

SUNBURY & MACEDON RANGES

Star Weekly

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Bowel cancer plea

By Glenn Fisher

“I’m not scared.”

Rebecca Arden is also not old. Not even close to middle-aged. So nowhere near the age when medical experts recommend getting checked for something such as bowel cancer.

Married for six years to Jesse and a loving mum to two young daughters aged five and two, Rebecca is just 37.

But this brave Sunbury woman’s world was turned upside down on 18 June when she was diagnosed with stage 4 bowel and liver cancer.

“I’ve been told my cancer is incurable, which was devastating to hear,” Rebecca told Star Weekly last week.

“But I’m not scared. I’ve had the conversation with Jesse about if I pass. But I’m also a warrior.

“ I wish bowel cancer had been considered sooner ... If sharing my experience helps even one person receive an earlier diagnosis .. telling my story will have made a difference ” - Rebecca Arden

“I’m optimistic, like always, and I believe miracles can happen.

“I’m choosing to focus on treatment, which is chemotherapy at the Sunbury Day Hospital, and time with my family, and making the most of every day.”

Busy with her young children and a regular volunteer at Sunbury Toy Library, Rebecca said she had “many vague symptoms of being unwell”, iron deficiencies and anaemia, heavy and painful menstrual cycles, and various treatments for PMOS (Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome formerly known as PCOS) and hormonal issues.

It wasn’t until fatigue set in about January this year, followed by a raft of blood tests, treatment for a stomach bug, and more severe gastro-intestinal pain in April that she was sent for a bowel screening test, colonoscopy and finally an ultrasound in June.



Rebecca Arden, a 37-year-old Sunbury wife and mother of two, was diagnosed with Stage 4 bowel cancer. (Damjan Janevski) 567018_01

On 18 June, an oncologist told her there were cancerous spots on her liver and that a biopsy confirmed she had Stage 4 bowel cancer that had spread to her liver.

One week later, Rebecca had a port inserted into her body, where IV lines are now hooked up for fortnightly chemotherapy sessions at Sunbury Day Hospital and which continue at home for two days via a portable vessel before the IV is detached until the next session.

“I was also told it was a slow growing cancer, that it didn’t just appear overnight, so maybe I have had cancer for a few years,” Rebecca said.

“Looking back, I wish bowel cancer had been considered sooner.

“But my goal isn’t to blame anyone or

cause unnecessary alarm.

“If sharing my experience helps even one person receive an earlier diagnosis or encourages someone to trust their instincts, then telling my story will have made a difference.”

Rebecca continues to look ahead as she receives her treatment, saying she wants to “continue to be the mum I was” and get back to participating in events, return to the toy library, to kindergarten and be there when the couple’s eldest daughter starts school next year.

Despite her own situation, Rebecca said she was so grateful for her support network of family and close friends, including her husband, parents, in-laws and sister, and had “huge respect” to frontline medical teams and especially the caring nurses

at Sunshine Hospital and Sunbury Day Hospital.

“I’m sharing my story because I want other young women to know that bowel cancer isn’t just a disease of older people, and that persistent or unusual symptoms deserve to be investigated,” she said.

Early-onset bowel cancer (diagnoses for people aged under 50) now account for about one in nine new cases. According to the Victorian Cancer Registry, rates have surged by 65 per cent in the past 20 years.

Rebecca is posting personal blogs about her journey on a GoFundMe page (<https://www.gofundme.com/f/rebeccas-cancer-journey-9grjj>) that was started by her family to help cover the family’s many unforeseen costs.

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GEELY

SUNBURY

Long road ahead for trail

By Glenn Fisher

The push to build a walking trail along the Melbourne-Bendigo railway line connecting Sunbury's Blind Creek Reserve with Skyline Reserve is still bubbling along.

Despite the Sunbury Family History and Heritage Society being unsuccessful in its bid to include the Sunbury Viaduct Trail in Hume Council's 2026-27 budget, council decided at its 13 July meeting to push ahead with initial assessments for the project.

Sunbury Viaduct Trail would meander about 1.2km from Blind Creek Reserve to Skyline Reserve along the railway line and give people the opportunity to view up close the historic 1861 bluestone viaduct

that spans Jacksons Creek just north of Salesian College.

The trail would also provide an accessible link to the Sunbury township for residents in the Rolling Meadows, Kingsfield and Kimberly estates, and allow for connections into the emerging Jacksons Creek (biik wurrdha) regional parklands.

"This trail would be an amazing asset for the Sunbury community - connecting two parts of Sunbury that are divided by the rail line, creek and steep ridges - improving accessibility for our growing community and honouring the rich history of our town," Hume councillor Kate Hamley, who was absent from the meeting, said in a report to council.

Sunbury Family History and Heritage Society member Trevor Dunn recently spoke at a Hume council meeting about his group's submission for the Sunbury Viaduct Trail.

"It will cross the creek, travelling along the base of the embankment, then walk up the incline to Rolling Meadows, joining other pathways," Mr Dunn said.

The request for a walking trail was not included in the 2026/27 budget due to the complexity of delivering the project, council officers told Monday's meeting.

Officers said that building a path in that location would be challenging, particularly as council didn't own a lot of the land needed and there were restraints due to the

steep topography of the Jacksons Creek Valley. Because of this and other issues, further work needed to be done on the feasibility of constructing the trail.

Councillors Jarrod Bell and Naim Kurt spoke in support of continuing investigations into the trail.

Cr Bell acknowledged the behind-the-scenes work of "local historian" Mr Dunn, while Cr Kurt said the trail would connect all the old parts of Sunbury, from its Indigenous history to its post-colonisation years.

Officers will engage with VicTrack, Salesian College and the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action of Victoria before providing a briefing to councillors at the end of this year.

Have your say on dogs in open space

Its title may sound like a sequel to the 1986 Dogs in Space movie starring the late Michael Hutchence, but in excess of 38,000 dog owners should be interested in this week's unveiling of Hume council's draft Dogs in Open Space Plan.

The draft plan, which aims to provide a framework for new and existing off-leash dog walking areas over the next 10 years, was endorsed by council last week and is open for community feedback until 23 August.

The plan recommends additional off-leash dog areas on sports fields at 19 existing and 14 future recreation reserves across Hume.

The plan also recommends the possible relocation of the Sunbury fenced off-leash area to Mary Wicks Park (formerly Sunbury Park), prohibiting dogs from habitat in and adjacent to Hume's waterways, and better protection of fenced nature reserves and other areas of environmental and cultural sensitivity.

Overall, Hume has more than 16,700 registered dogs, or six dogs for every 100 Hume residents, but Domestic Animal Management Plan figures estimate another 22,000 unregistered dogs in the city.

Sunbury leads the way with 5881 registered dogs, comparable per capita with Bulla and Atwood, while established suburbs in the south of Hume such as Dallas, Broadmeadows, Campbellfield and Meadow Heights have much lower rates of ownership, as do growth areas such as Kalkallo, Mickleham and Craigieburn.

Council officers noted in their report last week that the city already provided well above the average number of fenced off-leash areas (six0 and unfenced off-leash areas (42) for dogs, with a survey of 20 local government areas showing only three other councils provided more fenced areas than Hume - of which two of those provided no unfenced off-leash areas.

Knox Council leads all-comers with four fenced and 146 unfenced off-leash areas for its residents' dogs.

To have your say and view a detailed list of Hume's proposed amendments to existing off-leash areas, new fenced and unfenced off-leash areas or relocated off-leash areas, visit participate.hume.vic.gov.au

On-leash dog controls will continue as existing where not otherwise signed, and within 10 metres of paths or within 50 metres of play spaces.



Di Dawe, Colleen Weste, Anne Boyle and Natalie Webb. (Damjan Janevski) 566318_01

Wearable art showcases textile talent

The Gallery at Mt Macedon is renowned for its diverse array of beautiful artwork that includes paintings, wood, textiles, glass, pottery, jewellery, photography, origami and mosaics.

Run by a collective of local artists, The Gallery is featuring not only a month-long Art to Wear exhibition of creations from talented textile artists but two Meet the Makers sessions over the next two weekends.

Art to Wear in The Gallery will feature in the Focus Room at The Gallery from Tuesday 4 August until Monday 7 September, with 10 textile artists, including members of The Gallery, show-

casing knits, silks, felts, hats and much more.

Attendees are invited to two Meet the Makers sessions, on Saturday 8 August and Saturday 15 August (both 1pm to 4pm), featuring two different artists on both days - Leslie Grahovac and Kumi Malcolm on 8 August and Lyndon Regan and Emi Johnstone on 15 August.

Leslie hand-paints colourful silk patterns onto crepe and combines this with wool and linen, with her dresses, tops and jackets all made with comfort and style in mind. Kumi's garments have style, special details and are easy to wear for everyone, featuring natural

fabrics such as silk, cotton, wool and linen.

Lyndon hand-spins and hand-weaves wool and alpaca, creating warm, unique garments you'll love to own and wear in winter, while Emi makes elegant but simple stylish dresses and jackets made from Japanese wool and natural fabrics.

Enjoy a glass of wine as you view the extensive collection from these invited artists as well as The Gallery's own textile members. All garments are for sale and entry is free. The Gallery is at 684 Mount Macedon Road, Mt Macedon, open Friday to Tuesday, 10am to 4pm.

Kurunjuang company fined \$10,000 for burning waste

A Kurunjuang company has been fined over \$10,000 for dumping and burning industrial waste on rural land north of Melbourne.

The company was fined \$10,176 for dumping and burning industrial waste at a property in Darraweit Guim after officers from the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria inspected the Heaths Lane property on 9 June.

They found piles of mixed construction waste including scrap metal, timber, glass bottles, cans, spray cans, plastic, plasterboard, and wire coated in fiber-glass insulation.

