

HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE



Edition 132 – November 2025

Produced by: Harcourt Progress Association Inc

Online: harcourtprogress.org.au/news or harcourt.vic.au/news



THE MOST RECENT CONCERT in the bi-annual series held at Harcourt Uniting Church revealed many treasures.

Performers played, sang or talked, giving us musical treasures and thoughts. They contributed to an informal and sometimes impromptu atmosphere, and some audience participation.

The youngest performer was eight years old; she played a piano duet with her dad and then sang for us. Some of the senior musicians were in their eighties, playing recorder, viola da gamba or singing. In between were some already very

accomplished teenage and early twenties string players, and others whose age can remain their secret.

The program delighted us all. Compositions varied from those written before the baroque era and items by J S Bach through classical songs to songs from the 1930s to 1980s, including an invigorating jazzy number. A story about volunteering in Tonga sixty years ago added to the variety.

The final (unplanned) moment in the concert was an audience version of "Going Home" from Dvorak's New World Symphony, sung to 'aah'. The acoustic of the granite church lifted the sound perfectly.

Solway Nutting

Remembrance Day

Meet at the Cenotaph

at 10.45 am for an 11 am start

Remembrance Day is observed on November 11 to commemorate Australians who have died or suffered in wars, conflicts, and peacekeeping operations. It marks the end of World War I, occurring at 11 am on November 11, 1918.

Australians are encouraged to pause for one minute of silence at 11 am to honour and reflect on the service and sacrifice of those who have served.



CONTENTS

- HPA Update – 3
- Rail Service Update – 3
- Harcourt Valley Landcare – 4
- Harcourt Uniting Church – 5
- Councillor Comment – 6
- Harcourt Lions Club – 6
- Harcourt's Hairdresser – 8
- VMR Grand Opening – 8
- HVPS – 9
- Harcourt CWA – 10
- Harcourt CFA – 11
- Dhelkaya Health – 12
- The Heritage Centre – 13
- Harcourt Bowling Club – 14
- Flowserve 150th – 15
- Harcourt Carpet Bowls – 16
- Keep Our Doors Open – 17
- Community House – 18
- Community Bank – 20
- Weather & Water – 21
- Grace Church – 21
- Gardening – 22
- Council News – 23
- Xword – 24
- Repair Café – 25
- Sudoku – 25
- Gather Christmas – 27
- VMR Grand Opening – 28

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.



MEMBER 2025

Property Plus
REAL ESTATE

Di Selwood
0488 148 358
Harcourt - Castlemaine - Maldon

94.9
main
FM
LISTEN LOCAL

mainfm is an award winning radio station based in Castlemaine, broadcasting music, community news, talks and specialist programs and events throughout a large area of Central Victoria, serving our community.

With over 100 local volunteer presenters with a passion for radio, our programs are varied and diverse with over 70 shows across the program grid, transmitting 24 hours a day and streaming online via mainfm.net

COMMUNITY DIARY

Sunday November 9: 11 am-5 pm VMR Community Open Day.

Sunday December 14: Carols in the Park – free barbecue and craft for children. Visit by Santa.

Monday November 17: Fire Danger Period starts for the shires of Greater City of Bendigo and Mount Alexander.

Saturday November 29: 10 am – 2 pm Gather Harcourt Christmas, James Park. (See page 27).

Saturday November 29: 7 pm HVPS Trivia Night at the Bowls Club. See page 9 for details.

Saturday, Sunday December 6,7: VMR Grand Opening Weekend. See page 28 for details

Wednesday December 31: 6 pm until midnight Gather Harcourt News Year's Eve. (See page 26)

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

CFA: Brigade meets at 8.00 pm on the third Monday of each month. Sunday morning equipment checks and maintenance runs start 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.

Community House: See page 18 for September activities. Open each Wednesday from 12:30 to 2:30 pm, closed in school holidays.

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

Harcourt Bowls Club: see page 14 and the website: www.harcourtbowlingclub.com.au

Harcourt Lions Club: Third Monday 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.

Leisure Centre Committee: 7.30 pm on the fourth Thursday of each even-numbered month at the Harcourt Leisure Centre.

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

Repair Café: Last Sunday of the month from 10.00 am to 1.00 pm. See ad on page 23 for more information.

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.

At our Annual General Meeting held last Tuesday, I relinquished my position as Chairperson and am pleased to advise that Ivan Gilbert was elected as our new Chairman of the Board. Other board members were elected who are either continuing or new members and are listed below in alphabetical order:

- ▶ John Baldock
- ▶ Alison Curtis
- ▶ Bronnie Dean (Member Secretary)
- ▶ David Dean
- ▶ Ivan Gilbert (Chairperson)
- ▶ Rena Geroe (Vice-chairperson)
- ▶ Debbie Lawn
- ▶ Di Lederman (Secretary)
- ▶ Phillip Musat
- ▶ Bev Orgill
- ▶ John Stenning

- ▶ Remy Sowman
- ▶ Jeanette Teague (Treasurer/CAV Secretary)

It has been a pleasure to work with all members of the past committee, and I am happy to greet new members of the board and look forward to working with them in future days.

Welcome to new volunteers

We have recently had new volunteers come to the Community House, and new volunteers are always welcome. Please contact any of the above board members for more details.

Carols in the Park Sunday December 14

Plans are underway for another Carols in the Park on Sunday December 14. We have found the shady area close to the Harcourt Playground is an ideal spot for this event. There will be craft and play activities for the children, a BBQ for everyone followed by

Christmas Carols with music provided by Thompsons Foundry Band and, of course, a visit by Santa. Look out for the poster outlining more details.

Support the campaign for Community Houses

The HPA supports and encourages the community to get behind the Neighbourhood House Victoria (NHVic) campaign to increase funding for Community Houses, including new funding for the Harcourt Valley Community House. See the Community House report, page 18, for more details.

I look forward to stepping back, and you can look forward to regular updates from Ivan as our new Chairman in next month's *Core*. Thank you to you our readers for your continued interest in our endeavours to make Harcourt a safe and happy place to live, to work, and to make friends.

*Alison Curtis
Outgoing Chairperson*

Update on the Community Campaign to have a Passenger Rail Service re-commenced at Harcourt Station

The HPA Committee was privileged to have The Honorable Maree Edwards MP, Member for Bendigo West, attend our last meeting (7 October) to provide an update to the committee members on the much-discussed topic of re-introducing the passenger rail service to the Harcourt station.

Maree had also kindly arranged for two senior officials from the Department of Transport and Planning to attend the meeting to assist in explaining in some detail, the current situation with the topic and also to enable committee members to raise questions and/or clarify any issues.

The following is a summary of specific points referenced in the presentation from Maree and the two officers, who outlined:

- ▶ That subsequent to a formal review by the Department of Transport of the project to duplicate the rail line between Kyneton and Bendigo and also to re-introduce a passenger rail service to Harcourt Station, there have been some structural challenges identified, due to:
 - The, generally, current single-track rail line arrangement from Kyneton to Bendigo;
 - the location of some notable heritage structures (tunnels) along the line that are not able to

safely accommodate dual rail tracks;

- the specific location of some significant curves in the rail line adjacent to the current station platform.

Each of which, presents challenges in determining the specific positioning of an appropriate platform at Harcourt Railway Station, suitable for the faster trains to stop, and also:

- the overall government proposal to increase the frequency of rail services on regional rail lines to every 40 minutes.

The above situation will result in a need for a platform to be located in a position adjacent to a straighter section of rail line. The department officials then outlined that such a re-location option would likely include, being generally:

- ▶ east of the Rail Bridge crossing over the Calder Motorway;
- ▶ south of the current Railway Station Platform; and on
- ▶ the eastern (Coolstore Road) side of the main rail-line.

Discussion also referenced the VicTrack open space land on the Coolstore Road side of the station complex and which is ideally positioned for use as rail patron car-parking. The committee members then raised the matter of the extensive current invasion of environmental weeds and trees growing in, and in fact, damaging the existing heritage infrastructure at the station site – noting in particular, the former goods rail line and platforms

and other associated infrastructure.

The department officials noted that they will follow-up on this matter and communicate back to the committee.

Further to the above discussion, Maree Edwards then outlined to the committee a proposal presently being investigated as an interim measure. The proposal seeks the provision of a bus service between Castlemaine and Harcourt stations to operate on a timetable specifically to arrive at Castlemaine Station shortly ahead of north or south bound rail services stopping at Castlemaine. Such an arrangement would enable local and district travellers to either walk to the Harcourt station or park their vehicles on the referenced VicTrack land on the Coolstore Road side of the rail line and then catch the suggested bus service to Castlemaine. Maree advised that she will keep the committee updated on progress with this proposal.

The HPA Committee is also preparing for the formal submission to the government of the extensive community petition which has been collected over the past year from Harcourt and District residents; such petition specifically requesting the re-introduction of a passenger rail service to Harcourt Station.

*Ivan Gilbert
Chairperson, Harcourt Progress Association
Email: ivan.gilbert@mail.com
Phone: 0419 626 263*



Harcourt Valley Landcare recently held an event with a focus on maintaining a healthy environment in the face of climate change. President Terry Willis opened the evening with the words of welcome acknowledging the country of the Dja Dja Wurrung people. As an introduction, he mentioned the benefits that Landcarers have because of their connection with our natural world. He said, "As Landcarers, we are fascinated with our environment and we share stories of wonder and excitement about plants and animals we encounter and encourage to thrive. We also share failures and successes so that we can adapt as the climate changes. We have a strong connection to country, we aim to protect wildlife corridors and understand and encourage biodiversity in our surrounds."

Invited guest speakers for the event were: Monique Miller, Paul Foreman, Nicole Howie and Stephen Oxley. They were asked the challenging question: In the face of climate change what does meaningful local environmental action look like to you?

Monique has worked on conservation since 2017, with a special focus on rare and declining flora and is known for her amazing ability to remember the Latin names of plants, and has worked as a Restoration Project Officer at Bush Heritage Australia. Over the four years in this work she saw the effect of climate change. She said, "I observed the 2021 La Niña and the associated floods, the 2022 floods, the 2023 average year leading into 2024-25 where we experienced the worst drought since the millennial drought. I saw the bush transformed. I've seen the bush in late winter look like it was late summer, when the rehydrating season did not occur and Bell's swamp stayed dry. Mass flowering seasons did not occur, or they were very late, plants were either not flowering, or there were not as many flowers."

