

Meredith & district News



MARCH 2025

it's
AUTUMN!

OUR FREE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

inside

- We reflect on our past and our future..
- Top Pub shines at the Golden Plates Award
- CEO steps down after 6 months in office.

...and Much More!



e: news@meredithnews.com.au w: meredithnews.com.au



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**MORTIMER
PETROLEUM**

**MEREDITH
ROAD HOUSE**

Major Renovations and Upgrade from Monday 3rd of Feb Pumps will be closed for 4 to 6 weeks

There will be brand new pumps and canopy installed and we plan to keep the LPG, but in a new location

- The Shop Will Remain Open through the whole process
- Phone orders for Food are still welcome all day every day, and all other products, milk and snacks will be available.
- We will still be taking all Gas bottle orders
- Account customers can use their account at the Batesford Roadhouse just down the road towards Geelong

Thank you for your patience during this exciting and challenging time.

We're Still Open...

Mon to Fri 6am to 7pm
Sat 7am to 7.00pm
Sun 8am to 7.00pm

Thank you for your patience
and support while we are
upgrading our facilities.

Rebecca

Phone 5286 1556

Meredith & District News



The Meredith and District News is published by a volunteer sub-committee of the Meredith Community Centre comprising: Jim Elvey, (general editor and chair) Ian Penna, Sue Higgs, Nerida Anderson, Amy Medley, and Ian Leighton. Production is undertaken by Peter Boer, Don Atherton and Jim Elvey.

NEWS & VIEWS

Appropriate contributions accompanied by the contributor's name (which will also be published) and contact details, are most welcome. Please email to news@meredithnews.com.au or deliver to the Meredith Post Office or Meredith Hub

DATES AND DEADLINES

The Newsletter is distributed on the **first Thursday** of the month (except January). All ads and submissions must be lodged by 9.00 am on the **last Thursday** of the preceding month, but earlier is **really** appreciated.

ADVERTISING

Advertising in the M&D Newsletter is a great way to let district residents know about your business. Rates, excluding GST, are as follows:

	B&W/Colour
Business Card	\$20.00
Quarter page	\$30.00
Half page	\$50/\$110
Full page	\$100/\$200

A \$20 loading applies for preferred position. Please submit in jpeg format, if available.

Classifieds are **FREE** for small, personal notices from residents. Otherwise \$7.50 on invoice or \$5.00 if paid on lodgement. Community Groups can have a 1/4 page ad for free or a \$30.00 discount on larger ads. (conditions apply)

SUBSCRIPTIONS

You can subscribe to get the Meredith and District News posted to you anywhere in Australia for what it costs us to send it - \$59.50p.a. (11 issues)

CONTACT US

Post Office, Meredith, 3333

Advertising: Ian 0409 016815

advertising@meredithnews.com.au

Accounts: Ian Leighton 0428132880

accounts@meredithnews.com.au

Editorial: Jim: 0409 163169

news@meredithnews.com.au

WEB

You can check back copies and lodge comments at meredithnews.com.au

ONLINE PHOTOS

We do not publish children's photos online. If you would like any other photo that you appear in withheld from the online edition, let us know in writing by the second Thursday of the month of publication.

DISCLAIMER

The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the publishers. The publishers may edit or reject contributions and accept no responsibility for errors or omissions

FEEDBACK

Yes please! Send it to news@meredithnews.com.au

Issue Production: Peter Boer Editor: Jim Elvey

connect

ADVANCE
MEREDITH
0409 027 359

ANGLING CLUB
0419 248 660

B'BURN ART
GROUP
0410 808 483

B'BURN MENS
SHED
0407 835 731

BLUE LIGHT
DISCO
5286 1222

BOOK CLUB
5286 8201

CFA
000 for fire calls
Elaine
0419 767982
Meredith
5286 1502
Morrisons
0417 770 765

CHILDCARE
5286 0700

COMMUNITY
CENTRE
5286 0700

CRICKET
Elaine
0448 291074

Junior
(U16,U14,13)
0448 291074
Meredith
5286 1434

CUBS &
SCOUTS
Lethbridge
0435 042077

ELAINE HALL
53415575
0409861296

FOOTBALL
Seniors 0408 545246
Juniors 0430 587 674

GOLF CLUB
0407 795 342

HISTORY GROUP
5286 8201

LANDCARE
0409 862 326

MEMORIAL HALL
0409 662106

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GROUP
0491 184 999

MOTORCYCLE
CLUB
0437 009 250

PLAYGROUP
5286 0700

POLICE
PADDOCKS
0409 163169

RSL - 5286 1452

SENIOR
CITIZENS
5286 8232

TENNIS
Elaine
0448 291 074

Lethbridge
52 817 321
Meredith
0424 754 179

SEW 'N' SEWS
5286 0700

FRIENDS OF THE
BRISBANE
RANGES

emergency

Police, Ambulance, Fire	000
(from mobile phone)	000 or 112
Meredith Police Station	5286 1222
Police non emergency	131 444
Power Failure	132 412
Nurse-On-Call	1300 606 024
Mental Health Advice	1300 280 737
Poisons Information	13 11 26
Barwon Water	1300 656 007
SES Emergency - flood & storm	132 500
24 Hour Helpline	1800 629 572
24 Hour Drug & Alcohol Counselling	1800 888 236
Kids Help Line	
24hr 5-18yo	1800 551 800
Golden Plains Shire	1300 363 036
a/h emergency	0408 508 635
Ranger	5220 7111
	or 0409 830 223
Bannockburn Vet	5281 1221
Golden Plains Animal	5281 2226
Pets and Horses 24/7	0421 617 238

Justices of the Peace

Mr Don Atherton.	0409 869 960
Mr Paul Ryan Elaine	0409 861 296

services

CEMETERY TRUST

5286 1550

HALL HIRE

Meredith Memorial

5286 1545

Elaine Mechanics

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0409861296

Elaine Rec Res

5341 5703

LIBRARY VAN

5272 6010

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

5220 7230

PRE-SCHOOL

5286 0722

PRIMARY

SCHOOL

5286 1313

RECREATION

RESERVE

0429 315 575

..or start something.

If you have a special interest you would like to share with like minded people, let us know




"You never really learn much from hearing yourself speak."

— George Clooney

I'm here to help.


Please contact my office if you feel I can be of any assistance to you.

Michaela Settle MP
Member for Eureka

 michaelasettle.com.au

 michaela.settle@parliament.vic.gov.au

 (03) 5331 7722

 MichaelaSettleMP



Meredith Community Centre
working for our community

What's On This Month



Term 1

Mindfulness with Jade

Kindergarten Kids - 5-26 March

Wednesdays at 2.10 - 2.40

Primary School Kids -

Wednesdays at 3.30 - 4.30

Goddess Mums & Kids

Thursdays at 2.10 - 3.10

\$15 per session, payable by Term

Chatty Cafe

March 18 - 11.30 - 1.30 - Light Lunch

April 29 - 11.30 - 1.30 - Light Lunch

BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL



Haircuts..@ the Centre

Wednesday April 2

Phone: 0403667840 for Bookings

THE MEREDITH MART

**PROVIDING FOOD SECURITY FOR
OUR COMMUNITY**

SUPPORTED BY



CHANGE OF HOURS

MON-TUES - 9-3

WED - 9-1

THU - CONCESSION CARD HOLDERS BY APPOINTMENT

DONATIONS ACCEPTED IN THE OFFICE

Tai Chi - \$15 per session

Tuesdays @ Meredith with Sandra - 9.15 - 10.15

Wednesdays @ Bannockburn with Desma - 9:30 - 10.30

Gentle Exercise @ the Community Centre for over 65's

Thursdays @ 9.15 - 10.15

To Book:

learnlocal@meredithcommunitycentre.com.au

www.facebook.com/MeredithCommunityCentre

Ph. 5286 0700 / 0491 184 999



Join us on

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PLAYGROUP

THURSDAYS

9.30am - 11.30am

\$2 per family

Church News



Meredith Uniting Church

Services have recommenced. 11.00 am 2nd Sunday each month. Enquiries:

Rev. Paul Sanders 0407 833 515 5341 2440

Serbian Orthodox - 5341 5536

Daily services: Matins 8.00 am, Vespers 6.00 pm.

Divine Liturgies on Saturdays & Sundays 10.00 am.

