

Bridge Connection

Barfold, Baynton, Derrinal, Elphinstone, Glenhope, Heathcote,
Kyneton, Langley, Mia Mia, Metcalfe, Redesdale, Sidonia, Sutton Grange.



Edition 49

January 2014

A community owned newspaper

Celebration of loyal and devoted service

Victorians will celebrate the bravery and great work of Country Fire Authority (CFA) volunteers on the fifth anniversary of the Black Saturday wild fires on Sunday 9 February.

The Victorian Government will hold a central remembrance event from 2pm to 4pm on Sunday 9 February, at Treetops, Melbourne Museum, 11 Nicholson Street, Carlton, to mark the 2009 fires. Victorians are invited to

attend the Carlton event, but other remembrance activities are planned to be held across the State.

RSVP for the event is to fire.recovery@rdv.vic.gov.au or ring the Fire Recovery Unit on 1800 055 714 by Monday 3 February.

Afternoon tea will be provided, and the event will feature photographic displays, music by people from bushfire affected communities, and activities for children.



Exploding tree in Lyell Road fire. Photo by Jim Boyd.

Last resort fire refuge at Blackwood

The Blackwood community has a last resort bushfire survival refuge built alongside the Blackwood fire station.

The refuge is one of three built in Victoria under a pilot program, with others at Ferny Creek, and East Warburton. Police and Emergency Services acting minister Robert Clark said the Blackwood refuge, provided a last resort survival option in the event of a significant bushfire.

"Building a CFA fire station and community fire refuge together is a Victorian and Australian first.

"Blackwood residents now

have a last resort survival option, but it should not be considered a substitute for a practiced personal survival plan.

"Community involvement has been integral because community members will need to operate the refuges," he said.

The refuge has a remote opening system and direct contact with the State Control Centre in Melbourne.

Other features including heat shields, a standby power generator, and fire protection systems ensure the refuges can be operated by the community. Fire Services Com-

missioner Craig Lapsley said a Community Fire Refuge would be activated only when fire was threatening the community, and was not a drop in centre on hot days.

"This Community Fire Refuge is fully ember protected and built to withstand the passage of a bushfire under Ash Wednesday conditions, but ideally we don't want people to be forced into using it," he said.

Mr Clark said the program established three community fire refuges to test the policy prior to development of a broader program, which would be considered follow-

ing an evaluation of the pilot and future budget capacity.

"This refuge is ready for community use and provides a last resort bushfire survival option."

"The pilot has not only benefitted Victoria, but has provided the basis for development of national performance standards for building refuges across Australia.

"Victoria can be considered a world leader in the development of fire refuges, which will benefit not only our great state but also other high bushfire risk communities in Australia and around the world," Mr Clark said.

Information maps show the way

Bendigo Mayor Barry Lyons has launched user friendly maps to make it easier for people to find vital services. The maps cover Heathcote, Kangaroo Flat, and Eaglehawk, with handy information about bus routes, audible pedestrian crossings, scooter and wheelchair recharge locations, toilets, ATMs, car parking, supermarkets, baby feeding rooms, shelter, and drinking fountains. Bendigo City Manager Community Partnerships Suzie Mansell, said web and print friendly versions were available on the city's website under

Transport Connections. She said printed copies were available at the city's offices in Lyttleton Terrace and Heathcote, plus at libraries in Bendigo, Eaglehawk, and Kangaroo Flat. The maps can also be printed from the website in A4 or A3 formats, or can be downloaded onto mobile devices such as iPhones, iPads, Android smartphones and tablets. Suzie said the maps would ensure people of all abilities felt comfortable and welcome in Greater Bendigo.

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9th March
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Running a business without advertising is like winking at a girl in the dark

Top award for Kyneton Tennis Coach

Kyneton tennis coach Marcus Wills has won the 2013 State Government Minister's Community Sport and Recreation Award.

The award is to highlight the positive role sport plays in increasing community participation and wellbeing.

Marcus, who is the Kyneton and District Tennis Club coach, received the award at the Victorian Government's 2013 Awards ceremony held at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

Sport and Recreation Minister Hugh Delahunty presented the award and said Mr Wills was one of many outstanding examples of local community sporting heroes.

"I am honoured to present the 2013 Minister's Award to Marcus Wills for his outstanding dedication to the sport of tennis and his local community during the last

20 years.

"After playing state grade tennis in Melbourne he returned to Kyneton to mentor the next generation of tennis coaches and players.

"He has strived to break down barriers and get local people of differing backgrounds and abilities involved in tennis.

"In particular, the club's growth from 16 to 90 junior players in the space of two years highlights the way his passion and dedication has reinvigorated the Kyneton community.

"These young people have come together to train, compete and socialise and along the way have developed their skills, confidence, self belief, and a real sense of belonging.

"The flow on effects for the community have been phenomenal, with schools and

community members becoming involved in the Kyneton club through fundraising, community events or participation in the programs Marcus has worked so hard to develop.

"This is a great example of

the positive role sports, led by strong community leaders, can play in increasing participation and wellbeing.

"Not only for individuals, but for communities," Mr Delahunty said.

More prison beds needed for community safety reforms

Corrections Minister Edward O'Donohue said 84 extra beds would be added to the 152 bed expansion to Loddon Prison at Castlemaine.

He said this was driven by reforms introduced to Victoria's parole system leading to fewer offenders getting parole and more being sent back to prison for breaching parole conditions.

"Last financial year, parole denials and parole cancellations were up by more than

40 per cent compared to 2011-12.

"The trend continues in the current financial year.

"These parole reforms have clearly contributed to an increase in Victoria's prison population and the Government is providing beds required to support this community safety crackdown.