Monique said, "I'm trying to highlight the Sisyphean task of conservation work in a climate change environment. The way to deal with this is local and community-based action; so Landcare is on the right track. But also, support each other to stay and maintain these changes. For every action you take to change the world, make sure you look after yourself. I like the quote from Arthur Ashe the tennis player who said: 'Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.'" She said, "The three great challenges in facing climate change are people's disconnection from nature, from themselves and each other." In summary, Monique said: "You can't do everything, but you can join Landcare and share the skills you have. Make whatever small changes you can e.g. put a frog pond in your garden. Bring your children along and keep them inspired; they are our future and will continue what we have started."

Stephen Oxley, our next speaker, has a back-



ground in journalism and experience in environmental leadership and community conservation. He had a thirty-year career in Canberra in different roles with the Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, and is a member of the Committee of Management of Connecting Country.

Stephen said his challenge as a new arrival in Guildford, is to bring his experience from his working life to a local community, to make a difference. He said, "There is no action without local action. If we don't collectively act at the local level, then not a lot of difference is made. Landcare is the epitome of collective local action and it's amazing to see how Landcare has developed. In the Mount Alexander Shire alone there are over thirty Landcare groups." Stephen also believes that individual action, including the consumption choices we make in our households; our recreational activities, how we holiday, and all facets of our life will make a difference to the environment." He said, "We don't need to be perfect, but we have to have intent. We have to individually and collectively reduce our carbon footprint of our existence over time. Collectively our individual choices are impactful."

Stephen said, "The Mount Alexander Shire has relatively high native vegetation cover compared with many other parts of Australia. We have about twenty per cent of remnant box iron bark woodlands, but it is starkly different to what it was before the appearance of Europeans. It is fragmented, lacks diversity and has reduced ecological function. This is the fundamentally important challenge that, when overlaid with the climate outlook, becomes even more daunting. This underlines the importance of all the things we can do in the landscape to improve the ecological system function and resilience so that it becomes more adaptable to climate change."

Paul Foreman, who has had a strong relationship with Harcourt Valley Landcare over a number of years, spoke next. He assisted the group when it challenged the original "final" version of Plan Harcourt and represented the group at VCAT. As a result of our combined efforts, Plan Harcourt was re-written with environmental controls for proposed development areas in Harcourt. Our other mutual interest is in the protection of *Ballantinia antipoda* (Southern Shepherd's Purse), an endemic plant on

Mount Alexander which grows in moss mats on wet slopes. The plant was first described in 1845. Paul said, "The environmental envelope suitable for *Ballantinia* is shrinking; it was once found in Tasmania and other places in Victoria, now it is restricted only to Mount Alexander – it's our critical endangered species. It is expected that the plant will be extinct by 2050, but there are things we can do, like restoration of habitat, translocation work and seed collections, but it needs to be funded, implemented and have expertise. It could go extinct under our watch. We have to keep bringing attention to the authorities. Advocacy and collective action is important. I don't think that the government will step in; we know that this community is passionate and, if they put their minds to it, they can do all sorts of things."

"Another example of a local threatened species is the goldfields grevillea (*grevillea dryophylla*). Its biggest population here is in the Walmer Forest. There could be 20 or 30 thousand plants. Sadly, the state government burnt the area in a fuel reduction burn earlier this year. Fire has the effect that the plants die and then they regenerate by seed but, if another fire goes through within a few years, the young plants won't have had time to develop seed, so there will be a reduction in numbers. The good news is that they can be regenerated from seed. By this method, I hope to develop a new population from the 100 plants I have on my property."

Paul's other work is with the Biolinks Alliance. He said, "The bush here has been degraded by the gold rush. We did a project at Heathcote which has similar sedimentary bush found in this area. We used ecological thinning and used contour ploughing and pond establishment over 130 to 140 hectares, and it worked well. We need to roll this out at scale across more bushland to make the bush healthier and more resilient for animals, birds. There are solutions we just need to get together, get the resources, get the know-how and have the determination to make these things happen."

Nicole Howie, our next speaker, runs the school program River Detectives. This is an NCMA (North Central Catchment Management Authority) program delivered from Swan Hill to Woodend. Nicole is also secretary of the Northern Bendigo Landcare Group. She said, "I am a teacher and a lover of nature. Kids are always curious and love to be outside. When I'm asked, 'What can I do to combat climate change?' My answer is, by connecting kids with nature. I run the River Detectives program for three days a week and teach bush kinder the other days. I believe that citizen science is a catalyst for change."

"I have thirty schools I support in the North Central Region and there are always more tapping on the door. The program has a school adopt a local waterway. They get a kit to regularly test water quality. They also test for temperature, salinity, phosphorous, PH (acidity) and turbidity (dirtiness). Currently, five local schools are river detective schools. They collect data which show patterns in the water quality, month



by month, season by season, they get to know their local surroundings, they take pride in their waterway, and the best thing is, the program is a springboard for everything else.

"My other work is teaching bush kinder two days a week. At Huntly, every child plays in bushland for three hours a week in the Bush Kinder program. It ticks every part in the curriculum and fosters extra curiosity and communication. For example, as a cubby is being built it develops skills like negotiation and resilience. Never underestimate the learning capacity of a four or five year old! There is a ripple effect – their interests go home. Bush kinders are hugely popular. There's no equipment to fight over, nothing to pack up, there's space and freedom and quiet, and no swings to fight over."

The takeaway message from Nicole's talk is that if young people and families are engaged, environmental awareness is increased and learning takes place without it being onerous or boring. Environmental values and awareness become embedded at an early age, which can only assist and influence behaviour in relation to our surrounds.

Harcourt Valley Landcare is the perfect group for you and your family to join. You and your children will learn lots about our local environment; get your hands dirty, be excited and educated about the special plants and animals that make their home here.

Following the speakers, there was a short question time. Terry Willis thanked the presenters and noted some salient points we could take to heart. A delicious meal was served (thanks to Remy at The Coolstore) and people shared their impressions and ideas raised by the speakers.

Robyn Miller

All Saints Day

When reflecting on the life of a person who has lived with courage, compassion, unwavering devotion, a firm faith and is an encouragement to others, we often hear the comment: "What a saint!"

November 1 is All Saints Day when people of Christian faith remember and honour the saints of long ago. It's a time to remember loved ones who have passed away and to reflect on our own lives and the values we want to pass on to the future generations. It's a day to bring faith into our daily lives – volunteering, helping a neighbour, offering encouragement to others and a day to remember, reflect and reunite in faith.

Vale Josie

We were saddened by the recent passing of a dearly loved member of our congregation, Josie Milford – a devoted wife to George, a loving mother to Lisa and Adrian and a doting grandmother to Soya. The following words from Proverbs 31: 25-31 were read at her Thanksgiving service and it was as if it had been written about Josie. Here are just a few of the verses:

"She speaks with a gentle wisdom. She is always busy and looks after her family's needs. Her children show their appreciation and her husband praises her. Charm is deceptive and beauty disappears, but a woman who honours the Lord should be praised. She deserves the respect of everyone."

We will miss her infectious smile and all the stories she loved to share with us about her dearly loved grandson, Soya.

Spring Concert

Thanks to Solway Nutting for organising another of her amazing concerts at our church in late October. What a wonderful range of talents from the very young to the more experienced musicians with voice, instruments and stories to tell! Thanks also to the church ladies for providing afternoon tea in our new tearoom – no need to dash through the rain!

You may have noticed that our Church Hall, along with the old Preschool and the block of land directly behind the Hall up to Barker Street is for sale. The Auction Day on 8 November will possibly have been by the time you're reading this, and we hope to attract a buyer very soon.

You are always welcome to join us on a Sunday morning at 9 am at Harcourt Uniting Church in Buckley Street Harcourt.

A young girl was visiting a beautiful cathedral with her aunt. It was late in the day, and the sun's rays were streaming through the stained glass windows that featured figures of several saints. The girl pointed to a window and asked: "Who's that?" "That's St Peter," her aunt replied. Then pointing to another window, she asked again. "Who's that?" Her aunt replied: "St John", and to another window – "That's St James." The little girl gave a sigh of satisfaction and said: "Well, now I know what a saint is. A saint is somebody the light shines through."

Jan Jenkin

Partner with the most trusted bank for Australian farmers*

We understand the seasonal nature of farming and what it takes to help grow your business.

So partner with someone who's with you for the long term. Someone who supports you today, and is focused on tomorrow.

Find out more. Search Bendigo Bank or talk to Paul Simmons, your local Agribusiness specialist.

 Community Bank · Maldon & District 5475 1747

 **Bendigo Bank**
Agribusiness

*Based on Roy Morgan's survey of 1000+ Australian farmers in June and July 2024. Bendigo and Adelaide Bank Limited, ABN 11 068 049 178 AFSL 237879. 1985262-2009517 OUT_45591092, 16/06/2025





Councillor Comment

Hi all

As we are heading towards summer, it is a good time to get that grass under control in preparation for the fire season.

We travelled north recently, and I was surprised to see how much drier it is. A lot of crops have been cut for hay. I will be making hay in the next week, so it is a busy time.

I was really pleased to hear VMR have locked in dates for a community day as well as a major celebration in December. It is going to be fantastic to see the results of many years of hard work and dedication. A huge shout out to Andrew and the band of dedicated workers at VMR.

Hopefully we are all on track!

At this month's council meeting we will vote for a new mayor and also a deputy mayor if councillors want that. We can also decide whether the mayor gets a one-year or two-year appointment. Being mayor is a big honour, so I prefer to see the role shared around. Councillors will discuss who is in line for the job beforehand; however, it is only at the public meeting that the actual decision is made. Stay tuned for the next meeting which will take place on November 18.

I understand there will be a planning matter on the agenda of the meeting as well. Applicant objector meetings have been held, but no-one knows the outcome of council's decision until we vote at the public meeting. The agenda for council meetings is available from 5.30 pm on the Thursday preceding the meeting.

Remember you are welcome to attend the council monthly meeting. You may also ask a question at public question time as long as it does not relate to a planning matter on that meeting agenda. It should be an interesting night!

