant

Two Harcourt Weekend Pennant teams competed in Semi Final games on Saturday March 1. Division 4 played White Hills at Marong, with a nail-biting finish that saw Harcourt go down by one point! This put them out of the finals after solid season performance. Division 7 Blue played Bendigo East at Bendigo and, despite a strong performance, were unable to get the better of them. They had a second chance in the Preliminary Final against Strathfieldsaye, but unfortunately were not able to capitalise.

## Girls on the Green

By the last week of Harcourt Girls on the Green, the six teams showed more confidence and ability in their bowling. Importantly, the social aspect of the game saw the 'girls' enjoying the camaraderie with joking and laughter. The BeeJays team of Belinda, Jemma, Jo and Jan were the series winners; Oddbowlers were runners-up and Hooters in third place. The night ended with a chance to catch-up over delicious food. Thanks to all for their participation in making this a great event.



## Tournament Winners at Bendigo East Bubbly Day

An eager team from Harcourt enjoyed a successful day of bowls on Wednesday February 26 at Bendigo East Bubbly Day annual tournament. Kathy Harding, Heather Braid, Fran Corstorphane and Mary-Anne Doyle, returned home with big smiles as overall winners of the day. (Photo below)



## Sponsor's Challenge

On Tuesday February 25 the final of the Sponsor's Challenge was played out with eight teams competing. There was some fierce competition and a lot of laughter and joking across the green, all vying for their name on the Chappy's Challenge shield.

Overall winners of the challenge were the Chaplin Orchards team of Les Chaplin, Brenton and Tom.

In third place was the Toyota 2 team behind the second placed JJ Leech & Sons' team.



## Barefoot Bowls

The Harcourt Football/Netball Club held a Barefoot Bowls and BBQ night at the club on Tuesday March 4 and, by all accounts, a great time was had by all.

## Ladies' Drawn Pairs Championship

Harcourt Ladies' Drawn Pairs Championship was played out on the evening of Thursday March 6. The competition was played over 3 games of 6 ends with 3 bowls and finished under lights.

As has become the custom, the ladies were spoilt with a delicious two-course meal prepared and served by a dedicated collection of the men.

The Champion Pairs winners were Wendy Chaplin and Frances Collins who were the only 3-game winners on the night.



## Men's Gough Pairs Championship

On Wednesday night 12 March, the Men's (Gough) Drawn Pairs was held with 12 teams competing. The winning Pair was Rod Harris and Wayne Walsh (see attached photo). Runners-up were Daryl Gale and Ron Douglas. The evening was completed with a meal prepared and served by lady bowlers.





Rod Harris and Wayne Walsh, winners of the Drawn Pairs.

## Grant Pairs

On Sunday March 16 the annual Grant Mixed Pairs Tournament did start – along with the much-needed rain! The draw had been staggered with three different starting times to accommodate the twenty teams competing. Bowlers in the first draw were called off the green twice due to rain and unable to complete their eight ends before the decision was taken to call the day a washout. Everyone retired to the shelter of the clubhouse to share an enjoyable lunch and afternoon tea. (See attached photo)

The Grant Pairs will now be held on the evening of Tuesday April 2 commencing at 5.00pm. (Results will be in the May Core.)

## Men's and Ladies' Nominated Pairs

The Club Nominated Champion Pairs are still underway. With a couple more rounds to be played, they should be completed by the May Core publication.

## WHAT'S ON:

### Harcourt Social Bowls for March and April

#### Friday Fortnightly Meals

The Fortnightly Friday social nights have been a huge success with Kayla and Ebony providing a different delicious, affordable meal on alternate weeks. Bookings must be in by the Wednesday prior.

**Barefoot Bowls** alternate Friday evenings commenced on Friday 21 March and will continue on alternate Fridays. The green will be open from 4.00 pm and available until dark. Cost of \$5 for the game of bowls for non-club members. Social club membership is available for just \$20 for the remainder of the financial year.

Snack food will be available to purchase e.g. BBQ sausage in bread, dim sims etc. Form your own team of 4, or join others at the club.

**Weekly Jackpot Bowls** will commence next Monday 24th and continue each week. Be there at 12.30 pm for a 1.00 pm start. Names submitted at the club beforehand please. All welcome.