Community safety is paramount and we are delivering facilities needed to support a safer Victoria," Mr O'Donohue said.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE

Submission of copy to

Bridge Connection

Deadline 20th of each month

In order to relieve the load on our previous editor, Bernie Campbell, would contributors please send copy to

The Editor

mynardmedia6@bigpond.com

or by mail to Bridge Connection,
453 Bourke Rd, Katamatite, 3649

Ph 0417 567 741

Enrol your child at a council kindergarten



Nash, Archie, Lachlan, Jed, Anthony, Audrey, Kate, Daynah build a cubby together at kinder after discussing their ideas and gathering resources. Each child took on a different role to hang the rug between the A frames. This form of inclusion helps children develop positive concepts about working with others, and acceptance of similarities and differences. These children are positive, active, and engaged in their learning, having developed these and many other skills over the kindergarten year.

Kindergarten is a fun, play based environment that gives children the opportunity to learn and develop positive relationships with other children.

By experimenting and participating in group interactions, children make friends, build resilience and develop positive self esteem.

Vacancies are available for four year olds at council managed kindergartens in Kyneton, Lancefield, Riddells Creek, Romsey, Gisborne (Swinburne Avenue) and Woodend.

Vacancies for three year olds are available at Gisborne (Swinburne and Grant Avenue), Riddells Creek, Macedon and Woodend.

Eligible concession card holders for the four year old program receive a kindergarten fee subsidy.

Further information is available from the Early Years Unit on 5422 0333 or visit

www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/children

Letters

The Editor,

If you are a survivor of a violent, sexually abusive, or controlling relationship, you might want to use your experience of surviving to help others?

Do you cringe when you read headlines that trivialise violence against women by calling it 'love gone wrong' or a 'domestic dispute'?

Are you sick of hearing people spreading myths about family violence and sexual abuse?

Well now is your chance to become an Advocate.

The Centre for Non Violence is seeking female sur-

Become an advocate against abuse

vivors of family violence and sexual abuse in the Loddon Campaspe region.

Women will undergo a training and education program in March to learn how to speak to the community and the media about violence against women and controlling relationships.

Advocates will raise awareness, talk about prevalence, let other women know what help is available locally, explain why it is not always easy to leave or get away from the abuse, and help the community understand what it can do to prevent violence against women.

No previous experience is required, just a desire to help raise awareness and to have a voice.

Working out what to say; doing media and public speaking training; and considering how to keep your-

self safe are all part of the training.

Continual support after training is also provided.

Women aged 18 and over who are not currently experiencing violence are being recruited.

The violence must be in the past only.

Contact is Jan Earthstar at jan.earthstar@cnv.org.au or on 5434 4100.

If you are currently experiencing violence ring: The Centre for Non Violence on 5430 3000; Loddon Campaspe Centre Against Sexual Assault on 5441 0430; or the Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service on 1 800 015 188 (24/7).

If in immediate danger, call police on 000.

See Page 7.

To help us authenticate letters to the editor would writers please provide an address and phone number. The address will not be published on request

Hall committee thank you

Redesdale Hall Committee has expressed thanks to firefighters and people who helped extinguish the Lyell Road fires, as well as those who came to offer help at the Redesdale Hall.

Special thanks to the Redesdale Store for staying open to provide fuel for vehicles

fighting the fires and particularly for the special trip to Kyneton for extra food supplies.

Well done to the CFA, and Department of Environment and Primary Industries, for controlling the spate of fires experienced this fire season.

Do not let a child drown in a swimming pool

Bendigo council wants pool owners to ensure pools are childsafe.

Municipal Building Surveyor Hans Tracksdorf said any pool or spa, including a temporary inflatable or wading-style pool, required a fence. "Any pool or spa capable of holding more than 300mm of water must have a child-proof safety barrier installed around it and be regularly maintained."

He said 19 children under age five drowned in Australian swimming pools, in the last year, but some reports have this figure higher. "Half these drownings were in pools either completely unfenced or had unlocked gates.

"Even do it yourself above-ground pools must have appropriate fencing," Mr Tracksdorf said.

He said apart from the tragic consequences of someone

drowning in a pool, property owners risked a \$6000 fine if they did not have a lawful barrier for their swimming pool or spa.

He asked people to conduct life saving safety checks.

The top five needs around a swimming pool are gates and doors that are self closing; gates and doors that are checked for self latching; gates must not be propped open; ground movement can cause a safety barrier or gate to shift or separate and no longer work properly; and objects to climb on must be cleared away.

Redesdale Bush Market

The Redesdale Hall Committee will hold the annual Redesdale Bush Market on Labour Day weekend at the Agnes Mudford Reserve. The market, to be held from 8.30am to noon on Sunday 9 March, will offer something of interest for people of all ages.

Bendigo and District Band will entertain with plenty of music, and the Kyneton Lions Club train will provide rides for youngsters, as well as the 'young at heart'. Enjoy a wide selection of stalls, ranging from local produce, including wine tastings, olives, cake stalls and plants, through to cloth-

ing, bric a brac, a barbecue lunch, and great coffee.

Why not invite your family and friends along to explore this very picturesque area in Central Victoria and make a day of it?

Bring along a picnic rug or chair, enjoy the music and take in the local surroundings.

The weather can be quite different to other areas, sometimes drier so if in doubt, it's a good idea to check the weather forecast.

Outside stalls are available at \$20.

Bookings and Inquiries to Alwyn on 0419 513 976 or Carolyn on 5423194.

Regional communities regain choice of holidays

Regional councils are now able to nominate local public holidays in lieu of Melbourne Cup Day.

The Victorian Government has written to councils, Agricultural and Pastoral Show Societies, and Country Rac-

ing Victoria, reminding them that regional councils are entitled to nominate one full day or two half day local public holidays in all or part of their municipalities in lieu of Melbourne Cup Day. Innovation, Services and

Small Business Minister Louise Asher said the option reflected a commitment to regional communities and to the growth and prosperity of regional Victoria.

"These changes allow local communities to celebrate local events that have long been cultural institutions for people in the region, such as agricultural and pastoral shows or regional race days. "These events showcase the region's resources and rich agricultural history, together with enduring cultural institutions," she said.

Eighteen local agricultural and pastoral shows or regional race days were celebrated with alternative local public holiday arrangements in lieu of Melbourne Cup Day in 2013.

"I am delighted that through these new laws, events as diverse as the Geelong Cup, Kerang Show, and Mallee Machinery Field Days, can be celebrated by local communities," Ms Asher said.

