

Traf District News

May 2024 - Edition 263

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A bold vision which could lift a sagging economy

By Trevor Colvin

The Latrobe Valley economy is in a downward spiral and it is likely to get a little worse.

It is estimated that the local economy could lose \$2 billion over the next decade with the premature closure of the native timber logging industry last December, Yallourn in 2028 and Loy Yang in 2035. The native timber logging industry was worth \$770 million and secured 2,500 jobs, according to a 2016 report by Deloitte.

The closure of the Reflex paper making plant at Maryvale was a flow-on from the closure of the native timber logging industry. The mill produced up to 200,000 tonnes of white paper per year, with 300 reams of paper created a minute. An estimated 200 jobs were lost with the Reflex closure.

A socio-economic study data of for Victoria's seventy-nine local government areas concluded that the Central Goldfields and Latrobe City Council were "the two most socio-economically disadvantaged" Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Victoria. This data was compiled from the last census and therefore before the native timber industry closure.

To put this into perspective, a reduction of \$2 billion in the local economy represents about a 30% contraction. That's the bad news.

The good news is that there are many activities

which can and will lift the economy and one that could make a major economic contribution is the vision for the Great Latrobe Park. It is only a vision at this stage but its supporters believe it needs to be seriously considered and it needs to be considered now.

They believe there is a once-in-a-millennium opportunity to transform the three coal mines into a thriving economic zone to lift the local economy and replace the financial loss faced.

Currently the thinking around the Hazelwood mine, which is now filling and Yallourn and Loy Yang which will soon follow, is to rehabilitate them. The GLP committee suggests that the planned rehabilitation will do very little to lift the local economy but they believe these massive pits and surrounding lands could be turned into a valuable multi-purpose asset.

Hazelwood is a huge pit, six kilometres long, 3.5 kilometres wide and on average, 100 metres deep. It is nearly one and a half times the size of Sydney Harbour in volume. Or, for a more local perspective, it would take close to three Blue Rock Lakes to fill it. Yallourn is even bigger. The two mines are only five kilometres apart and are geologically linked, as is Loy Yang.

There is an obligation on the owners to rehabilitate these giant pits but what if

that work went beyond just rehabilitation to complete repurposing? They are three of the largest pits of their kind anywhere in the world and they present an opportunity to do something spectacular for the Latrobe Valley and for Victoria.

Current thinking at corporate and government level is to see the three mines in isolation and manage them in isolation. Hazelwood is currently being filled with water which will take at least another decade. Current thinking suggests the same will occur at Yallourn and Loy Yang.

So, let's go on an 'Imagine if...' journey for the next few paragraphs to see what could be possible.

Imagine if Hazelwood had beaches selectively dotted around its perimeter?

Imagine if it became a multipurpose marine area able to accommodate yachting, hang-gliding, speed boating, canoeing, swimming, fishing and bathing areas; and yes, it is big enough that these could be completely separate zones. It may also be suitable for an aquaculture industry.

Imagine if it contained wineries, market gardens, and similar.

Hazelwood has another major valuable asset which could be utilised; and that is billions of litres of hot water from the aquifers below the floor. That hot water is an incredible resource, so imagine

if that cheap energy was used to heat hotels, a business and commercial park, new housing, universities and colleges, museums, an Indigenous centre, etcetera. Imagine the appeal cheap energy would have to the business and tourism sectors in this state and the opportunities that could present.

Imagine if it had world-class hotels dotted around its perimeter, with walking tracks, cycling, golf courses, sports complexes, bird hides, reserves for endangered animal and plant species, and more.

Imagine if it had world-class subtterranean tourist accommodation built into its wall overlooking its vastness, similar to Lake Taal in the Philippines.

Imagine if it had health

spas and health resorts, museums, art galleries, all utilising cheap energy in the form of abundant hot water.

Imagine if a major geothermal industry was developed to take advantage of this abundant and inexpensive energy resource.

Imagine if Hazelwood and Yallourn were linked, with similar developments at each end with a nature oasis between them, linked by walking tracks and a tourist railway.

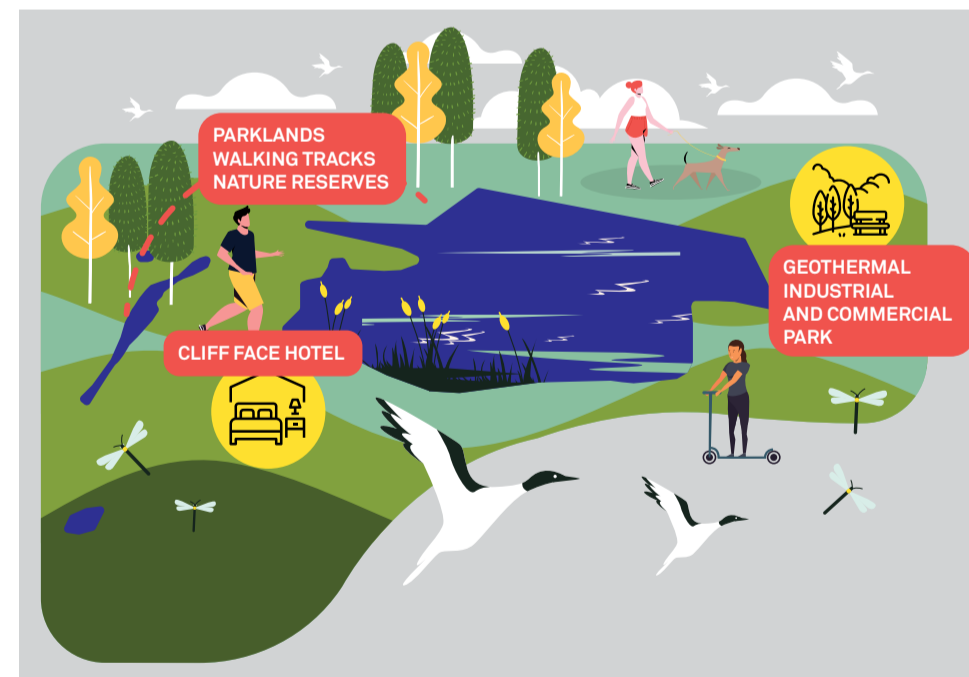
If it sounds like 'pie-in-the-sky', consider the Eden Project in Cornwall. A bold vision turned an unused commercial clay pit into a world class tourist attraction. Among other things it has the world's largest indoor rainforest all housed in a very large dome. A second

large dome houses plants in a mediterranean environment. There are outdoor botanic gardens and many attractions to attract paying visitors. The Eden Project has lifted the Cornish economy and the same could occur in the Latrobe Valley.

The Great Latrobe Park committee believe these ideas should be considered now, to flesh out the possibilities, before it is too late to do so.

Currently, the mine owners are set to foot the bill for rehabilitation, but it must be remembered that they are commercial corporations whose primary responsibility is to their shareholders and not the Victorian community.

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Name calling over ‘names’ at council meeting

By Trevor Colvin

It seemed more than reasonable that Baw Baw Council adopt a policy of naming more streets and roads after women, to correct an imbalance, but the issue boiled over at the April council meeting.

A motion lodged by councillors, Goss, Kostas and Wallace to rescind the ‘Place and Naming Policy,’ which was approved at the March council meeting, led to twenty five minutes of passionate debate, ending in Mayor Annemarie McCabe threatening to throw Councillor Goss out of the chamber.

Juliet wasn’t allowed to court Romeo because of his family name, because the two families were feuding. Juliet argued that a name is just a name, from which we get the famous ‘A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.’ Perhaps Shakespeare was also offering a lesson

when he penned this.

Yet sweetness was completely absent at the council meeting; rancour and gesticulating were present in its stead.

Councillor Goss told this paper he has no issue with more women’s names appearing on streets and roads in Baw Baw Shire. What he was objecting to was that the March decision was based on flawed data. Council produced a report that found only thirteen roads being named after women and that data was used as justification for the decision.

Cr. Goss later found twenty street names named after women without really trying and Cr. Wallace found 141 roads named after men and 101 named after women, with a number he considered neutral.

Refuting Cr. Wallace’s research Cr. Jazmin Tauru

claimed that some of the names considered neutral were in fact male and included ‘Tatterson’ and ‘McNeil’ as examples; yet these two names don’t show up in a ten thousand index of male first names which this paper consulted.

Cr. Goss questions how the original council report could be so inaccurate and believes such decisions should not be based on flawed data, which was what prompted him to act.

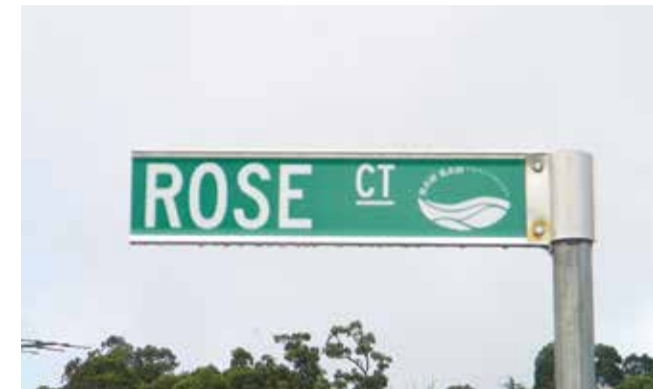
Councillor McCabe stated: “it wasn’t a burning issue

until you made it one”, with Cr. Goss responding that everyone missed the point of the rescission motion.

The rescission motion included a suggestion that council address equality in gender representation, by recognising the current imbalance of female names in public spaces, via a balanced approach, rather than adherence to strict percentage.

Crs. Wallace, Goss and Leaney voted for the rescission motion, while Crs. Tauru, Cook, McCabe and Jones voted against, with two

councillors being absent. The rescission motion was lost.



Council plans to correct a gender imbalance in street names, which led to uproar at the last council meeting. Is this court named after a woman or a flower?

Letters to the editor

Thank you for the very informative article in last edition by Jade MacGregor on “What you need to do following the death of a loved one”.

It highlights that accepting a request to be an executor of a will should not be taken lightly. I think most

people automatically agree to the request & feel honored to do this for a loved one. None of us like to think that we will outlive someone else & actually need to act on the request, but it is part of the cycle of life.

I am currently handling my mother’s affairs as she

is no longer capable & is in Aged Care. It comes with a huge responsibility & extra workload. The article has now given me a clear understanding of where to start & what to expect, when the inevitable will occur.

Recently my son has been asked to be the execu-

tor of a few family member’s estates. Hopefully it will be some time before he is required to act on it, but at least now, with the assistance of this article, he will know where to start.

(Name and address supplied Mirboo North)

IS IT A SCAM BY LARGE PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES?

Recently I had an issue with a medication that I had been prescribed to address an enlarged prostate.

I had been using specific medication for some 8 months, I went to renew it and was told that they had stopped producing and that I would have to get a new script or go to another pharmacy. I decided on the latter. I then asked some

questions about the future availability of an alternative product. The advice I received was that there was a direct alternative to my current medication in a generic brand, but it would cost extra. On further enquires I was told that the manufacture of my initial medication was also making the generic brand and was controlling the availability of both. This in my opinion

is a deceptive act of a pharmaceutical manufacture, a “scam”. It is obvious that we cannot blame the pharmacy as they can only give you what they have in stock.

This same strategy is the same as with home brands in the supermarkets and we now need to call all companies to task on this deliberate misleading play. We the community have to exert our power and voice to put

an end to such manipulations.

My issue may be only a small issue but the impact to our community; at large, would be significant and add to many peoples cost of living.

How many more such incidences are happening?

Michael Fozard
17 Ashby Street Trafalgar

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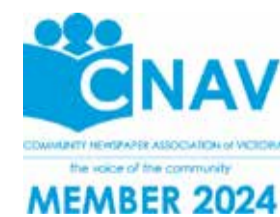
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Contingent Street businesses upset with unannounced street closure

By Trevor Colvin

“We’ve turned up to open up our shops and both ends were blocked off,” Nicole Grey, owner of café Eat Live Fresh said. “For three hours I had staff on I didn’t need, fresh food all prepped up ready to go and no traffic. No foot traffic, nothing.”

The quote above was published in the Warragul Gazette April 2 which went on to add:

Sarah Jenkins, owner of Jenkins Home Hardware, said while the footpaths were still open, many people were unaware of that fact. “Business could have happened, the footpaths weren’t closed, but people didn’t know that,” she said.

Ms Grey said with proper notification businesses on the street “Could have informed our customers that

they can park somewhere else and pop in and that they can access the shop just fine.”

The lack of communication was the most frustrating aspect of the incident, both owners said. “We’re not upset at the roadworks. The roads needed resurfacing and that’s great but we expect communication so that we can do things to minimise that disruption,” Ms. Jenkins said.

Two weeks on and Traf District News spoke to a Contingent Street business owner to find out what went wrong.

Council said it was a Vicroads responsibility and not a council issue. Vicroads contracted local company, Fowlers Asphalt and Fowlers subcontracted the work to another company. “A woman from the as-

phalting company turned up and said all the parked cars in Contingent Street had to be moved to allow for resurfacing. This was news to us.

“Supposedly, we were all notified but none of the businesses in Contingent Street received any notification. It is difficult to quantify the loss to business but Baw Baw Council has subsequently said a claim for loss of income is a

possibility.” It didn’t get any better some days later when the line markers turned up and closed off the street without proceeding. “It was too cold for the paint to dry on one day and too wet on another,” he told Traf District News.

Trafalgar Chamber of Commerce and Industry will be seeking further clarification.

Profile: Dr James Brown

Associate Professor and National Director of Training Royal Australian College of General Practice
By Paul Christian

Traf District News: “Overseeing national GP training is a significant responsibility. Could you provide an overview of what this entails?”