Best regards to all, Tony

AG Cordy

0439 742 434



Harcourt Lions Club

Community and Youth Member of the Year 2025

Barbecue at Community Opening of VMR

The Tractor Pull organised by the Mount Alexander Vintage Engine Club, which was to be held on October 24, was called off due to bad weather, so our planned BBQ for that event was also called off.

The good news is that we are going to be busy with the imminent opening of the Victorian Miniature Railway for Harcourt locals on 9 November 2025.

That will be a very exciting event for all who have been working and waiting for this to happen for nine long years.

This community event will be followed by the big opening for the public on Saturday and Sunday, December 6 and 7.

Another very special event for Harcourt is the presentation of the certificates to the COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR and the YOUTH OF THE YEAR for 2025 which will take place at the 2026 Applefest on Saturday 7 March 2026 at the Harcourt District Leisure Centre.

The awards cannot happen if you don't fill out the Nomination Form to be found here in *The Core*. (see page 7)

Harcourt Lions meet on the 3rd Monday of the month at 6.30 pm for a shared meal followed by a discussion at 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm at VMR in Harmony Way, Harcourt. If you are interested in joining or finding out more about the Lions Club please send your name and contact details to Harcourt District Lions Club, PO Box 100 Harcourt 3453.

Loretta Rice, Assistant Secretary



THE CORE

VOLUNTEERS

Would you like to learn the ins and outs of desktop publishing for free?

Send an email to news@harcourt.vic.au

Contact: Lions President, Ray: 0409 957 429 or Secretary, Sue: 0418 372 336 with any queries

Hairdresser Opens for Business



My name is Shannon Huntly, and I'm excited to share some wonderful news with the community – I've recently opened my own salon right here in Harcourt!

I've been a hairdresser for fifteen years, and during that time I married my husband – who grew up in Harcourt – and together we've built our home and family in Castlemaine, raising our two beautiful girls.

For the last five years, I've been working from home, building up my clientele and growing my business to the point where I could take this next exciting step: opening my very own salon.

I'm especially grateful to Annette, the owner of the Harcourt General Store, who has been a loyal client of mine for the past five years. Her support, belief in me, and encouragement helped make this dream a reality. When the opportunity arose to open a salon space alongside her store, it felt like the perfect fit.

The response from the community in the first few weeks of being open has been absolutely incredible. I'm so thankful for the warm welcome and I can't wait to continue growing, meeting new people, and offering a relaxing and friendly salon experience for everyone.

Thank you.

Zarlah Hair design
0433 506 230

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



VMR Grand Opening December 5 to 7

The Victorian Miniature Railway in Harcourt is ready to celebrate its **Grand Opening** over three exciting days from **Friday 5 to Sunday 7 December**.

The festivities begin on the **Friday**, with formalities and evening celebrations for VMR Members and both business- and community-based stakeholders – perfectly timed to coincide with **International Volunteers Day**.

On Saturday 6 and Sunday 7 December, VMR is open to the public and will feature **live music, food trucks, kids' circus activities and train rides** (rides run until 5 pm each day).

Saturday night is the big party, running until **9 pm**, and will feature headline performances from **Bad Debts, Grim Fawcner and Tony Cordy's Knight Moves** – making it a celebration not to miss.

Following the Grand Opening weekend, the VMR will commence its **regular opening hours**, welcoming visitors **every Sunday from 11 am to 5 pm**.

These celebrations follow on from the **Community Day on 9 November**, when Harcourt residents had a special opportunity to ride the newly finished **2.7 kilometre miniature railway track**.

For more details on the Grand Opening, please see the **full poster on the back page**.

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



Lisa
Chesters MP
FEDERAL MEMBER
FOR BENDIGO

☎ 5443 9055
🌐 lisachesters.org

Supported by Lisa Chesters, ALP,
18 Myers St, Bendigo





Harcourt Valley Primary School

Term 4, so far, has been action-packed for students and staff, and there are more exciting activities for young and old to come. See below for details.

Camps

Principal Andrew Blake welcomed students back for the start of Term 4 on Monday 6 October. On that same day, grades 5 and 6 began a very successful three day camp in Melbourne (see photo).



On their return, Mr Blake congratulated the students on making the most of their time in Melbourne. Some of the highlights of the camp included visiting the Eureka Skydeck, the Old Melbourne Gaol, the

MCG, and travelling on the inner-city trams and trains. Mr Blake thanked Ms Pascoe and Ms Stearne for their excellent supervision while on the camp.

On 16 October, the prep students enjoyed a twilight camp, while grades 1 and 2 slept overnight at school. The next day, they all travelled to the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo.

World Teachers' Day – Friday 31 October

Andrew said, "World Teachers' Day is a special occasion to recognise and honour the incredible educators at Harcourt Valley Primary School. Their dedication and passion for teaching truly make a difference in the lives of our students."

Andrew encouraged the rest of the school community to take a moment to express their gratitude to the teachers of Harcourt Valley Primary School for their hard work and commitment to fostering a love of learning in our community.

Prep-2 Kickball

Grade P-2 students attended the Harcourt Recreation Reserve on Friday 7 November to participate in the District P-2 Kickball competition.

Term 4 Coming Events

Tuesday 18 November:

The Transition Program for new students in Preps will begin.

Wednesday 19 November:

School Athletics Carnival – Parent helpers are needed. The athletics carnival will be held at the Harcourt Recreation Reserve. To ensure the morning is a successful one, parent support in setting up the events on the morning will be greatly appreciated.

Saturday 29 November:

Trivia Night – Silent auction donations for the trivia night are needed. If you can help us out, please contact Louise in the office.

Monday 8 December:

Whole School Free Excursion to Hamer Hall – Christmas Melodies.

Monday 15 December:

Grade 6 Graduation.

Thursday 18 December:

Whole school cinema excursion.

HARCOURT VALLEY PS



STARTING MONDAY 27TH OCT
8:00-8:45
OPEN TO ALL AGES
RAQUETS/DRINKS/HATS

BEFORE SCHOOL TENNIS
BASKETBALL COURTS
\$10
REGISTER NOW
PH0448009960

INFO.DROPSHOTTEENNIS@GMAIL.COM

Harcourt Valley PS

Trivia Night

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29 7:00 PM

GET TICKETS

HARCOURT BOWLING CLUB

COME ALONG AND SUPPORT OUR WONDERFUL LITTLE SCHOOL

\$10 PER PERSON - \$ MAX PER TABLE

BAR OPEN

BYO NIBBLES FOR TABLE

LUCKY DOOR PRIZE

SILENT AUCTION

6 ROUNDS OF FUN FILLED TRIVIA

SPOT PRIZES

ADULTS ONLY





Chatting with Harcourt CWA

Hello there everyone,
Bev O here reporting on
the latest activities of Harcourt Country
Women's Association (CWA).

For some of us, a move to a new
area where we don't already have
family roots or friends is often very
difficult and lonely. It takes time to find
our "tribe" and become a part of the
local community. Patience is needed
and we might even have second
thoughts about it all.

There are many community groups
on offer in our area, all offering lots of
opportunities to volunteer, to get
involved and make new friends. The
CWA is always open and welcoming to
new faces, new members and, contrary
to what some people think, CWA is
much more than just "Tea and Scones".
Just as well, because I, for one, would
not have joined.

As an example of what I am talking
about, meet Jill Reynolds – one of
Harcourt CWA's newest and active
younger members.

Meet Harcourt CWA Member: Jill Reynolds

Jill and her partner Jeff recently retired
to Harcourt after many busy years in
Melbourne where Jill held a senior
teaching position at a large suburban
primary school. When she moved to the
area, Jill was keen to meet new people
and give back to the community, now
that she finally had a little free time on
her hands.

Energetic and creative, Jill enjoys
walking, cooking, painting, patchwork,
knitting, gardening, collecting lovely
knick-knacks, and even singing! So why
did she join the Harcourt CWA?

It all began when
Jill met our
president, Robyn
McConville. After a
friendly chat, Robyn
invited her along –
as you do – to a
social get-together.
Jill enjoyed the
company of all of us
Harcourt CWA
(Chicks with Attitude) straight away, felt
very welcome, and soon decided to join
in the fun.

From the very start, Jill has thrown
herself in to CWA, quickly becoming
one of our very active members! She
saw that most of her interests and
hobbies – knitting, sewing and
cooking – could be utilised and enjoyed
as part of our CWA program. Her
delicious cakes and baked goods were
among the items sold on our Applefest
stall Recently, Jill gifted a basket of her
beautifully knitted trauma teddies to
Elizabeth Grainger of Dhelkaya Health's
Community Advisory Committee, to be
shared with children needing a cuddly
toy when they are in hospital.

Jill says she was drawn to the CWA
because its mission – *to improve
conditions for women and children and
make life better for families, especially
in rural and regional areas* – resonated
deeply with her own values. The CWA
of Victoria stands for friendship,
service and community spirit, and Jill,
like the other ladies in Harcourt CWA
branch, is a wonderful example of
these ideals in action.



We're delighted to have Jill as part of
our branch – her warmth, energy and
enthusiasm are truly appreciated.

Welcome to Sri Lanka!

It was Romania last year and Namibia
the year before, and this year our
special Country of Study is Sri Lanka.

Most months we've been learning
interesting facts about this beautiful
place, and last week ladies from the
Chewton Phoenix, Newbridge and
Newstead CWA branches joined us for
a delicious International Sri Lankan
feast. Provided by our CWA members,
chicken biryani, sambal, pappadams
and curries of all flavours and degrees
of spiciness were on offer, along with
milk tart, and Sri Lankan cakes and
sweets for dessert. It was yummy!

Annie Weir posted interesting,
informative posters. Helen Johnstone
told us about Sri Lankan teas. Phil and I
shared some interesting video clips.

Wendy Paulusz was our extra-special
guest speaker. She told us of growing
up in a Sri Lanka that, in those days,



was harmonious, multi-cultural and fun;



Harcourt CWA

continued

was a real melting pot of cultures, cuisines, religions and traditions. We learned a lot and can't wait to see what country we will be delving into next year. Once we know, we'll be digging into our recipe books and starting to think about the menu to be offered at next year's International Day.

Vale Mary Tigg

It was very sad to farewell a past member, Mary Tigg, who passed away after a longish illness. Mary was a friend, a hard worker and a loyal CWA member for some years. Our thoughts are with her family at this time. Vale Mary.