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Kyneton Aquathon preparation starts

Kyneton Toyota Sports and Aquatic Centre Manager, Jon Ground said everything was set for the 2014 Kyneton Aquathon on Sunday 16 March.

“Whether you are looking to get fit or knock out the com-

petition, now is the perfect time to begin training for the big day.

“Sport and fitness enthusiasts of all ages and abilities are encouraged to participate in either a mini, short, or long course option.

“Don’t forget that if you are a runner but not a great swimmer or vice versa, you can enter as part of a team to tackle the swim and run sections of the race,” said Mr Ground.

The mini course is friendly to any age group, and especially designed for first timers. The run is 400 metres with a 50 metre swim.

The short course includes a four kilometre run and 400 metre swim.

Feistier participants can enjoy the long course, consisting of an eight kilometre run and 800 metre swim.

Both short and long courses are completed in age categories.

The Kyneton business community has been extremely generous with donations of prizes for the two stage swimming and running race. Sponsors include Kleenheat Gas, Watt’s Fresh, Kyneton RSL, Central Victorian Drug Free Powerlifting, Kyneton Bowling Club, Jellis Craig Real Estate, and Campaspe Family Practice.

Kleenheat Gas is throwing in a four burner Sundance

Horizon Barbeque valued at \$399 each for the male and female champions of the long course. New sponsors, Watt’s Fresh, will supply fresh fruit for all competitors. To enter, download an application form from www.mrsc.vic.gov.au. Further information is available from Karyn Aumont at the Kyneton Toyota Sports and Aquatic Centre on 5421 1477.

Heathcote Diary dates for 2014

Saturday 15 February:-

Outdoor Cinema. Barrak Reserve.

Wednesday 19 February:-

Play in your Park Barrack Reserve.

Friday 28 February to Sunday 2 March:-

Sanguine Estate Music Festival.

Friday 14 to Sunday 16 March:-

Spanish Festival Weekend.

Saturday 7 to Monday 9 June:-

Queen’s Birthday Weekend.

Friday 29 August to Sunday 31 August:-

Heathcote Film Festival.

Saturday 4 and Sunday 5 October:-

Wine and Food Festival Weekend

Heathcote U3A activities

Chair based exercises.

Every Friday of the month except the last. Guide Hall at 10.30am.

Music appreciation group.

First Tuesday of the Month. Guide Hall at 2pm.

Understanding new technologies.

First Thursday of the Month. Guide Hall at 10am.

Antique collectables and curio Group.

First Monday of the Month. Guide Hall at 1pm.

Garden Club.

Third Wednesday of the Month. Guide Hall at 1.30pm.

History Group.

Third Thursday of the Month. Guide Hall at 10.30am.

Luncheon Club.

Third Friday of the Month. Guide Hall 11.30am.

Morning Tea Day.

Last Friday of the month. Various venues at 10.30am.

Some with a guest speaker.

Further information is available
in the U3A newsletter

available at the Visitor Information Centre, The Hub, (council offices), the Library, or contact us
on 5433 2925 or 5433 3649

and email: u3a.heathcote@gmail.com

Bridge Connection Inc.

Management Committee.

President;	Mary Bennett	03 5425 5551
Secretary;	Regina Bennett	03 5425 5402
	reginabennett@bigpond.com	
Treasurer;	Terry McKenzie	03 5425 3262
	tezzamack@bigpond.com.au	

Advertising 0417 567 741

Editorial:- Jim Mynard 0417 567 741 Anytime.
mynardmedia6@bigpond.com
Hard copy to 453 Bourke Rd, Katamatite 3649

Founders Berni and Brett Campbell.

Distribution

1000 printed copies of Bridge Connection are circulated in the Mia Mia Redesdale Region, taking in Barfold, Baynton, Derrinal, Elphinstone, Glenhope, Heathcote, Kyneton, Langley, Metcalfe, Sidonia, Sutton Grange.

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Don't survive twice

Once is enough at the hands of an abuser

Women who have survived violence and abuse are being asked to participate in a training program to heighten public awareness of the prevalence of violence against women.

Women in the Loddon Campaspe region who are survivors of family violence, sexual abuse and/or a controlling relationship are being invited to participate in a program to learn how to speak out publicly about their experiences and deliver key messages of violence prevention to the media and community.

The Loddon Campaspe Media Advocacy Project, run through the Centre for Non Violence, is a partnership between Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Mount Alexander Shire Council and City of Greater Bendigo as part of their commitment to the Prevention of Violence against Women.

Expressions of interest from women who would like to undergo a training and education program in March 2014 are being asked for.

They will use their own experience of violence to raise public awareness about

violence.

They will help to advise other women about what help is available.

Around one in three Australian women have experienced physical violence and almost one in five have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15.

A woman is killed in Australia almost every week by a partner or ex-partner.

The project aims to support women survivors to tell their stories as a way of challenging common myths, misconceptions and negative attitudes held by the community.

Women participants will

receive support throughout the project to ensure they have the skills and confidence to speak publicly and to ensure they can remain safe throughout their involvement.

Women interested in being part of the project should contact the Centre for Non Violence on 5434 4100.

If you are currently experiencing family violence or sexual abuse, ring the Centre for Non Violence on 5430 3000 or the Loddon Campaspe Centre Against Sexual Assault on 5441 0430.

If you are in immediate danger, ring police on 000.



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www.baccs.org
Contact Corina on
0412 693 415

New Bendigo Hospital well on target

Concrete footings have been poured to set the new Bendigo Hospital on its way.

Health Minister David Davis said construction was moving quickly, was on budget, and on track for completion in late 2016.

Northern Victoria MP Wendy Lovell said the \$630 million world class hospital was one of the largest regional healthcare projects in Australia and would deliver the highest quality healthcare to people in the Bendigo region.

"The new hospital will have 372 beds, 10 operating theatres, an integrated cancer

centre, mental health unit, and a helipad on top of a multi-storey car park.

"It will provide 75 mental health beds, including a 35 bed adult psychiatric unit, a 20 bed aged psychiatric unit, a 20 bed secure extended care unit, and a five bed mother and baby unit."