James Brown: “Certainly. General Practice has evolved into a recognized specialty like Cardiology or Surgery. Aspiring GPs complete medical school followed by one or two years as resident doctors in hospitals. Then, they embark on a three-year specialty training program in general practice, which can extend to four years with additional rural practice skills. This training involves supervised learning in general practices, small group educational activities, and self-paced modules covering various medical topics. General practice registrars closely monitor trainee progress, with feedback and additional support provided as needed.”

TDN: “What are some common challenges faced by

trainees during this process?”

JB: “Trainees may encounter challenges related to knowledge acquisition or professionalism. Sometimes, they lack the requisite knowledge for safe medical practice. More often, issues arise concerning professionalism, such as rudeness towards patients, arrogance, or making decisions beyond their competency level. Our role involves ensuring patient safety and upholding professional standards. We provide feedback and support to trainees who may be struggling, and in severe cases, implement remedial actions.”

TDN: “Are you actively involved in develop’ing training procedures?”

JB: “Yes, certainly. I oversee the entire Australian training program, which includes updating standards to ensure quality training. We have about 6,000 doctors in training. Accredited supervisors, ongoing training, and

rigorous monitoring are crucial components. Additionally, I advocate for funding and resources to support training nationwide.”

TDN: “Speaking of funding, is there sufficient support for training programs?”

JB: “Unfortunately, no. In comparison to other countries, our funding falls short. This inevitably affects the quality of training, particularly in providing professional development opportunities for supervisors. We consistently lobby for increased funding to enhance training standards and ensure the future readiness of our healthcare workforce.”

TDN: “How does GP training address the needs of different communities?”

JB: “One of our primary objectives is to train GPs equipped with the necessary skills and distribute them where they are most needed. While there is often a preference for urban areas, we

strive to encourage GPs to work in rural and underserved regions. This involves identifying workforce needs and establishing tailored training programs in those areas.”

TDN: “With the ongoing challenges additionally posed by Covid, how has healthcare delivery been affected?”

JB: “Overall, Australians are healthier, but mental health issues have become increasingly prevalent. Additionally, there’s been a concerning rise in cancer cases, possibly attributable to environmental factors. COVID-19 has underscored the importance of healthcare resilience and the need for ongoing support and resources.”

TDN: “It’s interesting to note the substantial number of doctors in regional areas. What factors contribute to this occurrence?”

JB: “Regional areas often retain doctors who received their training there. By invest-

ing in local training programs and recruiting students from these regions, we increase the likelihood of them staying. This approach ensures that communities have access to healthcare professionals who are familiar with local needs and challenges.”

TDN: “Technology plays an increasingly prominent role in healthcare delivery. How do you see this impacting the future of medicine?”

JB: “Technology, including artificial intelligence (AI), has revolutionized diagnostics and patient management. However, it cannot replace human expertise and empathy. The combination of AI with human oversight often yields the best outcomes. Moreover, technology facilitates data management and enhances efficiency in healthcare delivery.”

TDN: “Any final thoughts on the future of healthcare and the role of GPs?”

JB: “I’m dedicated to en-

hancing training programs to produce competent and compassionate GPs who are equipped to meet the evolving needs of our communities. Emphasizing small group learning and mentorship fosters strong professional identities among trainees. Despite the challenges we face, I remain optimistic about the future of healthcare and the pivotal role of GPs in promoting community wellness.”

We extend our gratitude to Dr. Brown of Trafalgar Medical Centre for sharing his invaluable insights and expertise.



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Potential danger at Dodemaides Road

By Trevor Colvin

Late last year Vicroads changed speed signs on the approach to Trafalgar from Moe to make the Davey Drive/Princes Highway intersection safer. Before the changes, much of the traffic arriving at Davey Drive was travelling well in excess of 60 kph, even though there was a 60 kph sign about 100 metres from the intersection. Signage went abruptly from 110 kph to 60 kph, which was insufficient warning for traffic to slow.

The solution was to commence an 80 kph zone 80

metres back and it has worked. While it is not perhaps the ideal solution, it has seen a significant improvement. Traffic is travelling noticeably slower when it arrives at Davey Drive.

The other end of town has a similar problem according to some of the residents who contacted Traf District News to put their case. Spokesman Dennis Jones organised a group of concerned residents to talk to this paper. Dennis hastened to add that Vicroads was aware that changes are needed and the work was supposed to occur last year,

but nothing has eventuated. Anne, a Dodemaides Road resident, told us "Turning right from Dodemaides is definitely difficult and quite dangerous - in fact when you look at the size of the gap between lanes and the fact that there is a right turn lane off the highway as well as a U turn lane coming from Traf there definitely isn't any space or design for cars from Dodemaides to sit in the middle and turn right."

"When we were first here I used to try turning there but then one time I crossed into the middle just as a 4WD

vehicle pulled into the right turn lane coming from Yarragon - he couldn't turn past me to cross the highway and I couldn't see a thing to be able to turn right - it was a stalemate until I took the risk of pulling out blind and I have never turned right out of there again."

The main problem appears to be that inbound traffic is allowed to be travelling at 80 kph. The 60 kph zone doesn't commence until after the Dodemaides Road intersection.

Dennis Jones and his team believe changing the speed

signs would have a positive effect. "Changing the current 80 sign for a 60 sign and slowing approaching traffic down from further back - similar to what occurred at the other end of town - should be effective and inexpensive."

"It would also help cut down noise which is quite significant. When trucks see the current 60 sign and apply their engine brakes, it becomes very noisy. We are all aware that Vicroads has a responsibility to keep traffic moving but safety and comfort should also be major considerations."

"We believe that with very little expense both safety and noise levels could be improved significantly."

Dennis spoke to MP Wayne Farnham who said he was aware of the problem having driven through it several times recently and Wayne offered to follow up with Vicroads local people to move the project along.

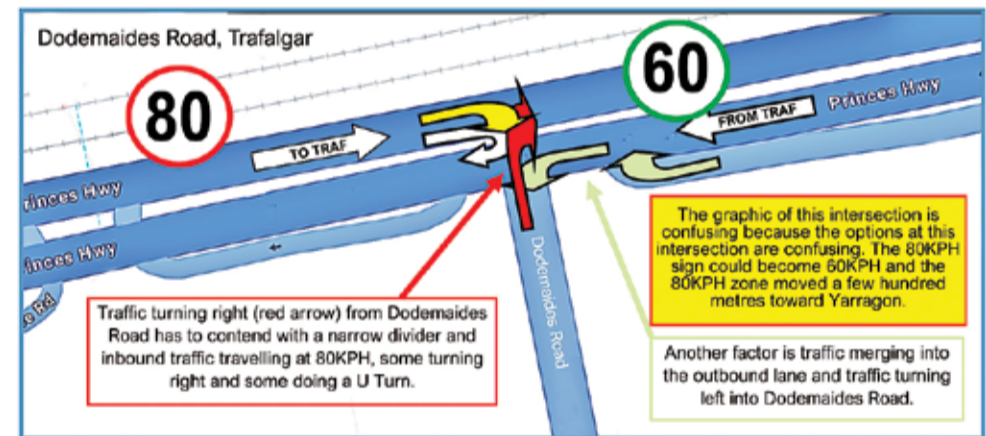
Footnote: At the time of writing, 80k speed signs on the West bound lanes have been changed to 60.



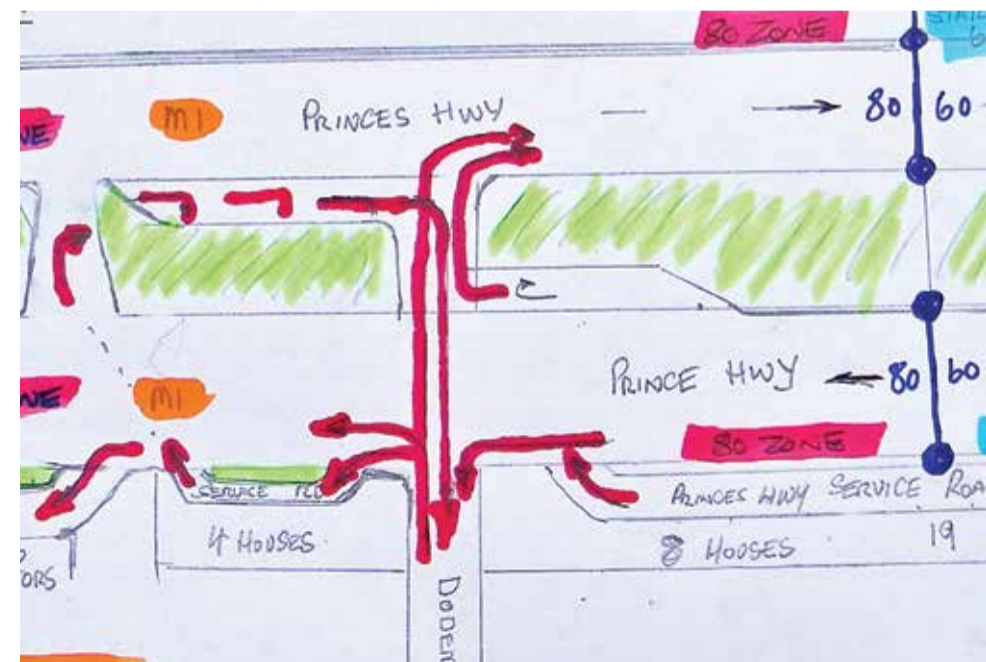
Residents believe the 80 kph speed limit sign should be replaced with a 60 kph sign and the 80 kph zone moved further west.



Dennis Jones (left) and some of the concerned residents asking for urgent change.



An artist's impression of the complex traffic movements.



Dennis Jones' mud map showing the complexity of the intersection which he and others believe should have the 80 kph limit reduced.

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The Summit: Adventure and personal development park in Trafalgar

By Michael Fozard

They come from schools, small businesses, large corporations, churches, community groups and they come to develop together through a wide range of physical activities.

This multi-award winning, fifty acre outdoor ad-

venture park has a primary focus on providing inspiring and life-changing experiences, through a combination of activities that build self-worth and confidence.

The Summit offers activities to help develop teamwork and individual confidence through diverse

activities, some of them downright wet and muddy.

Programs at The Summit have been developed in consultation with some of the country's leading psychologists, life coaches, outdoor education experts, motivational speakers, and sports and recreation specialists.

It is a live-in facility with several accommodation options from the more luxurious to cabins, bungalows, and tents. There are more than one hundred activities, including a laser skirmish field, giant water slide, a cave to explore, a lake with water activities and a pool. Activi-

ties can be tailored to suit all individuals and all abilities.

There are large open, outdoor and indoor spaces, ideal for team-building activities. There are BBQ areas for parties, entertainment, and special occasions, plus a number of indoor meeting and conference spaces to choose from.

The Summit caters for intimate groups of 10 people minimum, to large groups of 200 or more.

Contact can be made by phoning (03) 5633 3236 or emailing info@thesummit.net.au.



Trafalgar Police Report



around your area. Keep an eye on your neighbours and the neighbourhood and report anything suspicious.

Listen: Keep your ears open to anything that is out of the ordinary and report it if it seems to be unusual in nature or you have heard something of value.

Share contact details with neighbours and friends: Make sure you are contactable if something happens while you are away or out. Know your neighbours and look out for each other.

It is important that we always lock cars and homes; even though we are a country community, we are still vulnerable and unfortunately opportunistic people will take advantage of our relaxed country lifestyle.

Please report to 000 any suspicious behaviour or crime. Vehicles or people loitering around that you may feel suspicious of. This will help us work as a team to tackle crime prevention.

Let's start off with some issues I would like to bring to the community's attention that are affecting our community.

We need to know any patterns that are emerging within our community. We need to know who is out and about and it helps us decide what courses of action to take.

Trafalgar, due to location, is vulnerable and an easy target for offenders to come from east or west and commit crime. Help police by providing information and getting involved.

POLICE ASSISTANCE LINE (PAL): I would like to make you aware that there are now lots more ways you can con-

tact police for assistance. For non-urgent crime and events, you can report using the Police Assistance Line (PAL). Call 131 444 or go to police.vic.gov.au

The following can be reported: theft, lost property, property damage, party safety, absence from residence. This gives our community another platform to report to police. All reports are recorded and will be investigated by Trafalgar Police. Trafalgar Police and the greater Trafalgar community, which encompasses all the smaller towns in our service area, must work together to tackle our local police and community issues. As a TEAM we can make a difference.

REPORTING TO POLICE:

- Call 000 when it requires police to attend. This is for suspicious people and cars that we need to check out.
- Use the PAL line for anything non urgent.
- Station phone only attended when in the station. Otherwise, it diverts to 24 hour counter service at Warragul. Trafalgar police are tasked to patrol-deter-detect, not wait at counters for people to attend, so we are often out and about. If you require a document to be signed or certified, make a call or send an email to make an appointment. Trafalgar. uni@police.vic.gov.au.

Chris NOTT | Sergeant
36262 Officer In Charge
TRAFALGAR POLICE STATION
Victoria Police

IGA Trafalgar

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THURSDAY	7AM - 8PM
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SATURDAY	7AM - 8PM
SUNDAY	8AM - 8PM

REDUCE THE RISK OF BECOMING A VICTIM OF CRIME BY TAKING PRECAUTIONS

Lock Up: Currently our police service area is experiencing a lot of reports of cars and residences being broken into. It amazes me that people aren't locking up their cars and taking valuables out of the car.

Look Out: Keep your eyes open on what is going

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

It must be remembered that these mines have only been privatised for thirty years. For the first seventy years, the Latrobe Valley was run by the SEC, wholly owned by the Victorian State Government, which earned billions of dollars of revenue from electricity sales in that seventy-year period and earned \$30 billion when it sold them off to private enterprise. It can be argued that the state has an obligation to contribute but that obligation is also a great opportunity, an opportunity to develop a new economic model for the Latrobe Valley whose economy has been flattened in recent years.