EPA fined the owner of the property, BDS Family Investment (Vic) Pty Ltd, for unlawfully disposing of more than 1000 litres of industrial waste by burning, in breach of Section 115 of the Environment Protection Act 2017.

EPA Northwest Regional Manager Paul Ratajczyk said this was not just a bit of farm rubbish that should have gone to landfill.

"We received reports of loads of waste being brought in and dumped, then set on fire," Mr Ratajczyk said.

"Dumping and burning industrial

waste is illegal, and in this case was of sufficient scale to be contaminating the land and potentially nearby waterways.

"It is obvious pollution, producing smoke and odour, and leaving chemical residue on the ground," Mr Ratajczyk said.

"...EPA won't hesitate to hold the polluter to account."

Members of the public can report pollution by calling EPA's 24-hour hotline on 1300 372 842 or providing details online at epa.vic.gov.au/report-pollution/reporting-pollution.

Clarkefield saga rolls on

By Glenn Fisher

“You can’t change the Macedon Ranges just because you have a housing crisis, so hands off.”

While this was Cr Daniel Young’s message to the state government at the 22 July Macedon Ranges council meeting, his statement summed up the feeling in the chamber as the drawn-out battle over amendment C164 – Clarkefield Township Development continues.

At the meeting, council voted unanimously to endorse and lodge a second written submission with Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny opposing the planning scheme amendment and C164 planning permit application, which would

allow for the potential development of 2500 new homes accommodating 6000 people on 175 hectares of land east of Clarkefield railway station, as well as an activity centre, potential primary school, community centre, open space, community farm and solar farm.

“The Macedon Ranges is not a growth zone like Casey, Cardinia or Hume,” Cr Jennifer Anderson told the meeting.

“Clarkefield is defined as a hamlet, and new housing should be near infrastructure, not on a greenfield with no infrastructure.

“This should be going to an independent panel, not being decided by one person from an applicant’s documents.”

Cr Kate Kendall said the submission

spelled out council’s wishes, while Cr Young also said the submission was “the next chapter in a long saga”.

Council was first told in 2024 by the planning minister and the Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) that the combined planning scheme amendment and planning permit application would be determined solely by the minister.

Council was also asked to work in partnership with DTP on the expansion of Clarkefield, and the recent availability of reticulated water and sewer connections in the area has coincided with the state government’s housing supply targets, which require an additional 13,200 dwellings in the Macedon Ranges over the next 25 years.

Council senior strategic planner Jason Pullman said in his report to the council meeting that the submission considered the proposed planning permit to be premature and inadequately drafted and recommended C164 not proceed.

Mr Pullman said the submission requested that DTP undertake independent peer and legal reviews, prepare a resource and administrative costs impact statement, commission social and economic impact assessments, resolve key strategic and infrastructure issues, and refer the proposal to an independent planning panel or advisory committee before any further decision is made.

DTP and the planning minister were contacted for comment.

Concert will resonate at Braemar College

The distinctive and distinguished sounds of renowned cellist Zoe Knighton and the all-ages Resonance String Orchestra will take over Braemar College Woodend’s Performing Arts Centre in a one-off concert next month.

Musicians from around the Macedon Ranges, Sunbury and beyond will join Knighton and other Resonance String Orchestra members in the concert on Sunday 16 August at 2.30pm, marking the orchestra’s performance return to the Macedon Ranges.

Knighton, who regularly donates her artistic energies to Resonance as artistic patron, will perform solo in the Braemar concert.

Braemar College Woodend has hosted rehearsals of the Resonance musicians since last year, with college principal Russell Deer welcoming Resonance to the school with open arms.

Resonance president Liz Wilson said Resonance had been running a high quality, super supportive all-ages string orchestra program for beginners to advanced players from Sunbury, Gisborne, New Gisborne, Macedon, Woodend, Romsey, Wallan, Kyneton and Castlemaine for more than 15 years and was renowned for the quality of its work and the fulfilling experience players enjoyed.

“We are an all-ages group playing orchestral stringed instruments such as violin, viola, cello and double bass, and we have a range of standards from



Braemar College students Julia, Lucy and Will with president of the orchestra Liz Wilson and principal Russell Deer. (Damjan Janevski). 566235_05

established, beginners to advanced – there’s a place for everyone,” Ms Wilson said.

Tickets for the Zoe Knighton and Resonance String Orchestra concert on

Sunday 16 August at Braemar College Woodend are on sale at humanitix.com. People interested in joining Resonance can email resonancestringorchestra@gmail.com.

Help for those sleeping rough

The state government has announced 10 new homeless outreach services including in Hume, Brimbank and Maribyrnong.

Support workers will lend a hand to rough sleepers in these areas, helping them secure stable housing and get their lives back on track.

The investment includes additional emergency accommodation for those who need it most, as well as health and social care.

Rather than waiting for people to seek assistance, outreach workers meet people where they are—such as on streets, in parks or other public places—and work with them to build trust. The approach recognises that many people experiencing rough sleeping may not be able or willing to access traditional office-based services.

Assertive outreach workers assess immediate needs and safety, connect those with no or insecure housing with services, help them access stable accommodation and refer them to health, mental health and addiction help.

The assertive outreach services will launch later this year, with the expansion bringing the total number of services to 18.

It’s part of the state government’s \$27.8 million investment to deliver homelessness services in every region of Victoria.

The other seven areas into which the model will be extended are Shepparton, Whitehorse, Latrobe, Darebin, Bairnsdale, Wodonga and the Mornington Peninsula.

New partnership to improve wellbeing

Hume council is joining forces with VicHealth through the new Partners in Place initiative to create healthier communities across Melbourne’s north.

Through Partners in Place, council will work alongside local organisations and community members to improve the everyday conditions that support health and wellbeing, making it easier for people to be healthy, active and connected.

The initiative focuses on removing barriers to health and wellbeing and supporting stronger outcomes for First Peoples and culturally and racially marginalised communities across Hume.

Mayor Carly Moore said the partnership brings residents, community organisations and local leaders together to shape solutions that reflect what matters most to our community, building on the existing strengths and ideas of locals.

“Whether it’s making healthy food

easier to access, creating more opportunities for people to be active, or strengthening social connection and belonging, these are the kinds of changes that help communities thrive,” she said.

VicHealth chief executive Professor Anna Peeters said, “Hospitals and clinics play a vital role in keeping Victorians healthy, but the biggest opportunities to improve health are found in the places where people live, learn, work and connect with others. That’s why lasting change starts with communities themselves.”

“Communities know what will make the biggest difference because they live it every day. By backing local leadership, sharing what works and building strong partnerships, we can help more communities across Victoria create healthier places where everyone can enjoy better health and wellbeing.”

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Artefacts of Altona

Altona has long been defined by heavy industry and its skyline dominated by factories, gas flares and smoke stacks. Now a group of locals are working to preserve the suburb’s industrial heritage as its factories, refineries and plants rapidly disappear. Cade Lucas reports.

From Spotswood to Seaholm, Point Cook to Point Gellibrand, Skeleton Creek to Stony Creek, residents of Melbourne’s west woke up on Sunday morning asking themselves the same question: what the hell was that noise?

Facebook groups were flooded with posts about what was variously called a big bang, a loud boom and a big bang boom that got people out of bed, shook their homes, rattled their windows, frightened their pets while making their hearts stop and bowels suddenly spring open at about 2am on 19 July.

Lights began flashing and sirens start blaring as dozens dialled triple-0, while some excitable types hypothesised about earthquakes, explosions or cosmic thunder claps.

When it soon became clear it was none of these things but rather the decommissioning a giant piece of machinery at the old Mobil refinery in Altona, most of those who were questioning where they sound came from began asking why they weren’t told about it beforehand?

The uncomfortable answer of course is that they were.

“How Altona’s Skyline Is Set to Change” declared the advertisement from Mobil running across the bottom of page 5 of the 15 July edition of the Maribyrnong & Hobsons Bay Star Weekly.

After a preamble about how in 2021 the company closed its Altona refinery and began converting it into a fuel storage terminal, demolish of a number of tanks and other pieces of infrastructure as a result, the company got to the point:

“Soon you will notice a more significant change to the Altona North skyline as we commence demolition of the Fluid Catalytic Cracking unit and associated infrastructure.”

While most ads overstate things Mobil’s did the exact opposite.

More commonly known as the “Cracker”, the Fluid Catalytic Cracking unit weighs 900 tonnes and is as long as the MCG.

When it arrived from Japan in 1996, Williamstown was quite literally brought to a standstill as a fleet of semi-trailers that were made look the size of matchbox as cars dragged it to the Altona refinery.

Anyone of the thousands of people who lined the streets that day to witness it would have known that demolishing the something of that size was never going to be a small or silent exercise, though Mobil did their best to pretend otherwise.

“The unit will be felled entirely within the Mobil site and then progressively demolished on the ground, with all works approved by WorkSafe Victoria,” the advertisement read, before adding: “The felling will take place on 19 July.”

Even if the language was remarkable in its understatement, anyone who read the ad would’ve known to expect something to happen on the third Sunday in July.

But while just about everyone in the west heard the final crack of the “Cracker”, not all were surprised.

In fact, some were even expecting it, like Graeme Reilly from Altona Laverton Historical Society.

“They are large structures and I guess you can’t pull them apart bit by bit, there’s some parts that are just gonna have to come down at once and make quite a noise,” Mr Reilly said of the demolition.

Mr Reilly is paying closer attention than most to the demolition of the former Mobil refinery due to his role in a new project aimed at preserving Altona’s industrial heritage.