Northern Victoria MP Amanda Millar said the project would generate more than 770 construction industry and supply chain jobs.

"At least 300 of those jobs will be maintained for a minimum of three years during peak construction," Ms Millar said.

Mia Mia building on a strong foundation

Creation of an annual award for recognition of community work is one strong focus for the Mia Mia Community Plan.

The plan review received strong input, including support from the City of Greater Bendigo, and will be launched on Australia Day.

Support and promotion of existing and new community festivals and events such as the Mia Mia Flower Show, Trivia Night, Twilight Opera, Big Sing, Musters of the Lambs, and community dinners are listed in the plan. The plan also aims to establish an annual cultural event that brings together the professional artists of the area.

Investigate inclusion of a Mia Mia Slow Cooking Competition in the Muster of the Lambs event at The Flat, and to produce a book on the history of Mia Mia.

Storyboards will be provided at places of geographical and historic interest.

Residents will be made aware of Landcare and other environmental projects in the area, especially those of the Campaspe Valley and Baynton Sidonia Landcare groups, North Central Catchment Management Authority.

The historic Mia Mia Mechanics Institute building, the public hall, and The Flat, the Mia Mia Recreation Reserve, will be maintained so they are safe and attractive for sport, passive recreation, tourism, and community events.

Provide a regular community newsletter for Mia Mia residents with dates and contact details of local events, current social, craft, and environmental groups, and to

encourage new groups.

Develop a welcome letter and districe service package for new and existing residents, updated each year for distribution to community members.

Much within the plan is well under way as a matter of course and of particular interest is production of a book recording Mia Mia's history, support for cultural activities, and promotion of new and existing festivals.

Mia Mia was strongly and successfully involved in the 'Discover Redesdale' festival and produced activities of a high standard

Having a community plan that is dynamic and able to move with wider community norms is important, especial-

ly when it comes to seeking financial support from councils and governments. Most thought out requests for

grants needed for community facilities are successful if they come under a business plan, and can be justified.



Members of the Mia Mia Bennett family. From left: Helen, Laura, Brooke, and Mary.

Call for slower speed through Mia Mia

The meeting also decided to request a speed limit reduction on Heathcote - Redesdale Road, through Mia Mia from 100km/hr to 80km/hr, from the Heathcote side of the Recreation Reserve and to Lavender's Hill on the Redesdale side.

The road has several intersections, including with Blacksmiths Lane, Matheson Street, Halleys Street, Valley Road, Burke and Wills Track, Daniels Lane, and Westblade Street/Derrinal Road.

Concern was expressed about the Mia Mia Recreation Reserve entry with traffic turning on to Heathcote Redesdale Road during functions at the hall. Also about traffic speed

near school bus stops, and when fire units were accessing the main road at the base of the descent because vehicles coming into Mia Mia tended to build up speed on the slope.

This matter was referred to Vic Roads.

The action was generated by a request from Grant Hulls.

Sign to Mia Mia facilities

Mia Mia Small Township and District Engagement committee has asked Bendigo council to install directional signs at the T intersection on the Burke and Wills Track, also known as the Lancefield - Mia Mia Road, indicating the Church, Hall, and Recreation Reserve.

Date sort for community plan launch

Community consultation will be sort in order to set a date for the official launch of the Mia Mia Community Plan.

The matter was also referred to the next Mia Mia Mechanics Institute meeting.

This was decided during the Septemnber meeting of the Mia Mia Small Township and District Engagement meeting.

Road toll down

Victoria's road toll for 2013 was the lowest in 90 years. Road deaths peaked during the early 1970s with more than 1000 deaths in a year. Alcohol checks, speed cameras, seat belts, and better roads, have made our roads safer.

Workshops on sustainable gardening

Water saving techniques will be the focus of two free sustainable gardening workshops, offered by Macedon Ranges Shire Council in collaboration with Western Water at this year's Sustain-able Living Festival in Woodend.

The workshops will take place at 11am and 1pm on Saturday 8 February at the Neighbourhood House and Community Garden, 37 Forest Street Woodend.

They are open to anyone interested in learning, and free, but participants will need to pay the \$5 entry fee to the festival.

Conducted by sustainable gardening educator Mariette Tuohey, the workshops will cover five low cost techniques for saving water, practical ways to use water effectively, water saving products, and a tour of the Woodend permaculture garden. Mariette has

extensive ex-perience in sustainable gardening, with water conservation being one of her specialist areas. Places are limited, so please register your attendance in advance.

Bookings can be made online via www.western-water.com.au or by calling 03 9218 5455.

Council representatives and Western Water will also have stalls at the Sustainable Living Festival, which runs from 10am-4pm.

Council will provide information about conservation programs active in the region including the weed program, platypus sighting campaign, Landcare activities, and use of nest boxes. Western Water will provide information on sustainable gardening in the Macedon Ranges, with indigenous plants for the first 50 visitors, and a model demonstrating a rain garden.

Action on untidy blocks

The Mia Mia Small Township and District Engagement committee wants Bendigo council to act against untidy town blocks. Concern was expressed during the group's September meeting about the potential for creation of urban slums in rural areas caused by people buying blocks with little

intention of building.

The committee said too many vacant blocks were being used as places to dump rubbish and used cars.

Discussion revealed the issue was raised several years ago when there was an influx of sheds.

The council responded well to the situation, but it was noted there was a resurgence of the unsightly habit.

Blacksmiths Lane was named as an area of interest. Eppalock councillor Rod Campbell asked the committee to mark properties of concern on an aerial map provided so the council could investigate.

**Make the battle
easier for our
fire crews
this summer.
Clear fire
hazards**

Visitor centre volunteers needed

Macedon Ranges Council would like to hear from people passionate about the Macedon Ranges, and who enjoy meeting people and interacting with visitors.

The council needs people to join its volunteer team at one of the two accredited Visitor Information Centres, located in Woodend and Kyneton?

The centres are open daily (except Christmas Day and Good Friday).

Rostered shifts are available from 9am to 1pm or 1pm to 5pm.