Worship on Sundays in the Anglican Parish of Inverleigh+Bannockburn+Meredith:

8.00 am Holy Communion St Paul's, Inverleigh

10.00 am Family Communion. St John's, Bannockburn

5.00 pm Prayer and Praise Epiphany, Meredith

Find us at: www.goldenplainsanglican.org or

office.revdrtim@hotmail.com

The Revd Dr Timothy Smith

PiC Anglican Parish of

Inverleigh+Bannockburn+Meredith

St Josephs Parish of Meredith

CATHOLIC PARISH OF MEREDITH MASS TIMES –

Winchelsea - St. John the Baptist @ 6pm Sat. MAR. 1, 8, 22, 29

Anakie – St. Brigid @ 9am Sun. MAR. 2, 30

Meredith – St. Joseph @ 9am Sun. MAR. 9, 16, 23

Bannockburn – St. Mary MacKillop @ 11am Sun. MAR. 2, 9, 23, 30

Inverleigh – Sacred Heart – NO MASS

ST. JOSEPH'S PARISH 150TH ANNIVERSARY MASS SUNDAY MARCH 16TH 11AM @ MEREDITH ALL WELCOME

World Day of Prayer 2025

focus country: the Cook Islands

Join our local one hour prayer service

UNITING CHURCH, MEREDITH

10.00 AM 7th MARCH 2025

OUR COVER

Brisbane Ranges Sketcher, Amanda Hyatt, kindly consented to us displaying detail from her portrayal of a residence near Bunjil Lookout. More of the Sketchers' work from its last meet up can be found on page 30.



Send us your fabulous photos - you could be front page news!

A Big Year Coming

...but how many more?



EDITORIAL

Next year, we celebrate our 50th year of publication. This is no small achievement, given our population, and especially so, given the standard of content and the production values we have been able to achieve.

We will be working with the Meredith History Interest Group and others, to ensure we appropriately celebrate the occasion throughout 2026 and would love to hear from you if you would like to join in or contribute any information, photos, etc.

At the same time, the Committee of volunteers that oversees this complex operation, is reflecting on our future. In one sense, the newsletter is no longer as important as it once was. We receive and share information in a very different manner these days and there are other avenues, Social Media and email dispatch for example, that could be used. There are even local town Facebook pages that have sprung up for those who want to take part in them. And there is a lot of work for a lot of people in our operation. When you take into account the regular contributors, the producers, editors, deliverers, advertising and accounts, it amounts to about 20 people spending around 100 hours a month. Of course, mostly we all enjoy what we are doing and get a great sense of achievement out of the part we play in the end result.

But here's our reality: All our key production personnel are in their seventies as are many of others playing key roles. Unless others come forward to join us over the next two years, we may not have the trained personnel to keep it going. We are also open to deepening our migration to digital publication. (Meredith News can already be accessed via our website and Facebook page) either as an adjunct or a replacement to our paper publication.

The good news is we have terrific advertising support and a great array of talented, regular reporters and columnists maintaining a flow of quality content. We are financially sound and have an very good relationship and accommodation arrangement with the Meredith Community House, of which we are a sub-committee.

So there it is. At least two exciting years ahead of us and hopefully many more to come after that. But that may be up to you. Let us know if you would like some more information about how you could get involved in this highly successful and valued community project..

Jim Elvey, Editor

COFFEE

Small	Medium	Large
\$4.50	\$5.00	\$5.50
Cappuccino		
Latte		
Flat White		
Mocha		
Long Black		
Chai Latte		
Hot Chocolate		

Instant Coffee, Tea, Chai Tea \$3.50

Milkshakes \$9.50

Thickshakes \$12.50

Chocolate | Vanilla | Caramel | Strawberry
Blue Heaven | Banana | Lime

Iced Coffee

Small \$6.50

Large \$8.50

Decaf \$0.50

Extra shot \$0.50

Alternative milks \$1.00

Soy | Almond | Oat | Lactose Free

TOASTIES

Bacon and Egg	\$6.50
Bacon and Egg Roll	\$8.00
Bacon, Egg and Cheese Muffin	\$7.50
Ham and Cheese	\$4.80
Ham, Cheese, Tomato	\$5.50
Bacon, Egg Breakfast	\$9.00



FRESH SANDWICHES

Ham and Cheese	\$4.50
Ham, Cheese, Tomato	\$4.70
Ham, Cheese, Pickle	\$4.50
Egg, Lettuce	\$4.80
Ham, Salad	\$7.50
Chicken Salad	\$8.00

FRESH ROLLS

Salad	\$8.20
Ham, Salad	\$8.50
Chicken Salad	\$8.70

OPENING HOURS

Monday	6am to 7pm
Tuesday	6am to 7pm
Wednesday	6am to 7pm
Thursday	6am to 7pm
Friday	6am to 7:30pm
Saturday	7am to 7:30pm
Sunday	8am to 7pm

PHONE 03 5286 1556

Select option 4

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MEREDITH ROADHOUSE Take-Away Menu

*Fish
and
Chips*



Friday and Saturday
Nights

HAMBURGERS

Cheese Burger	\$11.50
Double Cheese, Sauce, Pickles	
Plain Burger	\$11.50
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato Sauce	
Hamburger with the Lot	\$13.50
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Bacon, Egg, Onion, Sauce	
Steak Sandwich	\$15.80
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Bacon, Egg, Onion, Sauce	
Chicken Schnitzel Burger	\$10.80
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Mayo	
Chicken Chili Wrap	\$13.50
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Sweet Chili Sauce	
Veggie Burger	\$7.50
Lettuce, Cheese, Tomato, Sauce	

EXTRAS
Beetroot, Pineapple \$1.00



FRIED FOOD

Hot Chips- Bucket	\$3.00
Small Bag	\$4.60
Large Bag	\$7.20
Flake Battered	\$9.00
Fish Battered	\$4.00
Squid Rings	\$0.90
Crab Stick	\$1.20
Battered Sav	\$4.00
Battered Burger	\$4.60
Chicko Roll	\$3.00
Spring Roll	\$3.00
Mini Spring Roll	\$1.60
Dim Sims- Steamed/Fried	\$1.20
Chicken or Pork Dim Sims	\$2.00
Potato Cakes	\$1.40
Chicken Wing Dings	\$2.20
Chicken Garlic Balls	\$1.60
Chicken Strips	\$2.20
Kransky	\$3.50
Hot Jam Donuts	\$1.20
Chips and Gravy	
Small	\$6.50
Large	\$10.00
Cheese	+\$1.50

Plantations of the future

'Plant and connect'

Stephen Murphy

Plantations on farms have the potential to be much more than windbreaks and shelter belts. They can provide a significant portion of a rural family's diversified income while being part of a vegetation network that sustains local biodiversity. They can also be places where farmers connect with wildlife as they maintain and harvest diverse crops of marketable products. On a national scale, if we are to protect and restore our biodiversity assets and sequester substantial volumes of carbon, future farm biodiversity plantations will need to be much wider (50m+) with native vegetation occupying as much as 30% of rural properties. Researchers have shown that this can be achieved without the loss of productivity.

These wider plantations are important conservation measures because they suit the spiral foraging patterns of birdlife. They also provide more protected farm shelter, critical to the survival of many of Australia's iconic wildlife that are presently facing extinction.

This vision offers a win-win, where landowners provide for their own needs through improved shelter and a variety of marketable products. This shift in rural landscape strategic planting also ensures the recovery of the flora and fauna that sustain the health and lifestyles of the broader community.