With help from a Make It Happen Grant from Hobsons Bay council, Mr Reilly, former Hobsons Bay mayor Sandra Wilson and one of the last engineers on site at the former Qenos plastics manufacturing plant, Nikki Gaskell, have joined forces to source, sort and save images, artefacts and stories about Altona’s state significant industry over the decades.

“The industrial skyline has defined Altona for over half a century and it is rapidly changing before our eyes; we feel the need to capture what we know before it is too late,” Mr Reilly said of the motivation for the project which is focused on the former Mobile refinery, the Qenos site on Kororiot Creek Road and also the former Toyota plant in Altona North.

Of all these sites, it’s Qenos which closed

most recently, with operations finally ceasing there at the beginning of last year. However, it’s also the site which is being demolished the quickest and which the group has been able gain access too, making it the immediate focus.

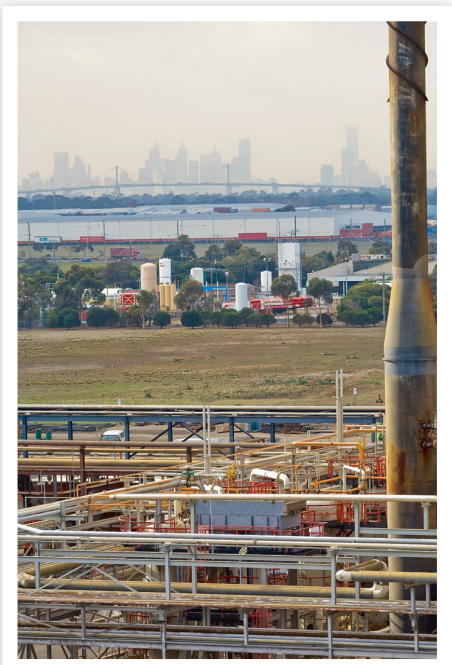
“Half of Qenos has already gone and there’s another part that’s about to go and once it’s gone all that industrial structure is going to disappear and once that happens, people will quickly forget what was there, why it was there and what they did,” Mr Reilly said.

“And it’s not often that we get in at the ground level to get artefacts from the company. It’s generally much later that you try and search for artefacts but in this case we’ve been able to get them before they’re gone forever.”

So far the more than 4000 images, some dating back to the plant’s beginnings in 1961, have been sourced, as well as 25 videos and even a full scale model.

Some of the material will be digitised and catalogued for future history buffs, but other artefacts will be displayed in an exhibition to tell the story of Altona’s changing industrial landscape as part of the 2027 Heritage Festival.

And while the group has access to the Qenos site and is in negotiations Mobil and Toyota about doing the same, Ms Wilson said there was an even greater resource they were hoping to tap into: former



Melbourne’s city skyline viewed from the former Qenos site. (Pictures: Supplied)

employees.

“We believe there is rich history to collect from our community so we’re curious to gather anything from people’s photo albums, work files, cupboards, drawers and memory banks!” Ms Wilson said, noting that even though all three sites were being torn down, former employees and their families were not hard to find.

“Just about everyone you speak to in Altona will say “oh I know someone who worked there, my dad, my uncle.

“I was just down at Bendigo Bank in Altona putting up some flyers and someone said “oh my uncle worked there, he died there in an industrial accident.”

Ms Wilson said Altona’s industry has played a significant role in the community, making preserving its history and documenting its end, all the more important.

“This change is happening before our eyes and I think people will notice it once it’s gone. Some people will be glad to see it gone but it’s part of our history whether we like it or not.”

From July - September a series of drop-ins are scheduled at Louis Joel Arts and Community Centre, the Hobsons Bay Men’s Shed and Truganina Explosives Reserve for people to share anything that provides a perspective on Altona industry.

The group is also seeking volunteers to help digitise documents and images into Victorian Collections, an online database. Training will be provided.

Contact: Sandra Wilson, 0432 161 777.



Former Hobsons Bay mayor Sandra Wilson and the Altona Laverton Historical Society’s Graeme Reilly next to Altona’s Cherry Lake with one of the suburb’s former factories in the background. (Gary Sissons) 564383_01

Consider the benefits of music therapy to support health

Those looking for NDIS funded health services will have more options locally thanks to the expansion of Omnia Community Health's allied health teams.

With clinicians in Sunbury, Kyneton, Romsey, Broadford and Wallan, people on an NDIS plan can access essential supports such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, and dietetics closer to home, reducing travel time and barriers to care, making it easier for individuals and families to receive timely, ongoing support.

The team is also excited to have recently introduced individual music therapy which is available at the Sunbury site for children aged 0 to 18 years. NDIS participants can use their Improved Daily Living funding on their plan and music therapy does not have to be explicitly named in the plan.

Music therapy can support children with delays in speech development, social or emotional regulation difficulties and challenges with attention or engagement. As well as singing songs and rhymes, Omnia's music therapist uses musical instruments, body movement and visual supports such as Key Word Sign.

Omnia's multidisciplinary clinical teams can support children experiencing developmental, learning or participation challenges, working alongside families and early childhood educators and schools to help children thrive at home, in early learning settings and in the classroom.

The teams also provide support for adults with NDIS funding, offering services such as podiatry, physiotherapy and exercise physiology to assist with mobility, independence and overall wellbeing.

Omnia Community Health is an NDIS registered provider and also has support coordinators who can help manage a



participant's NDIS plan, connecting them to services and local providers. Omnia also runs BoilOver Performance Ensemble,

a theatre company based in Sunbury for adults with disability which is currently seeking new members.

If you want to find out more, call the NDIS intake team at Omnia on 5421 1666 or email ndis@omniach.org.au.

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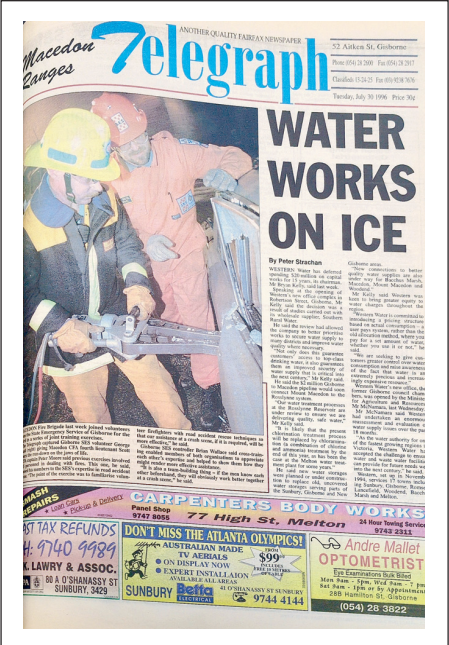
FROM THE ARCHIVES

Star Weekly looks back through the pages of our predecessors



35 years ago
30 July, 1991

Bulla Shire Council has put all greenfields (rural to residential) development planned for the shire on hold.



30 year ago
30 July, 1996

Western Water has deferred spending \$20 million on capital works for 15 years, its chairman, Mr Bryan Kelly, said last week.



20 years ago
25 July, 2006

A 55-officer federal police unit is being set up at Melbourne Airport to increase security and bring the airport's policing duties under one command.



10 years ago
26 July, 2016

The Gisborne community is rallying behind a family of eight who have the fight of their lives ahead of them.



Homestead Senior Secondary College students Riley, Devika, Kavinya and Simran. (Damjan Janevski) 565727_03



Above: Troy McFaul. (Ivan Kemp) 565435_05
Right: Olivia Chapman with some top winter reads. (Garry Sissons) 563990_03



Jessica Cassar. (Garry Sissons) 565846_12



Mayor Lara Carli. (Ivan Kemp) 565384_04

Faces of the west

Each week, Star Weekly photographers are out and about capturing the people and events across Melbourne's north and west.



Margaret and Walter Fioritti. (Ivan Kemp) 565713_09

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The lead actors during rehearsal for Boilerhouse Theatre's new production, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory: standing (L-R) Anne Schroeder, Banjo Ford, Benjamin Prewer, Kai Hagan, Liz Murdoch and Nick Linton; Front Rikki Inserra, Leni O'Sullivan-Snow, Cohen Constable and Aria Janetski. (Supplied)

Sweet treat for Sunbury

Sunbury is about to be taken over by a Willy Wonka, a Charlie Bucket, plenty of Oompa Loompas, a lashing of Augustus Gloop, and even a dash of Veruca Salt.

Roald Dahl's Charlie and the Chocolate Factory will be Boilerhouse Theatre Company's first production at the newly renovated Artrise Theatre on Jacksons Hill, with opening night set for Friday, 31 July.

The timeless classic for all ages will include more than 30 cast members over a two-week season ending on 15 August, with director and Boilerhouse Theatre Company vice president Becca McAliece just one of hundreds of people involved in

the production who are getting extremely excited.

Starring Aria Janetzki and Willow Kennedy as Charlie Bucket, Ben Prewer as Willy Wonka and Nick Linton as Grandpa Joe, Ms McAliece said the cast had been rehearsing since February and were "ready to take everyone on a journey into the magical world of Wonka".

The other notable achievement for the cast and crew before Charlie and the Chocolate Factory even hits the Artrise stage is that the entire season of shows has been sold out before opening night.

"Not even in a world of pure imagination could we believe this," Ms McAliece said.

Briefs

Rego rebate closing

Motorists have until midnight, Friday 31 July claim 20 per cent off their rego. A driver with one car gets up to \$186 back while someone with two cars can claim up to \$372 back. Motorists get the full rebate whether they paid their rego yearly or in instalments. Details: <https://service.vic.gov.au/regio-rebate>

Census support

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is reminding Australia's multicultural communities of the support options available for households to complete their Census next month. The Census website includes translated information in 26 languages to help people complete their Census. The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) is also available on 131 450 to assist those requiring additional in-language support. TIS provides access to interpreters who speak more than 150 languages. Census night is Tuesday 11 August. Details: census.abs.gov.au/language

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MY PLACE

Wolf Heidecker is passionate about promoting artists through his performing arts management company and as a board member of Wyndham Art Works. He speaks with Laura Michell.