#### Finals of Harcourt 100 Up (Men's and Ladies')

#### Finals of Men's and Ladies' Nominated Pairs Champs

#### Grant Pairs – Tuesday April 2

#### Rice Memorial Triples – Saturday April 12

#### AGM and Presentation Day – Sunday May 11



## Graffiti Busting

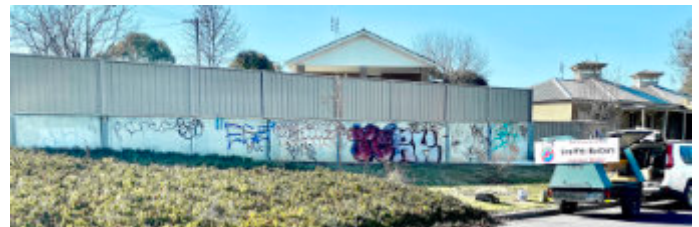


Graffiti has become a significant concern in Castlemaine and local towns in the Mount Alexander Shire with Castlemaine recently surpassing Melbourne in per capita graffiti incidents.

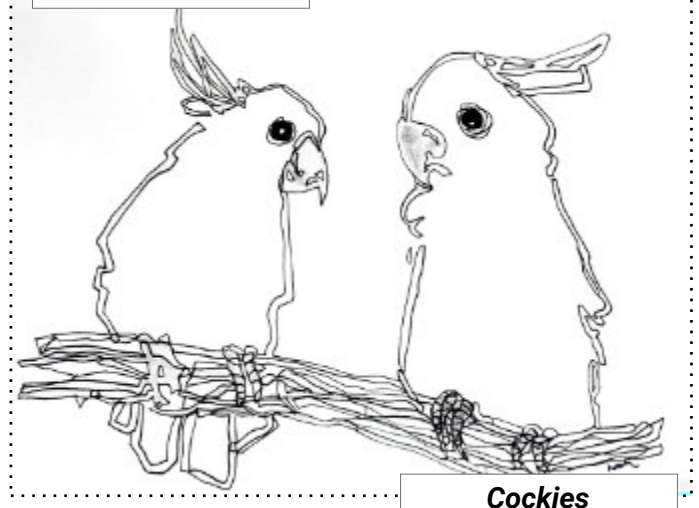
In response, Castlemaine Graffiti Busters (CGB), a volunteer group, was established in June 2024 and has been actively removing illegal graffiti from properties across the shire, with the blessing of the owners. Auspiced by Neighbourhood Watch and supported by the Department of Justice Victoria, CGB also receives backing from the Rotary Club of Castlemaine and numerous local businesses. CGB's efforts extend to neighbouring communities, aiming to keep areas like Harcourt free from unsightly graffiti.

Dedicated local citizens, such as a founding member of CGB, David Dean, have taken the initiative by cleaning graffiti from road signs, contributing to the overall beautification and safety of the region.

**If you are interested in joining as either an active member, or simply as an advocate, please contact Jane Cafarella on 0447 767 304 or email [castlemainegraffitibusters@gmail.com](mailto:castlemainegraffitibusters@gmail.com)**



Linda Newton



Cockies



# Harcourt Valley Primary School

## Applefest Success

Principal Andrew Blake said, 'What a great way to begin Applefest with our school choir formally opening Applefest. Students sang very confidently and kept the Applefest crowd well and truly entertained. Congratulations to the school choir on their great effort. Thank you to Mrs Hood for all her work in the lead up to Applefest preparing students for this performance.'

'I was delighted with the effort put into Applefest by staff, parents and students. The sales of apple pies totalled \$5,700. Thank you to everyone who was able to assist with our major fundraising event for the year.'

Andrew also congratulated all students on their completed art work and for taking the opportunity to have their work on display throughout Applefest. He said, 'I received numerous comments on the high quality of art work created by all students and thank you to Mrs Maddaford for ensuring all students had some work to put on display at the art show.'

'We certainly have some very talented students here at HVPS and thank you again to parents, staff, students and community members who assisted the school in the preparation for the apple pie stall, the art show and the choir at Applefest. Well done HVPS!'

## Harmony Week Celebrated on March 21

The Principal said, 'At assembly the Grade 3/4 students did a great job promoting Harmony Week by explaining how Harmony Week relates to inclusiveness, respect and a sense of belonging for everyone.' During Harmony Week students were welcome to wear a touch of orange on Friday 21 to celebrate this special week.