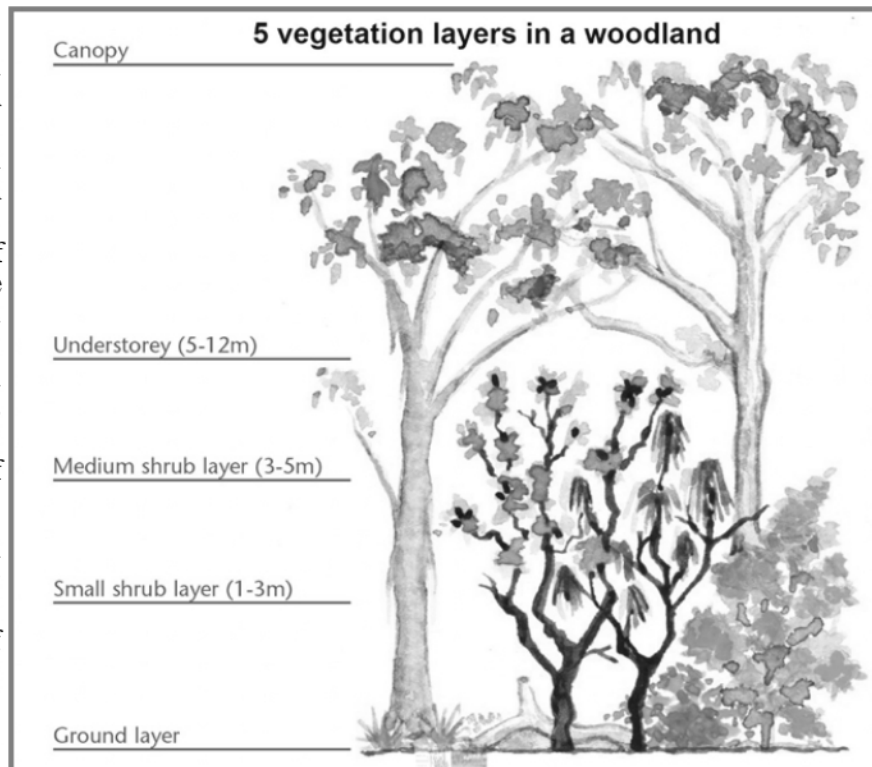
'Biodiversity influences the health, wealth and resilience of the land. It is not something that is found only in patches of native vegetation, it is all around us.'

David Salt et al., 2004

Sustainable 'Biorich' Design

There are a number of important design principles that help build diversity, longevity and resilience into plantations. Here are some general principles;

- Include a diversity of local plants. These are chosen from at least 7 families, 10 genera and 20 species. This ensures a richness of habitat, food and nesting materials. Up to 20% non-local, non-invasive species are planted for income and products for the farm. This doesn't diminish biodiversity values and makes wider plantations a lot more economically appealing
- Create a layered plantation structure by planting same species groups. The smaller plants, like shrubs and tussock grasses, are grouped in larger numbers (up to 50) and the canopy trees in smaller groups of 5 - 10 to allow for natural selection and the potential for future timber harvesting. Same species grouping provides better habitat and more food for small insectivorous birds, plus superior pollination and seed production. It also suits the inclusion of small forestry plots, shrubs for cut flowers and other plant based products for the market
- Include 60% shrubs in plantations. These provide the low, dense habitat and shelter that is often absent in



'We came to understand the importance of insects in building the health of ecosystems, and hence the desirability of smaller trees, shrubs and ground-level vegetation to attract those insects, together with small birds. The key appeared to be a continuous energy resource through an uninterrupted and easily accessible nectar supply and good, dense protective cover at shrub level.'

Richard Weatherly, 2020 'A brush with Birds, Paintings and stories from the wild.'

existing plantations that are usually dominated by too many tall trees

- Make vegetation links with wetlands, waterways, remnant vegetation, forestry and other farm plantings. This enhances wildlife movement for insect pest management and assists symbiotic fungi (mycorrhiza) to re-establish and support native plant growth, particularly when links can be made to remnant sites
- Re-establishing paddock trees at 25m to 100m spacing to support migrating birds and insects. Scattered paddock trees also provide essential shade in a warming climate and very effective wind shelter, similar to boundary plantations.

Sustainable biorich design can effectively restore biodiversity to rural and urban areas while providing a significant income and offering the potential to connect with nature. It is described fully in 'Recreating the Country. Ten key principles of designing sustainable landscapes.'

Stephen Murphy is an author, ecologist and an active member of Landcare. To read more of his writing visit his entertaining website, www.recreatingthecountry.com.au



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BANNOCKBURN & DISTRICT GRANTS

B&DG is a community company established for the benefit of every not for profit organisation based in our local area. We receive dividends from the Bendigo Bank and distribute these funds via grants and sponsorships into the community.

Special Announcement – this year we are accepting Grant & Sponsorship applications in March, April, May and June!

For further information:

Website: bannockburndistrictgrants.com.au

Bendigo Bank: 5281 1990

Email: 19118@bendigoadelaide.com.au

could be a great help

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Recreation



Meredith Tennis Club News

Bridget Dyer

AO Hot Shots Day

Meredith Tennis Club was very fortunate to attend the AO Hot Shots Day for the third consecutive year! We had a total of 68 attendees, including over forty children. The day began early with two buses departing at 5:45 am, and we arrived at Melbourne Park by 7:30 am. After arriving, everyone walked over to the AO BallPark for our customary group photo before exploring the BallPark, which opened to the general public at 10:00 am.

At 9:45 am, ten children (Harriet Geddes, Leo Fox, Amelia Dyer, Ryan Dinning, Lachlan Dyer, Ainsley Dyer, Eden Dickers, Kira Dickers, Angus Cockayne, and Darcy Cockayne) along with their coaches (Madeline Reynolds and Bridget Dyer) participated in the on-court experience at John Cain Arena. This experience allowed the children to use the players' tunnel, learn about being a ball kid at the AO, and have a hot shot session on the court. After the hot shot session, nine children formed an honour guard to high-five Miomir Kecmanovic and Hubert Hurkacz, while Amelia Dyer was chosen to perform the coin toss. Amelia had the unique opportunity to spend time with the umpire, sit in the umpire's chair, set up the match on his tablet, and chat about his role. She then performed the coin toss and wished both players luck. Amelia was also allowed to keep the special coin she used as a memento.

This was the first time regional clubs were given this opportunity, as it is typically reserved for metropolitan clubs. Those who participated were also given upgraded tickets to Rod Laver Arena, where some children got to watch Alex De Minaur play Tristan Boyer. This amazing experience was made possible by the great relationships Meredith Tennis Club has with Tennis Australia and the hard work of our volunteers. We extend our gratitude to everyone who helped organise this event and made it possible.

Cardio Tennis on Court 7 at the AO

Meredith Tennis Club participated in the pilot program for Cardio Community Tennis, which is traditionally run by a qualified coach. However, Tennis Australia was keen to set up a new program that could be run by volunteers or those without a coaching qualification. Maddy Reynolds led one of the first programs in Australia with a group of volunteers. The program was quite successful and received great feedback from Tennis Australia. As a thank you, Meredith and some of the volunteers involved in the initial cardio group were invited to have a cardio session on Court 7

at the AO on January 19th. This was an amazing opportunity that allowed Meredith players to mingle with participants from Cobden Tennis Club, who were also part of the pilot program. Despite the hot weather, all participants agreed it was an incredible experience. Meredith has also struck up a friendship with the Cobden club and looks forward to future cardio sessions with them.

Summer Saturday Competition

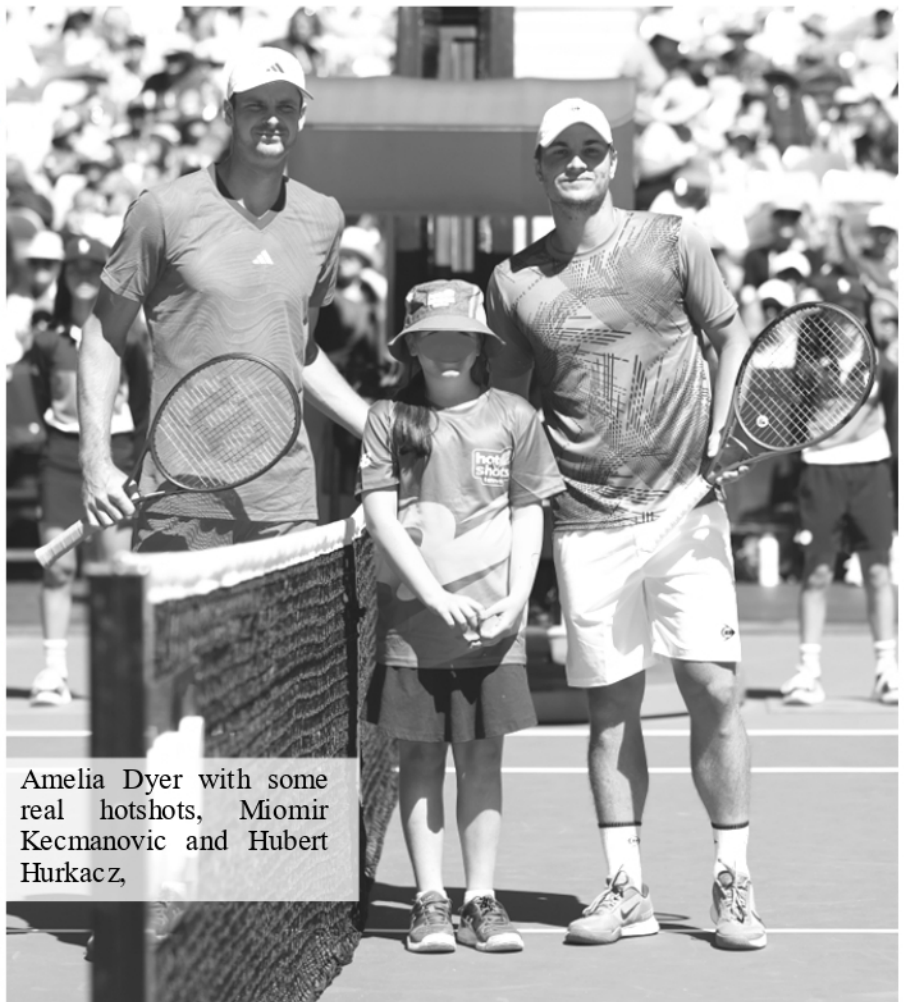
The Summer competition continues to go well, with a high standard of tennis being played and the kids having fun. Although we experienced a washout at home one week, the weather has generally been beautiful. The orange ball competition concluded on February 22nd, and we congratulate all our little orange ball superstars on their first or second orange ball competition. Many of these children will now be ready to move up to the green ball competition next season. It looks like we may have a few teams making it to the semi-finals, which is very exciting for everyone involved.