That's all from me this month. Keep well and happy, and if you are recently retired or new to the area, looking for a group of friendly ladies to join and feel comfortable with, don't hesitate to check us out at Harcourt CWA. As I often say, and as Jill Reynolds has found, we are a friendly bunch! We meet on the first Thursday each month at 1.30 pm at Harcourt Leisure Centre.

*From Beverley Orgill,
for the Harcourt CWA*

Mount Alexander Shire Council is offering free green waste disposal to help residents prepare homes and properties for the upcoming fire danger period.

Residents can dispose of green waste at no cost at the Castlemaine and Maldon transfer stations from Saturday 15 November to Sunday 30 November.

- ▶ Green waste includes garden waste such as grass, sticks and branches that are less than 10cm in diameter.
- ▶ The green waste must be free of contaminants such as rubbish and declared noxious weeds and removed from plastic bags prior to disposal.
- ▶ Loads containing items other than green waste will be charged accordingly.
- ▶ Residents are also encouraged to compost as much material as possible at home.
- ▶ Proof of residence in the shire will be required.

Normal green waste disposal fees will apply to businesses or residents acting on behalf of businesses.

Normal gate fees will apply before and after the free green waste disposal period.

For more information, visit www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/



Harcourt CFA

It's Mowember

It looks like November is going to need the mowers working overtime with the grass growth that is occurring around the district.

Rain in the latter part of October has ensured that the grass continues to grow, along with the weeds, meaning the task of cleaning up and maintaining our properties will be ongoing until the promised warmer weather dries and cures the grass and stops its growth. This will occur sooner rather than later because the moisture content of the ground is lower than normal.

This will lead into the implementation of the fire danger period (FPD) which has now been set to commence at 1.00am on Monday **November 17** for the Shires of Mount Alexander and Greater City of Bendigo. They will stay in force until **April 30** unless removed earlier.

Meanwhile, the bush areas are drier than they have been at the same time in recent years. The Chief Officer of the CFA wants to ensure that all Victorians are aware of the fire risk this season, and this was one of the reasons why he wanted brigades to conduct an open day in October.

We had our open day on Sunday October 5 and had a few residents come and visit. They were able to look at local mapping showing the levels of fire risk throughout their property, as well as information to assist in formulating a fire plan. We do have bags left over, so we will be out and about on some upcoming occasions where we can chat further with residents.

It was good to note that everyone we asked on the day had the Vic Emergency App on their phone, and had their watch zone set up as well.

Brigade Preparation

Members have been busy again preparing for summer. The mandatory entrapment drills have been carried out by all members. Some members attended the Pre-Season Briefing night at Kyneton.

Our two tankers and crew participated in the Mount Alexander Group exercise held at Taradale on Sunday October 26. This was well attended, with all group brigades participating and more than ninety firefighters involved. Unfortunately, due to lightning activity, it was called

off due to safety concerns, so everyone adjourned to the Taradale fire station for an early BBQ lunch and discussion.

Brigade Activity

October has been a busy month with eleven turnouts in total. Only three of these were primary calls, and the remaining eight support calls were to Castlemaine (five) and one each to Elphinstone, Ravenswood and Campbells Creek.

There were two bin fires (at each end of the month), three motor vehicle incidents (our three primary calls), three reported fires which were false alarms, a diesel fuel spill at the Ravenswood service station, one gas leak and a house fire at Cambells Creek.

Emergency Services Expo

Did you get to the biennial Emergency Services Expo this year? Our popular squirty trucks were in action and were popular with kids of all ages. There was a steady stream of people taking the opportunity to meet with all emergency services, including police, ambulance, CFA, Forest Fire Management and the SES.

Our squirty trucks were in action again the next day at the Chewton Brigade open day. They have since undergone a maintenance refit including new wheel bearings and minor repair.

How is your fire safety equipment going?

When did you last check your fire extinguisher, fire pump and hoses, your fire plan, emergency kit and ancillary equipment? Are you ready for this summer's fire season? Is your plan to leave early or are you going to stay and defend?

If you would like further information, please contact a brigade member, call in at the fire station of a Sunday morning or catch up with us when we are out and about in the area. Keep preparing your property and, hopefully, you will not need us.

Stay safe and be prepared.

*Tyrone Rice
Brigade Community Safety
Coordinator*



**Dhelkaya
Health**

Healthier Together

Programs & Services

Children's Services

Dhelkaya Health's Children, Youth and Families services support each child's unique development. We help identify small issues that may impact growth - like difficulty concentrating, sensory challenges, or speech delays.

Our team includes paediatricians, therapists, and mental health counsellors, working with children from birth to 16 across the Mount Alexander Shire. We focus on children's rights to identity, development, and support. Services are available in homes, schools, and the community.

As a registered NDIS provider, we also support children with disabilities.

Referrals to:

- Allied Health: 5471 3575 or intake@castlemainehealth.org.au
- Family Services: The Orange Door - 1800 512 359
- Other programs: 5479 1000

First Aid & CPR training

Be ready to save a life

Our nationally accredited First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) courses provide the skills and confidence to respond effectively in emergencies. Learn vital techniques, including CPR, wound care and emergency response in a supportive, hands-on environment.

Experienced instructors use real-world scenarios to prepare you for any situation. Courses are flexible, with weekday and weekend options to suit your schedule. Small class sizes ensure personalised attention, and all participants receive a recognised certificate upon completion.

Whether for workplace requirements or personal preparedness, enrol today and gain the knowledge to make a difference when it matters most.

T. 5479 1000

E. cprfirstaideducation@castlemainehealth.org.au

Get Active

Maldon monthly walking tour

Enjoy a gentle and shaded walk through the Maldon central business district, appreciating the streetscape which is a notable feature of Maldon.

The tour will also include the site of the Caledonian works at the end of the CBD and the original home of Robert Dent Oswald, Maldon's own mining magnate.

Bring a hat and water bottle.

When: Thursday 27 November 2025

Meet: Maldon Neighbourhood Centre (1 Church Street)

Time: 9.30 - 10.30 am

Cost: Free

RSVP: None required, just turn up

Guide: Ray Stevenson

More information: Call 5479 1000

Welcome Spring!

Wilkinson Noble Property Partners

Your Trusted Local Real Estate Agents

Spring into your new home!

Now is the perfect time to sell!

Are you ready to make a change this spring? With the season of renewal around the corner, it's the ideal time to put your house on the market!

Why Sell this Spring?

- ▶ Increased Buyer Demand. Spring attracts serious buyers eager to find their dream property before summer and the new year.
- ▶ Beautiful Showings. Showcase your property in full bloom with vibrant gardens and bright, airy spaces.
- ▶ Optimal Pricing. Spring sales often result in higher offers as buyers compete for the best properties.

Let Us Help You!

Our team is here to guide you through every step of the selling process. From staging your home to negotiating the best price, we have you covered.

Contact us Today!

Sarah Noble 0415 666 997 or Pauline Wilkinson 0468 543 589
admin@wnpp.com.au
wnpp.com.au





Harcourt Heritage Centre

Worth a second look: Stencils

Harcourt Heritage Centre collection includes several tin stencils. Visitors to the Museum might not pay much attention to these perforated stencils, but they are worth a second look as they tell quite a story.

The stencils were used to brand fruit cases to indicate the source and destination of Harcourt fruit for sale to local, interstate and overseas markets. The collection also includes the ink block and brush used for painting the stencil information onto the wooden box.

There is a great deal of variety in this collection of stencils. Some proudly proclaim the grower's name, others provide the size of the apples – 2, 2 $\frac{1}{8}$, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$, 2 $\frac{3}{8}$, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$, 3 – all sizes being in inches.

For Harcourt apples consigned to domestic markets, the majority of the stencils indicate the wholesale market agent's name, the market stand number and either "Sydney" or "Brisbane". In most instances the stencils were handed to the fruit grower by agents for the market stand proprietors who went from orchard to orchard searching out suppliers.

The importance of the stencilled marks is seen when we recall that, from time to time, Harcourt's fruit growers complained that cases of apples and pears destined for export or for interstate markets were repeatedly roughly handled. Fruit consigned to the Sydney market had to be transferred from one rail wagon to another at the border where the rail gauge changed. Fruit despatched to Brisbane was again loaded from one rail wagon to another at the Queensland border. And there was always the danger that fruit would go astray.



Worse still, there were no less than four transfers of cases of export fruit, from goods train to the government coolstores, from the coolstores onto lighters to carry them to Port Melbourne or Williamstown and then from lighter to ship. At each transfer, the handlers had to keep an eye on the stencilled brands. At the other end of the journey, be it Sydney, Brisbane or London, the local storemen had to note the brands, check the quantities against the consignment note and distribute the fruit to the correct agent's market stand. Thus, there were many opportunities for fruit to be mislaid, sent to the wrong place or just left on the wharf. Without the stencilled marks the fruit would not reach its destination, and the grower would not receive the proceeds of sales.

Sydney's fresh fruit and vegetable wholesale market was (and still is) located at Haymarket in the heart of the city. On market days, the laneways inside the market were thronged with professional buyers, greengrocers, hoteliers and restaurateurs. A similar throng would have been seen at Brisbane's Roma Street Markets from 1906 to 1964. These markets were tucked beside the rail line, handy to the Brisbane wharf area.

There is an interesting black and white photo in the Verey collection originally commissioned by Rowe Motors, Castlemaine, to advertise the 1927 new model Fordson Tractor. Local orchardist Harry Ford is depicted standing on the tractor's trailer drawbar leaning on a load of fruit cases outside the Harcourt Cooperative Coolstores. The cases on the trailer bear the Ford Bros stencil and are marked with the size of the apples 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " or 3", uniformly sized big fruit, fancy grade, specially selected for export to England.

Stencils used on boxes for the famed Covent Garden markets are simply "London", and "Bremen" for the German north-sea port.

In a good season 350,000 cases of fruit were sent from the Harcourt railway station



for overseas and Australian markets.

A long description of the Harcourt fruit industry was published by the *Mount Alexander Mail* in August 1907:

"As a boat is leaving for England every week, the fruit has to be most carefully picked, every apple sorted, graded, wrapped in tissue paper, and packed. The cases must be nailed down and stencilled at both ends and then despatched. On a Monday morning the apples are growing in the orchard and on the following Saturday morning a boat is leaving Melbourne with 500 cases of apples from that orchard."