What’s your connection to Melbourne’s north-west?

In 2000 I moved from Albury-Wodonga where I was general manager of The Flying Fruit Fly Circus to Werribee to manage the final stages of the construction and first year of operations of the Werribee Cultural Centre that opened in May 2001. Once the cultural centre was up and running, I resigned from Wyndham City Council and established WHAM, my independent performing arts management company. Soon after I arrived in Werribee, I became involved in the local arts community. I was instrumental in registering CAA-Wyndham Community Arts Alliance Inc and became a volunteer member of the still active group that is today trading as Wyndham Art Works, with its home in Laverton North.

What do you like about where you live?

Coming from the northern border of Victoria I enjoyed the more rural feeling of living in Werribee with the benefit of being so close to the ‘Big Smoke’ of Melbourne. Seven years ago, my wife and I swapped our house in Werribee and relocated to Tarneit where we are living in a retirement village since. It’s just five kilometres from where we lived in Werribee for nearly 20 years, therefore could maintain our connections to friends and the community without any interruption. Though Wyndham experienced significant growth as a city and lots of architectural and infrastructure improvements, the ‘old’ centre of the municipality still has its charm, homely and inviting image. In the surrounding



Wolf Heidecker, (Supplied)

vicinity we can enjoy the Werribee River and many green areas as well as all the new leisure developments, e.g. in Werribee South.

Where is your favourite local place to spend time?

Werribee Open Range Zoo.

How did Wyndham Art Works come about?

Wyndham Art Works (WAW) is the ‘trading as’ name of CAA-Wyndham Community Arts Alliance that was a community group

established to support the building of the Wyndham Cultural Centre in Watton Street. After the completion of the building in 2001 I was asked by some local artists to maintain the group as the ‘home’ for local artists which I then took over as a resident, not as the first manager of the cultural centre, and became the founding president of the incorporated association. I am still member of the board as their treasurer and business manager. It is still the only not-for-profit organisation in Wyndham dedicated to support local artists of all genres, e.g. studios for painters, glass artists, writers and workspace for the local branch of the Egg-Decorators-Guild, and performers from ethnic groups with South Pacific Islander, Samoan and Maori backgrounds.

WAW is entirely self-funded and run by volunteers; our arts centre with 10 studio spaces and two common rooms have been leased from Wyndham City Council for a token rental fee. In 2027 WAW will be negotiating with our landlord for a possible extension of the lease.

Tell us something people would be surprised to know about you...

For the last 25 years I have produced and directed about 30 theatre productions, volunteered managing the local Maori group Te Karangatahi Mana until they moved to WA last year, the Chinese Seniors Choir You Yi Zhi Qiao in Collingwood, ongoing, and officiated numerous weddings in Wyndham and surrounding areas until my retirement as a registered marriage celebrant.



Are you a photographer based in the western or northern suburbs who loves shooting sports and news?

Star Weekly is looking for new team members to join its pool of casual photographers.

A driver’s licence, reliable car and photography equipment are essential. Experience shooting video is highly desirable. The role may involve Saturday work and after hours assignments.

Send your resume and examples of your work to weditorial@starweekly.com.au



Lions members Melanie Kinsey, Susie Lawrie and Robin Miller, and artists Lyn Hovey and Jarryn Pitts. (Damjan Janevski) 567006_03

From eyesore to inspiration

A new project at Lions Memorial Park in Riddells Creek has helped change an eyesore into an inspiring celebration of nature, art and local collaboration.

Riddells Creek Lions Club led the push for the project and enlisted local artist Lyn Hovey to transform an unsightly graffitied structure into a vibrant mural artwork celebrating the natural environment of Murnong Creek, formerly known as the Riddells Creek Main Drain.

Melbourne Water renamed the waterway in 2020, recognising its connection to the native Yam Daisy, or Murnong (Microseris species), a staple indigenous food plant of the region.

Lyn’s earlier artwork enlivened the south wall of the toilet block in the same park.

Emerging local talent Jarryn Pitts was also assigned to showcase his creative skills, using his own flair and style to paint Superb Fairy-wrens.

Designed to be visible from both the footpath and passing traffic, the mural depicts local birdlife, flora and fauna

commonly found around streams that feed into Riddells Creek.

When completed, children who visit the park will be able to recognise species they see around their homes and develop a greater appreciation of the connection between healthy ecosystems and thriving communities.

The artwork will complement the surrounding landscape, and the community groups involved say they envisage more public artworks in the area soon.

While the mural might appear effortless to visitors, the journey to reach this point had been anything but simple and was several years in the making, Lions Club spokesperson Narelle McGellin said.

Despite many ‘red tape’ obstacles, common sense and community spirit ultimately prevailed, she said.

The Lions Club project was undertaken in collaboration from Melbourne Water, Macedon Ranges council, Greening of Riddell, community artists and local volunteers.

Hume welcomes glass pledge

A coalition pledge to scrap the state's glass-only bin mandate has been welcomed by Hume council.

The state government has mandated that councils provided a glass-only bin by next July in a bid to increase recycling rates and reduce contamination in recycling bins.

Last week, the Liberal National Coalition announced it would repeal the mandate and allow councils to use the waste and recycling system that best suits their communities if it wins November's state election.

The coalition said it would also review Victoria's Container Deposit Scheme to identify opportunities to expand the scheme, recover more recyclable material and deliver better environmental and economic outcomes.

Opposition local government spokeswoman Bev McArthur, said the state government's fourth-bin mandate would impose another unnecessary cost on Victorian households at a time they are facing increasing cost-of-living pressures.

Council described the announcement as a significant win for the Hume community.

Hume was the first Victorian council to formally reject the glass-only bin mandate in May 2025, raising concerns about increased costs, reduced convenience for residents and the lack of evidence that a separate glass service would deliver better outcomes than existing recycling systems.

These concerns were reinforced this year through the Let's be Clear on Glass campaign which received almost 25,000 re-

sponses from Victorians.

The survey found that 83 per cent of respondents opposed the introduction, and 91 per cent supported an expanded Container Deposit Scheme to include glass wine and spirit bottles.

In Hume, opposition was even stronger with 87 per cent against.

Mayor Carly Moore said Hume residents have made it clear the do not support the introduction of another household bin.

"Hume was the first council in Victoria to reject the glass-only bin mandate because we knew it would create additional costs and inconvenience for residents without adequately addressing the recycling challenges it was designed to solve," she said.

"Our community has consistently sup-

ported a better alternative. The overwhelming support for expanding the Container Deposit Scheme to include glass wine and spirit bottles shows residents want practical, cost-effective recycling solutions."

Council is calling on the state government to listen to the feedback from communities across Victoria and commit to abandoning the mandatory glass bin rollout.

A state government spokesperson told Star News Group the government was "making recycling as easy and convenient as possible while also keeping valuable materials out of landfill".

"We continue to work with councils on how to improve recycling in Victoria," the spokesperson said.

Free first-aid in the Macedon Ranges, sister!

Two sisters with big hearts and medical backgrounds are on a nationwide mission to help parents and carers in an emergency – and they are coming to the Macedon Ranges to hold their free workshops.

The Sisterhood Project is a national registered charity started in 2023 by siblings Grace and Skye Larson, to provide free health literacy, infant and child first-aid to parents and carers.

Grace is a paediatric intensive care nurse with 20 years' experience in performing and teaching first-aid and medical procedures.

"We want to prevent death and empower parents as first responders to save children's lives through education and breaking down barriers to that education," Grace said.

"If your child is injured or in an accident, knowing first-aid and how to navigate the Australian health system could save their life."

The other setback for many people, she said, was that while everyone who cared for children should learn how to perform first-aid, not everyone could afford to.

"Accredited infant and child first-aid courses cost anywhere from \$90 to \$150, and are largely only available in major cities or towns," she said.

Participants in the free workshops will gain knowledge and skills in how to manage common childhood accidents, injuries and illnesses common in children from birth to teens, including CPR, choking, head injuries, snake and spider bites, bleeding, and identifying red flags of common childhood illnesses.



Grace Larson and her son Jonti, 9. (Damjan Janevski) 566239_01

In addition, The Sisterhood Project nurses cover many other accident prevention strategies.

The Macedon Ranges sessions will be held in Kyneton, Gisborne and Romsey over the next two months, on the following dates: Monday, 3 August, Kyneton Community House; Tuesday,

18 August, Gisborne Secondary College; Tuesday, 8 September, Romsey Hub; and, Monday, 14 September, Kyneton Community House.

Details and bookings at <https://www.thesisterhoodproject.com.au/events>

Aye aye captain

Sailing the high seas on a tall ship can become a reality for teenagers from Sunbury and surrounds through this year's Rotary Youth Sailing Challenge.

Sunbury Rotary Club is once again promoting this exciting initiative for those aged 15 to 18 years old, with Rotary covering the cost of those selected to join the crew of tall ship Enterprize at sea around Melbourne.

Rotary club member Terry McCabe said the experience would not only be life-changing, but help give participants self-confidence while working in a team and the chance to meet new friends while learning how to sail.

"It's pretty full-on. The kids get to learn almost everything, and they have to leave their mobile phones behind on shore," Mr McCabe said.

Those who get selected will spend five days and four nights on the Enterprize in Port Phillip Bay, with the next youth sailing challenge departing from Melbourne in September this year and April 2027.