Presentation night – 27th March 2025

This year our tennis presentation night will be held in conjunction with our summer night competition grand final. Dinner will be \$10 per person and the presentations of awards and trophies will start at 7.30pm. RSVP to the event is a must for catering purposes. Please rsvp via Facebook.

Coaching

Coaching positions are still available for this term. Please contact Nathan Myers on 0430 726 486 or allcourttennis1@gmail.com



Amelia Dyer with some real hotshots, Miomir Kecmanovic and Hubert Hurkacz,

We're looking for a new...

NEWSLETTER CO-EDITOR

Here's a chance to play a key role in one of the district's foremost community projects. If you can commit several hours every second month, use MS Word or Publisher, are a reliable, team player by nature and willing to learn, you could play an important and rewarding part of this highly successful operation. Email us at:

news@meredithnews.com.au

...or call Jim on 0409 163 169 to find out more.



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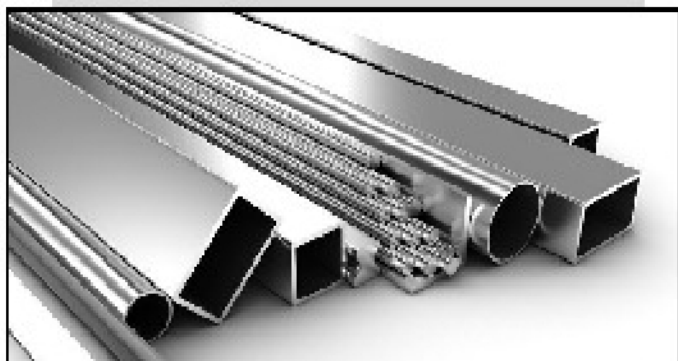
Hours:- Mon - Fri 8.30am- 5.30pm
Sat 8.30am-1pm

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the Philatelist



Michael Riseley

The Stamp Album Merry Go Round

With some poetic licence, let's look at the journey of a stamp album.

You go to a stamp fair and find a nice album full of stamps of the world. It has a \$60 price tag. You notice lots in it that you want and try not to be too excited because the price might go up. You um and ah, scratch your chin and pretend you cannot read and offer \$50.

At this stage the dealer tells you his family eat their evening meal by candle light dressed in pyjamas and dressing gowns because he cannot afford the electricity for heating and lighting. And says \$55. You um and ah, scratch your chin and say ok.

You go home and inspect the album page by page taking out only those stamps of the British Commonwealth that you collect. You leave some behind because you already have those stamps and don't want extra copies. You notice some quite reasonable stamps from countries you do not collect and realise you now have an album to sell. But now the tricky balance of a price low enough to attract a buyer but high enough to give you good return. You settle on \$40.

Soon you go to your stamp club meeting with your \$40 album and another member offers you \$35. He has seen you drive up in your new car so you know the candle lit dinner story will not work and accept. He is a thematic collector and goes home and takes out the stamps showing birds, fish, flowers, ships and whatever themes he collects. He brings the album back to the next meeting with a price tag of \$20. Someone offers \$15 which he accepts. The new owner collects postmarks and has seen some stamps with clear distinct postmarks. He takes them out. The album still contains many stamps albeit mostly of low value. He brings it to the next meeting hoping to sell it for \$10 but happy to take a \$5 offer so he doesn't have to take it home. Someone does and he quickly accepts.

Now this new owner takes out any remaining half decent stamps and adds them to another album that he is preparing for sale. He wants to increase the number and range of stamps in that album and boost its sale price.

The now seriously depleted old album which has faithfully served several masters has run its race and is thrown out in the recycle bin. But the circle of life is completed and soon a new album will enter the merry go round.

St. Joseph's Parish 150th Anniversary

Father Smythe celebrated the first mass of the district at the home of Mr John Campion in 1853.

The Catholic Parish of Meredith was established in March 1875, under the care of Father James Hegarty.

The District of Meredith, until the late 1850's was included in the Parish of St Mary's Geelong. It was

later transferred to and served from Ballarat. In 1874, when Ballarat was created a separate diocese from Melbourne, Meredith and Elaine were transferred back to Geelong, and arrangements were made to form a parish between Geelong and Ballarat.

In March 1875, the Parish of Meredith, comprising Meredith, Elaine, Lethbridge, Anakie, Darriwil and Steiglitz was established. Although Steiglitz was a much larger population, Meredith was chosen as the Parish Centre because of its convenience to travel, being situated on the main road and the railway line between the growing towns of Ballarat and Geelong. Lal Lal was added to the parish in 1909. The Steiglitz church closed in 1928; Darriwil in 1950; Lal Lal in 1960; Lethbridge in 2012 and Elaine in 2013. Bannockburn and Inverleigh transferred from the Winchelsea Parish to the Meredith Parish in 1998 and Winchelsea was welcomed in 2004.

The parish now comprises

- *St Joseph's, Meredith*
- *St. Mary MacKillop, Bannockburn*
- *St. Brigid's, Anakie*
- *Sacred Heart, Inverleigh*
- *St John the Baptist, Winchelsea*

You are invited to join us for Mass at 11am on March 16th, concelebrated by Archbishop Peter Comensoli, Fr. Charles Balnaves and Fr. Joseph Panackal. Followed by luncheon served in the garden at St. Joseph's.

Gold Medal Garlic

From media release

Melissa and Sean

Mortimer's garlic, grown at their property 'The Paddock Lal Lal' won a Gold Medal at the 2025 Australian Garlic Awards for their Turban garlic variety, known for its bold flavor, striking purple-tinged bulbs, and excellent storage qualities, Melissa said "...it is an honor to be acknowledged by the Australian Garlic Industry Association and to share this win with our community and customers."



Very happy gold medalists, Melissa and Sean Mortimer.



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Commemorating 70 years since settlement

Melinda Kamboski

Morbrook, block nineteen was a parcel of land in the third subdivision of the "Moronghurk Estate", an estate that formed part of the Victorian Government initiated Soldier Settlement Scheme. Funded and administered by the Soldier Settler Commission (SSC), the scheme's aim was to provide a potential livelihood for returned soldiers and a "reward" for their sacrifice to their country on the battlefields. The term "reward" was a gross misdemeanour. Returned soldiers paid for their land through a purchase lease agreement. It was the responsibility of the settler to buy livestock, agricultural machinery, clear land, eradicate weeds and pests as well as fence their blocks. No mean feat for returned soldiers who, too often, had minimal to no former knowledge of the many and varied facets of establishing and maintaining a viable farming operation. Unfortunately, many failed, yet there were others who thrived. Harry Mohr and his wife Hilda were one such example to succeed in conquering the trials and tribulations presented.