Another writer reminds us that:

"One end of the box was marked using stove black and a stencil to indicate Jonathon or Granny Smith apples and what size of fruit. To the other end of the box the colourful grower's label was attached with clag."

With a bit of imagination we can visualise the export of fruit. Burly wharf labourers heaving bushel cases of apples and pears into the hold of a ship is one scene that comes to mind. The actual voyage of such a ship has been described by Australian poet Capel Boake as: "The rolling cargo steamer, her curl of smoke behind" and, towards the end of a long sea voyage, the ship and its precious cargo of fruit could be seen "... rolling up the channel where the cliffs of Dover frown, feeling through the fog banks to the port of London town."

From the 1890s right up to the late 1960s, stencils were always to be found hanging on a nail in Harcourt's packing sheds. Cardboard fruit cartons superseded the use of stencils about 1970.

Stencils were an integral part of the economy of an industry that brought prosperity to this valley in the twentieth century.

George Milford



Harcourt Bowling Club

Pennant

Harcourt Weekend and Midweek Pennant sides have had a slow start to the season. Wins were hard to come by, and the early starting date clashed with bowlers' holiday arrangements. This, in turn, put pressure on selectors to fill some teams. Fortunately, by round four all sides have settled and are getting their mojo back and, with a few wins, are showing we can be more competitive.

Club Championships

The draws have been done and competition has started for the Ladies' and Men's Singles and Pairs and the 100-Up Championships.

New Greens Director

The board and members sincerely thank Ron Douglas for his tireless efforts and dedication to his duties over many years as Greens Director. Although Ron has stepped down as Greens Director he will still stay on the committee and help out when possible.

President Gary Maddern will take over as Greens Director, with assistance from Rod Harris.

Club Booklet

The club extends special thanks to Ruth Hay for her time and considerable work on our booklets. For the past three years the club booklet has been designed and produced by Ruth.

Friday Night Meals

Members and friends continue to enjoy the fortnightly meals provided by Kayla and Ebony.

Dates for November are 7 and 21 into 5 December – names in by the Wednesday prior, please.

Breast Cancer Network Australia Fundraiser – Bowling over Breast Cancer

The Harcourt Bowling Club and members were proud to be involved in the fundraiser on Sunday afternoon October 5, hosted by Gay and Brian Buchanan and family.

The day was well supported by an extensive network of friends eager to raise funds for this very worthy cause. The club was decked out in pink, as were the many people who attended to support Gay and her cause.

An estimated 250 people attended



and eagerly joined in the organised events, making it a happy and fun community event.

While thanking everyone involved, Gay, Brian and their daughter Kate were delighted to announce that, with online and cash donations and the event itself, they have raised \$20,000 for Breast Cancer Network Australia! What an incredible result from their humble original target of \$2,000!

Seniors Week

As part of Seniors Week, Harcourt Bowling Club held a social Come and Try Bowls morning on Tuesday October 21. The event included morning tea, and provided an opportunity for seniors to connect with each other in a friendly community environment.

Kidman Fours Tournament

The Kidman Fours mixed tournament was to be held on Sunday 26 October. The club event is held to honour Wilma and the late Brian Kidman, significant past members and supporters of the Harcourt Bowling Club. Unfortunately, the welcome rain for our gardens meant that the day had to be cancelled.

Girls on the Green

Harcourt will again be running a three-week Girls on the Green program commencing on Wednesday nights: 5, 12 and 26 November at 5.30 pm for a 6 pm start.

Meet with other women in a friendly atmosphere at the club, form a team with your friends or arrive separately and be allocated into a team.

Entry is \$10 per head per night. Entries close at 4 pm on the night of play and should include the names of those attending and the team name (if applicable).

- ▶ No experience is needed, novices can be guided by club bowling members
- ▶ Bowls are provided, wear flat soled shoes or be barefoot on the green



- ▶ Nibbles are provided; drinks at bar prices
- ▶ There are prizes for the winning team after the three weeks are completed
- ▶ It is hoped that each team will play the three nights

Enquiries and entries:

At the club, 2 Warren Street Harcourt or harcourtbowls@gmail.com or text Chris on 0417 341 814

Coming up in November

- ▶ **Friday Meals**
November 7, 21 and December 5
- ▶ **Girls on the Green**
November 5, 12, 26
- ▶ **Ladies' Triples Tournament**
November 20

Flowserve 150th Open Day

Saturday 18 October saw over 2500 people help Flowserve (Thompsons Foundry) celebrate 150 years of manufacturing on the one site at 5 Parker Street Castlemaine. Parking was at a premium around the site as people gathered waiting for the proceedings to begin. The iconic foundry whistle was blown at 10 o'clock, followed by the raising of the flags, before the main gate was swung open for the gathered crowd to enter.

The Thompsons Foundry Band, which has played almost as long as the foundry itself - 140 years, provided entertainment as the crowd made their way on a wander through the plant. Many past employees took the opportunity to catch up with fellow employees both past and present, reminiscing about the "good old days" and the changes that have occurred since.

At 10:30 am the Federal Member of Parliament, Lisa Chesters along with David Lawrence (Head of the 150th Committee) unveiled a special plaque commemorating the anniversary.

Former employee, and well known Harcourt identity George Milford, who worked at the Castlemaine site for 45 years before retiring in 2008, introduced the book he authored about the foundry and delivered a presentation on the history of the site twice during the day. Both sessions were full-up with standing room only and were well received.



Management was overwhelmed with the response from the public and wishes to take this opportunity to thank everyone for coming and making the event a very special day.

The comment was made that we are not going to wait other 25 years to do it again!

Tyrone Rice



From the Office of Lisa Chesters MP

Have your say on the 2025 Federal Election – 13 November, 2025

The Electoral Matters Committee is inviting Bendigo and surrounding communities' input on the 2025 federal election at its upcoming hearings.

The Joint Standing Committee wants to receive feedback from community members about their experiences participating in the 2025 Federal Election, and to use this information to shape our upcoming hearing.

The Committee will be holding hearings in Bendigo on 13 November 2025.

As part of these hearings members of the public will be invited to be on

the record by making short verbal statements of up to 5 minutes.

You don't need to have put in a submission to register your interest; you just need to inform the committee what you want to talk about and how you participated in the 2025 Federal Election.

We might not be able to hear from everyone on the day, but we want to hear from as many community members as possible.

To register your interest in making a statement at upcoming hearings, contact the Committee Secretariat at em@aph.gov.au

Further information on the 2025

election inquiry can be found at the inquiry webpage. Committee details can be found at the Committee's webpage: www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/Electoral_Matters



Harcourt Carpet Bowls

SUMMER BOWLS? - NOT THIS YEAR!

The Harcourt Carpet Bowls Association has unfortunately had to decide not to hold a Summer Bowls Competition this year because of a lack of members available to play. I am sure we will be able to hold a Summer Competition again if we can welcome some new members.

Carpet Bowls has been played in Harcourt since 1952, making a total of 73 consecutive years, missing only one season due to COVID, which is a pretty impressive record for a small town like Harcourt.

For those who have not played Carpet Bowls, it is an easy game to learn, is a lot of fun, requires a little skill and concentration, and anyone from age eight upwards is welcome to come and try when we commence again in 2026.

We meet at the Harcourt District Leisure Centre on Wednesday nights at 7.15 pm for a 7.30 pm start, and the game is finished by 9.00 pm.

Costs are minimal: \$5.00 registration to cover hall hire and insurance and \$5.00 weekly to play. For Juniors 17 and under it is half price: \$2.50 registration and \$2.50 each night to play. A bonus is that the heaters are on for the cold nights.

The next season will commence in May 2026 after our Annual Meeting held in April, so watch *The Core* and keep an eye out for notices around town for information on the next season of Carpet Bowls.

For more information:
Contact John – 5474 2226
or Loretta – 5474 2453

HARCOURT COMMUNITY PANTRY



NEW TIME:

Opening Hours:
Wednesdays
12:30 pm–2:30 pm

Location:

Harcourt Valley
Community House
23 Station St.
Harcourt

Harcourt's Community Pantry is here for anyone in our community who's feeling the impact of the rising cost of living. Come on down, take what you need, and stay for a cuppa and a chat.

If you are in the position to help run the Food Pantry, please email us. We are also gratefully accepting donations.

All welcome.



Harcourt Valley Community House
23 Station St, Harcourt, Vic, 3453
Email: harcourtvalleychd@gmail.com

ALTERNATIVELY CREATED
BOWEN THERAPY
Carole Kernohan
Qualified practitioner since 2004
Relieve back pain, chronic fatigue,
improve general wellbeing & more.
Suitable for all ages.
Homebased practice near centre of Taradale
Phone: 0407 372426
www.bowenalternativetherapy.com.au
Member of BAA & BTAA

COFFEE HQ

OPEN
Monday - Friday
7am - 2pm

P 0407 570 282
coffeehqbarkerscreek.com

8653 Midland Hwy
Barkers Creek

KEEP OUR DOORS OPEN



**PICK UP A POSTCARD AT
OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSE ASKING FOR THE
MINISTER'S SUPPORT**

Every week, 185,000 people access Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria. Around half of all Neighbourhood Houses in Victoria are running at a loss.

This cannot continue.

We are asking the Victorian Government to urgently restore funding for Neighbourhood Houses with a 25% increase.

LEARN MORE:



nhvic.org.au/2026-campaign



Neighbourhood
Houses Victoria™

**STRONG
COMMUNITIES
START HERE**



BIG NEWS:

State-wide campaign to increase funding to Community Houses including funding for unfunded houses like Harcourt Valley Community House

Some facts...

There are 401 Neighbourhood or Community Houses (CHs) across Victoria which collectively see 185,000 people every week for Friendship, Advocacy, Resilience, Wellbeing, Support, Connection and/or Learning.

- ▶ About half of those CHs are running at a loss and have been doing so for the past two years. The cost of living, additional demands (like food relief, running costs etc) and a lag in government funding (to match these increasing costs) has eroded their capacity to serve the communities as they have traditionally done.
- ▶ Twenty-five of those 401 houses are unfunded, namely they do not receive the Neighbourhood House Coordination Program (NHCP) funding. Harcourt Valley CH is one of the 25! The funding, while welcome only covers the award level wages for a coordinator for 20 hours a week, leaving nothing for overheads, the running of programs and related materials.
- ▶ At Harcourt, we have a voluntary manager who opens two hours a week (though many more hours are done "behind the scenes"). We have building overheads (power, WIFI, rent, insurances) of \$7,000 a year. With grateful thanks to Mt Alexander Shire, we have been thrown a lifeline of \$7K, as a one-off allocation to get us through 2025/2026 while we try to secure ongoing funding.