More details from Sunbury Rotary Club on 0407 546 000 or 0455 667 277, or visit youthsailing.com.au

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

WANT YOUR EVENT LISTED? Community Calendar is made available free of charge to not-for-profit organisations to keep the public informed of special events and activities. Send item details to Star Weekly Community Calendar, Corner Thomsons Road and Keilor Park Drive, Keilor Park, 3042, or email to westeditorial@starweekly.com.au by 9am Wednesday the week prior to publication

Sunbury Badminton Club

The club plays social games at all times, with tournament and competition nights during the year. All are welcome to attend at Clarke Oval Stadium, 49 Riddell Road, Sunbury. Open Monday,Tuesday,Wednesday and Saturday nights 7.30-9.30pm. Plus Wednesdays, 10am -noon.
■ sunburybc@gmail.com

Chamber Poets

The Chamber Poets Woodend meet every second Saturday of the month at the Woodend RSL. Featuring open readings, special guests and music. Donation \$10 at the door.
■ facebook.com/groups/ChamberPoets/about

Sunbury Over 55s Social Table Tennis

Every Wednesday from 1-3pm, in the Sunbury Recreation Stadium, Sunbury Recreation Reserve (Clarke Oval). No experience or booking necessary. Come, have a look and give it a try.
■ Bruce, 0438 027 978

North West District Pipe Band

North Western District Pipe Band meets every week at the Diggers Rest Bowling Club. They're looking for any pipers or drummers out there, retired or beginners, for social play outs.
■ Hank, 0412 160 576

Sunbury Ladies' Badminton Club

The club plays social and competition games every Thursday morning 9.30am-noon, excluding public and school holidays at the Eric Boarman Stadium, Wilsons Lane, Sunbury. All skill levels welcomed.
■ sunburylbc@gmail.com

Sunbury Art Society

Join the SAS group for all things arty. The group meets on Fridays and Saturdays at its new location at Artrise in Jacksons Hill from 10am-3pm. New members and beginners welcome.
■ sunburyartsociety.com

Woodlands Ladies Probus Club of Sunbury

Woodlands Ladies Probus Club is for retired and semi-retired ladies who are looking for new friends and social activities. The club meets on the fourth Monday every month at Club Sunbury, with guest speakers and lunch after.
■ Jessie, 0458 190 254, woodlandsladies.3429@gmail.com

Scottish Country Dancing Group

The Macedon Ranges Scottish Country Dancing Group meet every Thursday, 1-3pm, at Buffalo Stadium, Woodend. The dancing involves social country dancing, not the highland dancing many people think of. The group dance in sets, learning different steps and formations – no special clothes needed, just soft flat shoes. The group are a friendly group having fun and keeping fit at the same time. No partners needed, just a smile and sense of fun.
■ Lynne, 0417 331 439, Norm, 0408 592 609

CWA Sunbury

CWA Sunbury meets second and fourth Mondays at St Mary's Church, 7-19 O'Shanassy Street, Sunbury. All women are welcome, and grandchildren welcome to.
■ Bev Goodman, 0402 988 954

With One Voice Sunbury

With One Voice Sunbury community choir is changing the world one voice at a time by providing an opportunity for people to meet and experience the joy of singing, often making friends through the shared



This week's photographer's choice picture is of Riverbend Historical Park, which sits on a former settlement area in Werribee.
(Garry Sissons) 563945_29

experiences of singing and performing; although performing is not required. The choir rehearses each Tuesday from 6.30pm at Goonawarra Neighbourhood House, 8 Gullane Drive, Sunbury. A fun and welcoming choir, new members are welcome.
■ sunbury@withonevoice.org.au

Neighbourhood garden

Become part of Sunbury's Neighbourhood Garden and grow edible and useful plants in a social group at the Sunbury Neighbourhood House, 531 Elizabeth Drive, Sunbury. All skill sets are welcome.
■ sunburyhouse.com.au, 9740 6978

Malmsbury Farmers and Makers Market

Locals and people from afar get along to this wonderful Farmers Market. Always the third Sunday of the month. Fresh produce, wine, hot food, coffee, plants, artisan foods and crafts that are special. Musical entertainment while you shop and catch up with friends. Located at the picturesque Malmsbury Cricket Ground, Ellesmere Place, Malmsbury from 9am-1pm.
■ Amy, 0423 726 695

Hume Men's Shed

The Hume Men's Shed (Sunbury) is a not-for-profit organisation, meeting every Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at 158 Evans Street, Sunbury. The group caters for men be it carpentry, welding, metal work, gardening or just to chat.
■ sunburymensshed.com, 0438 677 425

Messy Play in Sunbury

Join in the Messy Play fun with this toddler-focussed program, including messy and sensory child-led play. The program will run from 10–11.30am on Tuesdays, Wednesday and Thursdays at the Sunbury Neighbourhood House, 531 Elizabeth Drive, Sunbury.
■ sunburyhouse.com.au, 9740 6978

Young Voices of Macedon

A community choir for children of the Macedon Ranges and beyond, Young Voices of Macedon rehearses at the House of the Rock, 247 Station Road, New Gisborne. The choir has separate programs for young children aged five to eight and older children. Rehearsals assist children in developing vocal technique, part singing skills, and general musicianship, across popular, classical, folk and music theatre styles. Rehearsals run on Thursdays, from 4.15pm, with afternoon tea and play time.
■ yvmacon.org.au

Macedon Ranges Photographic Society

Into photography, just starting out, or a fully fledged professional? The Macedon Ranges Photographic Society is the local camera club for friendship, photographic outings, workshops, guest presenters, competitions and more. Come along to a meeting on the first and second Monday of the month. Doors open at 7pm and the meeting starts at 7.30pm at Jubilee Hall, 52 Smith Street, Macedon.
■ macedon-ranges-photography.org.au, info@macedon-ranges-photography.org.au

Insync Entertainment

Insync Entertainment is an all-female community choir, providing the opportunity to meet others who enjoy singing. The group is seeking new members to join the friendly choir. No auditions required. They rehearse at the Sunbury Baptist Church Hall every Monday from 7.15–9.30pm.
■ insyncentertainment@gmail.com

Sunbury Seniors

Sunbury Seniors meets on Mondays and Fridays from 10am-2.30pm [except public holidays]. The club meets at the Sunbury Seniors Hub, 8 O'Shanassy Street, Sunbury, and the group takes part in a variety of activities including carpet bowls, cards, pool, jigsaw puzzles, board games, darts and table tennis, with monthly guest speakers and outings and subsidised lunches as well as a cuppa and a chat.
■ sunburyseniors.com.au, 0434 400 754

Pernaperna Women's Group

The group is currently knitting and crocheting blankets for First Nations peoples in palliative care across Australia. Pernaperna is a friendly group who meet fortnightly on a Thursday from 1-3pm at Sunbury Neighbourhood House, 531 Elizabeth Drive, Sunbury. It has established a bush tucker garden at Sunbury Neighbourhood House. New members welcomed. If you don't knit or garden but would just like to drop in for a chat, the group would love to meet you.
■ Joan, 0418 302 676

Young ‘Newsies’ entertain

The Williamstown Musical Theatre Company (WMTc) is gearing up for its annual junior production at the end of this month.

This year’s production is Newsies Jr, a Disney Broadway musical based on a 90s film about New York newspaper kids, or “Newsies“, and their strike for fairness against some of the richest and most powerful people in Manhattan.

Director Stuart Dodge said he’d always liked the musical ever since he first saw it performed in the very city it’s set in.

“When I saw Newsies on Broadway, I was transported to 1899 New York, and from the

second the orchestra started I was in awe,” Dodge said. “Newsies is a dance-heavy show... when watching the dancers in the Broadway production I thought, ‘surely these boys are on wires... there is no way any human can stay in the air that long, leaping across the stage!’”

Newsies Jr is WMTc’s 13th junior production and also it’s largest, with a cast of 41 children aged eight-18.

“As a team, our goal is always to not only put on a slick and entertaining show, but also to provide our cast of young people with a truly enjoyable experience from start to finish,” Dodge said.

Newsies Jr features a Tony Award-winning score by Alan Menken (composer of The Little Mermaid, Aladdin) and Jack Feldman and a book by Tony Award winner Harvey Fierstein (writer of Broadway musical Kinky Boots).

The cast will be performing it from 31 July to 9 August at Altona Theatre.

Details and bookings: <https://www.wmtc.org.au/>

Some of the cast members of Williamstown Musical Theatre Company’s latest junior production “Newsies Jr”. (Supplied)



ABBA classics set to light up Myrniong

Dust off your flares and warm up your singing voice, as a night of disco classics is coming to Myrniong this August.

SOS: The Australian ABBA Tribute Show has been dazzling audiences since 2011, bringing the music of one of the world’s most beloved pop groups to places all over Australia, and they’re set to bring their electric performance to St Anne’s Vineyards on Saturday 22 August.

Fans can relive the magic of Agnetha, Frida, Benny and Björn as SOS performs ABBA’s greatest hits in a spectacular live production featuring authentic costumes, choreography and a high-energy band.

The audience will have the chance to sing along to timeless favourites including Dancing Queen, Gimme! Gimme! Gimme!, Waterloo, and The Winner Takes It All, as the winery is transformed into a celebration of the Swedish supergroup’s enduring legacy.

“Our favourite ABBA song at the moment is As Good As New,” band manager Sam Bennett said. “However there is always something truly special when audiences hear that first glissando of Dancing Queen, and the room just aligns. It’s pure magic.”

Promising a night of 70s and 80s nostalgia, the event is an opportunity for ABBA fans old and new to enjoy an evening of music, food and drinks with friends.

“We see an incredibly diverse age range at our shows,” Bennett said.

“ABBA is truly multi-generational, and it is an absolute joy to see a whole room come alive.”