Harry McDonald Mohr along with his wife Hilda Marie Mohr (nee Conlon), and first-born son, John, settled on what was block nineteen of the Moronghurk Estate in early autumn of 1955. Harry and Hilda, more commonly known as Marie chose to name their property "Morbrook". The preceding year they welcomed their second son Adrian who keeps ownership and management of the land until this day. Adrian often jests he is a mere one year younger than Morbrook.

Harry, despite having the opportunity to give a preference list of two or more blocks of land, only applied for one property, block nineteen. A comparatively small holding to the others on offer at five hundred and fifty acres, block nineteen was arable with a meandering creek and housed the original bluestone Moronghurk woolshed shed (erected 1875) along with the shearer's cook-house and separate cottage as well as a freestanding sandstone house in which the Lownes family had previously resided for many years. A brief time later, Harry bought the laneway leading to the entrance of Morbrook from the SCC, bringing the total land holding to five hundred and fifty seven acres.

Harry, the son of a share farmer, grew up in Mangoplah. Mangoplah is a small town approximately 35km south of Wagga Wagga and the hometown to his wife Marie. Marie's parents owned and ran the local bakery in Wagga Wagga.

Harry voluntarily enlisted with the Second Australian Imperial Force (AIF) in 1941 to serve his country and allies in WW2. In 1942 Harry was part of the 39th Battalion on the infamous Kokoda Track Campaign that fought Japanese invasion of what was then the Australian Territory of Papua. At the cessation of his overseas deployment, he returned to Australia and married Marie in 1944. Harry remained enlisted with the AIF as an instructor until his discharge in 1945.

Growing up experiencing the often-low rainfall in Mangoplah and witnessing the devastating impact on

farming, Harry had always wished to live in the Southwest region of Victoria. "It always rains there" was a frequent utterance from Harry. A local shearing contractor in Mangoplah offered Harry the contact details of Mr Charles Burns, a prominent Geelong entity who, amongst other holdings, was the owner of approximately 160 acres of land alongside the Barwon River, in the Geelong region.

Post discharge from the AIF, the family moved to Geelong taking up residence in Newtown. Within a brief period, Harry contacted Charles Burns. Adrian explains that Mr Burns had intentions of running a dairy farm on his riverside land and given Harry's commendable reputation in farming, Mr Burns offered him the challenge of setting up the dairy farm venture. Mr Burns had a modest home erected on the land (the home still stands today, thirty-one Gaylard Avenue, Newtown) for Harry and Marie to occupy. It was during this time Harry formed an unlikely lifelong friendship with Mr Burns. In fact, Mr Burns would later become Godfather to Harry and Marie's son Adrian. Mr Burns bought what is known today as Leighburn, Shelburn and later, Roxby Park. Mr Burns requested his now friend, manage the properties. It would be six years before Harry bought his soldier settlement farm.

Harry and Marie lived in the bluestone shearers' cook's house whilst their home was constructed and Harry continued overseeing the books for Mr Burns' rural holdings for a further six years. Adrian fondly recalls his mother's ingenious approach to ensure Harry retired from working on their new farm at a reasonable time by driving Mr Burns' Austin truck to wherever Harry may be and leaving the headlights on before walking back to the family home. If Harry were to continue working on his tractor, the battery would flatten on the old Austin, and he would have no means of getting to work the following day. Not wanting to let Mr Burns down, he very quickly learnt when it was time to "call it a day"!

Shortly after taking up his block, Harry had a visit from the local CFA representative explaining the conundrum the Meredith CFA faced at that time. If the local CFA failed at recruiting more volunteers, the fire truck would be reallocated to another CFA locale. Harry volunteered, taking on the role of Brigade Captain for eight years. Harry was highly respected and admired for his sensible approach; a testament to the pragmatism needed from a soldier both handing out and taking orders during combat.

In 1978 Marie suffered a fatal asthma attack at the untimely age of fifty. Harry Mohr passed away twenty-four years later, succumbing to cancer in 2002: a mere two days short of his eighty-fifth birthday. Harry was the last of the Soldier Settlers to retrain his original parcel of land.

Harry bequeathed Morbrook to his and Marie's second born son, Adrian. And so, upon Harry's demise, Adrian took on ownership of Morbrook. Of the twenty-six Soldier Settler families, Adrian holds the distinction of being the only descendent that continues to own, occupy and manage the family property. Adrian carries on his parent's Soldier Settlers legacy with impassioned pride, and honour.

an ORIGINAL PUZZLE by JESS and ASHER

Birds of Meredith

Can you spot a few of the birds you can find around Meredith in the word search below?

K	C	R	E	T	A	E	Y	E	N	O	H
L	O	G	E	I	P	G	A	M	E	N	B
S	C	O	X	P	F	F	L	F	S	O	W
T	K	R	K	E	L	B	L	A	K	I	I
M	A	Z	J	A	O	A	E	I	D	S	B
U	T	Y	M	G	B	X	S	R	O	Y	I
E	O	V	A	L	Y	U	O	Y	K	M	S
A	O	N	G	E	I	Q	R	W	C	I	D
W	A	T	T	L	E	B	I	R	D	N	P
H	T	H	W	Z	V	C	I	E	A	E	J
H	A	L	A	G	U	N	U	N	R	R	Q
S	H	R	I	K	E	T	H	R	U	S	H

- KOOKABURRA
- GALAH
- FAIRY WREN
- SHRIKE THRUSH
- WATTLE BIRD
- NOISY MINER
- MAGPIE
- ROSELLA
- COCKATOO
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ENABLING BETTER CONVERSATIONS

Revd Dr Timothy Smith

There is a time in any community group meeting, a relaxing coffee or dinner with those who are important to us to happily spend quality time and conversation together. Much of our conversations are practical, surface-level when we meet. These kind of conversations strengthen relationships, express care for one another, and even encourage us knowing we are not alone in the ordinary issues of life. But, we can so easily get stuck in these surface-level conversations and attend to the purpose of the community group or in our relationships. Here are five suggestions to enable better conversations within our community groups or with our significant others.

Stay connected on the mundane stuff

It seems a bit counterintuitive, but if we want to have better conversations, make sure we allow time for the superficial day-to-day stuff. Try including a gathering time before the set meeting start time, including some refreshments. Allowing for the surface level stuff makes going deeper that much easier later. This time also gives background to understanding each other's world and context, enabling understanding of how they are approaching the more profound stuff.

Be curious

When our groups or relationships have been together for a long time, it's easy to assume we know everything about each other. But people are continuously evolving, and that means there's always more to learn about one another – and yourselves! Instead of assuming we know their thought process, be curious and ask questions that go beyond the surface level answers. And when an issue arises, be open to the same curiosity our selves so we can respond in a way that continues conversation instead of shutting it down.

Ensure emotional safety

Effective relationships or community groups mean that we are not worried about being judged, criticised, shamed, or rejected for revealing our true self or expressing an alternative thinking. It means treating one another with empathy and kindness, and listening to understand the issue better and a mutually agreeable outcome.

Get uncomfortable

It's normal to have topics that you avoid talking about for many reasons, personal and past experience. We can continue to tiptoe around these things, or we can acknowledge our nerves and speak anyway. To work through issues that require those tough conversations we need to be willing to be uncomfortable.

Be intentional when you need to

When everything seems to be working well within the community group, or in your relationships, it feels like the conversation flows on its own. But sometimes, it can help to set some guidelines, have an agenda, to ensure the conversation does talk about the purpose of the community group, or a topic that is important in all our relationships.

Surface-level discussions have a time and place in our formal and intimate relationships. But if we want to

connect on a deeper level, enabling better conversations will strengthen relationships and purpose.

Based on <https://www.prepare-enrich.com/blog/5-secrets-to-better-conversations/>

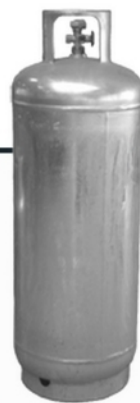
Prepare/Enrich is a low-cost programme we offer to explore relationship strength and growth areas in times of transition: preparing for a wedding, an addition to the family, change in career, approaching retirement, or just to enrich your relationship. Please contact me for more information.

Rabbit Baiting in Police Paddocks

Rabbit baits will be laid in the Meredith Police Paddocks commencing 8th May. This will be an ongoing program conducted by site managers, Western Region Ecological Network (WREN), in an attempt to reduce the large number of rabbits on the site and arrest the damage being done to both soil and vegetation.