## School Wide Positive Behaviour End-of-Term Award - 4 April

Points for demonstrating good behaviour are accumulated over the term and recorded on a large picture of an apple tree. The points are updated each week at assembly. Mr Blake said, 'I congratulate all students on reaching the goal of filling the Core Points Positive Behaviour Tree. As a result, students have elected to have an 'out of uniform' day on Friday April 4, along with a movie day. Students and staff are welcome to bring a comfy pillow/cushion and enjoy the movie. A big thank-you goes to the School Council for allocating a small amount of funds from the Applefest stall for students to have an ice-cream on the day. We will also have a barbecue for lunch that day.'

## Anzac Service

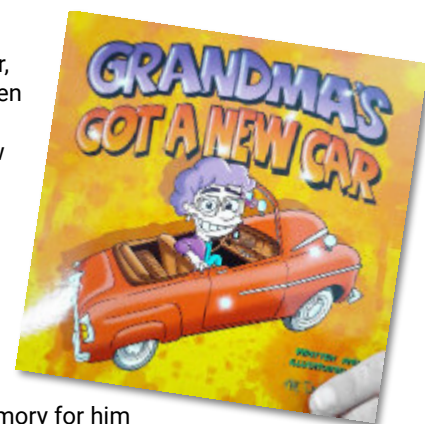
Andrew concluded this edition of school news with an invitation to parents/carers and the Harcourt Valley Primary School community to attend the school's ANZAC Day Service on Wednesday 23 April, which will commence at 9:30am. He said, 'The service will be conducted by our wonderful School Captains and Glenn Cox (Mrs Simpson's father) who will be playing the Last Post.'

# Grandma's Got a New Car



Dave (right) and his children, Zoe and Roy with teacher Ben Walter.

Inspired by his grandmother, Dave O'Donahugh has written and illustrated a children's book, *Grandma's Got A New Car*. He said, 'As a young person, the first time I saw my grandmother drive was when she was in her 60s when she bought her first car. While Dave confirmed that his grandma did not have purple hair, which was popular at the time, the memory for him is very vivid.'



Dave works locally and has always had an interest in drawing cartoons and illustrations and, apart from art classes at school, is self-taught. His children Zoe and Roy attend the Harcourt Valley Primary School and were excited to be present at the launch of the book.

The students at Harcourt Valley Primary School were delighted to hear the story being read out loud to them. After the reading, each grade was given the opportunity to ask a question about the book and the student who asked the question was presented with a copy for their grade. The school library also received several copies of the book.

Dave said, 'The book took two years to produce on Amazon Kindle and has already sold a few copies on Amazon. I've produced 25 hard copies so far and I'm considering a sequel.'

Keep an eye out for this enjoyable story which would make a good present for a child from 2 to 12 years old. Copies are available at Stoneman's Bookroom and at the Kyneton Library.

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## Chatting with Harcourt CWA

Hello there, Everyone.

Wow! What a great weekend we all had recently at this year's Harcourt Applefest celebration. People came from near and far to join in the fun. The weather was kind to us, the new venue at the Harcourt Leisure Centre proved a winner and everybody agreed it was one of the best festivals ever.

We at Harcourt CWA Branch had a successful time, as I said in our Facebook post immediately after the event.

"Thank you to everyone who supported our Harcourt CWA stall by buying jams, chutneys, cordial, teddies, cakes, slices and biscuits yesterday at the fabulous Harcourt Applefest. What a great day!

Special thanks to all those who bought raffle tickets.

### Raffle Winners were:-

- ▶ 1st Prize - Allan of Eaglehawk (see photo right);
- ▶ 2nd Prize - Madolyn of Huntley;
- ▶ 3rd Prize - Judy of Castlemaine and
- ▶ 4th Prize - Barb of Kangaroo Flat.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you – on behalf of the Harcourt Country Women's Association."

All of that was true but it was only half the story. Not only did our intrepid Harcourt CWA Chicks With Attitude work their socks off on the Harcourt stall, they also multi-tasked and joined Group President Dani Kent and some other CWA ladies from Castlemaine, Dunolly, Newstead and Sutton Grange branches, to (wo)man the CWA Group's Devonshire Tea and Luncheon Cafe, where sandwiches, cakes, slices and the ever faithful award-winning CWA scones were prepared, served and sold all day, to the delight of all who bought.