The team at Great Latrobe Park (GLP) are a serious group of retired people who are all committed to community development and

they are highly credentialed. Below is the briefest explanation of who some of them are.

Rob: a geologist with twenty-five years' experience in the Latrobe Valley mines and a lecturer in Engineering Geology.

David: A regional planner in Gippsland for thirty years and author of a book on the topic.

Nina: Former president of the Moe Development Group and more recently 'Growing Together Latrobe,' a supportive organisation for school and community gardens. Nina is the catalyst for forming this group.

Bob: A senior mechanical engineer with the SEC for 14 years and knows the geology of all these mine pits as well as anyone.

Barbara: Studied Ag. Science and a career in Agricultural Education at secondary

and tertiary levels. Extensive Landcare and water management experience.

Richard: More than thirty years in senior positions in the brown coal mining industry. Responsible for redirecting and moving the Morwell River and Strzelecki Highway to allow open cut mining.

Ross: Trained as an economist with thirty-five years experience with the PMG national headquarters (which became Australia Post) working in industrial relations and network planning.

Peter B: Retired surgeon with 30 years' experience in the Latrobe Valley.

Peter K: Retired dentist and philanthropist and patron of the Latrobe Valley Orchestra.

Monique: Marketing and IT specialist.

Rosemary: A lifetime involved with community wel-

fare.

Margaret: An educator before retirement.

Brendan: An engineer with a long career in micro-computer development and later, with Australian Paper, managing health and safety and hazard management.

Some of these ideas may be workable and others not so, but the idea of seizing an opportunity to examine the potential needs to be considered urgent.

What next? Members of the GLP committee will be directly addressing community groups across the region to put these ideas forward and they are already talking to mine owners, government and other industry bodies.

You can learn more by visiting www.glp.org.au



Some of the team behind the Great Latrobe Park vision at Yallourn.

Scammers prey on the innocent and vulnerable

By Trevor Colvin

Scams come in various sizes and guises; from simple scams involving a few dollars, to elaborate stories which can take years to develop and which can rob their victims of small fortunes.

The following two stories are true. Your writer has direct involvement in both.

GRANDMA'S GOLD:

They met on a dating site, she a stunning blonde from Eastern Europe looking for a husband and a new life in a democratic country; he, a lonely Gippsland farmer in his forties. She had no ready money but she did have a significant amount of gold inherited from her grandmother which had been kept secret from the authorities. She was keen to come to Australia and all she needed was the cost of a passport and the airfare. The farmer promptly sent the money.

But she hit a hurdle. Authorities in her country had to be bribed in order to get the gold out. Given the gold was worth around \$200,000, a \$3,000 bribe was certainly worth paying and they would live happily ever after. The

money was sent to cover the bribe.

About this time my wife and I and another neighbour became involved and tried hard to convince the farmer he was being scammed; but he wouldn't have it. Loneliness was a stronger motivator than reason.

Quite some time went by and then she was in Singapore. So close! But the Singaporean authorities were demanding an assay and an audit of the gold in order to establish a transit tax and this was to cost a few thousand dollars. Again, we tried very hard to alert him, but again we failed. He simply refused to believe he was being conned.

Eventually, I helped this poor bloke track the scam to Nigeria and I actually spoke to the scammers, pretending to be a senior officer with the Nairobi Fraud Squad. As soon as I mentioned any detail, the phone went dead.

My farmer friend reluctantly confided that the entire exercise, which dragged on for some time, cost him in excess of \$120,000.

THE LONELY CLEANER:

She is a decent woman in her seventies in Melbourne. He posed as a British citizen who worked for the UN in the Middle East and then moved to Europe and then to Australia where he is currently imprisoned on 'trumped up' visa charges.

They met on the internet some years ago and she still believes he is genuine; even though he has scammed more than \$100,000 from this lonely vulnerable woman who could ill afford to lose it. She is still working as a cleaner.

His latest ploy is to seek money to get him out of prison. Traf District News has seen the letter supposedly from the British High Commission in Canberra and it is clearly a fake. It goes on to suggest that with a little more money he could get out of prison and finally join her in Melbourne.

The real tragedy here is that this poor woman may give him yet more money because she can't accept that this person she has never met, is a fraud. She lives in hope they will meet soon.

There are common threads in these two stories

and common practices employed by the scammers.

1. They seek out the very lonely.
2. They build confidence and rapport over time, exchanging personal and intimate details.
3. They claim to be equally lonely and commit to a permanent relationship and they are happy to come to Australia.
4. They ask for very small amounts of money to begin with, gradually upping the ante.
5. They are master manipulators.

This sort of scam is huge. Scamwatch reports that it tallied up the dollars of the romantic scams reported to it in 2021 and it was a staggering \$37million. Given many such scams are never reported, the real figure is likely to be huge.

You might think most of the people caught in romantic scams are elderly but not so. Scamwatch reports that nearly half of those reported to it are under 35.

It could be happening to a friend or relative of yours, so be mindful.

Not all scams are big but they all have one thing in common; they prey on the honest, the fearful and the vulnerable.

This scam is currently on my mobile. Note: Your past due toll bill may affect your credit. Please resolve it promptly <https://link-ish.life.au>.

Clicking the link takes me to a convincing invoice from the Linkt Corporation requesting \$5.83. How many busy people who use Linkt tollways, would pay this small amount rather than spend time checking its validity? How many would get it out of the way and move on and if you are the scammer and a few hundred people fall for your little scam every week, then big money is to be made.

Citilink's official website warns of this particular scam. Another favourite is what looks like an official text from Australia Post asking to complete an order and pay some money. Australia Post warn it's a scam but how many people don't bother to check and fall victim to the cyber criminals?

A very popular scam doing

the rounds a few years back was the inheritance racket. I received one from a law firm in London which tracked me down as the only living relative of an obscure and distant unknown aunt in England who had left me a tidy sum of £2,480.00. My luck was truly in and all I had to do was provide my bank details.

Earlier this year I noticed a \$307.05 charge on my credit card I did not recognise from a company called Simple Site in Copenhagen. I went to our local bank which recognised it as a scam and the money was returned to my account. Currently in my 'spam' folder is an order from PayPal for some bitcoin I supposedly ordered. All I have to do is confirm the order and provide some bank details.

That is the key. If anyone asks for your personal details, particularly your bank details, don't provide anything and make sure you have this conversation with your friends and relatives.

If in doubt, check the Australian Government site 'Scamwatch' and remember the sixteenth century adage 'If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.'

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The training is free, Council will provide the training through Lifeline Gippsland at various locations across the Baw Baw Shire. The course will go for five hours and you will come out of it feeling more informed on mental health, and how to help.

Scan the QR code to register for a training session.

Times and locations: 9.30am – 2.30pm

Friday 10 May	Longwarry Public Hall, Longwarry
Wednesday 22 May	Trafalgar Community Centre, Trafalgar
Saturday 25 May	Longwarry Primary School, Longwarry
Wednesday 29 May	Longwarry Primary School, Longwarry
Wednesday 19 June	Yarragon Bowls Club, Yarragon

Morning tea and lunch will be provided.



 bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

 chantelle.beary@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au

 0436 311 781

Autumn – a time of rest, rejuvenation, celebration, and planning

Gardening - By Dianna Mattea

Cool nights, warm days and March Equinox leads us into the next seasonal cycle. For many gardeners, including me, autumn is a time we reflect on our gardening success and failures. What can I improve for the following season? The cooler season gives us the opportunity to tidy up, rest garden beds, plan and prepare soils for a spring cornucopia.

Autumn is the time we see deciduous plants hibernate, reserving their energy throughout the colder months to reemerge in spring. During this process, the green leaf colour known as chlorophyll begins to die back. Chlorophyll is created through a photosynthesis process energising the plant's life force to fruit and bloom. The plant retreats inwards reserving its energy until it is time to reawaken.

Leaf colour changes from green to warming, intense shades of red, orange, yellow and brown. At the right time plants release most or all its leaves – "letting go" as she prepares for dormancy.

A beautiful, spectacular display of warming colours litter the landscape. Good, nourishing litter that is useful to create healthy compost. I usually mulch the leaves before adding to the compost bin that creates a finer compost. It is always good practice to check if any bugs or disease are present among the leaves, if so, do not add to your compost bin. Collect the leaves and dispose of them thoughtfully to reduce possible spread into fresh, clean garden beds.

Edible and ornamental plants

Deciduous trees – fruit and exotics drop their leaves. Some plants (vegetable and ornamental) die back fully to be pulled out and composted (where appropriate) making way to nourish soil beds in preparation for spring and some winter crops. Remember to collect seed and clearly label the particulars.

Rejuvenating beds, planning, maintenance

I usually dedicate two

beds to sit and rest for at least nine months. Another bed dedicated for winter crops that are nutritionally demanding, example - broccoli and kale. The beds are alternated seasonally as part of my crop rotation system.

Succession planting is good practice to consider extending a crop's harvest.

A diary dedicated to our garden practices is a must. It helps us to better navigate the year's successes and failures. Documenting our observations helps us to form better practice and remedy any difficult challenges. Most of us would agree that nature throws us a few unexpected climate challenges compounding our understanding of how to work with nature; questioning what processes we need to change or adjust.

Garden tasks - checklist

Autumn is a great time to check over garden tools and attend to repairs.

- Check raised beds for splitting, deterioration.
- Check irrigation system.
- If space permits, set aside

a couple of beds to rest during the year.

- Replenish spent soil with organic matter.
- Never add potting mix to soil because they are two different growing mediums.
- Clean and sharpen all tools including spades.
- After each use all tools must be wiped down (weak solution of vinegar and water) to prevent spread of disease.
- Check first aid kit.
- Remove plant labels and put them in a safe place. If left on the plant outside, they fade over time. The plastic ties merge into the plant as it grows creating wounds in the bark that may be detrimental to the plant. I usually place them in a dedicated box or envelope.

Replace garden stakes if broken.

- Ensure a good supply of plant food on hand.
- Check gloves for holes, always wash after use.
- Good quality masks to wear when opening bags

of potting mix and any growing medium.

- Do you have a leaky watering can?

Plants to consider growing

Australian natives.

Kale, beetroot, broad beans, carrots, endive, snow peas, turnips, parsley, oregano, garlic, cauliflower, saffron.

Poppy, foxglove, calendula, carnation, cornflower, cosmos, sweet pea, camellia, and various flowering bulbs, tubers, and corms – tulips, daffodils, iris, hyacinth.

Tip: *If you love coriander, plant seedlings or sow seeds in autumn / winter. The plant loves moist conditions; leaving it too late the plant will bolt to seed.*

Autumn landscapes and art exhibition

If you are not a keen gardener there are many regions you can visit to experience the stunning open autumnal landscape. Here in Victoria the Harvest Moon Festival and Victorian Autumn Festivals are celebrated. Marys-

ville, Mt Dandenong, Bright, and Victoria's High Country are stunning places to visit. For us locally we can enjoy our own backyards – Mirboo North, Walhalla, Broughton Hall and further out Buchan Caves Reserve.

A few years back I had the opportunity to visit an exhibition at New York Botanical Gardens where artist Philip Haas created an interpretation of Giuseppe Arcimboldo's Four Seasons. Philip created four massive artworks representing winter, autumn, spring, and summer.

I leave you with a poem written by an Australian writer Monty Edwards.

Unpredictable Autumn

There is no "ought" in Autumn- It's bound to disobey. It doesn't like to keep a rule, But for prefers to play. Sometimes cool and sometimes warm, Sometimes sunshine, sometimes storm, Think it over. You will find Autumn can't make up its mind!

Please be safe and let me know how you are getting on with your tasks.



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Community Bank supports Holden Heritage Centre

By Mick Bourke

Some of you may have noticed some building work going on out the back of Trafalgar Holden Museum, which has been made possible, in part, by Community Bank Trafalgar & District.

We're expanding our already large premises with a huge new building, to be called the Holden Heritage Centre.

It's planned to be completed and opened by March 2025.

We'll keep you informed via Traf District News, the museum's website and Facebook.

It's going to significantly increase the size of our current museum with cars and a huge celebration of Holden's history, kindly supported by General Motors Australia, the parent company of General Motors Holden.

The Holden Heritage Centre will have two floors; the lower floor displaying heritage cars and the upper, mezzanine floor, with many booths to inform every one of the beginnings of Holden, its impact in Australia and overseas, to celebrate the many

faces Holden won, the people involved, and the generations of workers who were part of the Holden family.

Community Bank Trafalgar & District has been a consistent and generous supporter of our museum and this new building exists, in part, due to the generosity of the bank, plus other grants. Thank you to all at the bank for your kind gift of \$33,000.

Ex- Holden Employees Day

We will be having our second ex- Holden employees' dedication day to Holden's employees on June 16.

Everyone - not just ex- Holden employees - is welcome to this event, which will celebrate the incredible contribution that was made by all the generations of Holden employees; as well as employees of companies who contributed parts to Holden cars.

It's a great way to catch up with old mates who were colleagues and also to exchange stories of Holden's history.

We will be having a BBQ on the day, which is included in our \$15.00 per adult entry

fee. On top of all that we often have new cars and exhibits

for you to see. Unfortunately, the Echuca Museum will be closing

soon. Fortunately for us, we will be receiving their General Motors Holden/General

Motors New Zealand-owned cars to boost our displays.