Help save Neighbourhood Houses – Send a Postcard

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria (NHVic) have launched a campaign to send hundreds of thousands of postcards to Minister Ros Spence MP to highlight the plight of communities in danger of losing their Neighbourhood House and to seek additional funding in the lead-up to the 2026 State Election. In Harcourt's case, we are seeking ongoing funding for OUR Community House. Along with other Community

Houses in Mt Alexander Shire (Castlemaine and Maldon) and those in the City of Greater Bendigo, we aim to deliver tens of thousands of postcards to our sitting member, the Hon Maree Edwards before 14 December with local media engaged to highlight this vital service.

We ask you to sign a postcard to support Neighbourhood Houses, but most importantly, to support the potential to fund the Harcourt Valley Community House. Just think what we could achieve with the consistency of a paid manager working at least 20 hours a week! While volunteers do their best, typically, they just can't provide that level of commitment and consistency.

How to sign a postcard?

Firstly, our many thanks to our community partners, who all have a supply of postcards and a special box to put them in. There is no need to place a stamp on the postcard if you "post" them locally in a collection box.

- ▶ The Harcourt Post Office, High Street Harcourt. (Please do not place in the red Australia Post mailbox out the front, go into the Post Office to put it in the special box.)
- ▶ The Heritage Centre (open Wednesdays) ANA Hall – also High Street Harcourt.
- ▶ The Coolstore Café, Coolstore Road Harcourt.

- ▶ The Harcourt Valley Community House at 23 Station Street, Harcourt – open Wednesdays 12:30pm - 2:30pm (but slip it under the door at any other time!).

Look out for our marquee promoting HVCH and the postcard campaign at Gather Harcourt on Saturday 29 November.

We hope to do a letter-box drop in the coming weeks (in letter-boxes that do not display a "no junk mail" sign as we respect your right not to accept unsolicited mail).

By the way, if you have already signed a postcard (thank you), please don't sign another one; like a petition, it will not be counted twice.

The postcard might be on card (like a postcard) or on paper, it makes no difference as we hope to run out of cards and then we will make our own! Your signature, name and address is like signing a petition, and it will be counted as a concerned citizen who cares about your local Community House and what it can do for your community.

Thank you in advance for your help to secure recurrent funding for the Harcourt Valley Community House.

Seniors' Lunch and Scam Awareness Talk at HVCH

The seniors' lunch on Thursday 23 October was a fabulous success. We had twenty-two community guests for lunch along with our seven volunteers



(all seniors too), who sat down to share lunch together. A big thank-you is extended to the Heritage Centre for the loan of their tablecloths and to Ingrid who decorated the room beautifully with flowers.

Thank-you to all our volunteers: Alison, Chris, Debbie, Di, Ingrid, Ivan, Jeanette, Jess, John B, John T, Nic and Rena who helped with any of the following: the set-up, cooking the yummy food, hosting our guests or helping clear away at the event.

Following the seniors' lunch, Jack Kennedy from the Bendigo Bank Financial Risk Department, shared insights on the importance of online safety and how to identify scams and prevent being scammed. Most lunch guests stayed for this presentation, and a few extra community members came along; all agreed it was a highly valuable and enlightening session. Tips to help you recognise scams and ways to protect yourself from financial impact of scammers are printed on page 20.

Other Community House News...

Press Play Cafe (Playgroup)

Wednesdays 10.00 am–11:30 am

Come along to Press Play Cafe each Wednesday (during term) at HVCH. Enjoy a cuppa and chat with other parents/carers while the children play. New families are welcome. A gold coin donation would be appreciated.

Harcourt Community Pantry –

Wednesdays 12:30 pm–2:30 pm

(Note the change of day and time)

Please note that Harcourt Community Pantry hours will now coincide with regular Community House “drop-in” hours on Wednesday afternoons. If

you are finding it hard to make ends meet in these tough economic times, drop in and help yourself to a bag of groceries. Stay for a cuppa and have a chat with our wonderful volunteers, if you have the time.

Community Lunches – A proposal

We would really like to offer community lunches in 2026. There would be a modest cost involved to cover expenses (about \$10 for a two-course meal). Our kitchen is fully registered with Mt Alexander Shire. In order to make this happen, we need to know if there is community interest and/or volunteers willing to be involved with the cooking, set-up, serving and pack up. Please register your interest (participating and/or helping) by emailing: harcourtvalleych@gmail.com or drop in on a Wednesday (12:30 pm - 2:30 pm) and we will keep you in touch with the progress of these plans.

Community Library/Book-swap coming soon ...

Thanks heaps to Bronte for the free bookshelves. They need a little TLC, but we will soon be up and running with our community library/book swap. Watch this space.

HVCH “Think-Tank”

At the recent Harcourt Progress Association AGM (Tuesday 28 October), we launched the concept of holding a “Think-Tank” to gain the community’s support and ideas for how the Harcourt Valley Community House should be run and serve OUR community. With Christmas and the holiday season coming at us faster than the high speed trains that whizz past the HVCH multiple times every day, this is proposed for early February 2026. While the whole of the community will be invited, if you are keen to be

Contact the Harcourt Valley

Community House

Visit us: 23 Station Street Harcourt Vic 3453 (Wednesdays during school terms, 12:30 pm–2:30 pm)

Email: harcourtvalleych@gmail.com

Phone: 4417 8742 (Please leave a message as this phone is monitored regularly)

Phone Jeanette: 0438 579 987

involved, please register your interest by emailing us at: harcourtvalleych@gmail.com. This will ensure you are consulted about the date and you will get a personal invitation to attend. For more information, just ask Jeanette on 0438 579 987 or email HVCH.

Wanted please...

- ▶ A freezer (upright or chest) to allow for extra capacity for the Harcourt Community Pantry
- ▶ Donations of new take-away food containers
- ▶ Volunteers who might be willing to go on a roster to either regularly clean the HVCH and/or keep the garden in check. We have a local volunteer that is happy to mow the large areas with a tractor and a flail mower, but we need volunteers to keep the smaller areas tidy with regular mowers.

That’s all for this month, and hope to see you at the Harcourt Valley Community House soon!

Cheers

Jeanette, Voluntary Manager

Office Space and Room Hire Available

A multipurpose room, offering heating, cooling and wifi can accommodate up to 40 people (seated in rows) or about 30 seated at tables. If you need to hire this space for meetings, events or workshops, please let us know. A fully equipped kitchen is also available.

Rates are \$12/hour (community organisations or not-for-profit) or \$20/hour for business or private use. Half or full day rates offer significant savings over the hourly rate. Call or email us to book a time for a tour of the facility or to discuss your needs.

Do you need a comfortable, secure office space on a casual, temporary or semi-permanent basis? We are offering

co-share office space @ \$5/ hour casual rate but we can negotiate half day, daily, weekly or monthly rates based on your needs. We can also offer independent (security coded) access to the building and desk space, heating, cooling, wi-fi, kitchen amenities and ample car parking space. Call or email Jeanette or Emmylou to discuss your needs or book a tour of the facility.

Printing & IT Services at HVCH

We are now offering printing, scanning and email services at HVCH during our regular opening hours (Wednesdays 10 am–12 noon).

Printing Fees

A4 black & white @ 10c per page, colour @ 20c per page

A3 black & white @ 30c per page, colour @ 60c per page

Lamination

Lamination of your documents is also available, an extra 20c for A4 or 50c for A3 sized documents.

Scanning and Email

Do you need to scan and email a document? Cost is 10c per page or we can negotiate a price for a large (multi-page) document.

Public Access to Computers

Two public access computers are available at HVCH. Do you need to access your email? Do some research? This is available for free during opening hours (Wednesdays 10 am–12 noon). A donation is welcome.

Scam Awareness Session

On Thursday 23 October, as part of the Victorian Seniors Festival, a scam awareness session was held at Harcourt Valley Community House. Hosted by Community Bank Maldon & District, experts from Bendigo Bank's Financial Crimes Division shared a presentation about what to watch out for in the ever-changing world of online scams. Fraudulent schemes designed to steal money or personal information are increasingly common, with phishing schemes, fake investment opportunities and **fake invoices all being discussed**. The main takeaways from the session were:

STOP: Don't give money or personal information to anyone if you're unsure.

THINK: Ask yourself if the message or call could be a fake.

PROTECT: Act quickly if something feels wrong.

1. Beware of anyone offering **easy money**.
2. Check invoices, bills and payment requests before you pay them by calling the business on the **publicly listed number**.
3. Add **multi-factor authentication (MFA)** to your mobile devices (a code, token, a secret question or your face or fingerprint



(biometrics)) to show you are who you say you are when you login to online services.

4. Never provide personal or login information, passwords or codes over the phone or via text to anyone who has contacted you.
5. **Don't click on links** from unexpected emails or texts.
6. If you feel uncertain or pressured, **check in with someone you trust**.

7. A bank will never ask you to login to e-banking via a link sent in an SMS or email.

8. Immediately report any suspicious activity to your bank.

For more information please visit www.scamwatch.gov.au or drop in and see the staff at Community Bank Maldon – 81 High Street, Maldon. Open Monday – Friday 9.30am-4pm and Saturday 9am-12pm.

Lmct:10769

WRECKING ALL MAKES & MODELS

We buy most cars and utes

Free old car removal

5474 2432 HARCOURTAUTO.COM

Supporting your community

Community Bank Maldon & District

Bendigo Bank

03 5475 1747

MaldonMailbox@bendigobank.com.au

EnviroShop

Energy • Sustainability • Efficiency

solar power | battery storage | insulation | heat pump hot water, heating and cooling | insulating blinds | ceiling fans | EV charging

49 Lyons Street, Newstead 3462 Tues to Sat from 10am
t: 5472 4160 e: energy@enviroshopnewstead.au
www.enviroshopnewstead.au



Weather & Water

Spring in all its variability

In the past month we found we could do without the combustion stove for heating on quite a few days, however, the air conditioning was still needed to keep the air at a reasonable temperature. The spring show of flowers began early in the month and has continued. There were a few frosts and one or two days where the temperature nearly reached 30 degrees. Strong wind warnings were issued for at least two days during the month, and, as predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology, there were high tides, loss of power and building damage in some areas of Victoria.