Talking of scones ... have you ever wondered how the CWA ladies make the best scones? Much of the expertise is in the recipe, which is shared here.

Lastly, here are some pictures taken of our Harcourt CWA stall at Applefest. Thanks to Joy Robertson and Mike Rule for the photos.

**Don't forget, we meet on the first Thursday of each month at the Harcourt Leisure Centre at 1:30 pm and, as always, we would love to have you join us for a cuppa and a chat.**

Beverley Orgill, for Harcourt CWA



## CWA Scone Recipe

(as used at the Royal Melbourne Show)

### Ingredients:

- 4 cups Self Raising flour
- 300 ml cream
- 300 ml milk
- 1 tsp sugar
- pinch salt

### Method:

1. Add cream and milk to the dry ingredients and mix to a soft dough.
2. Place on a lightly floured board and pat it out to a thickness of about 2.5 centimetres (or an inch in the old measurements).
3. Cut with a floured scone cutter.
4. Bake at 200 degrees Celsius for 12–15 minutes.

### Hint:

- 1 tablespoon cornflour added to each cup S.R. flour makes scones lighter.

## Grace Church

*This is a statement of belief by Grace Church.*

This edition of *The Core* covers the Easter period. The major events on the Christian calendar are Christmas, when we celebrate the birth of our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Then follows Easter when we remember Christ's crucifixion on Good Friday, and we celebrate His resurrection on Easter Sunday. The next significant event is Jesus' ascension into heaven, followed by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, in a dramatic fashion.

Jesus Himself had this to say ....

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.

The Apostle Peter also recorded the fact that it was Jesus' desire that none of mankind should perish ....

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.

As we approach Easter, I would like to point out to you that Jesus' desire to save the lost was on display, even as He hung on the cross ... the penitent thief was the first to receive mercy ...

One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at him:

"Aren't you the Christ? Save yourself and us!" But the other criminal rebuked him. "Don't you fear God," he said, "since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong." Then he said, "Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom." Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

*Ps Roger Thurecht, Grace Church*



# Harcourt Heritage Centre

## A pair of granite stones, and the story they can tell

A quarter of a century ago, Harcourt's museum was given a pair of quern stones. Initially, the interest in these stones was that they were of Harcourt granite. However, the stones have quite a story to tell.

The pair consists of a lower, stationary stone with a centering piece and a rotary disc-shaped quern, which has a central hole and a handle slot. Quern stones have been used since neolithic times to grind grain to produce flour for bread-making. Harcourt Museum's pair of stones are only about 150 to 170 years old. They were fashioned by a stonemason for domestic use. While the surface of the grinding faces is naturally rough, the flour does not become gritty.

The museum's pair of stones came via a donation made by the folk at the Restorers Barn, who had cleared out the sheds at a long-established local farm. It is clear that this old farm had, at some stage, attempted to cultivate a crop of wheat. In the same shed would have been a sickle for cutting standing wheat, a flail for threshing the wheat and a shallow, metre-wide winnowing dish for use after the flail had been employed to separate the grains from the stalks. The farmer scooped the debris from the threshing floor into the winnowing dish, took it outside on a windy day and gently threw the results of his labours into the wind. Only the grains of wheat fell back into the winnowing dish. Then the housewife went to work with the quern stones while the stove was heating up to make the bread.

The colonisation of central Victoria after the gold rush of the early 1850s brought many families to the Harcourt



Valley. These were families whose main ambition was to establish their small-holdings and, to use a phrase from the Bible, "to sit under their own vine and fig tree". In response to the demand for land the colonial authorities developed a policy to sell land on extended payment terms, on condition that the purchaser would cultivate the land and make improvements in the form of fencing, houses and sheds. Some of the farmers taking up land on the outskirts of Castlemaine started to grow wheat in a small way. The Victorian Government archives contain thousands of applications to purchase land, and each file lists the extent of the cultivation and improvements. A common feature in these land purchase files is the mention of wheat as the first crop. Often the area sown to wheat was very small, and domestic conversion of the wheat into flour was a sensible course in lieu of taking the grain to the local flour mill. It was sensible, too, to grow and process your own grain, rather than pay the exorbitant price being charged for flour carted from Melbourne over appalling roads.