The bait will be an oats based Pindone and presented in plastic containers that the rabbits have to enter. This reduces the likelihood of harm to marsupials.

Signs will be placed at Reserve entrances to alert visitors and, notwithstanding the low risk and the precautions being taken, pet owners are advised to ensure their animals cannot access the baits. Any queries should be directed to 0449 706 501.



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There will be new pumps and a new canopy installed and the plan is to keep the LPG. These products will be in a new location on site.

Reminder to all account customers, that their accounts are still available to use at the Batesford Roadhouse down the road towards Geelong.

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2025 MEMORIAL HALL AGM

The Hall's Annual General Meeting will be held on Monday 31st MARCH at 7.30pm at the Memorial Hall, 61 Staughton St. for The Election of the Committee for 2025, and to present the Annual Financial Report.

ALL ARE WELCOME

Hall Bookings – Sandra

M: 0409 662 106.

Accolades Galore

Marg Cooper

Chris Hassan at the Meredith Hotel or Top Pub said that they have been crazy busy. They have also been winning accolades from all over.

In the Victorian Golden Plate Awards they won the *People's Choice Award* with over 2000 votes. Their apprentice Lynda Polwarth, after only four months of training won the *Apprentice of the Year Award*. At Comcater showrooms in Melbourne, she was required to use an ingredient chosen by the judging panel to create a hero dish. The ingredient was pumpkin, which she combined with blueberries and served with duck. Linda won a spot in the top four, and in December at the Awards night, she found out that she had been judged the winner. Meredith Hotel won the *Best Value in 2024* and was a finalist in *Best Hotel Dining*. Chris said that judges visit and dine anonymously, twice, at each venue that have

entered the competition. They don't pay for their meal which usually consists of 3 courses and leave a calling card at the end to announce that they have been.

But Chris tells that every guest is treated as a VIP in his hotel which combines fine dining with the charm of a country pub.

Another accolade that he has been selected for, as one of the chefs representing Regional Victoria to cook for the *Longest Lunch* at Geelong Waterfront, as part of the *Melbourne Food and Wine Festival*. He has been tasked with the sea food mains. He usually likes locally sourced products and the freshest food available. To this end he buys barramundi from Humpty Doo in Northern Territory that comes by truck, packed in iced water.

Another recent accomplishment was catering for a wedding with only 15 hours notice. A desperate couple came into the hotel on Saturday night hoping to buy meat from Chris, as the caterer had pulled out at the last moment. Chris and Jasmine and their team considered and thought they could do it, so as well as having quite a crowd at the hotel for Sunday lunch they managed to serve the wedding guests at a B & B at Elaine, canapes, mains and wedding cake. It was a long day and night!

A specialty at the Hotel are parmigianas. In fact there is a competition to pick the best Parmigiana, called *Parmi v Parmi* or *The Great Debate*. Chris offers 20 different varieties on Wednesday nights for \$22 with a choice of sides.

Jasmine and Chris would like to thank people for their support over the last five years They hope to stay in Meredith, receive more accolades and share their passion with many more people.



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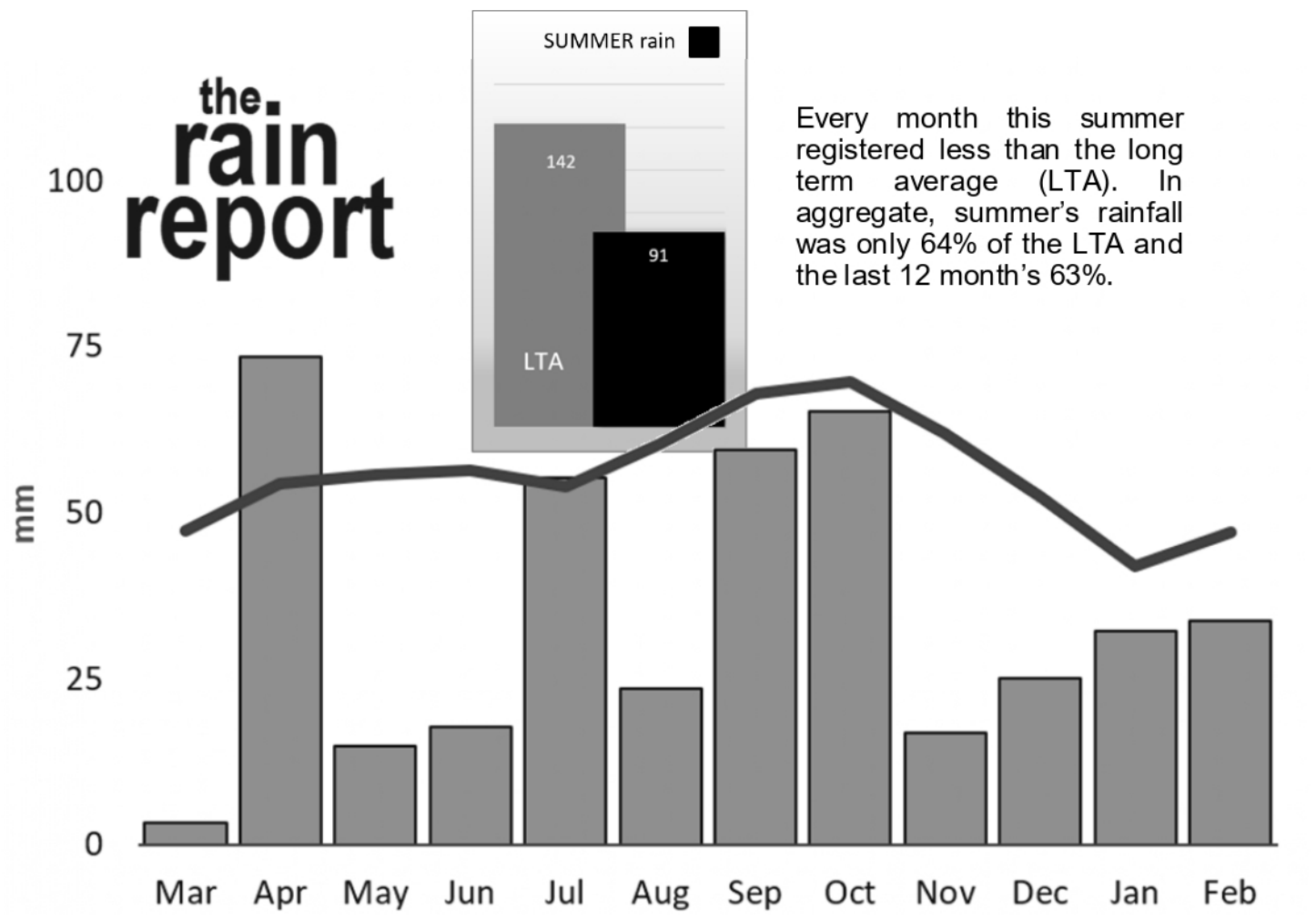
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it's History

Meredith History Interest Group

Annual Meeting:

The Annual General Meeting was held on Sunday, March 2 at the Meredith Hall. After the President's Report, Financial Report and Election of Office Bearers, John and Mark spoke about their research. Their card details that they document urban and industrial history. They are two chaps who team up to research random things and write reports. John told me that recently they were intrigued by the wooden roof in a shop in Bridge Street, Ballarat and set about discovering how it came to be there.

Elaine & District Photographs:

You may have seen the extensive spread in both the Golden Plains Times and The Moorabool News advertising that MHIG is now collecting photos of Elaine & District for an exhibition in October. Elaine seems to have many more categories or subjects than Steiglitz or Morrisons, [the two districts that we collected photos of, over the last four years] including railway, power lines, water race, trucking and events. So please look in the case on top of the cupboard or the box under the bed for photos of these categories or subjects, as well as photos of buildings, businesses, churches, schools, significant trees, mines, etc and people.

We invite you to bring photos to the History Centre, email photos [meredithhistoryinterestgroup@gmail.com] or ask us to visit. [Phone Paul on 0409 861 296 or Darren on 0407 078 748.]

History Reconstructed:

On the weekend of May3 & 4 MHIG is having a sculpture exhibition. The sculptures will be displayed in the grounds of the History Centre or indoors, if delicate. We invite you to create and submit a sculpture or sculptures in 3-dimensional form that represents your view of history, using any material or combination of materials. The event will be part of the Australian Heritage Festival. The theme for that festival in 2025 is *Unearthed*.