The minimum commitment is two four hour shifts a month.

Full inhouse training is provided and a rewarding annual learning program which includes first hand experience of many tourism facilities. This is an opportunity to connect with other people and contribute your skills

and experience to the community.

You can register your interest and download a position description from the council's website at

mrsc.vic.gov.au/vic-volunteers.

Alternatively, contact Jane Duncan at the Kyneton Visitor Information Centre on 5422 6785 or vic@mrsc.vic.gov.au.

Why have a bushfire plan?

In a bushfire or grass fire, people might be confused, disoriented and physically or psychologically stressed. In these conditions, making sound decisions becomes difficult. A written and well practised plan will help you remember what steps to take during a fire crisis.

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John Duigan a man of high pursuits

Member of the Mia Mia historic Duigan aviation family, John Dennis Duigan (Tig), died peacefully in his sleep at his Flinders Island home on Thursday 2 January 2014, aged 87.

He was the youngest child of Reginald and Phyllis Mary Duigan.

Reg and his brother John, on their father's property Spring Plains, Mia Mia, designed and constructed the first powered aircraft to be flown by an Australian.

John Robertson Duigan made the historic flight of around 23 feet (seven metres) on Saturday 16 July 1910.

The event was enthusiastically celebrated at Mia Mia, one hundred years later by a large gathering of locals and aviation enthusiasts.

John's older brothers, Terry and Brian, both served with distinction in the RAAF and the RAF while his sister Dr Sue Duigan was an eminent botanist on the staff at Melbourne University.

Sue was also a licensed pilot, flying her own plane on many expeditions.

When John left Geelong College his ambition was to follow his two brothers, into the Air Force, however with the war over the need for recruits had ceased, so John turned to the sea, enlisting as a cadet trainee with the Shell Oil company fleet.

He spent several years travelling the world and during that time achieved his Master's Certificate.

After a few years he returned to dry land, buying a farm, 'Kirribilli' near Gisborne.

It was while farming he began selling and delivering wood to the nearby Civil Defence School at Mount Macedon.

This institution was developed to train individuals and communities should a major disaster occur such as nuclear attack.

Staff members were mainly recruited from ex-service personnel and before long John was asked to join their ranks. The transformation from outside worker to lecturer was remarkably quick and in time he became one of the star performers.

By Jill James



The little Savannah

People who had the good fortune to attend his lectures all spoke highly of his ability to communicate and enliven the serious nature of the subject matter. In January 1963, John married Helen Paikes.

Children Kate, Megan, and Nick, arrived at suitable intervals.

Life at Kirribilli was good but both John and Helen were keen to purchase a larger and more productive property.

A chance meeting with Bill Heggarty late of Summer Hill, Redesdale, introduced the Duigans to Flinders Island where Bill had previously bought a farm.

On inspection John was quickly convinced that a farm on the island would meet all the criteria, important for he and his family.

These were a highly productive farming area, close to the sea and somewhere he might indulge his love of flying.

Soon after they moved to Flinders Island, John bought a boat, 'Pegasus' and purchased an abalone licence.

The enterprise fitted in very well with farming and his love for the sea.

He and a friend, Jamie Mason, bought a truck and established the 'Mason Dixon Line' for the transport of live stock. John and Helen also acquired a bus and took over the school run, later extending this service to the Launceston suburbs on the Tasmanian mainland.

These enterprises fitted in well with farming demands, but there was always time to entertain friends, with picnics to the outer islands, memorable parties, and the many activities, which so often flourish in isolated communities.

Flinders Island was the right choice for

the Duigans.

Not only is it a place of exceptional beauty, but it provided the family members with the perfect opportunity to satisfy all their needs.

Over the years John had several ultra light aeroplanes in which he flew on most days, checking stock and on occasions dive bombing the local pony club where Helen was officiating.

When he was approaching his 80th birthday he decided as his father did before him, to build his own plane.

However unlike the Duigan bi-plane which on its first take off only travelled some 23 feet, John planned to fly his plane, a Savannah to Uluru.

He flew to Coliban Estate, Redesdale to collect his friend, Brian James, from where after six days, followed by a film crew from the ABC, they arrived at Uluru International Airport.

The birthday was celebrated at Alice Springs by the family who had flown up in a more mundane fashion for the occasion.

It is a cliché to say that some one was 'much loved', but in John's case this is simply true.

He was a wonderful husband, father, and grandfather to his seven grandchildren and everyone who met him throughout his long life all spoke with true affection about their memories of John.

He was one of those rare people who while thriving in social situations could also find satisfaction in solitary pursuits.

He was fortunate to be blessed with a strong sense of curiosity.

By nature a true bush mechanic, his search to explain the often unexplainable seemed unlimited; the 'Why is it So?' factor was very much part of John's thinking.

The hall at the little town of Whitemark on Flinders Island was packed to overflowing for the funeral.

His son Nick's parting words: "John Duigan you are now ready for take off," was a fitting finale to the celebration of his father's life.

Great year for Mia Mia Redesdale Primary School

What a big year it has been for all involved at the Redesdale Mia Mia Primary School.

I looked on with a sense of pride as three fine young men gave their graduation speeches in front of a packed Mia Mia Hall.

It was great to see Andrew Morrison, Ethan Parsons, and Hamish Campbell handle themselves so well, displaying the leadership qualities they have shown right through primary school and I am sure they will continue to impress at their secondary school.

This night was the culmination of a lot of hard work by students, staff, parents, and the wider community.

We saw many successful fundraising events during the year to raise \$6500.

Many thanks to community members for supporting us. One of the highlights of the year was when we were able to give back to the community and hold a garden party to officially open the new work that has been done on the buildings and grounds.

This was attended by almost 100 former and current students, teachers, and interested locals.

Former student and long time resident Agnes Mudford did the honours of cutting the red ribbon while former Redesdale and Mia Mia principal Keith Chambers entertained us with his stories of both schools.

Another successful night was the Trivia Night, attended by 100 people who raised \$3200.

The profits from this went towards building a permanent barbeque facility, which

By Andrew Campbell school council president

in turn, can also be used for future fundraising.