As further evidence that wheat was widely grown hereabouts, we may point



to historic flour mills in Barker Street, Castlemaine, in Kennedy Street, Castlemaine, at Newstead, Castlemaine, Green Hill, Kyneton, Carlsruhe and at Smeaton, to give just a few examples.

The growing of wheat and other grain crops in this area, without the aid of fertilisers, resulted in the land becoming starved and the central Victorian settlers soon abandoned the growing of cereal crops. Raising of livestock and fruit growing became more popular uses for land. Today you will find wheat crops on broad acre farms, far away from the Harcourt Valley farmers further north who found it cheaper to send their grain direct to the seaboard for milling, hence the central Victorian flour mills suffered accordingly.

Broad acre farming and milling of cereals is now highly mechanised. The flour mills of Castlemaine have been repurposed to be the offices of Flowserve and Barty's Depot. The basalt mills at Newstead, Malmsbury, Green Hill, Kyneton, Smeaton and Carlsruhe are heritage-listed monuments to a long-past era. On a smaller scale, the Harcourt Museum's pair of quern stones is, similarly, a relic of our valley's hopeful, small scale, self-reliant colonial pioneering era.

**Harcourt Heritage Centre is located in the ANA Hall, High Street Harcourt. It is open each Wednesday from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm or by appointment.**

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# Harcourt Uniting Church

As we approach Easter (one of the most important celebrations on the Christian calendar), members of many churches have already celebrated Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day). We invited Grace Church members to join us for our morning tea with tasty toppings to enjoy on the pancakes.

Palm Sunday is celebrated on the Sunday before Easter. Palm Sunday reminds us of the entrance Jesus made into Jerusalem riding on a donkey. The crowds pulled palm branches from the trees to lay on the road or to wave as Jesus passed by. The people were calling out: "Hosanna – Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord". Had it been happening in Australia, perhaps the crowd would be waving gum tree branches!

We welcome everyone to join us at Harcourt Uniting Church for the Good Friday Service at 9.00 am on 18 April followed by the Easter Sunday service on 20 April at 9.00 am. Of course, there will be some Easter eggs to enjoy after the service.

Recently, we held our Harvest Thanksgiving service with a wonderful variety of fresh harvest from our gardens plus bags of Chaplin apples, a



giant pumpkin and a generous display of packaged foods. We gave thanks for the abundance of good food we have while remembering those who struggle to provide food for their families. To acknowledge this, all the food was donated to the Castlemaine St Vinnies to help local families.

The extension at the rear of our church is almost complete, and we look forward to being able to move in soon, thanks to our builder, Marc, and his "attention to detail".

Happy Easter to all – enjoy some chocolate and hot cross buns, as you



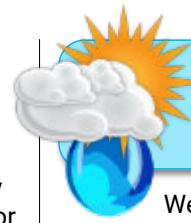
spend time with your family. Hopefully, you might remember the reason for celebrating Easter as you munch on your Easter goodies.

Some facts from a popular Bakery chain:

- ▶ They will bake 4.2 million hot cross buns during the Easter week alone.
- ▶ 18 million hot cross buns are baked from January to April.
- ▶ The choc chip hot cross bun has 100 choc chips – that's 66 tonnes of choc chips in all.

**Remember when \$20 worth of groceries wouldn't fit into one bag – let alone one stomach!**

Jan Jenkin



## Weather & Water

We experienced warm to hot weather in March.

Deceptively, the month began with cooler temperatures for the first 3 days. The long weekend of 8 – 10 March saw very high temperatures which eventually eased with rain arriving on 15 March and 13 mm was recorded.

High temperatures followed by rain occurred 5 days later with 11 mm recorded on 20 March. Temperatures began to ease in the days leading to the end of March, with warm days close to or just over 30 degrees, until 29 March when a strong southerly brought 7 mm of rain and the first cold night for the year.

Total rainfall for the month was 31 mm bringing the sum for the year to 70 mm. Rainfall to the same time in 2024 was 126 mm, with January receiving exceptional rainfall for the month on 7 January of 78 mm.