In my weather report for October, I mentioned the Polar Vortex and its drying effect on the weather. It would seem that the worst has been avoided as enough rain has fallen over our catchments to increase inflows and thus storage levels. But there may be an underlying dry trend. Here at Reservoir Road, this year's rainfall total to date of 383 mm is lower than hoped. There have been seven years since 2002 where the total to this date was lower; three of those were in the ten-year drought from 2000 to 2009. This year the autumn break failed which set the growth season off to a bad start. The appearance of the country has improved with cooler temperatures, but there has been recent concern about lack of moisture past the top few centimetres of soil.

The long-range forecast summary for Australia according to the Bureau of Meteorology for November to January shows:

"Rainfall is likely to be above average for parts of the east and below average for parts of the north and west.

Daytime temperatures are likely to be above average for most of Australia except in parts of eastern New South Wales.

Overnight temperatures are very likely to be above average across most of Australia."

Irrigation allocation increased to 75%

Harcourt irrigators met with representatives of Coliban Water on 18 September to express their dissatisfaction with a 30% allocation for the coming irrigation season. As providers of food and wine locally, and for the country as a whole, they felt singled out for restrictions as nothing similar was planned for domestic users or general rural water users. On 15 October Coliban contacted local irrigators to tell them that the seasonal water allocation for 2025/26 was increased to 75%. This news was naturally greeted with relief.

Inflows to the reservoirs improved markedly in July and August, and were maintained for September, but petered off in October, however, the inflow was still above the figure for July. As at 3 November, the combined reservoir levels (those shown below and also Coliban's share of Lake Eppalock) were at 65%.

Robyn Miller

Grace Church

This is a statement of belief by Grace Church

The Leper

One day Jesus healed a man with leprosy ...

Now a leper came to Him, imploring Him, kneeling down to Him and saying to Him, "If You are willing, You can make me clean."

Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, "I am willing; be cleansed." As soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him, and he was cleansed...

... he (the leper, now healed) went out and began to proclaim it freely, and to spread the matter, so that Jesus could no longer openly enter the city, but was outside in deserted places; and they came to Him from every direction.

Another day Jesus healed a blind man

... as he (Jesus) was leaving Jericho with his disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar, the son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out and say, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" And many rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" And Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." And they called the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart. Get up; he is calling you." And throwing off his cloak, he sprang up and came to Jesus. And Jesus said to him, "What do you want me to do for you?" And the blind man said to him, "Rabbi, let me recover my sight." And Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he recovered his sight and followed him on the way.

At Grace Church we still believe in miracles! See you one Sunday soon!

Ps Roger Thurecht

Reservoir Levels 2025

	30 July	4 September	28 September	27 October
Upper Coliban	58.7%	63%	61.6%	62.3%
Lauriston	70.3%	80%	88.9%	87.6%
Malmsbury	14.6%	19%	28.5%	31.8% (26 Oct)
Barkers Creek	33.7%	34.9% (28 Aug)	39.9%	41.5% (26 Oct)

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

Grace Church

Service: 11.00am Sunday

All Welcome

Pastors: Roger & Glenise Thurecht

0422 605 897

gracecastlemaine.org.au

30 Buckley Street, Harcourt

KATIE FINLAY'S FRUIT GROWING TIPS

Hi everyone

Our orchard volunteer exchange program (called Fruit Crew) has started for the season, and it's great to get it going again. Forty enthusiastic volunteers have put their hands up to help grow this year's fruit crop. In exchange they get weekly lessons, free fruit and lots of cake! Our experience last year showed us that what our volunteers really valued was being part of a community - which is funny, because that was definitely one of the highlights for us as well!

The program has filled up but gaps may open up, so if you're interested, head to the website:

theorchardkeepers.com.au/volunteering

Catch us at the weekly Castlemaine Farmers Market

The other good news is that our fruit will be available again this season for locals to buy! We'll be at the weekly Castlemaine Farmers Market every Wednesday afternoon at the Camp Reserve from 2 pm-5 pm. We'll also do the occasional special/bulk box, so keep an eye on The Orchard Keepers Instagram to hear about them. Apricots and cherries are looking like having light crops this year, and the plums, apples and pears are all looking excellent.

Leaf Curl on Fruit Trees

Have you had any leaf curl on your peach or nectarine trees? If so, there are three things you need to know:

- (1) Once you've got it, you've got it this season and there's nothing you can do about it now.
- (2) It will miraculously disappear from your trees very soon as the weather warms up, and then your trees will look much better!
- (3) You need to take preventive action next winter to make sure you don't get it again next year. Keep an eye on this column, and we'll explain what to do closer to the time.

If you have curly leaves in your plum trees it's a different problem! There are lots of aphids about this year and they're the likely culprit. If you spot a patch of aphids you can wash them off or spot spray them with an organic spray (or even just soapy water). You can even cut infected bunches of

leaves off, but only if it's not going to ruin the structure of your tree. Another tip for beating aphids is to check if there are ants in the tree. Ants "farm" the aphids and protect them from predators, so it's a good idea to exclude the ants from the tree with some sort of sticky barrier around the trunk. Luckily, they can't fly so this strategy usually works.

Time to Thin Fruit

Now that flowering has finished, it's time to start thinning your fruit. Thinning is the process of pulling some of the tiny fruit off, and it's one of the most important jobs in spring for all deciduous fruit types like apricots, peaches, nectarines, plums, apples and pears. There's no need to thin your cherry trees. It can be a hard job to do! It feels wasteful to be throwing all that fruit on the ground, but rest assured, if you do it early i.e. now you won't reduce the overall size of your harvest (or not much anyway). In theory, you'll get almost the same volume of fruit, but in fewer pieces.

Here are four excellent reasons to thin:

- (1) Most fruit trees have a natural biennial bearing cycle – a heavy crop one year, followed by a light crop the following year (sound familiar?). Thinning makes the tree react as if this is its 'off' year, so it will set another full crop next year. Once you understand that, it's obvious why you have to do it every year!
- (2) To protect the structure of your tree, and make sure no branches or laterals break from carrying too much fruit
- (3) To grow larger fruit, because the tree's energy is put into fewer pieces of fruit – you get more delicious juicy flesh and less core!
- (4) It helps control pests and diseases by allowing the fruit to dry faster after rain so fungal disease has less opportunity to spread, and removing habitat for pests in the lovely dark spaces where fruit hangs in bunches.

In deciding how much fruit to remove, first assess the overall crop load: does the tree have a heavy, medium or light crop? Factors like the age of the tree, how healthy the tree is, how much



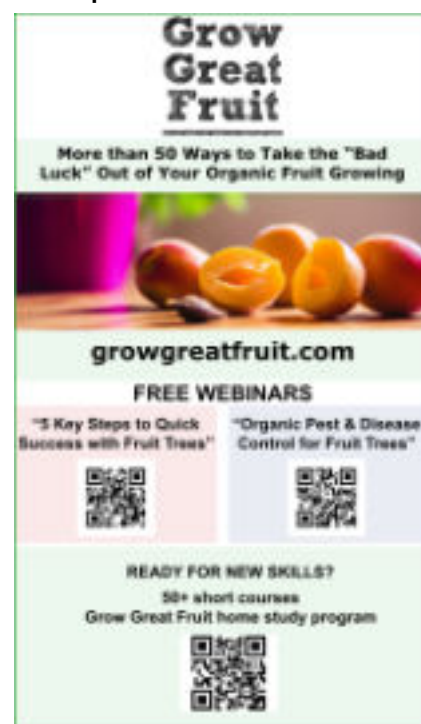
water you have available, how long until the fruit will be ripe, and the ultimate size of the fruit also affect how much fruit you need to remove.

Set your Fruit Fly Traps Now

And finally, it's definitely time to get your fruit fly traps out. Some fruit flies will have overwintered as adults, so it's important to start monitoring early in the season so you know if they turn up or start to get active in your garden. Then you can be ready with your next line of defence (e.g. netting, female traps, or an organic spray).

Happy growing!

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



Council news

Volunteer at Christmas Lunch

Spread the festive cheer this December and volunteer for Community Christmas Lunch in Castlemaine.

The event is held on Christmas Day every year and is open to all shire residents.

It's a great way to come together, connect with your community and enjoy the season's festivities in a friendly environment.

Volunteers are needed for: Kitchen/meal preparation, hall and table decoration, gift wrapping, driving/transportation, wellbeing support, first aid, serving food and cleaning up.

To find out more about volunteering, contact Castlemaine Community House on 5472 4842 or reception@cch.org.au.

Show your support this 16 Days of Activism

16 Days of Activism runs every year from 25 November to 10 December. It works to raise awareness and encourage communities to take action to end gender-based violence.

Come along to Respect Starts at the Table, a community event on Wednesday 26 November from 10.00am to 12.00pm at the Campbells Creek Community Centre.

Bring baked goods and a biscuit tin, join a craft circle, cook with Chewton CWA, contribute to a cookbook and work on a community banner.

There are lots of activities to get involved in, visit mountalexander.vic.gov.au/16DaysActivism for more information.

Working together for a healthy, connected shire
mountalexander.vic.gov.au (03) 5471 1700



I hold Listening Posts in *Harcourt & district* regularly.

To make an appointment, please contact my office.