A large portion of the funds raised in 2013 went towards the schools' swimming program.

We were able to subsidise this to such an extent that all students were able to participate.

The school council identified the importance of all children living in country areas being able to swim, or at least be safe around water.

Another night that filled me with pride was the Kyneton Secondary College Presentation Night.

This was like a 'who's who' of former Redesdale Mia Mia Primary School students.

We were entertained during the night by Celena Boyd, Tahlia Campbell, Jasmine Sciberras, and Chantelle Sciberras, in both the school band and the choir.

The following awards were presented to former Redesdale Mia Mia students:

Year Seven Excellence: to Jessica Kriewaldt.

Year Eight Excellence: Tom Bennett.

Year Nine Excellence: Tahlia Campbell, Chantelle Sciberras, Jasmine Sciberras, and Leah Short.

Year Nine Outstanding Excellence: Ebony Kriewaldt, and Sasha Sciberras.

Special Awards.

Year Seven to Nine Student Leadership Group: Ebony Kriewaldt and Leah Short.

Boost Award: Nikita Moorfoot.

Music Encouragement Award: Celena Boyd.

Year Nine English Award: Tahlia Campbell.

Alpine Leaders Award: Eb-ony Kriewaldt

Year Ten Outstanding Excellence: Sophie Gunter.

Year Eleven Excellence: Brooke Bennett.

It was a great night to see so many young locals doing well and to catch up with proud families.

We wish them every success in the future.

On a sad note, Hamish's graduation sees the end of Lisa and my time on Redesdale Mia Mia School Council, but I am sure we will be present at many future school events because a Redesdale Mia Mia Primary School event is a Community Event.



Former Redesdale Mia Mia Primary School student, long time resident, Agnes Mudford. cuts a ribbon to officially note new work at the school, in company with former principal, Keith Chambers, and school council president Andrew Campbell.

Farmers' Markets

Farmers' Markets will be at Kyneton on Saturday 8 February, in St Pauls Park, Piper Street.

Riddells Creek Farmers' Market on Saturday 15 February at Riddells Creek Primary School.

Lancefield and District Farmers' Market on Saturday 22 February in High Street.

Riddells Creek market will feature a cooking demonstration with a local resident at the market on Saturday 15

February. Check out the website <http://www.mrs-gonline.org.au/> for great local initiatives. Sign up to be a local 'trader' in the Macedon Ranges with the Macedon Ranges Community Exchange. Administrators are present at the markets to answer questions and might be able to sign you up on the spot. Look out for the Relay for Life stand. Markets have locally prepared foods available.

Lauren Mitchell to talk tourism

Author, journalist and columnist, Lauren Mitchell, has been appointed Regional Tourism Development Officer with Bendigo Regional

Tourism (BRT). BRT was formed in September 2012 as the peak industry body for tourism across Bendigo and the surrounding

region. This covers the municipalities of Loddon, Mt Alexander, Central Goldfields, and Greater Bendigo.

Chair of Bendigo Regional Tourism, Central Goldfields Cr Paula Nixon said tourism across the Bendigo Loddon region was worth nearly \$460 million a year.

Cr Nixon said the area was growing in stature as a major tourism destination.

She welcomed Lauren to BRT.

"While Lauren will be based within the Tourism Department at the City of Greater Bendigo she will spend much of her time travelling across the region coordinating major projects and initiatives in an effort to grow tourism in the broader Bendigo Region.

"Lauren has worked in local media for 14 years and is known for her work with Bendigo Magazine, Bendigo Weekly, and the Bendigo Advertiser.

"As a journalist, editor and columnist, she will bring a unique perspective and understanding of the region to the new role.

"Lauren is also a published author who has written a number of books including Mixed Cases – stories of the Bendigo Winegrowers which she co-authored with John Holton and has also shared stories from our region nationally through publications such as Slow Magazine.

"The Bendigo Regional Tourism Board is looking forward to working with Lauren who is a long time supporter and avid visitor to the villages and townships surrounding Bendigo," said Cr Nixon.

Lauren Mitchell said she is excited about the challenges that lay ahead with the new role.





"I have personally experienced some of the best attractions of the region. I've danced in the street at Maldon over Easter, toured the old Rheola goldfields with a gypsy wagon and Clydesdale horse, toured the wineries in a shining silver vintage Bentley and spent hours and hours shopping for bric-a-brac in every historic village north, west, south and east of the city.

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Enquiries: Marg 0409 550 238 - or just come along!



0409 550 238

dyslexiclever@gmail.com

Diary Dates

Thursday 30 January.

Chinese New Year's Eve. (Horse).

Friday 7 February.

DyslexiClever support group meeting.

9am in Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Sunday 9 February.

Fifth anniversary of Black Saturday fires.

Friday 14 February. Valentine's Day.

Friday 7 March.

DyslexiClever

(Dyslexia Support Group)

9am at Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Saturday 8 March. International Women's Day.

Monday 10 March. Labour Day

Friday 4 April.

DyslexiClever

(Dyslexia Support Group)

9am at Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Friday 18 April. Good Friday.

Friday 2 May.

DyslexiClever

(Dyslexia Support Group)

9am at Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Monday 5 May. Japanese Children's Day.

Friday 6 June.

DyslexiClever

(Dyslexia Support Group)

9am at Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Saturday 21 June. Winter Solstice.

Friday 4 July. American independence Day.

Friday 4 July.

DyslexiClever

(Dyslexia Support Group)

9am at Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Friday 1 August.

DyslexiClever

(Dyslexia Support Group)

9am at Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Friday 5 September.

DyslexiClever

(Dyslexia Support Group)

9am at Ethic Cafe, Woodend.

Marg 0409 550 238.

Editorial

A grateful community

Some among us who were safe in our homes or distant from the Black Saturday wildfires five years ago, can only imagine the fear and heartbreak of those who came under attack, on that terrible day, and on other black fire days.

The fires in some areas were among the top fiercest four or five wildfires in the history of Victoria's European settlement, but among the worst in human terms because of closer settlement in bushy areas.