From left, Trafalgar Holden Museum's Holden Heritage Centre's building supervisor Bill Moroney, Trafalgar Holden Museum's committee member Geoff Dodge, Community Bank Trafalgar & District branch customer relationship manager Gavin Duffy, Trafalgar & District Financial Services Ltd director Edwin Vanderburg, and Community Bank Trafalgar & District's customer relationship officer Emily Morton, in the museum's partly constructed Holden Heritage Centre

Camilla

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META announcement real blow to regional news, putting jobs at risk

This article reproduced courtesy of Latrobe Valley Express
By Andrew Schreyer: President of Country Press Australia.

Australia's largest organisation of newspaper publishers has attacked the announcement by Meta that it will no longer negotiate deals with publishers once current agreements expire.

Country Press Australia represents more than 230 regional, rural and outer suburban publications across the nation.

The organisation was recently advised through an email from Meta that "our company priorities have substantially shifted in the past year and, as a result, we will no longer be making Facebook News Tab available in Australia".

Meta also confirmed "This doesn't affect our agreement with Country Press Australia which will continue in accordance with its terms and conditions until it expires".

In a subsequent meeting between Country Press Australia and Meta, it was made clear that Country Press Australia's agreement with Meta would not be renewed.

This is a devastating blow to our members who are party to the agreement.

All are publishers of regional and local public inter-

est journalism.

Meta has been providing grants to Country Press Australia publishers which has provided vital sustainability.

There will be publishers who close the doors and won't be able to continue supporting their communities with news in the wake of this announcement. These regional and local publishers are the major and in most cases, sole, providers of local public interest journalism in their communities.

In times of trouble and in emergency situations, such as during floods and in major bushfire events, the local publisher's Facebook page is never more important or appreciated by people in our communities.

Meta's actions undermine our democracy in the way the company displays such disdain for the work of the news industry. It also undermines public confidence in the media sector.

The most popular Facebook pages in most regional and rural communities are those of the local news publishing company, yet Meta says people don't go to Facebook for news or political content.

What about in times of bushfire and floods or when the chips are down and someone in the community needs help? Local experience would suggest otherwise.

If, by Meta's own admission, Australians don't go to Facebook for news or political content, then the federal government should heed the advice of Meta and immediately cease advertising on Meta's platforms.

Sadly, jobs will definitely be lost as a result of Meta's decision but it's hard to put a number on this.

Given the already well-documented challenges our industry faces (major cost increases for newsprint, ink, energy and the decline in federal government advertising spend), this announcement will force many publishers to confront the issues ahead of them and cut staff.

The reaction from our members in the aftermath of the announcement has been one of deep concern, alarm and even anger.

The federal government must act to give assurance to our industry and to support the democratic infrastructure that is the newspaper

industry. And it needs to move swiftly, decisively and with purpose.

We need government to support the news industry and invoke the news media bargaining code. Our government must also do what it can to assure Australians that the government values the news industry's role in our democracy to mitigate disruptions to it.

Facebook reaped the benefits of our members' unique local content for many years and has paid those local and regional publishers for only the last three years and will now not renew their agreement with Country Press Australia.

A democracy cannot function without a healthy news sector, and this is now heavily at risk in regional and local communities after Meta's decision. It is important that the federal government responds swiftly to this decision and considers all possible action including designating Meta under the News Media Bargaining Code and other options available to them and the ACCC.

It is vital that news media is adequately compensated for the content that Face-

book has been able to build their business from over many years and ensure a strong and robust news media industry which is vital for a healthy democracy.

It is also vital that the

federal government ensures strong support of the industry now more than ever before and ensures the News Media Assistance Program (News MAP) is finalised urgently.



Andrew Schreyer.

Plans for reforestation around Blue Rock Lake sounds alarm bells

By Michael Fozard

Southern Rural Water plans to reforest areas around the lake but locals have several concerns.

The lake area is seen as a safe refuge in the event of bushfires and there is a real fear that reforestation could take away this safety valve. The threat of bushfires is ever present in this heavily timbered district.

Residents also fear that reforestation could provide difficulty with insurance coverage as insurance companies become more risk averse to bushfire areas. It is a concern insurance premiums could rise and - at worse - insurance could be denied property owners.

These views were expressed at a public meeting on April 12 at the Willow Grove Public Hall in response to a proposal by Southern Rural Water on the reforestation of land around the lake. The company is looking at reforestation as a means to attain carbon capture offsets.

The meeting attracted around sixty people with representatives from Southern Rural Water, Narracan Member, Wayne Farnham, and

Councillor Michael Leaney.

Southern Rural Water is assessing land holdings across southern Victoria to see if there are suitable locations to undertake carbon reforestation offset projects that could help in achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emission targets.

They are in the early stage of investigating and appointing a qualified forestry expert to assess the suitability of land around Blue Rock Lake. This will include an assessment of any bushfire risks to the community, cultural heritage matters, impact on visual amenity and land suitability for planting.

Meetings have occurred with people who have access rights to the land.

The meeting was assured that no decision has been made concerning the planting and no decision will occur until the community has had an opportunity to provide feedback on any proposal.

The meeting was assured by the Southern Rural Water representative that the community would be consulted on all concerns.

It is anticipated that the assessment will be completed by July 2024 at which

time the community would provide feedback on the findings. The authority did ac-

knowledge that they had misjudged the mood of locals. Contact can be made with

Southern Rural Water on 1300 139 510 or email srw@srw.com.au



Local residents fear intended reforestation around Blue Rock Dam will remove a bushfire bolt hole



Two delightful bushwalking options

If you fancy a stroll in the bush there are two options which are easily accessible and provide a range of tracks and you don't have to travel far.

The first is Uralla Reserve in Trafalgar and the other we recommend is the Edward Hunter Reserve in Moe South.

Uralla Nature Reserve
Only minutes by car from the centre of Trafalgar this

beautiful reserve offers a range of walking options.

It is a hidden gem for bushwalkers, offering 60 hectares of natural Australian bush.

Tracks range from easy to fairly steep, short to quite long allowing visitors to explore its beauty all year round. One track is even wheelchair-friendly, providing accessibility for all visitors.

Exploring the moss-covered logs, ferny glades, and enjoying the scent of wet earth are some of the exciting experiences within the reserve. Birdwatching is also popular, with the chance to spot species such as the superb fairy-wren, eastern yellow robin, and grey shrike-thrush.

The best time to visit Uralla Nature Reserve is during the cooler months from March to November, when the weather is mild for outdoor activities. There is a small car park available for visitors to park their vehicles and the reserve is conveniently located just five minutes away from the centre of town.

Uralla Nature Reserve offers several track options to explore the natural bush, all well signposted to prevent getting lost. Dogs are allowed on a leash, providing an opportunity for pet owners to

enjoy the reserve. Location: Giles Road, Trafalgar

Edward Hunter Reserve
In the late 1870s, the area that is the Reserve today was originally set aside as a water catchment with a storage dam to supply water to the Moe Railway Station for steam trains.

From the 1950s, the electrification of the rail line meant a decreased need for water but the dam had gained popularity as the local swimming pool. It had a wooden duck board around the banks and a large wooden tower approximately three meters high with a diving board on the west side. Swimming carnivals and bathing beauty contests were held. There was even a kiosk.

The Reserve was named the Edward Hunter Heritage Bush Reserve after Narracan Shire councillor, Edward Hunter, for his dedicated services to the Moe community from the 1920s to the '40s.

The area of approximately 57 hectares still contains the dam with the remainder consisting of natural bush land, with main access roads and walking tracks.

It is a delightful place to walk your dogs and, of course, yourselves.

The tracks around the pic-

turesque lake are a delight and you feel like you are a long way from any town.

Here are two walks you can try. There are maps at the start of the walks.

Coral Fern Walk

As you follow the gentle rises and falls in the natural path, you will pass through the cool, mossy and shady part of the Reserve. Ferns and fern trees flourish along the northern slope. A wide range of flowering shrubs, orchids and fungi can be seen in season, and there are many forest birds to spot.

Distance: 0.75 km. Time: 30 minutes. Rating: Easy to moderate with some tripping hazards.

Heart Starter Walk

Proceed north-east along Baringa Way to the intersection with Pipeline Track. Then either head south downhill along Pipeline Track to the Coral Fern Walk or join the George Toyne Track from the Lincoln Street entrance. This walk includes steep sections and possible tripping hazards.

Distance: 2.73km. Time: 1 to 2 hours. Rating: Difficult Location: Coalville Road, Moe



Edward Hunter



Uralla

Probus Club ready for 2024/25

We had a busy AGM in March followed by a lunch, to close off a wonderful year under Glenda Mynard who now takes up the Past President's role.

There were 26 new members inducted into the Club during the year which is a record and new activities started with a craft group underway, a book group getting started and plans for a

dance group as well. The new Committee of 17 members was elected with six positions taken up from our new members for the year which is a great effort. Our new President is Barbara But-

terworth, who takes up the role after six years as editor of our wonderful newsletter. A job well done Barb and we look forward to your leadership this year. Congratulations!

The honour of Life Membership was conveyed upon Maggie and John Attwell after serving for 13 years on various committee positions. An award proudly received. They join only three other

Life Members in the Club. Looking ahead for more fun, friendship and fellowship!

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Trafalgar Community Directory

This Directory has been compiled to provide a listing of not-for-profit community based organisations operating in Trafalgar. Please advise Traf News of any corrections and additions.

Organisation	Contact	Email/Website	Phone
Baw Baw Arts Alliance	Sue Murphy	bawbawartsalliance.org.au	0428 866 417
BawBaw Shire Councillor (East Ward)	Darren Wallace	darren.wallace@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au	0478 000 053
BawBaw Shire Councillor (East Ward)	Michael Leany	michael.leaney@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au	0476 000 119
BawBaw Shire Councillor (East Ward)	Peter Kostos	peter.kostas@bawbawshire.vic.gov.au	0438 570 304
BawBaw Sustainability Network	Malcolm McKelvie	bbsn.org.au	0490 485 370
BetterMental Together	Kerry Rantall	bettermentall@gmail.com	0477 115 666
Bowls Club	Ian Miles	trafalgarbowlsclub@bigpond.com	0400 210 033
Boxing Gymnasium	Shane Cameron	box_on_box_all@hotmail.com	0408 962 764
Campdraft	Cheryl	facebook.com/trafdraft	0416 166 027
Cemetery Trust	Howard Jones		5633 2282
CFA (non emergency contact)	District 9 HQ		5624 1900
Chamber of Commerce	Jade McGregor	facebook.com/visittrafalgar.com.au	0421 467 270
Community Notice Board		facebook.com/trafalgarcommunitynoticeboard	
Crickets Club	Liam Durkin	trafalgarcricketclub@gmail.com	0402 556 338
Earls Rd Landcare Group	Jim Whiley		0423 832 122
Football Netball Club	Brett Tonkin	trafalgarfnfc@gmail.com	0477 836 648
Golden Girls Trafalgar	Social Group		5623 6032
Golf Club		golf@trafalgargolf.com.au	5633 1110
High School			5633 1110
Historical Society	Dianne Ireland	historicalsocietytraf@gmail.com	0439 655 172
Kindergarten			5633 1233
Lions Club	David Koschade	trafalgarlions@gmail.com	0428 331 157
Mens Shed	Eric Johnson		5633 1566
Opp Shop	Glenys Brennan		0417 597 454
Police Station (non emergency)			5633 1188
Polocrosse Club	Gill Massey	trafalgarpolocrossclub@gmail.com	0455 440 062
Pony Club	Denise Marriot		0411 890 299
Primary School		trafaps.vic.edu.au	5633 1162
Probus Club	John Atwell		0419 701 331
Public Hall	Tanya Stanley	trafalgarpublichall@gmail.com	
Rotary Club of Trafalgar	Michael Fozard		0418 513 092
St John's Church	Trafalgar		6 pm Saturday
St. Jariath's Church	Yarragon		
Traf District News	Trevor Colvin	articles@trafnews.com	5633 2591
Trafalgar Parks Bowling Facility	Michael Fozard		0418 513 092
Trafalgar Ping Pong Club	Bob		
Trafalgar Tennis Club	Sue Klemke		
Wesleyan Methodist Church	Thorpdale		10 am Sunday

PLEASE DIRECT ANY CHANGES TO PUBLISHER@TRAFNEWS.COM

Vacant Residential Land Tax

By Jade MacGregor

This is a new tax that will be imposed on the owner or owners of any residential property that is unoccupied for six months from January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024 and not considered as any of the owners' principal place of residence. This applies to an established house, the commencement of a built house, or if the residential land is vacant.

This affects anyone who owns more than one residential property anywhere in Victoria and is no longer limited to the Metropolitan region that surrounds Melbourne.

WHAT IS VACANT RESIDENTIAL LAND?

Property that sits within a residential zone attracts this tax. Vacant Residential Land can be:

1. A vacant residential block of land;
2. Any additional property owned by an owner or joint owners, outside

of their principal place of residence that is not lived in by someone else and left vacant for six months consecutively or inconsistently over six months in any calendar year from 2024.

Therefore, if the property has been left vacant for six months or more since January 1, 2024 to December 31, 2024, the property will attract the Vacant Land Tax. This tax will be introduced from January 1, 2025.

HOW IS THE VACANT LAND TAX CALCULATED?

The Vacant Land Tax is calculated as 1% of the Capital Improvement Value of the property. The Capital Improvement Value is something that will be determined annually from January 1, 2025 and calculated as a tax to be paid and issued to the owner.

The Vacant Land Tax will be paid in addition to the standard Land Tax that is

issued by the State Revenue Office.

WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO?

Notify the State Revenue Office of any vacant unoccupied property you have. It is your responsibility to report this. If you do not report a property as vacant, you may receive a fine as penalty.

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING?

This is to encourage any vacant property to be lived in. Victoria has a rental availability crisis, the competition and price hike for affordable liveable rental properties is extremely high.