It is difficult to see a pattern developing with previous years at this stage, although all Harcourt locals will agree that there is a worrying dry trend evidenced with only one day of rain recorded in December 2024 and the first two months of 2025.

Here in Reservoir Road the bird baths needed constant topping up and kangaroos have come close to the house at night to forage the watered patches of grass.

### Reservoir Levels:

	25/3/25	16/2/25	19/1/24
Upper Coliban	64.3	64.3%	68.8%
Lauriston	83.2%	84.6%	91.3%
Malmsbury	18.7%	18.6%	16.8%
Barkers Creek	32.5%	33.7%	36.2%

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

## Cooking for Blokes is back!

A new series of **Cooking for Blokes** classes begins on Wednesday, 23 April 2025, running for four weeks at Castlemaine Community House, from 10:30am to 12 noon. The cost is \$35 (Full) / \$25 (Concession).

To book, contact [reception@cch.org.au](mailto:reception@cch.org.au) or call 5472 4842. Come join us to learn practical skills, enjoy great food, and connect with others!

Each two-and-a-half-hour session focused on a different theme:

- ▶ Week 1: Egg preparation – scrambling, poaching, and frying – with homemade mayonnaise and egg & lettuce sandwiches.
- ▶ Week 2: 'Fake-Away' meals – participants made homemade burgers with balanced nutrition, replacing the need for takeaway.
- ▶ Week 3: Braising – exploring the art of creating stews with simple ingredients that yielded impressive results.

- ▶ Week 4: Desserts – a fruit crumble class where Alex encouraged creativity with new ingredients and techniques.



# KATIE FINLAY'S FRUIT GROWING TIPS

Hi everyone,

What a beautiful start to autumn. The trees are just starting to change colour and it looks like we'll be in for a stunning display this year. We're busily pruning apricots at our place because we like to get them done while the trees still have leaves on them. We'll be holding two pruning workshops in April (one online and one in person), so if you'd like to learn (or practise) pruning, please see the booking links at the end of this article.

Did you get a chance to taste all the different types of apples at this year's Applefest? Once again, Harcourt Growers did us proud and the Fruit Growers tent was able to present a fabulous display of varieties, mostly grown here in Harcourt.

We'd like to give a special shout-out to Gavin Lang from Langdale Orchards and Trevor Peeler from the Harcourt Co-operative Coolstores for gathering apples and pears from most of Harcourt's growers. Thanks also to Robyn, Nick, Andrea, Andrew and Clare for contributing fruit from their gardens for the display. The Orchard Keepers (that's the orchard on our place) also contributed many varieties to the display, with plans afoot to be bringing many more of the old heritage varieties to the public in coming years.

Thanks also to Joe from Redlands Orchards for generously donating some of the new varieties they are growing, including Dazzle and Sassy apples. Most of Redlands fruit is grown for the export market, so the Applefest is a rare opportunity for locals and visitors to taste some of these world-class apples that are being developed right here in Harcourt.

Fruit fly has been around a bit this season, but thankfully most of the late fruit has not been infected. Our protocols seem to be working well, but as always, we're asking anyone who buys fruit from us (or any other grower in Harcourt) to be part of the front-line defence system by letting us know if any infected fruit slip through our controls.

The other thing you can do to help prevent fruit fly from spreading is to educate yourself about how to manage this pest in your home garden. The biggest risk is unmanaged and feral fruit trees. If fruit flies are allowed to get established in fruit trees in backyards, on roadsides, or in the bush

(or the mountain bike park, in Harcourt's case) - that's when the pressure can really start to build up.

If you've got a fruit tree please keep monitoring your traps and fruit right until the end of the season. Follow all the hygiene recommendations, which are mainly about cleaning up ALL your fallen fruit as soon as it falls - this stops the fruit fly larvae from getting into the soil to finish their life cycle. This one simple action can make a big difference to how hard the community will be hit next season. You can help to make a big difference to whether we can all keep growing fruit into the future - backyard growers and orchardists alike. If you have a fruit tree you can't look after, please think about getting rid of it this winter and replacing it with a beautiful ornamental!