For flyers or entry forms, email or call at the History Centre. Mark Cuthbertson, who created the concrete couch, has agreed to judge the sculptures, and will present the awards on Sunday afternoon, and tell us a bit about his art projects since the couch.

Volunteering:

Last issue I advertised for a person to help MHIG with their financials. There are several other tasks that volunteers could help us with and you wouldn't even have to come to the History Centre if you wished to work from home.

Would you be able and interested to collect articles from newspapers / facebook etc about Meredith and District. We have many cuttings from past newspapers but current ones we sometimes miss. History is being made everyday and we need to record today as well as yesterday.

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CEO Steps Down

After only six months in office, Golden Plains Shire CEO, Shane Walden "has departed the organisation, following his recent resignation." according to a media release . This is a most unusual occurrence, and we have sought some more details from the Shire. The Shire's Director of Infrastructure and Environment, Phil Josipovic, will act in the role. "for the next 28 days.



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in our NATURE

Wendy Cook

Houdini, the agile antechinus, pressed his long nose to the tiny hole in the house wall. The scents from inside were enticing. He had been here before, and knew that he could squeeze through the small space between the pipes. Once he was through, he easily ran up the wall behind the stove, gripping with his tiny sharp claws, and onto the kitchen bench. He stopped to leave some droppings, then ran nimbly down the kitchen cupboard, bounced across the floor and up a leg of the dresser to reach the fruit bowl. He sniffed at the objects in it. The citrus smells of oranges and lemons were not attractive. He walked over them, to a tasty apple, then smelt something even better. Softer than the apple and juicy, it was a pear. He reached up and tore at the fragrant fruit with his sharp teeth and claws, and began eating. Another antechinus had followed him. She began work on the other side of the pear.

When the two little marsupials had finished eating, they ran back down a leg of the dresser, hopped across the floor and up the kitchen cupboards. While the female continued to the exit, Houdini paused. He could smell apple again. He turned and walked into a cage. The fruit was delicious, but as he began eating, he heard a crash behind him. Twisting around, he saw that the entrance was blocked. He had been in a trap like this before, and knew that he could escape. If he banged on the cage door hard enough and long enough, the spring that held it shut would weaken and he could push his way out.

From a room nearby, he heard muttering as the person awoke. He had met her last time. She had put his cage on a bench outside, and had planned to release him in the morning, some distance from the house, but he had escaped, and now he was back. The person had seen droppings on the kitchen bench, and at first suspected that they had been left by mice. However, they didn't have the pungent smell of mouse droppings, and didn't look right. They were smaller and grainier, made up of leftover bits of insects, the main part of an antechinus' diet. Agile antechinuses are native to our area, and the person did not wish to harm them, so she used a cage trap with food that antechinus find tasty, such as apple, ham or pepperoni. Although he was not much larger than a house mouse, she knew he was an antechinus, because of his pointy nose and short slightly hairy tail. She recognised him. He had a large tick on the back of his neck, which sucked blood from him, but caused no irritation. He had escaped last time, so she had named him Houdini, and she did not plan for him to escape again. This time, when she took the cage trap outside, she put a weight against the end of it. After she returned to bed, she could hear Houdini banging on the cage door, but when she went outside in the morning, he was still there.

The person gently lifted Houdini and the trap into a cloth bag and began walking. She hoped that if he couldn't see where he was going, and she took him far enough, he would not be able to return to her kitchen. She walked over half a kilometre and opened the trap at the base of a large tree. Houdini froze. The person closed her hand around him and placed him on the ground. Feeling exposed to predators, Houdini hopped around the side of the tree and up the trunk. He had visited this tree before. In a hollow halfway up was a communal nest made of gum leaves and twigs. Here, he and three other antechinuses spent the day sleeping.

After dusk, Houdini was outside foraging on trees, under bark, and among leaf litter on the ground, searching for beetles, cockroaches and spiders to eat. He spent the following day in a different communal nest, three hundred metres from the tree where he had been released. Like all agile antechinus, he was a sociable creature and liked the company of others. Moving around also gave him a chance to get to know other males who would be his competitors at mating time, and to learn where to find females.

Two nights later, Houdini found himself near the house again. He remembered the tasty fruit, and squeezed his way among the pipes, back into the kitchen. Two antechinuses were already there. This time, he stayed on the first bench, lured by the scent of a juicy piece of ham. As he reached it, he heard the cage door bang shut. Soon, the person was moving his cage outside and putting a weight against the end. She was very surprised to see him for a third time. Another cage containing an antechinus was already on the bench. In the morning, she put both cages into her car and drove them back to the large tree. Seven times in two weeks, she made this journey, and each antechinus followed the same path around the side of the tree and up.

Houdini did not return to the house again. He continued his high energy, short life in the bush. He searched for communal nests and company in a far larger area than he needed simply for finding food. Although less than one year old, in a few months he would begin his only mating season. He and other males would gather in the nests, where the females would visit them to choose mates. These two weeks are extremely stressful for the males, and at the end of it, all males die of stress-related diseases. The females are pregnant for about twenty-eight days, which is a long time for such a small marsupial. They all give birth within two or three days and care for between six and ten babies for three or four months. The females stay with their mother, who if she survives long enough, will breed again. The young males go exploring and find a place where they can forage for food and visit other antechinuses in communal nests. Some will return to the house, and the person will take them to the tree, or even further, but she will probably have agile antechinuses visiting her kitchen every year.

Houdini, or one of its companions is pictured on the adjoining page.

Houdini, the unstoppable antechinus. See story on adjoining page.



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Marg's BOOK REVIEW

Kal by Judy Nunn

A sweeping novel of Kalgoorlie.

This is an historical novel set in the Australian outback during the 1890's gold rush.

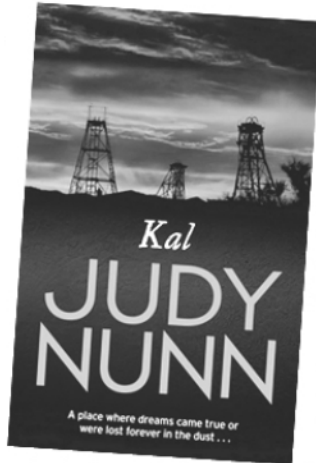
It is a novel which tells the story of the people who forged a nation out of a harsh and unforgiving land, from the heady days of the gold rush, to the horrors of the First World War, to the shame and confrontation of the post war riots. The book delves into the harsh realities of life in the booming mining town of Kalgoorlie, as well as exploring social and political issues of the time.

Kalgoorlie, at that time, was a magnet to anyone with a sense of adventure. It attracted anyone who had a dream whether they were escaping from somewhere, or wanted to arrive where there was excitement and the promise of wealth.

The novel starts in the Italian Alps where the Gianni brothers are railway workers. It then follows their lives as well as several other characters who are drawn to the goldfields of Kalgoorlie, Western Australia. Giovanni Gianni, an Italian immigrant, is a handsome dreamer who arrives in Kalgoorlie in search of a fresh start after a family tragedy. Rico, Giovanni's elder brother, a larger-than-life bull of a man, follows his brother. Maudie Gaskill is a gutsy Englishwoman who sets up a successful pub and becomes a prominent figure in the town's social life. Another character is flash Harry Brearley who is a charismatic conman and shyster, who with his young son Jack befriends Maudie. There is also Caterina Panuzzi who was banished to the other side of the world to protect her family's honour.

Readers first meet many of Judy Nunn's characters in the Italian Alps before encountering them again when they meet up in Kalgoorlie. Family relationships and childhood romances resurface in the new country. Another important issue dealt with in the book is prejudice towards new Australians, especially after the war when jobs were hard to get. Such prejudices led to riots and is another theme tackled by Nunn.

This is an engrossing novel which talks about the town, the gold and the outback, as well as about people and their relationships. The Blurb says Kal was a place that could reward you or it could destroy you. It was a unique place and still is.



Found after Ten Years.

Marg Cooper

A small blue plastic wallet somehow slipped out of the pocket of a blue shirt. It held a number of important cards including a driver's licence, a Medicare card and a Safeway card.

When the owner of the wallet later felt his pocket and it was empty, he returned to the place where he thought he had lost it. A thorough search was undertaken by the desperate owner of the wallet, and the owner of the property.