Guests are encouraged to arrive early, grab a drink from the bar and enjoy a bite to eat before settling in for the show.

Doors open at 5pm, with the performance scheduled to run from approximately 7 to 9.30pm.

Tickets are \$25 per person and include reserved seating with your group, making it easy to gather a crew and enjoy the evening together.

With ABBA’s biggest hits on the setlist, SOS promises to be a fun-filled night of singing, dancing and nostalgia for fans looking to relive the golden era of disco-pop.



SOS: The Australian ABBA Tribute Show brings the electric hits of ABBA to St Annes Winery on Saturday 22 August. (Supplied)

“This is our second time performing at St Anne’s Winery. Last time was incredible so we expect nothing but an electric dancefloor this year!” Bennett said.

Details: <https://welcometomoorabool.com/events-bacchusmarsh-ballan-gordon-blackwood-greendale/sos-abba-tribute-at-st-anne-winery-myrniong>.

Show pays tribute to the King

A new show at Wyndham Cultural Centre is sure to delight fans of the King of rock ‘n’ roll.

The Watton Street centre will host Elvis Tribute show, Elvis to the Extreme, on Sunday 16 August, from 4-5.50pm.

Celebrating the music, high energy and charisma of Elvis Presley, the performance promises to capture the magic and power of Elvis Presley’s iconic Vegas years.

Starring Marcus Jackson, a five-time, multi-award winning Elvis tribute artist recognised by Elvis Presley Enterprises, this electrifying production features the ETS Band, The BellaTones, and glamorous Vegas showgirls.

Elvis to the Extreme is more than a tribute, its high energy afternoon celebrating the King’s greatest performances, designed to thrill, move and captivate audiences of all ages.

Whether you’re a lifelong Elvis fan or simply love great live music, the show offers something for everyone.

Come along and sing along to favourite tunes, reminisce about the golden age of rock and roll, and enjoy an entertaining afternoon celebrating one of music’s most enduring stars.

Get ready to put on your blue suede shoes and enjoy an afternoon of classic hits and unforgettable entertainment.

The show runs for 110 minutes including an interval.

Tickets are \$50 full price and \$45 concession.

Details: www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/whats-on/elvis-extreme



Catch Elvis to the Extreme at the Wyndham Cultural Centre in August. (Supplied)

Contemporary, prog-rock opera After-Light will glow

Excitement is building for opening night of the original, contemporary, prog-rock opera After-Light, to be presented by the Mount Players for the first time on stage in its complete form.

Mount Players president Craig Lenaine-Smith and other committee members saw a scaled-down version of After-Light at the 2024 Melbourne Fringe Festival but, after speaking with composer Zac Vanstone and creator and musical director Tom Foster, it was decided Macedon’s Mountview Theatre should be the place for the duo to launch the show’s full production.

After-Light is guaranteed to be a production full of excitement, provocation and entertainment. A seven-piece rock band will perform live on stage, in full view of the audience, as singers tell the story of Boy as he struggles through his past mistakes, exorcising his demons in a journey of self-discovery and ultimately redemption.

Penned during COVID, Vanstone said the 18-plus production explored some darker themes.

“This is a show about learning how to let

go,” Vanstone said.

“Following the break-up between Boy and Girl, Boy falls into a life-threatening coma. In order for Boy to wake, he must forgive the past, reconcile with the future and learn to let go of Girl,” he said.

“If Boy fails, his intrusive thoughts of addiction, paranoia and depression will consume his soul.”

The season of After-Light runs from 14 August to 30 August at the Mountview Theatre, Smith Street, Macedon.

Bookings at www.themountplayers.com or 0419 329 052.



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General Notices

PUBLIC NOTICES AND EVENT



Unscheduled Council Meeting - Mayoral Election 4 August 2026 12:30pm

The Chief Executive Officer has called an Unscheduled Council Meeting to elect a Mayor on Tuesday 4 August 2026 from 12:30pm.

The meeting will be held in person at the Gisborne Administration Centre and livestreamed via Council's website.

This meeting is being held in accordance with requirements of the Local Government Act 2020 and Council's Governance Rules following a vacancy in the office of Mayor.

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting in person or view the livestream online.

For more information, see mrs.vic.gov.au/Council-Meetings or call (03) 5422 0333.

The meeting agenda will be available from 12pm on Thursday 30 July 2026.

General Notices

PUBLIC NOTICES AND EVENT

Packaged Liquor Licence Application

We Riddells Creek Foodworks applied to Liquor Control Victoria on 13th July for the variation of a packaged liquor licence at 2 Station Street Riddells Creek. The variation is for an increase to the current licensed area.

Any person may object to the grant of this application on the grounds that:

- It would detract from, or be detrimental to, the amenity of the area in which the premises are situated, and/or
- It would be conducive to or encourage the misuse or abuse of alcohol.

An objection must state the reasons for the objection.

All objections are treated as public documents.

Objections must be made in writing to:
Liquor Control Victoria
GPO Box 4356
Melbourne VIC 3001

Objections must be made no later than 30 days after the date of this notice.

Find it in the
Employment
section of Network Classifieds.

General Classifieds

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Employment

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NEED WORK LOCALLY?

SPORTS QUIZ

- 1. Which player scored the goal that won Spain the 2026 FIFA World Cup?
- 2. How many seasons did Brodie Grundy play for Collingwood in the AFL?



Shakira

- 3. For which FIFA World Cup did Shakira release the hit song *Waka Waka (This Time for Africa)*?
- 4. Which former Fitzroy and Geelong player was announced as the inaugural coach of the AFL's Tasmania Devils?
- 5. What number has Taj Gibson worn playing for six different NBA teams including the Grizzlies, Pistons and Knicks?
- 6. Which player was awarded the Golden Boot for scoring the most goals during the 2026 FIFA World Cup?
- 7. Teams including the Heights, Hunters and Firebells will play what sport in the US's planned WPBL?
- 8. Which non-alcoholic mixed beverage of iced tea and lemonade is named after a US golf professional?
- 9. How many times has Spain's men's national soccer team won the FIFA World Cup?
- 10. Australia's women's national baseball team is known by what nickname?
- 11. What year did Spain's national women's soccer team win the FIFA Women's World Cup?
- 12. What is the boxing term for a right-handed fighter?
- 13. Chinese Taipei and the US are set to host which international baseball competition in 2027?
- 14. In 2024, Ariarne Titmus set a world record in the 200m event of which swimming stroke?
- 15. What kind of sports commonly use terms such as fartlek, bonking and negative splits?
- 16. Which other nation faced off against Spain in the 2026 FIFA World Cup final?
- 17. And how many goals were scored in that match?
- 18. In tennis, which surface is considered fastest: a) clay, b) grass or c) hard courts?



- 19. In support of Jai Arrow, many athletes across multiple sports have celebrated scoring with what gesture?
- 20. In F1 racing, what does a HANS device stand for?
- 21. St Louis' NHL team shares its nickname with which AFL team?
- 22. Who is the current captain of the Australian men's T20 cricket team?
- 23. In which year did skateboarding first appear at the Olympics?
- 24. What is another name for the white ball in pool or billiards?
- 25. Cameron Bernasconi is the coach of which AFLW team?
- 26. In standard darts, which score does each player start with?
- 27. What was the name of the bowling team originally featuring Homer, Moe, Apu and Otto in *The Simpsons*?
- 28. Which sport features in the film *Fighting With My Family*?
- 29. How many seconds is the shot clock in a game of basketball?
- 30. The Cleveland Guardians play in which league?

1. Ferran Torres 2. 10 seasons 3. 2010 FIFA World Cup (South Africa) 4. Ken Hinkley 5. 67 6. Kylian Mbappé 7. Baseball (Women's Pro Baseball League) 8. Arnold Palmer 9. Two (2026 and 2010) 10. The Emeralds 11. 2023 12. Orthodox boxer 13. Women's Baseball World Cup 14. Cue ball 15. Freestyle 16. Argentina 17. One 18. grass 19. Miming shooting a bow and arrow 20. Head And Neck Support 21. Carlton (Blues) 22. Mitch Marsh 23. 2020 24. Cue ball 25. GWS Giants 26. 501 27. Pin Pals 28. Professional wrestling 29. 24 30. MLB



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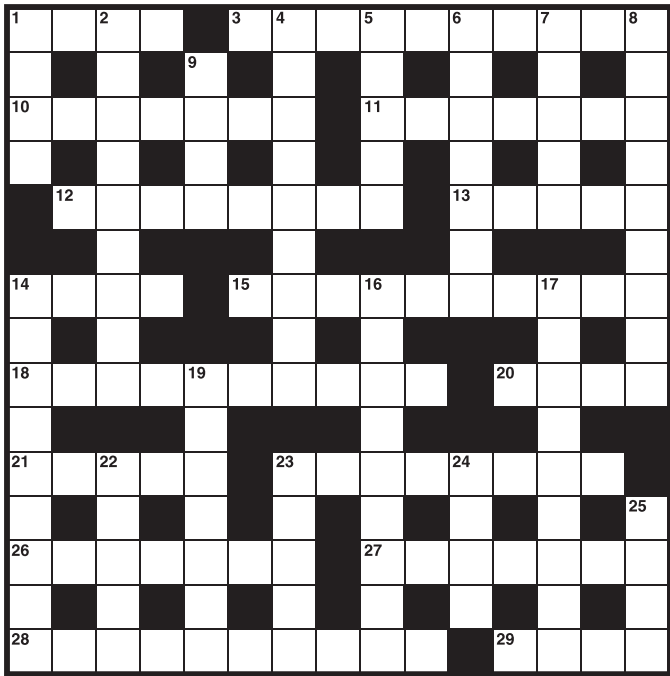
QUICK CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Drench (4)
3 Whatever the risks may
be (2,3,5)
10 Dabbler (7)
11 Worry (7)
12 Aesthetically pleasing (8)
13 Inexpensive (5)
14 Writer of verse (4)
15 Optical instrument (10)
18 US motorway system (10)
20 Domestic animals (4)
21 Educate (5)
23 Speed (8)
26 Permitted (7)
27 Word made from the
letters of another (7)
28 Cut off from the sea (10)
29 Shoot (4)