Also, this tax is designed to stimulate the property market and encourage more properties to be available for sale.

If you are unsure about whether this new tax applies to you, please speak to one of our staff for assistance. Call J. MacGregor Legal - 5644 0000

Trafalgar Fire Brigade help our Western Victoria firefighters

Editor's Note: This story occurred last summer and was scheduled for our April paper, but space was an issue. Although this is a 'summer' story it is far too important not to appear, which is why we are running it in this issue.

When the call came out for help with the fires in the Beaufort area of Western Victoria, the Trafalgar Fire Brigade answered the call in a positive and timely manner.

Over the period of a week the Trafalgar brigade sent a total of five firefighters over in different strike teams, some firefighters doing two or more trips. Fire fighters

Kate Wattachow, Naomi Goodin, Kathy Geisler, Craig Moon and Lieutenant Marcus Barker were on District 9's Strike Team 0904.

Five tankers, one Big Fill unit and a strike team leaders vehicle were initially sent over and those vehicles stayed there for the entire week. Strike team crews from all over our district were then bused over to spend two days and one night at a time on the fire ground.

The brigade made the decision to send no more than two members on each strike team in order to keep enough crew available at home to crew the trucks in the event

of a local fire incident. As it was, a grass and scrub fire event occurred on the Wednesday which was rated as a high fire danger day and even though we had two members away on a strike team, the brigade was still able to respond with seven members and two vehicles. This shows what a strong and dedicated volunteer firefighter base the Trafalgar Fire Brigade is.

On the fire ground in the Beaufort area our members were part of tanker crews tasked with active fire fighting, asset protection, blacking out hot spots, patrolling the fire line and combating

fire outbreaks. Long days start at 6am catching the bus from Warragul to Beaufort before heading out on the tankers and returning at around 8pm that night for dinner at Beaufort. It was then a one hour drive to the base camp at Great Western where the crews bunked down for the night in tents. Base camp is made up of hundreds of tents, a main dining tent, portable shower and toilet units and also a large portable kitchen.

The following morning it was up at 6am and a quick breakfast before heading back out in the tankers back to Beaufort to be tasked

again for the day's work. On completion of the day's work at around 8pm the crews were all bused back to Warragul arriving at midnight. As you can see these crews had two very big days on the fire ground.

One of our members, Craig Moon, was tasked on a liaison crew attached to a Fire Rescue NSW strike team who were used in reserve as a rapid response team based in Great Western in the event that they would be needed on the catastrophic fire danger day on the Wednesday. On the Thursday this team was sent to Beaufort for blacking out work and then returned

to NSW on the Friday.

This all came on the back of the work put in clearing storm debris and putting tarps up on compromised roofs in Mirboo North where Trafalgar Firefighters, Lieutenant Adrian Allatt, Kate Wattachow and Craig Moon, put in 12-hour days.

If anyone is contemplating joining the CFA feel free to come down to the Trafalgar Fire Brigade on either Monday nights after 7pm or Sunday mornings at 10am. Alternatively you can follow this link:

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/volunteers-careers/volunteer-with-cfa>





Russell Broadbent MP

Federal Member for Monash

National Volunteer Week

20-26 MAY 2024

Something for Everyone



A huge thank you to the volunteers of the Monash electorate for the integral work they do for our communities - whether that be through emergency services, local sport or youth and senior activities.

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 russell.broadbent.mp@aph.gov.au
 5623 2064
 Russell Broadbent MP

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CFA actively recruiting Traf Farmers Market

Many organisations are having a challenging time getting volunteers to join them and ensuring that their activity is able to exist and maintain its role in the broader community.

The first task toward successful recruiting is to make the community aware of a group's role, functions, and benefits. The CFA is typical of many organisations, in getting people to volunteer, and ensure their ongoing viability.

The CFA in general, has been going through a lot of challenges over the last three years with recruitment being the greatest challenge of all. As with most voluntary organisations it has become harder to get individuals interested in becoming members. It is obvious that a lot of new people in the community are not completely aware of the need and the characteristics of a CFA operation.

All members of a local brigade are voluntary (they are not directly associated with Fire and Rescue who are paid officers), there is no

significant ongoing government funding and each operation does most of its own fundraising.

Some brigades use their funds to purchase vital equipment and cover their day to day costs.

Each operation responds to many call-outs such as grass/bush fires, road accidents and support other CFA brigades, SES and police. They also respond to varied things like livestock rescue. Recently Drouin had an issue with a cow stuck in mud and assistance was provided to the farmer.

Trafalgar CFA has approached this new challenge with a different approach, which has led to success and an increase in its numbers.

Prior to Covid, they started a Junior Volunteer Program for 11 to 16 year olds. In 2017 they were able to start with 17 individuals which progressed to three joining the senior division as well as four parents joining. Sadly, then Covid happened and the process stopped. The program has started again and the brigade is again very positive in its program to encourage individuals to join.

Every September representatives of the CFA visit the local schools to seek volunteers to join the activity and become junior members. The juniors have their own peer structure and meet on the first and second Thursday of each month. Each participant will undertake training in various areas such as using radios, hose bowling, teamwork, leadership and other skills. Juniors, if confident, can progress to the seniors at 16 years. Naomi Goodin is the Junior Brigade Coordinator.

Most brigades rely on the recruitment method of communicating with the community by having promotions, doing letterbox drops etcetera.

Yarragon CFA approaches their manning issue with the older members responding during the day and the younger ones being the responders at night. Team support and cooperation is a vital part of such arrangements.

Contact CFA Trafalgar <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/volunteers-careers/volunteer-with-cfa> - Yarragon Ashly Smith 0427 274 666

Traf Market Vendor	Products
Annie's Knitware	Home knitted gloves, shawls and scarves
Aroma Lee	Candles for all occasions
Baw Baw Arts Alliance	Art for all the community
Bella-Liscious	Homemade naturally prepared dog treats
Carrie's Massage	Bowen specialist for any ailment
Colleen Plants	Organic beef, cheese and yoghurt
Delores Butterball	Old fashioned cinnamon scrolls in the French Tradition
DownUnder Mushroom	Dried and fresh mushrooms and organic kombucha
Dream Organic Coffee	Organic chais and coffee
Eddies Cider	Organic apple cider in many flavours
Eden Hill Garden	Organically grown heritage seedlings
Ellinbank Wildflowers	Naturally and locally grown wildflowers
Folk Pharmacy	Organic teas and lotions
Forest Remedy	Organically prepared medicines and creams
Freeze Dry Fanatics	Freeze dried fruits and icecreams
GI Essential	Essences and essential oils
Gippsland Colloidal Silver	Discover the benefits of homemade colloidal silver
Gippsland Jersey	Locally produced delicious jersey milkshakes and cream
Gippsland Organic Donuts	Organic handmade donuts with delicious sauces
Gomathys Kitchen	Indian samosas and curry puffs
Handmade by Deni	Childrens clothes all made by Deni
Harriet Herbery	A variety of natural herbs and plants
Hughesy Nuts	Large variety of caramelised nuts
Jayva Designs	Homemade gifts of all designs
Kiki77 coffee	Locally brewed coffee and specialty iced coffee
Little Red Bucket	Italian gnocchi and pasta sauces
Madebytaylahrose	Decorative ladies hair ware and jewellery
Mill Grove Dairy	Artisan Dutch gouda cheese
Our Soap Kitchen	Full variety of artisan soaps
Postcode Hives	Fresh honey and all sorts of honey products
Premium Nut Co	Quality roasted and raw nuts and dried fruits
Pretty little occasions	Artisan artwork
Primal Meat Co	Organic lamb, chicken and beef
Queen Bee Bags	Artistic homemade bags of all sizes
Reminence Natural	Natural healing therapist
Riahna Blomeley Jeweller	Artisan Handmade jewellery
Rotary Club	Old fashioned BBQ sausages
Small Batch Sweets	Hand made deserts to tempt any palette
Splashes Of Colour	Artisan artwork
St Fiaccres Farm	Italian fruit and veg plus homestyle wines
Steel Sparking	Laser art steel work on any design
Strzelecki Heritage Apples	Nine varieties of organic apples
Tarago Valley Organic	Homestyle marinades for all occasions
The Clover Project	Artisan artwork
The Marinade Man	Homestyle marinades for all occasions
The Mug Shop	Handmade pottery of all artistic designs
The Song Of Herbs And Birds	Herbal remedies, crystals and so much more
Tickled Pink Art	Artisan locally made jewellery for all occasions
Warraview Dahlias	Home grown local dahlias
Whimsical Craft	Croatian artist with a variety of artistic craft
Wild Yeast Bakery	Over 10 varieties of delicious sourdough breads
Wings to Sing	Natural healing creams from wild herbs
Yummy Gozleme	Delicious Turkish street food, gozleme



Rie Nicolson with Traf Market raffle winner Jenny Evison.



Volunteers Jude Haymen and Susie Foletta with raffle winner Peter Farmer.

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MEET THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT BAKE IT SOW IT OR GROW IT

St Joseph's celebration of Jesus at Easter

St Joseph's Trafalgar celebrated the story of Jesus' by reenacting the last stages of his life. Each class shared different events of Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday, Holy Thursday and finishing with Good Friday. Our Grade Five

and Six students depicted the events of Good Friday, sharing the 14 Stations of the Cross with our community.

Everyone was so moved by the experience that every person silently left the church with Jesus lying in the tomb.