The procedure of getting new cards was gone through and were placed in a new blue plastic wallet, and in the top pocket of his blue shirt.

A few weeks ago, ten years later Paul Ryan returned to the same shearing shed to load bales of wool onto his truck to take them to Winchelsea to sell. After they loaded the freshly shorn wool bales the owner, now the son of the farmer of ten years ago, suggested they also load some bales that had been in the back of the shed for some time.

During the process the small blue plastic wallet dropped onto the ground.

It is presumed that it was stuck somewhere amongst the old bales.....for ten years.

Mystery Solved!





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Golden Plains Festival 2025 Information and Contacts - Saturday 8 - Monday 10 March 2025

We are writing with information about the Golden Plains Music Festival, scheduled to occur at the Meredith Supernatural Amphitheatre from Saturday 8 - Monday 10 March 2025.

If you have any comments or ideas about any matter related to Golden Plains, including any concern or question about Traffic or Noise management, please get in contact by phone/text 0430 091 120 (available 24 hours over the festival weekend) or by emailing auntym@mmf.com.au (available anytime).

The festival website is goldenplains.com.au

Additional information for locals is available at aunty.goldenplains.com.au/locals

As part of our traffic management plan, the festival will:

1. Implement a speed reduction on Meredith-Mt Mercer Road and Cameron Road from two days prior to the festival through to the day prior to the festival.
2. Implement one-way traffic on Meredith-Mt Mercer Road from Bamganie Road to Cameron Road from approximately 4am the day prior to the festival to approximately 7pm on the first day of the festival.
3. Divert traffic traveling to Meredith within the one-way zone down Cameron Road.
4. Station traffic controllers to the corner of Midland Highway and Staughton Street on the final day of the festival to assist vehicles turning left or right onto Midland Highway.
5. Install no-parking zones along Meredith-Mt Mercer Road and some surrounding roads.

Vehicle passes are distributed to properties along Meredith-Mt Mercer (town side) and Coopers Roads a week before the festival. If you live or work along Bamganie Road or Cameron Road and you would like a vehicle pass, please email Aunty Meredith to confirm if you need one.

Thank you for your support.

Festival Planning Team

Rehydrating Australia

Mulloon Institute

For the majority of central-western Victoria, the summer of 2024–2025 was exceptionally hot and dry. The combination of below-average rainfall and above-average temperatures caused severe decreases in soil moisture and increased bushfire risk for landholders throughout the region, as the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council's (AFAC) seasonal outlook accurately predicted back in November 2024.

With these extended dry periods projected to become longer and drier, the landscapes our farmers depend on need to be resilient and functional. That is the key message driving the work of Mulloon Institute, a not-for-profit education, research and advocacy organisation dedicated to rehydrating landscapes around Australia.

Established in 2011 by founders Tony Coote AM and his wife, Toni, the Institute quickly gathered attention through the Mulloon Rehydration Initiative (MRI) – a catchment-scale research project involving 23 landholders and covering 23,000 hectares supported through funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare program and the NSW Environmental Trust. The project is studying the impact of restoring natural landscape function on ecosystem health, agricultural productivity and hydrology. In 2016, Mulloon Institute was recognised by the United Nations, with the MRI selected as one of five global case study projects to help develop guidelines for sustainable but profitable and productive farming.

Following the success of the MRI, Mulloon Institute set a goal of rehydrating 2.5 million hectares of agricultural land across Australia, aiming to improve the resilience, productivity and profitability of over 5,000 farming families. "We believe the MRI project is just the beginning, a model for landscape restoration which can be scaled up and rolled out across the country," says CEO Carolyn Hall.

The Institute's methods for regenerating landscapes primarily focus on strategies to slow the flow of water, repair local water cycles, re-build floodplain systems and halt active erosion. Alongside sustainable land management solutions, the Institute works with a range of landscape rehydration infrastructure, composed entirely of natural materials (logs, rocks, earth and brush) and including contours and revegetation. In-stream structures, for example, work to gradually rebuild the stream bed in degraded creeks, encouraging flows from small rainfall events to more easily overtop stream banks and spread across the landscape. Reconnecting streams with floodplains allows local aquifers to recharge and retains soil moisture, leading to improved soil health and fertility, biodiversity and carbon sequestration.

Much of Mulloon Institute's work is community focused with a suite of interactive learning programs delivering educational field days, workshops and bootcamps. The curriculum focuses on empowering landholders with the knowledge required to rehydrate, regenerate and restore their landscapes. The Mulloon Institute is also increasingly working with Traditional Owners who have managed Country successfully for tens of thousands of years.

Most recently the organisation has carried out a mentoring program as part of its Communities of Practice Project (CoPP), which gave participants across NSW, QLD, VIC and WA the opportunity to plan, design and undertake landscape rehydration projects under the guidance of Mulloon Institute landscape planners.

Funded by the Australian Government's Future Drought Fund, the initiative was offered to graduates of the Institute's Rehydrating Your Farm Landscape Bootcamp and involved farm visits, one-on-one mentoring sessions and a 'Boots on Ground' day where participants gathered to oversee and participate in the construction of in-stream structures. Just last week, CoPP VIC participants joined Mulloon Institute and the Bass Coast Landcare Network in building seven structures (log-sill, rock and brush weirs) to address gully erosion on a cattle property in Woodleigh.

Hall emphasises the importance of creating change from a grassroots level if we are to be successful in rehydrating and restoring farming landscapes. "We're working with landholders across the country, building their capacity and working with them to take action on the ground."

Aside from their research and educational programs, Mulloon Institute's Law Committee led by Environmental Law specialist Dr Gerry Bates is advocating for regulatory reform to address the fact that many environmental laws hinder rather than facilitate environmental restoration projects. Launched in October 2023, the proposal for a National Code of Practice seeks to expedite, expand and de-risk landscape rehydration and restoration projects across Australia.

"If we can encourage the Federal Government to come to the party on this, it will be the most important change - for the regeneration of the Australian landscape - since Federation," Dr Bates told ABC's Landline.

It seems there is no stopping Mulloon Institute as the organisation continues to grow, now having expanded its work across all states and territories in Australia. "We're a small team with big goals, backed by globally renowned scientific research," says Hall.

With over half of Australian land under agriculture, repairing our landscapes and building resilient, productive ecosystems is paramount to ensuring food security for all Australians. While the predominant focus of this work is environmental, rehydrating Australia's agricultural landscapes will have lasting social and economic benefits for all of us.

See photos on adjoining page and find out more about the Institute at www.mullooninstitute.org/





An example of Mulloon Institute's work (see article on adjoining page) is shown in these before and after photos depicting a degraded water hole brought back to life through sound restoration practices. In this project, leaky weirs were constructed to back up creek water to rehydrate land but still allow flow to continue downstream ."



Elaine botanical artist, Leanne Martin, is exhibiting her beautiful floral drawings and paintings at **Ballarat Art Space**, 14 Lydiard Street North from **March 14th to April 13th**. The gallery is open from 10.00am to 3.00 pm daily.

Leanne studied at the Melbourne Botanical Gardens under Dianne Emery, a member of the Botanical Art Society .

You very likely have seen her work, as she provided the bee image recently displayed on the large box at the Buninyong roundabout. After many requests, native bees are now often the subject of her works..

As well as online, Leanne's work can be seen and purchased at various outlets including Buninyong Gift Shop and, of course, at the Ballarat Art Space exhibition.

She undertakes commissions including painting wedding bouquets, saving precious memories of a special day.

We wish this talented local artist a very successful exhibition.





Brisbane Ranges sketchers

The first outing for 2025 saw 15 of us savouring the glorious weather and views at Bunjil Lookout in Maude. As usual varied mediums were used with most of us facing the challenge of capturing the panorama of the Moorabool valley. Others focused more closely on the Lookout structure itself, nearby picnic shelter or local resident's house. A successful range of artworks were produced. Our mascot, Monty, explored widely and also managed to endear himself to some of the travellers camped at the site. Much concern was raised about the potential impact on the view to the north when a new home is completed just to the right of the Lookout.



Right: Making good use of our coloured page, we're showing some of the group's Bunjil Lookout art with a charcoal drawing by Deidre and a watercolour by Peter .



...and below, is a delightful photo of a wattlebird feasting on a grevillea, captured by Stephen Gourdon at his Morrisons property.





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