DOWN

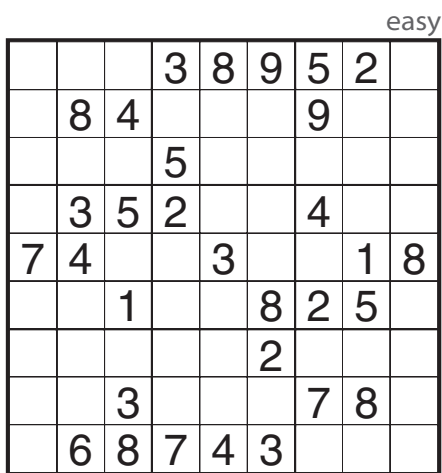
- 1 Graceful bird (4)
- 2 Awe (9)
- 4 Person who uses violence for political aims (9)
- 5 Overdrafts (5)
- 6 Options (7)
- 7 Show amusement (5)
- 8 Suffering from insomnia (9)
- 9 Tidings (4)
- 14 Colourful team shooting sport (9)
- 16 Make reprisals (9)
- 17 Removed from power (9)
- 19 Act of refreshing (7)
- 22 UK singer Lily – (5)
- 23 Early form of Sanskrit (5)
- 24 Cousin of the oyster (4)
- 25 Self-satisfied (4)



DECODER

WORDFIT

No. 300



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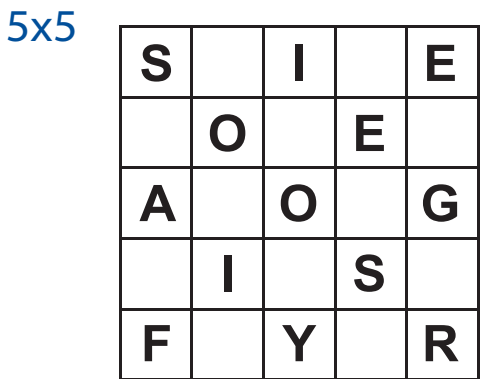
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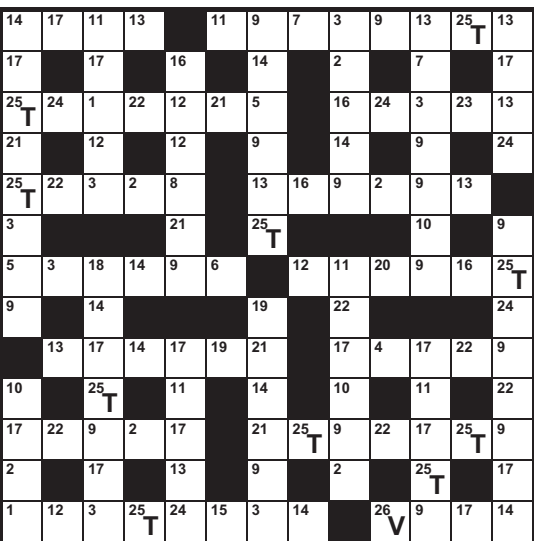
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hard

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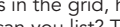
14 SUNBURY & MACEDON RANGES STAR WEEKLY Tuesday, 28 July, 2026

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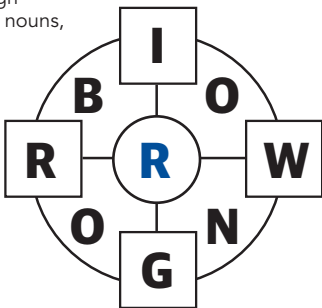
9-LETTER WORD

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once.

No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural nouns ending in 's'.



Today's Aim:
 12 words: **Good**
 18 words: **Very good**
 24 words: **Excellent**

[illegible]

QUICK QUIZ



- 1 A person with the condition anodontia was born without what body part?
- 2 What liquid is typically used inside disposable lighters?
- 3 What is the name of Spotify's personalised end-of-year listening summary?
- 4 Which Muse of Greek myth shares their name with a rural town in Queensland?
- 5 NFL's Bengals are based in which US city: Baltimore, Cincinnati or Detroit?
- 6 Name the capital city of Andorra.
- 7 To whom does Hamlet deliver his 'Alas, poor Yorick' speech?
- 8 What was the first name of the Austrian composer Haydn?
- 9 Australian musician James Keogh (pictured) performs under what name?
- 10 What does PVC stand for?

ANSWERS: 1. teeth 2. Butane 3. Spotify
4. Calliope 5. Cincinnati 6. Andorra la
Vella 7. His friend Horatio 8. Franz 9. Vance Joy
10. Polyvinyl chloride

Super hybrid ticks the boxes

By Chris Riley, Marque Motoring

It's more than three years since we first drove what was then called the MG HS +EV, or plug-in hybrid as they have come to be known.

And haven't things changed in this time? Not only has the car grown in size, so has the battery and projected, electric-only driving range.

Now in its second generation, the HS has emerged from its cocoon, spread its wings and become a fully-fledged 'Super Hybrid' - it's a much more enticing proposition.

Styling

There are two grades from which to choose, Excite and Essence.

Prices start from \$42,990 for the Excite and \$46,900 for the Essence - both prices driveaway.

Our test vehicle, Essence, was finished in Arctic Blue Metallic, with Classic Tan interior trim - they add \$700 apiece.

Standard kit includes cloth trim and auto air conditioning with rear outlets, along with 18-inch alloys, keyless entry and start, LED lights front and back, power-adjust driver seat, head-up display, auto high beam, adaptive cruise control, traffic sign recognition, auto lights and wipers, rear parking sensors and six-speaker audio.

Essence adds larger 19-inch alloys, artificial leather, dual zone climate air, electric tailgate, panoramic sunroof, front parking sensors, eight-speaker audio, 360-degree camera and wireless phone charging.

There's also heated front seats, power adjustment for the front passenger seat, driver seat memory, power lumbar adjustment, auto folding heated door mirrors, front parking sensors, rear privacy glass, and door mirror memory.

HS is covered by a 10-year, 250,000km warranty, provided the car is serviced by MG, otherwise it reverts the standard seven-year/200,000km.

The high-voltage battery is covered for the same period, but for only 150,000km.

Each service must be performed within the specified time or kilometre window.

Infotainment

Infotainment consists of a combined 12.3-inch touchscreen and 12.3-inch instrument panel, together with Bluetooth, voice control, built-in navigation, AM/FM and DAB+ digital radio, wireless CarPlay and Android Auto, and eight-speaker audio.

There's also wireless phone charging, with two USB-C ports front and back, plus a 12-volt outlet in the front, with iSmart connected services that comes with 12-month complimentary access.

Safety

The MG HS has been awarded a full five stars for safety with seven airbags including a centre airbag to provide added protection for front seat occupants in side impact crashes.

The MG Pilot Safety Suite includes autonomous emergency braking (car-to-car, vulnerable road user, junction and crossing, backover and head-on) as well as a lane support system with lane keep assist (LKA), lane departure warning (LDW) and emergency lane keeping (ELK), and an advanced speed assistance system (SAS) with a speed sign recognition.

There's also blind spot detection, door opening warning, rear cross traffic alert, drive monitor system, unsteady driver warning, and traffic jam assist.



RATINGS
Looks: 7
Performance: 7
Safety: 7.5
Thirst: 8
Practicality: 8
Comfort: 7.5
Tech: 7.5
Value: 8
Overall: 7.6

Where the HS excels is being a Super Hybrid, with ultra-low fuel consumption and a range of more than 1000km. (Pictures: Supplied)

Engines/transmissions

A 1.5-litre turbocharged four-cylinder petrol engine is paired with two electric motors; one to drive the wheels, the other to recharge the battery when necessary.

Drive is to the front wheels through a dedicated, one-speed hybrid transmission.

Combined output is 220kW of power and 350Nm of torque, with the switch from petrol to electric power almost imperceptible most of the time.

Driving

In Arctic Blue the HS really stands out. Otherwise, the styling is almost generic for this section of the market, apart that is from the side steps.

They are not quite high enough or wide enough to be practical, but they do enhance the look of the car.

Even the kids commented how difficult they were to use.

Wider and longer than its predecessor, the second-generation HS offers generous head and legroom front and back, with a good-sized luggage area.

With the rear seats in use, it offers 507 litres of space, with the seats folded the boot expands to an impressive 1484 litres. Not so generous is centre storage for loose items, with much of the space given over to two cupholders and wireless charging pad.

The doors are adorned in a fancy, quilted design, but closer inspection reveals they are in fact plastic - as is much of the interior trim. The door bins are able to accommodate larger sports bottles.

The hybrid system in the HS Super Hybrid is underpinned by a 24.7 kWh battery pack, 23.2 kWh of which is usable. The previous model offered 16.6 kWh.

You can switch manually between hybrid and electric modes, but not easily, and we

were inclined to let the system do its thing - most drivers will.

The dash from 0-100km/h takes 6.8 seconds.

Interestingly, although there is sport mode, there is no Eco mode to achieve minimum fuel consumption and no option to change gears manually.

An indicator light and graphical interface reveal what mode the transmission is operating in, while the switch to fully-electric mode seems to depend on several factors - not just speed or throttle input (although both play a part).

At one point we looked down to find the car in EV mode travelling at a speed of 90km/h on a downhill section of the motorway.