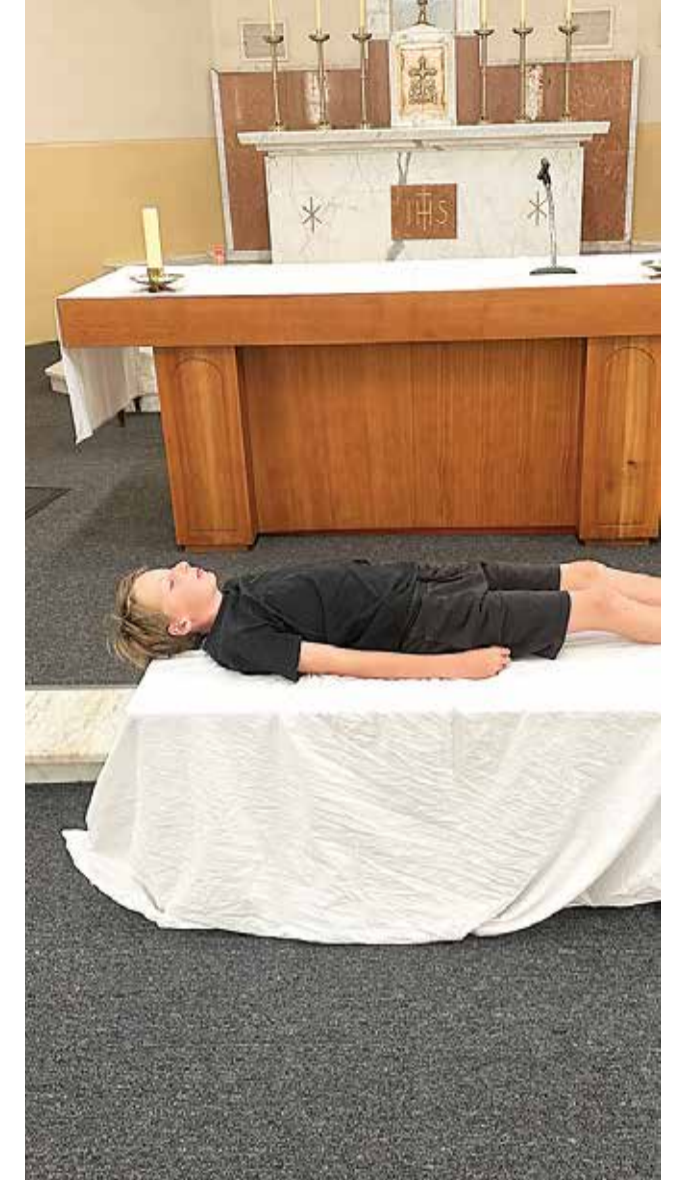
Jesus is sentenced to death



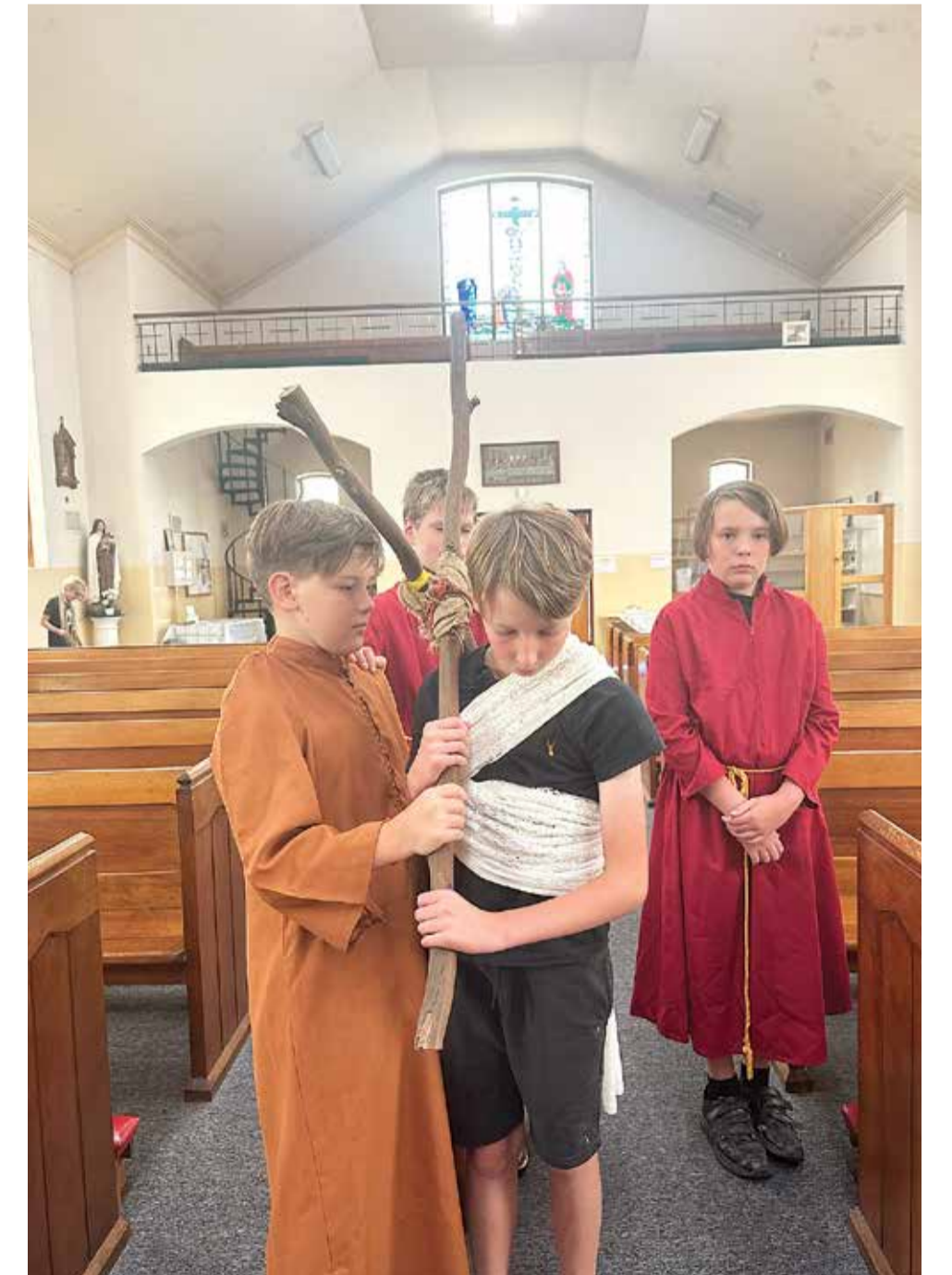
Jesus Falls for the second time



Jesus meeting his mother



Jesus is laid in the tomb



Simon helps Jesus carry his cross

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Pain in Pets

By Kerrie Piper: BVSc (Hons) MANZCVS

Many people bring their pets to me when they have noticed a change in their behaviour. Often they would like the behaviour to go away.

Animals change their behaviour for many reasons, one of the most common causes is actually not a behavioural problem, but due to physical pain or discomfort.

The changes your pet may display when in pain will depend on what species they are (birds have a phenomenal ability to disguise pain), how resilient your pet normally is, what the injury or source of pain is, as well as what else is going on in their environment.

A very excitable dog with an injury may continue to play and run when there are people around to interact with him, but when he is put out on his own or brought inside then he shows signs of his injury.

Animals in pain may become grumpy, they may go off their food, they may limp or strain or lick and chew. But sometimes they become withdrawn with less obvious signs - they might sleep in longer, have a less intense or shorter greeting ritual, they may not wish to play with you as much or they want more pats than normal. They may develop odd behaviour patterns in an attempt to relieve or avoid their pain.

If your animal's behaviour has changed, there may be a physical problem.

- For example:
- A cat who grooms her belly until she develops a bald patch may not have an overgrooming disorder, but may actually have bladder pain.
 - A dog which is licking carpet or other material may not have a behavioural oral fixation, but may have intestinal cramps.
 - A horse who refuses to have his halter placed may not be acting out, but may have an ear infection.

Pain is one of the vital signs your vet will assess when presented with a sick pet.

Sometimes vets can have difficulties convincing the owner that their pet is in fact in pain because their expression of pain is unusual or subtle. A common situation we see is that associated with dental pain.

Often the onset is so gradual and the pet manages, in spite of advancing dental disease, that owners don't appreciate or recognise the level of discomfort and pain their pet is in.

Only after the pet has had their dental issues treated can the owner see the improvement in their pet's behaviour. Commonly at the postoperative recheck, the owners will remark how bright and active their pet has become.

Pain in animals can be very difficult to appreciate. If your animal has had a recent change in behaviour, your veterinarian will be able to help you investigate and manage the cause.



Recognising pain in your pet (library image)

Hank Zeeman - local inventor, recycler

By Neil Hauxwell

Hank Zeeman and his wife Nell left Holland after WW2 to start a new life in Australia.

Hank arrived in 1950. Our government said that Nell could not come until he could provide a house, so Hank started work at the SEC and was soon able to buy some semi-bush land at what would become the settlement of Trafalgar East.

There was a post-war shortage of building materials (the 'baby boom' was in full swing). The Victorian Housing Commission was importing 'flat-pack' homes from Britain and having them assembled in Newborough to house the Latrobe Valley's influx of post war migrants. The kit-form homes were shipped in large packing crates. The resourceful Hank recycled the timber crates to build their first small family home. He also used the crates to build parts of his first engineering workshop at Trafalgar East.

When wars stop, the victorious countries are often left with huge amounts of military equipment to be disposed of. In Moe, the Saxton brothers, sawmillers by trade, filled a yard where Kmart and Coles now sit with left-over army and air force vehicles, spare parts and equipment. The Saxton yard provided many items for Hank to convert into useful peace-time equipment.

One of Hank's early projects was to convert a decommissioned battle tank into a stump puller. Farmers benefited by being able to plough land that had previously been dotted with tree stumps left from logging and ring-barking. Hank's stump puller could apply 120 tons of force to improving the productivity of local farms.

Hank went on in the '60s, '70s and '80s in his larger workshop to invent and repurpose an extraordinary range of engineered products, from garden gad-

gets to agricultural implements and large machines for the pulp-wood harvesting industry.

Hank's ingenuity and multiple trade skills served our local businesses and people very well. Hank and Nell's partnership contributed much to their new country.

Australia's prosperity owes a lot to our post WW2 migrants and the energy, skills and capacity for hard work that they brought. To reduce our impact on the environment, we still need to be following Hank's example of reducing waste by invention, recycling and repurposing.

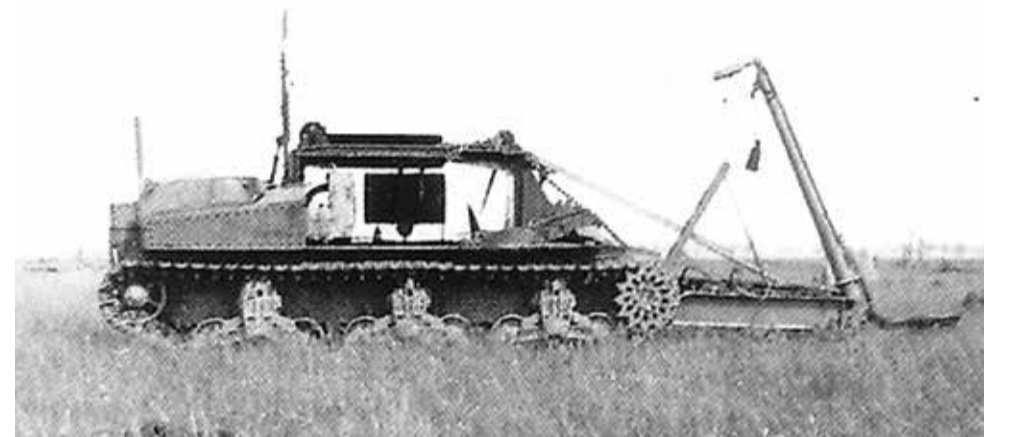
Hank died last year. If any readers have photos or recollections of Hank's machines, Neil Hauxwell would like to hear from you - 0490 496 882
Neil Hauxwell: 175 Mountain Glen Drive, Trafalgar East (PO Box 17 Moe)
neilhauxwell@gmail.com



Hank repurposed this Bren Gun carrier to drag sawlogs from the bush.



Recycled packing crates were used to build this 1950's home in Traf East.



A decommissioned tank repurposed as a stump puller.

Living in a gum tree

By Trevor Colvin

Thousands of creatures live in gum trees in the bush but spare a thought for the early settler family who lived in this massive tree trunk.

This huge trunk became a house in the 1880's for the family of five and was big enough that it had two floors, accessed via a ladder.

The pioneer family who occupied this tree house didn't simply stumble across a massive tree trunk. The man of the house spent a year clearing land and

building a home in the tree for his family, who waited near Ballarat. A year later the entire family arrived at Warragar by train and walked the twenty or more kilometres to Childers.

Everything they owned and everything they needed had to be carried by them and a packhorse through the tall dense Mountain Ash forests and heavy undergrowth and up the steep escarpment north of Yarragon.

The timber from the

huge tree was used to build a more permanent and more recognisable home and timber from the tree beside the home (see picture) was used to floor the new dwelling.

It was a tough life for this and hundreds of other pioneering families who settled this land and it didn't always end well. The bush was so thick that the children were often 'belled' like cows so they could be heard, if not seen.

The family grew fruit

which they turned into preserves to earn some cash and felled trees for poles, posts and palings.

It was a constant struggle to make enough money to meet the rent on the acres they leased from the Crown

and ultimately they walked off the land - the rabbits, blackberries and bracken had beaten them.



Trafalgar Public Cemetery news

Around 1986 the Trafalgar Public Cemetery Trust were notified by VicRoads and the Health Department Victoria that a 45m strip of land approximately 1.5 acres along the front of the cemetery would be required and acquired to make way for the duplication and widening of the existing Princes Highway at the same time adding a new service road in front of the Cemetery now known as Mountain Glen Drive.

The proposed road widening then required the ex-

humation and relocation of two graves containing five burials, some dating back as far as 1888. These graves belonged to John Caven Kenny, Patrick Kenny and Catherine Kenny, Joseph William Hulley and Mary Lillian Hulley.

The two families were related through marriage. The oldest grave belonged to John C Kenny who died at the age of 11 1/2 in 1888, only months after the Trafalgar Cemetery opened. He sadly died after being gored by a bull. (WGL Gazette Dec 1988)

The exhumation and re-

location along with the family monuments took place on the December 5, 1988 in the early morning. The new grave site was chosen further up the hill. These graves can be found in the left hand corner at the front of the cemetery on the eastern side. A plaque has been placed on the graves reading :-

"This monument and the graves of Kenny and Hulley families were relocated 28 metres south to this site on December 5, 1988, to allow for the duplication of the Princes Highway Trafalgar

East section."

The Cemetery Trust received some compensation equal to the Valuer General's valuation price, this enabled the Trust to seal all internal cemetery roads as well as the car park at the top of the cemetery.

As the Trust endeavours to keep all the grounds looking their best we have organised a tree lopper to come and attend to a number of large branches which are causing some concern, especially after the wind storm that went through the

We are still trying to eradicate the large agapanthus clusters that have made their home in and around some of the older grave sites. This will be an ongoing task as they are very difficult to eradicate but where there is a will there is a way, or so we are told.

A big thank you and shout out to the volunteer Friends of the Cemetery group that assisted with weeding and tidying up recently, on Sunday, April 7. Many hands make light work, it is true, and afternoon tea wasn't too

bad either.

If you would like to assist, the Friends of the Cemetery, the next group is meeting at 1pm to 3pm on Sunday May 5, 2024. This will be a pre-Mothers' Day tidy up. Bring gloves, a few gardening tools, maybe a hat. Afternoon tea provided.

Please contact Robyn Gunn 0409 957 078 if you would like to help.

For other enquires our office is open Thursdays 11am to 2pm

Secretary. Howard Jones 0418 345 595.

Public readings of collected poems coming up on May 19

The number 21 is significant for many people as a time they celebrated a milestone in their lives. For writer and member of the Baw Baw Arts Alliance, Rodney Williams, this number has taken on a different meaning as he prepares to launch yet another series of collected poems in the 'Catchment' series.

Information about the literary journal 'Catchment' can be found on the Baw Baw Arts Alliance website. Rodney established this component on the website to encourage writers from across Australia to contribute poems that would be later published in a small book. The first edition of these poems was launched on December 21, 2023.

The Arts Alliance promotes all creative arts and

Rodney's consistent support for writers is reaping benefits as the number of contributors to 'Catchment' grows.

Until May 21, the Arts Alliance website is open to contributions from writers both experienced and novice. Preparation for the official launch will begin with reading rehearsals on May 15, followed by further public readings on May 19, at 2.00pm at the 'Community Hub', Oak Street, Drouin. This is an opportunity to hear a new set of poems showing a sense of location.