People who find themselves under threat have no or little choice of what is happening to them, except to have been prepared and to hopefully save property and lives.

Far too many times the battle to save either or both has been lost.

But these losses would easily be doubled, tripled, or even more serious, were it not for thousands of volunteers across Australia who leave the sanctity of jobs and homes to prevent the spread of wild fire.

Some CFA call outs are to quite small fires and dealt with immediately.

How many of these little fires, we can ask, would have grown into conflagration?

This writer, just before lunch on Christmas Day, heard the piercing call of fire engines and saw two units racing off to quell a small fire.

Volunteers on board had left their homes, children, friends, and wider family, on Christmas Day and raced to the scene of a fire.

Were they to know when the message came, whether or not they would return to their families in time for a 'delayed' Christmas lunch, or were they putting themselves forward for a long, serious, and dangerous battle in order to help protect their community. Commemorating the fifth anniversary of Black Saturday, and recalling other 'black' fire days is a way for the wider community to say 'thank you'. (Page One).

Do not leave children in cars
unattended. Even for one minute,
warns minister.
See page 14.

Rainfall

Baynton

	Year
Jan	0
Feb 90.6	90.6
Mar 27.4	118.00
April 8.6	126.6
May 42.2	168.8
June 86.0	254.8
July 87.6	342.4
Aug 106.4	*424.8
Sept	
Oct	
Nov	
Dec	

Eppalock

	Year
Jan 0	0
Feb 50.4	50.4
Mar 22.4	72.8
April 5.5	78.3
May 34.4	96.8
June 35.1	145.6
July 77.4	210.20
Aug 59.8	285.0
Sept 76.8	361.80
Oct	
Nov	
Dec	

Mia Mia

	Year
Jan 0	0
Feb 63.5	63.5
Mar 24.5	88.0
April 5.0	93.0
May 63.0	156.0
June 32.0	188.0
July 78.5	266.5
Aug 88.0	354.5
Sept 83.5	438.0
Oct 40.5	478.5
Nov 38.5	517.0
Dec 21.00	538.0

Redesdale

	Year
Jan 0	0
Feb 54.0	54.0
Mar 28.5	82.5
April 4.7	87.2
May 24.3	111.5
June 65.0	176.5
July 63.0	239.5
Aug 94.0	333.5
Sept 79.0	412.5
Oct 32.9	455.4
Nov 50.5	505.9
Dec 9.00	514.9

'No' to roadside sales

The City of Greater Bendigo is reminding residents and visitors it is illegal to sell vehicles from roadsides and reserves.

Under State legislation and a Local Law (council) it is an offence to offer vehicles for sale on public land and could result in a \$100 fine. Bendigo Council Director Planning and Development, Prue Mansfield, warned residents and visitors against taking advantage of big events by placing items out for roadside sales.

"These events often attract large numbers of people to Greater Bendigo and many feel an increase in traffic flow will improve their

chances of attracting a buyer for their vehicle or goods if they are displayed on the side of the road or nature strip.

"Such activity is unsafe, as illegally parked cars can be a traffic hazard, cause traffic congestion and can be a distraction for drivers.

"The local law is implemented with the support of police to keep traffic moving and people safe.

"The display of goods or a vehicle for sale in a residential area also has a negative impact on the amenity of a neighbourhood and can cause a disruption to residents and visitors wanting to park their cars in the street," Ms Mansfield said.

Do not leave children in cars alone

Children and Early Childhood Development Minister Wendy Lovell has asked people not to leave children in cars.

Ms Lovell said leaving children in hot cars could be fatal and was a criminal offense.

She said to leave a child in a hot car even for a short time could result in the child's death.

"During busy shopping periods, it is easy for parents to be caught up in the rush and forget they have their children in a car.

Ms Lovell said the temperature inside a parked car during summer could be 20 to 30 degrees hotter

than the outside temperature.

"A young child's smaller body size and underdeveloped nervous system puts a child at a much greater risk of life threatening heatstroke, dehydration, and other health risks than older children or adults," Ms Lovell said.

"The message is clear - if you are travelling with a child in a car and you need to leave, even for just one minute, take the child with you," the minister said.

During the last year paramedics in Victoria were called to more than 1100 cases of children locked in cars across Victoria.

Serious concern over Mexican Feather Grass

Gardeners have been asked to watch out for infestation of Mexican feather grass.

The grass has been found in a Scoresby garden.

The resident had bought seven Mexican feather grass plants from a retailer in 2008 and they had continued to grow and spread.

She identified the weed after attending a weed recognition class.

The plants were mistakenly sold in 2008, but recalled.

Nevertheless some survived in gardens.

Department of Environment and Primary Industries (DEPI) Biosecurity Officer Annie Lamb said an estimated 800 property owners may still have Mexican feather grass plants growing in their gardens.

"We are urging Victorians to contact the Department if they believe they may have bought or received Mexican Feather grass as a gift around 2008," she said.

"Mexican feather grass is a dense, upright grass around 70 centimetres tall, with long

feathery seed heads.

"The leaves are very fine and can be rolled easily between the fingers.

"It is drought tolerant, unpalatable to stock and closely related to serrated tussock which is widely regarded as Australia's worst pasture weed," Ms Lamb said.



Mexican Feather grass

She said it was important people did not attempt to remove the plants themselves as this may further spread the weed.

"DEPI will remove them safely at no cost to the property owner."

Residents are urged to report suspicious plants to the DEPI customer service centre on 136 186.

Classes for adult bike riding

To help people return to or start cycling, Macedon Ranges Council is facilitating its final round of AustCycle programs as part of the Healthy and Active People Initiative.

The program caters to a range of skill levels, from those who have never ridden a bike to those who are comfortable but may not have ridden for a long time.

This beginner bike riding program will be the eighth

program run as part of the initiative which has seen almost 50 people in the Macedon Ranges back on their bikes to re-learn the skill of riding a bike safely.

The seven week AustCycle bike riding program starts on Thursday 6 February at the Woodend Buffalo Stadium and the cost is a gold coin donation per session.

To register contact Council's Healthy Communities Team on 5422 0216.