Maree Edwards MP
State Member for Bendigo West

16 Lockwood Road, Kangaroo Flat VIC 3555
maree.edwards@parliament.vic.gov.au
03 5410 2444 mareeedwards.com.au



Victorian
Labor

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

SJK EXCAVATIONS Pty Ltd

Commercial, Industrial and Domestic Earthworks



Stuart King

Owner/Operator

sjkexcavations@yahoo.com.au

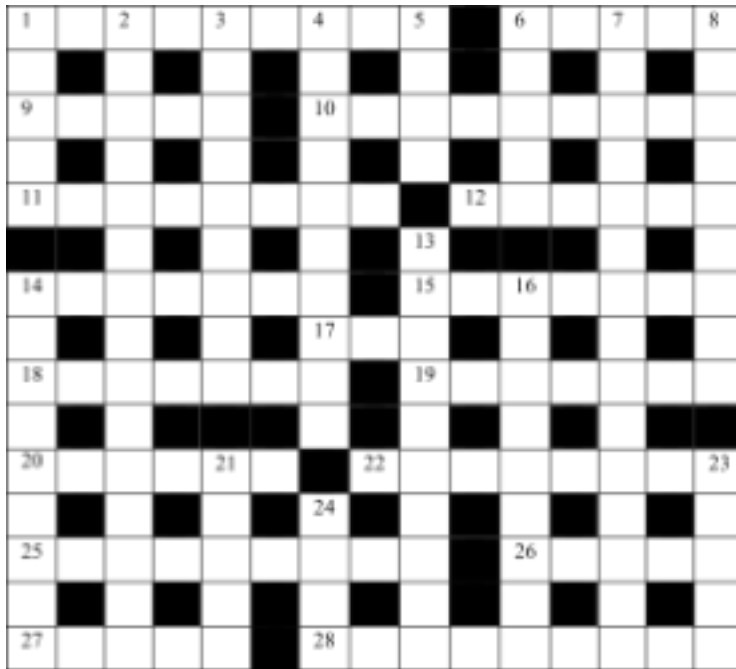
Call Stuart for a free quote
0407 514 797

Equipment includes 5 ton, 8.5 ton & 14 ton excavators all with rubber tracks & tilt buckets, tipper truck & large tag trailer. Attachments for all excavators include rocker breakers, a grab (ideal for clean-ups), auger – several sizes. Pesi track with laser grader blade attachment, (ideal for driveways, shed & house site cuts). We can provide all general earthworks including driveways, trenching, site cuts, land clean-ups & drainage works.

ABN: 63708900385

November 2025 Xword

© McW December '19



Note: 11 & 16 lack definitions, but give descriptive nouns as solutions.

Across:

1. Of utmost importance to get the usual sum! (9)
6. Receive, and the preposition where you harass me? (3,2)
9. Arithmetic serpent? (5)
10. No-no at sign of up-oneself-ness leaves real friendliness... (9)
11. Self-satisfied Scots dam? (8)

12. Mussolini-sounding fish out of Ernest? It's a boon for some, but not in Robe. (6)
14. Cut short a way across. (7)
15. Plural of first 3 of 27—5, 6, 6, 14, and so on, to spell it out... (7)
17. Legendary bird sounds solid even if it wasn't. (3)
18. Impost at twenty-five past to recover from a gaffe? (Maybe with cards...) (7)

Down:

1. They claim it gently strips fruit. (5)
2. Why would anyone describe this condiment as "dull Jerry nectar"? (3-7,5)
3. Perfect soakers as in dream... (9)
4. Unread news won't generate a reply! (10)
5. Mum's little fight for big dog is no longer hers: doggone—just a spat! (4)
6. Greedy lizard? (5)
7. Paper burns at Fahrenheit 451, but add 13 to get a real bang! (15)
8. Lousy tune clings on thinly... (9)
13. Receding so far into the gloom, he was still spotted for what he was. (10)
14. If fat diva wants to testify, guess what? (9)
16. New 11? (9)
21. Get rid of small rule and solve grave puzzle. (5)
23. Are sea-horses always girls? (5)
24. You think I'm dumb? It's only scraps that you'll find in the middle of all this. (4)

October Xword Solution

© McW late November '19

**Across:**

1. Seemingly endless [interminable], but replace sailor with little gravity and get people to mix...
7. Affirmative town? [Well?]
9. Nice political and religious weather during his incumbency... [It was Cyril who was the bastard...]
10. Ouch! Nut is less than genteel.
11. Considered apocryphal, yet is the subject of many enquiries. [Like the 'ambivalent' tense]

12. How to hold up the sewing circle with off-the-scale vehemence! [Well? Needle-guns de-scale...]
13. AA spirits among the workers [bees...].
16. Little sea-girt land ['s allowed] to be... [Well?]
18. What he duth when he sliph... [Well?]
19. Service without return or fault [Ace]; a male [man]; a limb [arm]. Put 'em together right and get a bloke to record things...

Down:

1. Some leg-ends that could be scratched? [Well? Feet...]
2. It may well be an ace T-shirt but when the racist throws these wheelies we can't tolerate her static [Well? THREE anagrams!]
3. What 22 does now! [Well? The disappeared signifier? 23ac might have some form...]
4. He's gonna send tin. He does gonna... definitely gonna... (7)
5. Max for sitting on? [Well? ...imus]
6. Six Creole reciters might get Henry [Wadsworth Longfellow] Onwards and Upwards!
7. Baton-holder of tender age. [Simone]
8. [Ha! One bank—his son-in-law was Two-tank! Amen to that...]
13. [Opals rule] okay? So when the government doubled the licence fee, everybody rebelled.
14. [Sceptered] Isle no longer given this esteem post-Brexit. [love the misspelling...]
15. [Eat] dinner in the '50s.
17. New alignment has us regretting big-time! (9)
19. [Each Inc.] company erects a barrier. (7)
20. [Me? I gasp] when they come at me. (7)
22. What 3 had done perfectly... [Well? Tense...]
23. Tedious bit of Michael [Pretorius]'s muse... [Terpsichore]
24. Backward part of sole gets a hundred and sucks [blood]... [Well? and 'backward' works twice...]
21. Natural to resent pig giving you grief...
23. [Lacan] re-routed under English coaling barge.
25. Get [pain out] of prickly customer.
26. [I soiled] my nest, but I so admire him!
27. Swiss painter endlessly backed in quadruped. [Well? Paul Klee...]
28. [The GSR] (Girls' Sartorial Register) [lends] authority to the policing of hems.

Harcourt News/The Core is published monthly by the

Harcourt Progress Association Inc

(ABN: 22 887 254 268)

For inclusion in *Harcourt News/The Core* contact the editor, Robyn Miller on news@harcourt.vic.au or 0467 670 271. Contributions of news items, articles, photos, stories, poems and letters are welcome, as are advertisements which help to cover production costs.

For placement of advertising please contact *The Core* via email at: advertising@harcourt.vic.au

Circulation is 400 hard copies which can be obtained at the Harcourt Service Station, Harcourt Post Office, Harcourt Produce Store, The Little Red Apple, and various outlets in Castlemaine.

A full colour version of *Harcourt News/The Core* is available on the Harcourt Progress Association website and readers can receive a free copy by subscription at: harcourtprogress.org.au/news/sub *The Core* is also available at the Harcourt Community website at: harcourt.vic.au/news

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

Harcourt News/The Core is a member of the CNAV, the Community Newspaper Association of Victoria.

Advertising rates

Business Card Size (55x90mm) pre-paid for:		Larger ads invoiced monthly	
3 months	\$50	1/6 page	\$40
6 months	\$80	1/4 page	\$60
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	12:05	2:25
Coolstore Road/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:56	12:06	2:26
Coolstore Road/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:57	12:07	2:27
Blackjack Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	9:03	12:13	2:33
Halford St/Barker St (Castlemaine)	9:05	12:15	2:35

From Castlemaine to Harcourt Monday to Friday

Castlemaine RSL/Mostyn St (Castlemaine)	8:45	11:55	2:15
Wimble St/Barker St (Castlemaine)	8:48	11:56	2:18
Blackjack Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:53	12:03	2:23
Coolstore Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:54	12:04	2:24
Market St/Harmony Way (Harcourt)	8:55	12:05	2:25



Repair Café
THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH FROM 10AM TO 1PM

**2025
Nov 30**

Castlemaine Community House
30 Templeton St
(enter via back door/garden)

For information phone Chris 5470 5508

First in first served, so be prepared to wait.

WE WILL TRY TO REPAIR ALMOST ANYTHING
CLOTHES - FURNITURE - ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES
TOYS - BICYCLES - etc

You'll have a chance to join our fixers to learn how to repair your useful items - to take up some new skills and avoid throwing your items into landfill.

  Castlemaine Repair Cafe

castlemainerepaircafe.wordpress.com



October Solution

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

SUDOKU

Difficulty: Easy

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

For early access to the solution to this month's puzzles, email: news@harcourt.vic.au

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



Is that text message worth \$611?

Using your phone illegally while driving could land you a \$611 fine and 4 demerit points.
Distracted drivers won't see police coming. Chances are you will be caught.
Anywhere. Anytime. Anyone.





**Stalls
Music
Food
Drinks
Entertainment**

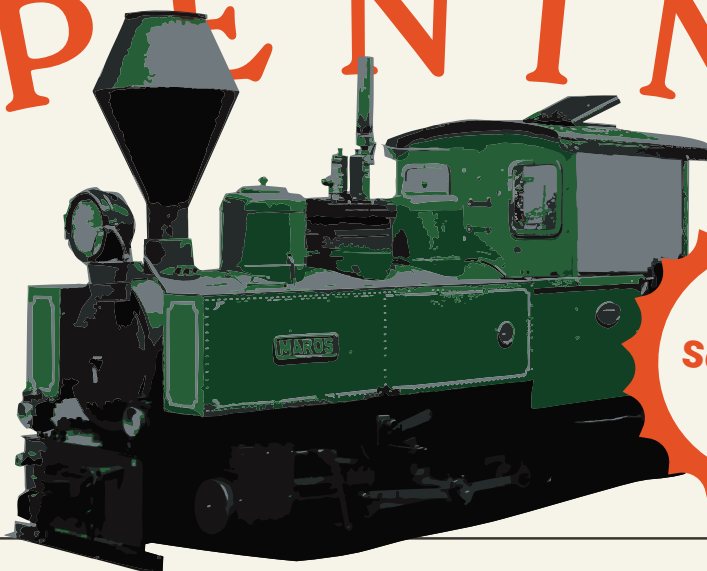


*29TH NOVEMBER 2025
10AM - 2PM
JAMES PARK HARCOURT*



Victorian Miniature Railway

GRAND OPENING



+Party
Saturday
Night

6th December

11am - 9pm

7th December

11am - 5pm

ALL - WEEKEND

Train Rides till 5pm, Food & Drink Trucks, Circus
Workshops & Much More...

Live Entertainment all weekend:

**Knight
Moves**

**Grim
Fawkner**

**Bad
Debts**

**+ Many
More!**

3643 Harmony Way, Harcourt VIC 3453
www.vmr.com.au