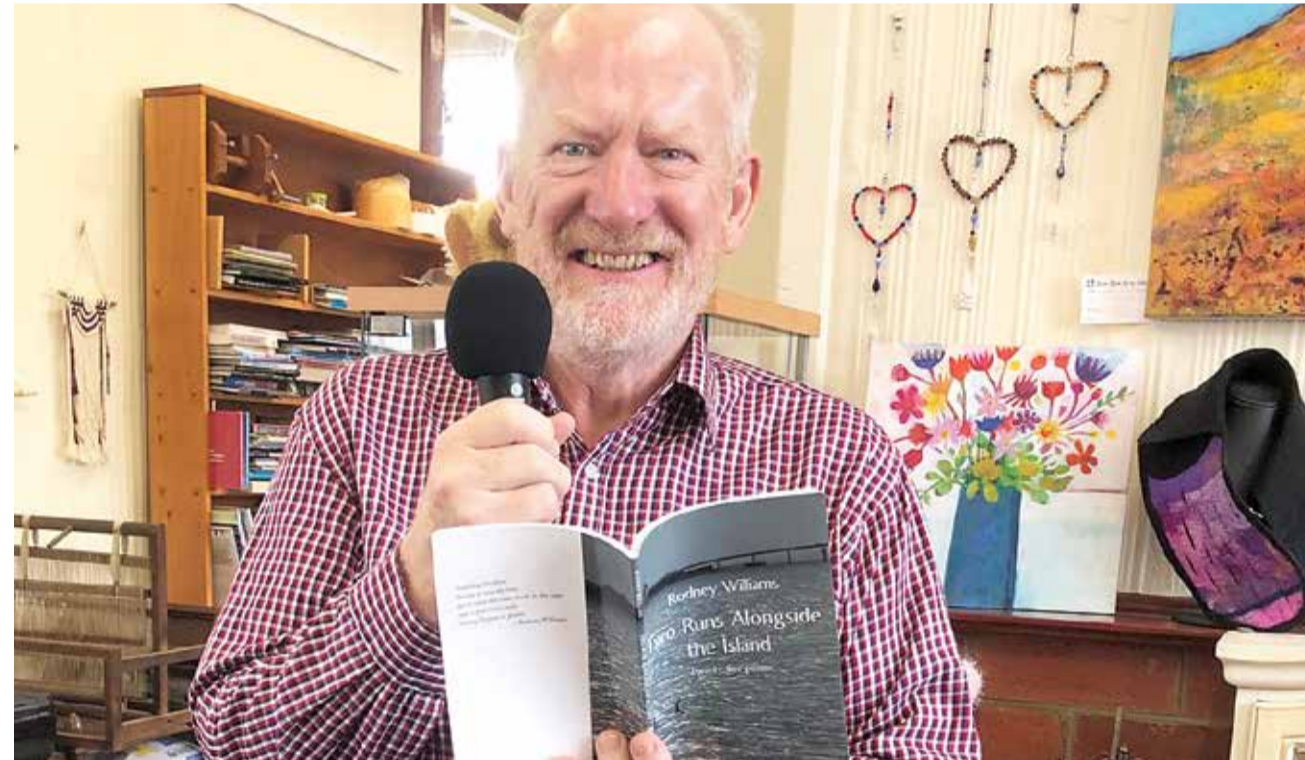
On June 2, the second edition of 'Catchment' will go live. <https://www.bawbawartsalliance.org.au>

If you also enjoy the visual arts don't miss two wonderful exhibitions at the 'Station Gallery', Yarragon during May. Deborah Churchill

is a local mixed media artist whose work is described as gentle and reflective storytelling.

Also on in the gallery at the same time is an exhibition of miniature works in

2D and 3D created to fit into a 20 x 20 centimetre space or frame.



Around the Historical Society, April 2024

The Trafalgar & District Historical Society was formed at a public meeting in August 1985. In the almost 40 years since, the Society has amassed a large collection of local newspapers, documents, minute books and numerous items of local interest.

The Society's Gazette, published quarterly, is up to number 106 and over time has published articles on local pioneering families, historical homes and businesses as well as documenting the ever-changing face of Trafalgar.

The T&DHS has the use of the residence at the front of the Maternal Health and Child Welfare building (the old kindergarten) at 30 Contingent Street. Meetings are held on the third Thursday in February, April, June, August (AGM), October

and an end of year dinner meeting in November. Official working bees are conducted on the first and third Fridays of the month although most Fridays see members in attendance working their way through the cataloguing, documenting and sorting

resources. Gazette Number 106 is still available for purchase (\$4) at the Trafalgar Newsagency, the Trafalgar Post Office or the station galleries at Trafalgar and Yarragon. Subscriptions, either hard copy or digital can also be arranged.

You can find us on Facebook, email to historicalsocietytraf@gmail.com or our mailing address is Trafalgar & District Historical Society, PO Box 128, Trafalgar 3824

Gippsland FM fundraiser concert

Trafalgar Public Hall - Thursday May 16, 1.30pm - 3.30pm - Cost \$10.00.

All proceeds from this event will go directly to Gippsland FM to help save the valuable community radio station from having to close.

The station has served the local community for over 45 years and has broadcast 24 hours a day, seven days a

week. Gippsland FM is a non-profit voluntarily run community radio station based in the Latrobe Valley. Their vision is community focused and simple; Gippsland FM aims to connect our community by delivering unique, diverse and valued programming, celebrating the character and values of our Gippsland region, while prompting freedom of ex-

pression and breaking down of isolation and cultural barriers. Relax and enjoy some of our local talent from Gippsland and Trafalgar.

Don't forget this great relaxing day of entertainment and at the same time supporting a very worthy cause, for details contact Margaret Parton on 0417 386 377.

In February 1959 a meeting was held to form a team of Marching Girls and by December of that year, Trafalgar had formed three teams of Marching Girls with the Marching Girls Midgets the last to receive their caps - red peaked pill-boxes with white tops and plumes. As well as the Midgets, who were all under 12 years of age, the Trafalgar Youth Club had two senior teams of Marching Girls. Since their formation earlier in 1959, the teams were under the expert guidance of their instructor, Mr Terry Laybourne of Trafalgar.

Members of the Midgets team were Sally Laybourne (Captain), Kay Parke, Gail Brock, Faye Dillon, Maureen Heath, Carolyn Cook, Rhonda Mitchell, Jill Haldane, Sue Hasthorpe, Glenda Cook.

Number 1 senior team: Joy Matthews (Captain), Beryl Turner, Claire Mahoney, Lynette Eades, Phillis Heywood, Valerie Martin, Helen Heath, Marlene Cook, Cheryl Cook, Jean Robins.

Number 2 senior team: Marlene Tudor (Captain), Lynette Jean, Carol Dillon, Sue Pabst, Judy King, Norma Larkins, Dorothy Larkins, Joy Parke, Penny Donaldson.

Marching Girls' teams were popular throughout Gippsland at this time and Trafalgar's Marching Girls were highly successful. Unfortunately, they are now a part of Trafalgar's history. If you were one of these girls, Trafalgar & District Historical Society would love to hear from you and would be most grateful for any photos you may have. Please contact the Society's archivist Jean Huffer on 56331960

Information for this article was from the Gippsland News, February 19, 1959 and December 10, 1959.

Sampson's restaurant shuts it's doors

Is this the end of an era? Traf District News contributor Ric Nicolson chats with owners Brad and Lexie Sampson

"So Brad, how did you come to the recent decision to close?"

Brad "The main reason is not seeing my four daughters (three teenagers and a fourteen month old) during the working week.

"But apart from that hospitality is shot now. People can't afford to eat as much now and with a staff of twenty the costs were mounting.

"I wanted to keep my staff employed but it was becoming

unrealistic. There have been two wage increases last year, super is up to 11%, workcover went up 44%, gas and electricity up 30% as well as insurance and food prices also going up. If I had sold my business two years ago I would have got a bucketful but now my costs have blown out 25% across the board it makes it difficult proposition to sell."

TDN "So moving forward you decided to build your food trailer?"

Brad "Yes to still provide good food with limited staff and no table service. We can also ca-

ter for weddings, engagement parties and the like. This also reduces the cost for people needing to hire a venue which can run into thousands of dollars.

"This was a way to recession-proof our business. In my 30 years in hospitality I have found the work hard but enjoyable but the last few years with covid have been very difficult. Many talented chefs I know have opted for other work outside hospitality. They are earning more money and have more time with their family.

"They are even thinking of reducing the apprentice-

ship to two years to fill the ever-growing vacancies. Because the industry is so de-skilled now we have international students being trained to provide a simplified "heat and eat" menu. Businesses are forced to shred their food costs and labour costs, charge as little as they can to get people in the door to try and cover their costs.

TDN "And you are also thinking of doing some popup days at the restaurant?"

Brad "Yes we will open for Fathers' Day and Mothers' Day and other special functions.

When covid came into effect we built the outside dining area, greatly increasing our table space. So we now have the staff and room to cater for the busy days and the margins are more worthwhile.

"We have built a brand that people trust. Whether we are on the road or at our pop up days we still want to remain local. I have had grown men hug me to thank me for their steak. But during covid people got used to eating at home or buying takeaway and the social experience of dining out has faded. Staff also were well reimbursed to stay at home creating a massive staff short-

age. "Buying local meats has also been prohibitive because the export market is dominating the trade. I have a mate in England who can buy Australian lamb cheaper than I can. So our food industry is in big trouble. But I try to stay in the industry because I love the trade, the customers and of course my family. And hopefully one day I can save enough money for my daughters' weddings!"

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Old cars at Old Gippsstown

Images and words by Trevor Colvin

On the first Thursday of every month garage doors across the Latrobe Valley open and old cars emerge for

a public outing. For several hours they park at Old Gippsstown in Moe and you are welcome to

go and have a look - but not touch - because these vehicles are precious and virtually irreplaceable.

The owners spend a couple of hours at the Old Gippsstown Café talking parts and paint, tools and treads and

everything there is to talk about with old car restoration. There are nineteen mem-

bers in the group but numbers of cars on display vary from one month to the next.



64 EH Holden



Stunning 59 Fairlane



Stunning 59 Fairlane



55 Chevrolet

Trafalgar Bowls Club Ladies Pairs Champions

The final of the Trafalgar ladies pairs Championship was held recently with Heather Taylor and Mandy

Miles defeating Mary Holdsworth and Helen Robertson in a nail-biting finish 15/14. After a slow start and

a rain delay Taylor and Miles fought back from 12/1 down to hit the front late in the game.



Winners in a tight 15/14 finish; Heather Taylor and Mandy Miles.

Trafalgar Bowler Wil Mcilwain Wins State Pairs Title

Trafalgar Bowler Wil Mcilwain has become a Victorian State Pairs Champion after he teamed up with Traralgon's James Scullin to win the title at the Bendigo East Bowls Club recently. After the pair successfully won the Strzelecki North title and defeated all other Gippsland teams, they went to Bendigo to take on the champion teams from the 16 regions all

over Victoria. They had a very close game against the team from Whittlesea eventually winning that match 17/16. In the next round, they defeated the Ballarat Region team 19/16 and, in the semifinal, they defeated the Geelong champions 16/14. In the final they came up against the team from Lilydale/South East Metro and got an early

lead 11/5. Although their opponents closed the gap, Mcilwain and Scullin held on to win 15/13. The Victorian State Champions will now go to the Gold Coast later in the year to contest the Australia Pairs Championship against the Champion teams from all the other states.



Wil Mcilwain and James Scullin holding their Victorian Open Medals.

Bloods off and away

By Liam Durkin

ANOTHER football-netball season has started for the Trafalgar Football-Netball Club.

The familiar sight and sounds of country football and netball are currently permeating, providing the soundtrack for the next six months.

Appointments for the 2024 season see Tom Halinan back for his third year at the helm as senior coach.

Joining the crew this season is Kev Hennessy, who has bravely stepped up to coach the reserves.

It is great to have a full complement of junior teams back this season, and coaches have done a great job rounding up the numbers.

Cooper Burgess and Matt Devon are providing the funnest time imaginable coaching the Thirds, while Jamie Marslen has made the move up from the junior club to coach the Fourths, which has provided good familiarity to the players.

On the netball court, coaches are: Dani Davies (A Grade), Alesha Hallinan (B Grade), Angie Blackshaw (C Grade), Ellie Farmer (17s), Calli Koch (15s) and Bella Rosato (13s).

At time of print, two games were completed in the Ellinbank District Football-

Netball League season.

Those looking at the senior football side on paper for the first game may have been excused for making comment at the sheer mix of youth and experience.

On the field for senior football, Traf had a disappointing final term that saw a 10-point deficit turn into a 27-point loss against Lang Lang in Round 1.

Among the bright spots however was Isaac Caroleo kicking three goals on senior debut. Others to play well were Jace Butler, Brayde Bosman, Daniel Baker, Liam Coulthard and Brad Hoffmann.

Reserves only lost by 14 points, with Zack Brown playing well in defeat, along with Owen Zimora, Jaxen Rowe, Ben Cunico, Keegan Tullett and expert mediator, Blake Zimora.

Thirds lost a thriller by just three points. In a pulsating finish, the ball was in attack for Traf as the final siren sounded.

The Bloods probably should never have been in that position, as they kicked four goals to none in the first half, and then didn't score in the last term.

Even usually placid coach, Cooper Burgess may have been tempted to vent his

frustration, having built it all up ever since an afternoon at Morwell involving leg side fielding restrictions.

Juddson Ryan, Toby McCabe, Louis Hennessy, Brock Gill, Angus Carlson and Riley Timbs got the nod as Traf's best.

The Fourths had something of a reverse, coming from behind to win by five points.

The Bloods trailed by a point at three quarter time, but kicked a goal and kept their opponents to a solitary behind in the last.

Will Mills, Wesley Scott, Dylan van der Stoep, Matt Kersten, Riley Peters and Tait Kersten did a good job.

On the netball court, B Grade was the only senior team to salute.

B stood for best as the Bloods won 34-30, with Lateisha Edwards the most outstanding.

A Grade only lost by two, and were well-served by Grace McRae. C Grade went down comfortably, although Tayla Kleevan was able to hold her head high.

In juniors, the 17s got the points courtesy of a 31-27 win. Tessa Farrell played well, as did Madison Schrader in the 15s defeat. Skyla Embleton also put in a good performance in the 13s.

The next round saw Traf host Poowong, where the senior side recorded victory.

Traf led at every change, and in what turned out to be a pretty good game in the final term, held on to win by 15 points.

Such a margin was perhaps long odds at three quarter time, when the Bloods had six goals to one on the board, before Poowong rallied with four of their own.

Dylan Gauci got the nod as best-on in the win, after doing a sound job shutting down key Poowong player Jack Hazendonk. Others to play well were Klay Butler, Maclan McInnes, Dylan Farrell, Jordyn Baker and Connor Noonan.