Kyneton adopts Khanh Vinh orphanage

Kyneton committee of Artists for Orphans has adopted the poor rural Orphanage Khanh Vinh in Vietnam.

Committee supporters were overjoyed by news the Department of Consumer Affairs had approved their application to adopt Khanh Vinh.

This means the orphanage is an official beneficiary of Artists for Orphans Inc.

The group has been supporting several orphanages in Vietnam, but always had a special feeling for the children at Khanh Vinh.

Founder of Artists for Orphans Roni Wildeboer, has been visiting Khanh Vinh Orphanage, delivering aid for three years.

Committee vice president, Ros Bradbury, and patron Marcie Jones joined her on a visit late last year and were captivated by the children of Khanh Vinh.

Their zest for life, dazzling smiles, optimism in the face of poverty and adversity, is truly inspiring," Roni said.

Despite the language barrier, Marcie Jones taught them to chant: "Aussie Aussie Aussie. Oi, with 'Oi! Oi' causing squeals of delight from the children.

Khanh Vinh is a rural orphanage about a one hour drive from the coastal town of Nha Trang.

Air in the mountains is much cooler so the children were delighted when the Kyneton women delivered socks and hats, along with toiletries, clothes, educational supplies, and fluffy toys to cuddle.

More good news was received from the Department of Consumer Affairs last week with the announcement

that an Australian friend and supporter based in Nha Trang, Robert Costabile, of Lanterns Restaurant, who supports several orphanages in the Nha Trang area with nutritious, freshly cooked food was to become the official representative in Vietnam for Artists for Orphans.

"Robert's experience will be invaluable for us.

"He can help us oversee projects, keep us up to date with progress and needs at the orphanages.

"He is a remarkable man and we are so proud and grateful to have him as part of our team," said Roni.

During 2013, this small but dedicated group of Macedon Ranges people allocated \$10,000 to sponsor children who have to leave their orphanages.

These children are institutionalised, alone, and naive. They are vulnerable to sweat shops, the sex trade, and human trafficking.

The money paid for scholarships enabling them to learn life skills, a trade, or continue their education at university.

The personal involvement of Roni and her team is what makes this group different.

Artists for Orphans is registered with the Department of Australian Consumer Affairs.

Roni personally travels to Vietnam, usually twice a year, to ensure the money is well placed with the intended target and not moved sideways into anyone else's pocket. Ros Bradbury accompanies Roni on some trips, at her own expense.

Roni said nobody gets paid. "We rely on volunteers who invest their hearts as well as their skills.

"We keep overheads low and the Rotary Club of Woodend sponsor us, accepts donations on our behalf and offers

tax deductibility on donations.

"It is a winning formula and I am very proud of our little organisation.

"The rewards for us are life changing," Roni said.

The group relies on artists of all persuasions to fundraise; painters, potters, singers, jewellery makers, and musicians.

Patron Normie Rowe has been especially supportive of Artists for Orphans.

Both he and Roni's husband, Laurens Wildeboer are Vietnam veterans who understand the effects the Vietnam war have been far reaching.

Remnants of that war, including Agent Orange, are still decimating the Vietnamese population and now causes indescribable birth defects in fourth generation children. Further information is available from Roni Wildeboer on 0424 938 931

Joy for two distant communities

Please send news items about community groups to
The editor
Bridge Connection

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BROKEN WINDOW REPAIRS, MIRRORS,

BALUSTRADES SHOWERSCREENS: FRAMED,

SEMI FRAMELESS, AND FRAMELESS,

RETRO FITTED DOUBLE GLAZING
AND

COMMERCIAL WINDOW FRAMES AND GLAZING

New local history books

Ken James and Noel Davis launched two books during late 2013.

The books are of interest to Central Victoria.

They are 'A history of Eight Central Victoria Mechanics' Institutes: Barfold, Chewton, Elphinstone, Lyal, Mia Mia, Redesdale, Sutton Grange, and Taradale'.

This is a record of the districts, which had and still have Mechanics' Institute halls.

Replacement halls at Elphinstone, Redesdale, and Sutton Grange are no longer Mechanics' Institutes.

The Mechanics' Institute at Chewton operated mostly from the Chewton Town Hall. The book is available from Ken James, 18 Lofty Avenue, Camberwell, 3124 for \$37 posted.

Copies are also available from Mia Mia Primary School, and Aesops Bookshop, Kyneton.

The second book is "Taradale's Halls and Lodges", a history of the Mechanics' Institute hall and the Oddfellows Hall as well as seven lodges. The cost is \$32 posted and is available from the Taradale Historical Group, Post Office, Taradale, 3447.

Poppy crop for Victoria

Controlled commercial alkaloid poppy cropping could be established in Victoria this year.

Agriculture and Food Security Minister Peter Walsh said the high value crop could create a \$100 million industry within a decade.

"The alkaloid poppy crops would be grown for the production of valuable pain relief medication and

would be a totally new industry for Victorian agriculture.

"This is a very exciting opportunity for farmers who are looking to diversify, as alkaloid poppies can be grown as part of crop rotation.

"There will also be flow on economic benefits for regional Victorian communities, supporting local jobs and services.

The Victorian Government has set a target for farmers to double food and fibre production by 2030.

"Current law prohibits the cultivation of alkaloid poppies in Victoria except for small scale, strictly controlled experimental trials."

He said 13 trials were in hand, but once the crops were analysed, the plant matter was destroyed.

Spurious terms of endearment

By Louise Joy

'That sheila's got big boobs' and 'she's a nice style of woman', factual and complimentary, they cannot imagine their fault.

'I never said anything wrong' they say, 'no one has a sense of humour anymore' as objections are made to a random 'my little desert rose' in the most ridiculous manner, which makes many laugh as much as 'my little sauce bottle'.

So obviously absurd, the sense in which it was meant, the greatest compliment the dinosaur can receive is to make people laugh.

There is always one who will not laugh, threatens to go to court and the whole

sorry saga of a dinosaur's day of comedy unravels. No laughing matter in court as the dinosaur becomes an extinct species.

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