So, to this month's tips: Now is the time to put away your nets if you used them on your fruit trees over summer. Nets get damaged and wear out much faster if they're left out in the weather all year. Early autumn is the perfect time for this job because they slip off more easily while the tree still has leaves, so don't wait too long to get the job done. Of course if your apple or pear tree still has fruit, then leave the nets in place for now, because the birds will take advantage of the free feed if you take them off early.

If you've used drape netting (as opposed to having put up some sort of frame to hold the net off the tree) a handy tip is to use a long stick to push the nets off the tree, being careful not to damage the ends of the limbs if possible. Disentangle any twigs, branches, leaves or rotten fruit before you pack them away. If you can pack and store them so they're rat-proof, you'll thank yourself next summer when you go to put them out again. If the net has any holes (from persistent kangaroos, for example), your future self will thank you very much if you repair the nets now, before you put them away. This is usually a simple matter of sewing the holes up with UV-



stable nylon thread, or tying the edges together with cable ties or even hay band (baling twine).

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

**Hugh and Katie Finlay are certified organic orchardists 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. Register for the upcoming ONLINE Pruning Masterclass here: [growgreatfruit.com/product/pruning-masterclass-registration-april-2025](http://growgreatfruit.com/product/pruning-masterclass-registration-april-2025)**

**Register for the upcoming IN-PERSON pruning workshop here: <https://www.trybooking.com/DAIZU>.**





# Council news

## What matters to you?

We're looking ahead at the next four years and need your input to shape our shire's future.

We want to know three things that matter to you now, and three things that you're thinking about for the future.

Your input will guide what we do and how we do it over the next four years, and shape our new Council Plan, and Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan.

We're also taking this opportunity to check in with you about our 10-year Community Vision, which we created together in 2021.

Learn more and tell us what matters to you at [shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/ourshire](https://shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/ourshire).

## Pet registration due soon

Pet registration is important for a number of reasons. One is if your furry friend goes missing or wanders away from home, you have a much better chance of them being returned.

Registration is due on Thursday 10 April.

To register, call 5471 100 or visit [mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Register-your-pet](https://mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Register-your-pet).

## Stay in the loop on Council news

Are you interested in what events are on around the shire? What about sustainability updates, local business opportunities or arts news?

We have something for everyone! Sign up at [mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Connect-with-us](https://mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Connect-with-us).

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



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# Maree Edwards MP

STATE MEMBER FOR BENDIGO WEST

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

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

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



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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:  
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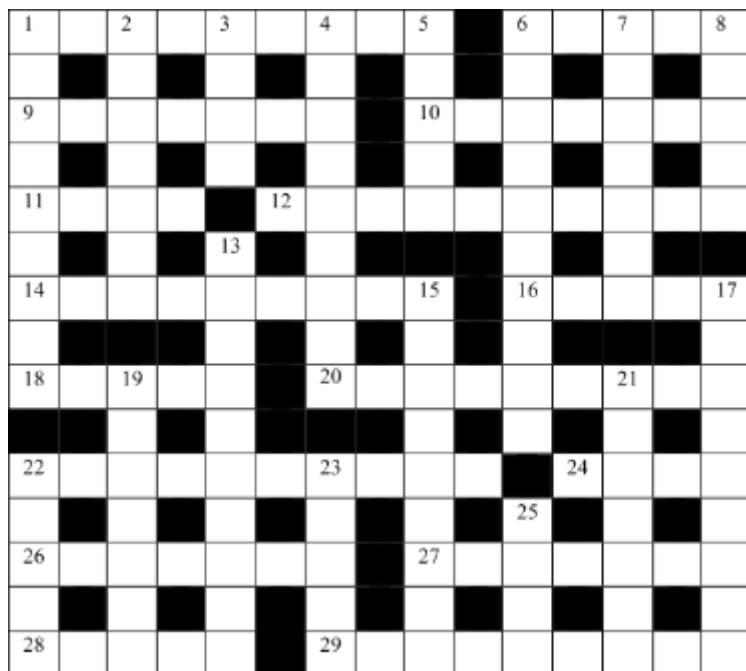
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## April 2025 Xword

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### Down:

1. It's the last straw when the Faithful lose conviction. (9)
2. Harpo (AA, but very unreliable) used to have a home where the buffalo roam. (7)
3. With a pith helmet on, I am up for a bit of wildlife spotting in north America. (4)
4. It's an aid to rain, but a bit acidic. You'd need to ration aid efforts after it... (9)
5. They split bills... (5)
6. You can derive lads from these tearaways. (10)
7. It's only the second half of the dance, and already the ear-to-ear expression on my rival's face is causing me grief! (7)
8. Their failure to correctly weigh up the situation (6), because they missed one of four similar points, makes them bits of dopes... (5)
13. Black Sea bathing pipes? (10)
15. Clues in so many of these crosswords need to be constructed in private... (9)
17. Held in sacred memory of building on St Kilda road in the end. (9)
19. To confirm it's legit., sign at the end, or see the teller. (7)
21. How digger earmarked things? (7)
22. Find anvil in customary fashion. (Helps to hear...) (5)
23. Idle, with first and second swapped and a tyro on board, ends up as the remains of former glory. (5)
25. Drummer could get a short class in Truth, or the Greek, perhaps. (4)

### Across

1. Each editor committed a fraud, and then shot through... (9)
6. They say you can get to a Russian house by reindeer. (5)
9. A complete novice with an AK-47 would make us jumpily anxious! (7)
10. Helen Donath reads through the basic content on dressmaking. (7)
11. Oddly enough, we hear music from this group even now. (4)
12. On these things, my sad perch is most insecure! (10)
14. Boardrooms of banks and nesting seabirds? (9)
16. Gets a Packard without the marketing tool to move it forward. (5)
18. Chap reaps harvest of fauna with it... (5)
20. Boot ties adornments further up? (9)
22. So: ruin code of manners with this behaviour. (10)
24. Likely to be 22. If he were frank first he might have the talent to get away with it... (4)
26. Universal panacea had its century of allure, and is still held out for by some. (4-3)
27. Fashionable being in contradictory act? (7)
28. Stevo [wrong spelling] and his dodgy mates were into it. (5)
29. What Sherlock did to deduce the last solution? (9)

## March 2025 Xword Solution

© McW Sept '19



### Down:

1. What the hero puts into the case [picks] in some Westerns?
2. Confusing? Incorporate fish! [cf 28...]
3. Making a big quid led Eric to desuetude. [Telegraphing my punches...]
4. Suffers several turns below. [Well?]
5. Deed pole finished minced.
6. If Trump is wanting to jettison his colleague he should hear what the chemist is up to!
7. Model in alcoholics anonymous.
8. Man with BSc rages about sheep's neck.
13. What they danced sins away with, frankly...
15. State of Laertes' tip? [Well?]
17. The thickness you get from a thick Scots dam. [Well?]
19. Quiet [Sh...] over milk source might elicit an involuntary tremor.
21. What two vicious dogs fighting over a ball of string might do... [Well?]
22. Box the couple at the front of girl's uniform.
23. Brisk sport of chap takes chances.
25. Old liberal Liberals [Well? Remember the 'Wets'?] are back for hearty meal.

### Across:

1. A banality in quiet [P] liberality of interpretation.
6. Aden's not the right place for higher ed. figures.
9. Eggs Molly? [Well?]
10. Not being praised causes teenagers to plunge into the depths.
11. Apparent to the ear in atmosphere. [Well?]
12. Are angel cords drawn round baby while lullaby draws to a grand close?
14. We need a bit of male rigor to get through this tedious process.
16. A sitter ends up evenly balanced on a quadruped.
18. Rented [leased], lost the learner, became more relaxed...
20. Quite an event seen at this birthday!
22. Maybe what pirates are doing before they gulp dinner!
24. Same thing as perception to George [Berkeley... Esse est Percipi]
26. Loop a clue forever. [Well?]
27. Gas off Macbeth's chest-thumping? [Thane of Cawdor, Thane of Glamis...]
28. Knocks up American rubber? [Two defs!]
29. Where not to use 28... [Well?]



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12 months	\$110	1/3 page	\$70
		1/2 page	\$80
		Full page	\$160

## 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



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[castlemainerepaircafe.wordpress.com](http://castlemainerepaircafe.wordpress.com)



### March Solution

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

## SUDOKU

Difficulty: Moderate

Fill the grid so every row,  
column and 3x3 frame  
contains every number  
from 1 to 9.

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





Photo: Lou Citroën



Photo: Lou Citroën



Photo: Robyn Miller



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