Reserves had a commanding win, getting Kev his first four points as coach of what is the hardest grade to coach in any sport. Blake Zimora

was busy early with a couple of goals, while Ben Cunico, Caden Webb, Tyron Stevens, Oliver Hennessy and Brodie Malady also did some damage.

The Thirds survived a late scare, holding on by a goal. After controlling the first three quarters, Traf failed to score in the last quarter, but did enough to ensure they had enough time to sing the song and make it to Traralgon to catch up on goings on.

Toby McCabe, Josh Mills, Andrew Daly, Brock Gill, Matt Kersten and Jordan Chapman were best.

Fourth's went down to a strong opposition, and will look to take some learnings out of the contest. Will Mills, Oly White, Brodie Gauci and Zak Larkin showed their skills aren't just confined to cricket, while Tait Kersten and Ryan Davis also battled

hard. Senior netball enjoyed a clean sweep, with most games decided by significant margins.

Traf nearly doubled their opponent's score in A Grade, winning 49-25. Bella Rosato was best, taking off from Lateisha Edwards, who played a blinder in B Grade, which the team won 47-32.

C Grade had a closer game, but still nearly won by 10, getting up 35-26 thanks to the efforts of Sydney Blackshaw.

In junior stakes, the 15s were the only team to toast victory.

Izzy Nardone was best in the 25-21 win. Tessa Farrell was good for the 17s, as was Willow Rantall in the 13s.



Trafalgar Under 16s sing the song following victory.

Willow Grove Tennis Club

By Jo Baker

Season 2023/24 has been a very different season for our club due to the redevelopment of our tennis courts.

Our senior team used Moe Tennis Club for their home matches and our juniors used Trafalgar Tennis Club. Thanks go to Moe Tennis

Club and Trafalgar Tennis Club for the use of their facilities for the season - it was very much appreciated.

Our players and families have been fantastic in adapting to the changes and we thank them very much.

We had three teams for the season:

Seniors - Section 1 Doubles. Ray Town, Phil Cervi, Barry Buckley, Veronica Penfold.

Juniors - Section 1. Tilly Nave, Lily Blackshaw, Xavier Mether.

Section 2. Ella Robinson, Lilly Gretton, Alex Gillies, Nina Gillies.

Unfortunately they were defeated. Congratulations to Churchill Tennis Club.

Tennis coaching returns Accredited tennis coach Sally Kirstine is offering tennis lessons on the new courts at Willow Grove. **When:** Every Friday after-

noon, commencing April 26.

Time: 3:30pm through to 7pm. Lessons are 30 minutes. Coaching is for all standards including beginners.

Contact: Sally on 0403282630 for cost details and bookings.

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Latrobe Valley stuns at state titles

By Zaida Glibanovic

THE Latrobe Valley Netball Region were very competitive at the recent Netball Victoria State Titles competition held in Bendigo over the Labour Day long weekend.

Teams from all across Victoria come to compete in the 15 and Under Female, 17 and Under Female and Male, Open Female and Mixed All Abilities competitions.

The Latrobe Valley team has built itself back up and showcased the regions talent with three female teams in the Under 15's, Under 17's and Open division.

The Open Team finished the standard draw on top of the Ladder losing only one game.

The Latrobe Valley team started guns blazing beating Glenelg 18-4 in the games two short halves.

Continuing the momentum Latrobe Valley beat the usually strong Elmer, 14-10, then Dandenong 16-11, also beating Barwon by four goals, North East by two and Jika by six all on the same day.

Come Sunday, The Latrobe Valley team faced their first loss against Tow Bays going down 15 goals to 13. Despite the narrow loss, the Latrobe Valley team grounded themselves to beat

North Central and then the second-best team and finalist contenders, Henderson.

With talented and experienced netballers like Yin-nar's Skye McDonald and Churchill's Rachel Loechel alongside the shooting ferocity of Nilma-Darnum's Hayley Purcell, the Latrobe Valley team really showed the metro clubs some fight.

Despite dominating the open fixture for the tournament, when it came to the first final against Elmer's Open side the Latrobe Valley Women couldn't get the job done, losing 16 to 11.

It may come as consolation to the team that Elmer went on to win the tournament, beating Henderson in the Grand Final.

Coach Katrina Hutchinson was incredibly happy with the results, finishing among the top four in the state.

Latrobe Valley's State Titles Officer, Tamara Kennedy said she was incredibly proud of the regions talent.

"It has been a busy and exciting 2023-24 State Titles Campaign. We are just over halfway into a five-year plan and are already exceeding expectations. Our players and coaching staff have demon-

strated that they can match it with some of the best netballers in Victoria," she said.

"Results are always improving as our players coaches and administration staff learn more every year. The job won't be done until we can consistently demonstrate we are a region to be reckoned with. That means not just winning but making finals and winning over a number of years."

"Latrobe has always had talent and we have a lot of raw talent, it's just a matter of being to harness that talent and give players and coaches an opportunity for consistent high quality netball pushing them to their limits."

The Under 17s coach Alesha Hallinan started incredibly strong, surprising the competition.

Finishing the fixture at third spot on the ladder, the Latrobe Valley young athletes were on fire winning 12 games and drawing one, out of their 17 matches across three days.

Day 1 was no doubt a strong start for the Under 17s.

Starting with a draw didn't deter the team going onto win the next five games in a row.

The Under 17s remained fiercely competitive all tournament long making it to the finals. Unfortunately it was just not meant to be, as the team went down to Central Highlands 20 to 12.

Nevertheless, coach Hallinan was proud of her young team, saying she felt each and every player brought their best to the State Titles.

Netball Victoria's Eastern Region Manager said it was clear that this region can produce the very best of net-

ball.

"Seeing the quality of netball across the weekend made me extremely proud of our Eastern Zone which had two regions competing," she said.

"The Gippsland region showed great promise and with Latrobe Valley Region having two of three teams in finals, it showed the level of talent not only on the court but off the court as well with the coaching expertise that was on display and the work

that the State Titles Officers do behind the scenes to get these teams on court."

The Latrobe Valley Under 15s came up against some very tough competition – though they did not make finals they showed some very promising signs.

Coach Sammy Walters is confident the Under 15s will be the future of this region's netball.



Trafalgar netballer Tillie Manfield in action at the state titles.

Can you split these two modern day greats?

By Liam Durkin

TWO of the modern day greats of the Gippsland League are missing from their respective clubs this season.

Season 2024 has already proven to be a completely new era for the league, as names people are so familiar seeing in the best on a weekly basis have moved on.

Of the departed players, perhaps the two biggest standouts are James Blaser and Kane Martin.

The pair plied their trade for Moe and Sale respectively over the last 15 years, picking up no shortage of accolades along the way.

Martin is still playing football in Gippsland this season, making the move to Sale City in the North Gippsland Football-Netball League.

Blaser meanwhile has moved to Queensland.

Comparing Blaser, who grew up in Trafalgar and played junior football for the Bloods, and Martin offers an excruciating exercise if one is trying to award gold.

Both have won a league

best-and-fairest (Trood Award and Rodda Medal), and been named in the league's Team of the Year on the same number of occasions (five).

At club level, the best-and-fairest count is the same at four apiece.

Ironically, Blaser was named coach of the Team of the Year the same year Martin was named captain (2017). That they shared the league medal in the same season perhaps showed that even the Gippsland League and the umpires couldn't split them.

During their peak years in the mid-2010s, both played as midfielders able to break clear from stoppage and hit the scoreboard.

Midfielders who can kick goals are worth their weight in gold, and Martin and Blaser both kicked more than 200.

Martin's goal tally is much higher, but keep in mind he played in a very good Sale side for most of his career. Martin played in as many

Grand Finals as Blaser played in finals series (five).

With that considered, the question of premierships making someone a better player is again up for debate.

Would Martin have got the possessions he did if he wasn't playing in the same midfield as Luke Collins, Chris Laverty, Adrian Cox, or even a young Josh Dunkley?

Equally, just how good would Blaser have been in that same midfield? Voss and Buckley stuff had the latter stayed at Brisbane.

Blaser was perhaps a victim of unfortunate timing, as his peak years coincided with some of Moe's worst. He played in two wooden spoon teams, and a further two season period when the win-loss record was 8-28. That he was able to perform so well when the team was performing so poorly has to count for something.

Adding to this, he also played with the burden of being a playing-coach for three seasons, something Martin never did.

Adrian Burgiel, who left Maffra to coach Moe from 2014-15, said he never realised how good Blaser was when he played against him – it was only until he started coaching him.

The course of history may have changed in 2015 had

Martin himself pulled on the maroon and blue jumper.

The Lions 'sort of but didn't' have a foot in the door to securing his services thanks to a work connection. Martin did train at Moe during pre-season once and only once, and that was the closest

the Gippsland League ever got to seeing Blaser/Martin combined (except for inter-league).

Can you split them? Martin maybe by a nose because he is left footed.



Former Trafalgar footballer, James Blaser, arguably the best player seen in Gippsland this century.

Victory for the great Ships

By Liam Durkin

BATSMEN sell memberships, bowlers win premierships.

A bowling and, more specifically, catching masterclass saw the Trafalgar Cricket Club Second XI finish the 2023/24 season as premiers in the Warragul District Cricket Association last March.

The result capped off a dominant campaign for the team, who lost just one match for the season.

Such consistency meant the Ships finished on top of the ladder, and were given the advantage of a home semi-final.

Trafalgar won the semi-final against Jindivick to advance to the decider, where they were opposed to Garfield-Tynong.

Winning the toss and electing to bat, the Ships compiled 176 from their allotted 70 overs in the Grand Final.

Opens Brodie Burgess and Mitch Claridge laid a solid foundation, putting on

41 for the first wicket.

Burgess hit four boundaries in his 27, while Claridge made 29.

Their work was undone by a resultant collapse, that saw Trafalgar slump to 6/98, and then 9/125.

With plenty of overs left on Day 1, it appeared certain the Ships would be bowling trying to defend a total around the 130 mark.

However, as Grand Finals often do, an unlikely hero was found, and Traf found theirs in 16-year-old James Pace.

The youngster, coming in at Number 11, chanced his arm, and ended up smashing a run-a-ball 37 to top score for the innings.

A Number 11 top-scoring in a Grand Final? Funny things happen in Grand Finals.

Pace and Owen McLeod-Agland put on a morale-boosting 51-run stand for the final wicket, with McLeod-Agland chipping in with 20 runs of his

own.

The pair ensured Traf made full use of their overs, and their efforts were appreciated as they walked off to applause to end Day 1.

The last wicket stand may well have won the game in the immediate aftermath, as Garfield-Tynong returned the next day having almost conceded defeat.

Zack Brown struck an early blow, and from there, wickets just kept tumbling.

Brown broke the game open and virtually hand-delivered the premiership, taking three wickets in his fifth over to leave the scoreboard reading 6/23.

Trafalgar players could hardly believe their luck, as batsmen came and went, some to very good catches behind the wicket.

McLeod-Agland took one of the better slips catches you are likely to see, diving to his left to pull in a blinder in front of second.

A total of four catches were taken behind the wick-

et, most of which would be a good chance of going down in a regular season game. With the stakes higher in a Grand Final however, the Ships rose to the occasion.

Connor Dastey took two good grabs, while Claridge took the one that cued premiership celebrations.

Louis Hennessy was called into the attack, and ended up finishing the job, as Garfield-Tynong was, amazingly, knocked over for 42.

Trafalgar players were forced to stall somewhat with their celebrations, given only 17 overs were bowled when the last wicket fell. With 50 overs still left in the day, there remained the possibility the Ships would need to bat again, but the umpires determined no other result was plausible, and so the game came to an end.

Louis Hennessy and Brown finished with identical figures of 4/6, while Olly Hennessy ended with 2/29.

The trio were the only bowlers Traf used. Victorious captains Cooper Burgess and Brendan Dawson accepted the premiership cup, before players were called on to collect their medals.

Brown was awarded Man of the Match honours. As per TCC Grand Final tradition, the team gathered to sing the club's victory song, led by song master Ray Burgess (grandfather of Cooper).

In an extra special moment, the premiership was won on Trafalgar Recreation Reserve, putting this team perhaps in a very select group.

The team was already in a select group regardless, as there had only ever previously been one Second XI premiership team in Trafalgar Cricket Club history.

The club's only Second XI premiership captain, Alan Blaser, rang through on the Saturday night, and was eagerly anticipating Burgess and Dawson joining him for

company. Festivities carried on Sunday night and into Monday. As a result of bowling Garfield-Tynong out in less than 20 overs, the Ships actually finished around 2.30pm, a potentially dangerous three hours before the game was expected to finish.

The two day triumph made it a clean sweep for the Second XI, who also won the 40 over and Twenty20 premierships in Division 4 this season.

As a result of winning the two day flag, Trafalgar earned promotion to Division 3 next season.

The winning team was: Cooper Burgess (captain), Brendan Dawson (captain), Mitchell Claridge, Brodie Burgess, Connor Dastey, Oliver Hennessy, Louis Hennessy, Owen McLeod-Agland, James Pace, Zack Brown, Jordan Chapman, Teilor Woolford and Liam Durkin.



Trafalgar Cricket Club Second XI celebrates after winning the premiership. Pictured is James Pace, Teilor Woolford, Louis Hennessy, Oliver Hennessy, Mitchell Claridge, Brodie Burgess, (front) Liam Durkin, Connor Dastey, Cooper Burgess, Owen McLeod-Agland, Zack Brown, Jordan Chapman and Brendan Dawson.



Zack Brown celebrates one of his four wickets during the Grand Final.



Connor Dastey about to gobble up a catch at second slip during the Grand Final.



Trafalgar captains Cooper Burgess and Brendan Dawson hold the premiership cup aloft.

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