During our week with the car we clocked up more than 1000km and can report the HS is a surprisingly easy and comfortable vehicle to drive, and if the battery is charged frequently - it uses very little fuel.

For a vehicle that has not been tuned for our poor Australian roads, ride quality is quite good.

Grip from Bridgestone Alenza tyres is above average and pressed hard the wagon doesn't misbehave.

The brakes bite hard in an emergency stopping scenario.

With a 55-litre tank, the HS takes premium 95 unleaded, with claimed fuel use of 0.7L/100km and energy consumption of 18.0 kWh/100km.

We charged the car three times using the supplied granny charger, averaging 3.4L/100km and 6.9 kWh/100km - with 230km of petrol remaining on return.

The battery in the HS can be charged at a rate of up 6.6kW using an AC charger which we're told takes about four hours. It cannot be charged from a commercial DC fast charger.

Each time we charged the car with the granny charger however, the system told us it would take more than 13 hours. Of note we were surprised to find the supplied charger worked with an extension lead (this is a first for us).

We were also pleasantly surprised to find the dreaded Chinese driver warnings are not as Draconian in this particular car.

But over the speed limit warnings are constant and annoying, and the system seems to have a problem differentiating between posted speed limits.

Corners, roundabouts and car parks involve a bit of guess work because the front roof pillars and large exterior mirrors block vision.

The rear-view camera was also distorted and difficult to use.

Of note, the electric tailgate worked inconsistently, with not enough grunt to lift the tailgate if the car was parked on a slope.

We suspect it's the same electric motor as used in MG's Cyberster electric sports car, whose chic scissor doors refused to open when parked on a slope - whether you're in or out of the car.

Eight months later we are still waiting for MG to get back to us on this issue.

Summing up

We like it. It's not perfect, but then no car ever is.

Where the HS does excel is being a Super Hybrid, with ultra-low fuel consumption and a range of more than 1000km, provided you recharge the battery at every opportunity.

With an electric-only range of 120km, the urban commute is very doable too.

It's easy to see why the popularity of plug-in hybrids is increasing exponentially - especially at these kinds of prices.

Local stars shine at Games

By Tara Murray

The first three days of the Commonwealth Games are done and there have been some good results for the locals so far.

On the court, the Australian Diamonds and women's 3x3 basketball team remain undefeated.

The Diamonds started with wins against Tonga on night two and England on night three.

Former City West Falcons pair Kate Moloney and Liz Watson have played big roles for the Diamonds in the midcourt as they've come away with two big wins.

It's been two losses for Uneeq Palavi's Tonga.

Palavi, who played two games for the Falcons this year, shot 30 goals in game one against the Diamonds despite a dislocated finger.

She finished with 29 goals in game two against South Africa, with South Africa winning 96-42.

On the basketball court, Australia's 3x3 women's team are through to the semi finals.

After going 3-0 on day one, the Aussies, including Keilor Thunder's Lara McSpadden went 2-0 on day three.

They beat the Cayman Islands, 21-3, and backed it up with a 21-9 win against Uganda.

McSpadden had her best game from a scoring perspective against the Cayman Islands, finishing with seven points.



Jacob Cassar. (AAP Image/Simon Stacpoole, via Photosport NZ)

The semi finals and medal games will be played on day six.

Taylors Lakes' Jacob Cassar got his boxing campaign underway on day three.

Competing in the men's 65 kilogram event, Cassar sealed a quarter final berth with a 5-0 win against New Zealand's Connor Campbell in the round of 16.

Cassar will be back in action on day five.

In the pool, Bundoora's Tara Kinder just missed the final in the 100 metres breaststroke.

Kinder finished fourth in her heat, but it

was enough for her to qualify 10th fastest for the semi finals.

In the semi finals, Kinder finished sixth in her race.

It was the faster of the two semi finals, with Kinder finishing ninth overall, just 0.03 behind Jamaica's Sabrina Lyn who was the last finalist to qualify.

Kinder still has the 400 and 200 metres individual medley events to come.

In the lawn bowls, Deer Park Bowls Club's Paris Baker and her Tongan teammate Milika Nathan lost a second straight tiebreaker on day three.



Lara McSpadden.

Having won the first set 10-0, the Tongan team lost the second set 6-4 before losing the tie break.

The Tongan side then lost to Namibia 2-0.

After three matches, Tonga sits fifth with one win.

In section D, the Norfolk Island women's pairs team including Deer Park's Ellie Dixon sit second with three wins.

On day three, the pair beat the Falkland Islands 2-0.

The men's pairs, which includes Deer Park's Corey Wedlock and Aaron Tey, gets underway on day five.

Hot competition despite the cold, tough conditions

As the seasons approach finals times, results are even more important in the run home. *Star Weekly* photographer Ljubica Vrankovic was out shooting some of the action.



Gisborne Giants' Olivia Craske. 567372_06



Westmeadows fans watch on. 567702_04



Riddell's Matt Darby and Gisborne Giants' Blake Tirchett. 567707_04



Gisborne's Torie Skrijel. 567375_13



Fans watch on at Gardiner Reserve. 567378_16



Gisborne's Brad Bernacki. 567378_05

New chapter for East Sunbury

By Tara Murray

With plenty of support within the club, Nathan Dent has become East Sunbury's coach for the Gisborne and District Cricket Association club.

Dent is no stranger to the Thunder, having played the majority of his junior and senior cricket at the club.

He also spent time at the Greenvale Kangaroos, gaining valuable experience that he'll now bring into his coaching role.

Dent said it was a new opportunity for him.

"It's a new journey and it's exciting," he said. "It's not something I always saw myself doing."

"I spoke with some of the older guys that I was thinking about giving it a crack and they said why not?"

"I've spent a lot of time with the older boys over my career and it was good to get their tick of approval."

Dent said he would look to work on the fundamentals to help try and get the side back in finals contention.

The Thunder finished fifth in the Johnstone Shield last season, just under three points outside the top five.

"The journey is the most important part of it," he said. "We want to get the basics right."

"The commitment levels and the drive to get there. It's about rolling the team out in the big moments and getting the wins that matter."

"We want to get the firsts back in McIntyre and bring depth and consistency across the club."

Dent said they have the potential at the

club to win a premiership, but it was about finding the belief in themselves to take the next step.

The Thunder said through the interview process that Dent impressed with his vision for the club, his passion for developing players, and his commitment to building a positive, competitive environment.

He spent last season at Gisborne.

As well as a new coach, the club has a new president for the first time in 16 years, with Alec Boorsma stepping up.

Boorsma said he has big shoes to fill with Mark Wilkins standing down. With Boorsma just 25 and Dent being 28, it's the next generation stepping up.

"We our turning over a new page, a new chapter," he said. "I want to put my own spin on it, but we're not going to reinvent

the wheel.

"We are looking to build off having a women's team for the first time last season and it's going again this year and Nathan as senior men's coach."

"There's a new direction and new focus."

Boorsma said on the men's side they had plenty of talent within the club it was about further developing that and adding a couple of pieces around them

One area the new president is keen on building, is making East Sunbury the premier club in Sunbury for female cricket.

He said the side had added a lot to the club last season and are a driving factor on what they want to achieve.

In big news for the women's program, Jess Hourigan, who was the first female to play in the McIntyre Cup, has signed with the club.



Brad Mangan kicked eight goals in a best on ground performance. (Ljubica Vrankovic) 567707_21

Giants' stunning come from behind win

By Tara Murray

It was a watershed moment for the Gisborne Giants on Saturday in the Riddell District Football League.

The Giants pulled off the biggest win of the club's short history, as they came from behind at three-quarter time to beat Riddell.

The Giants stunned the Bombers in the final quarter with eight goals, to claim their fourth win of the season, 20.8 (128)-17.10 (112).

Giants' coach Andrew Hall said it was a massive day for the club.

"It was a watershed moment for the club as we got three wins against a powerhouse side," he said.

"We have the greatest respect for Riddell who has done it for a long period of time."

"We put four quarters together for the first time this year against a top four side."

"It was encouraging for us as we played five kids again."

Hall said both sides had players out and the Bombers hopes weren't helped when playing-coach Matt Darby went down injured.

He said it was a really good game of football in front of a good home crowd atmo-

sphere.

"It was a high pressure game and a pleasure to watch," he said.

"Both teams fought it out and it was long quarters and a long game."

Hall said the message to the group at three quarter time, when they trailed by five points, was to stick to their plan.

"We encouraged them to look at the growth mindset and be proactive," he said.

"It was about sticking to the process and not getting caught up in the moments as we're aware of how Riddell plays the game."

Captain Brad Mangan kicked eight goals in a best on ground performance as he led from the front.

"Brad is the best one-on-one contested forward that I can remember," he said.

"The way he leads and he's a leader of men."

Hall said Tom Rochester in the ruck continues to perform despite being under-sized, while Alex Grigg, Mitch Bongiovanni and Blake Turchett were standouts.

He said the result was driven by the leadership group.

"They had support everywhere," he said.

"The players had to get the job done and we played a small part in that."

Jordan Theodore kicked what Hall said

was the goal of the season.

Hall said results and improvement like that bodes well for the next period of the club.

He said they remained focused on getting games into younger players with a focus on the future.

They have given 20 players senior debuts since they came into the competition last season.

The win moves the Giants to eighth on the ladder.

Hall said with both their reserves and under-19s in finals contention, they wanted to make sure the whole program was still switched on.

They have a bye this week before facing Diggers Rest

"We don't want to leave yesterday's [Saturday] performance as being good enough," he said.

"We want to go in and focus on being competitive, we understand what we are up against and we don't want to take our foot off the pedal."

Elsewhere, Melton South upset Wallan, Melton Centrals beat Romsey, Diggers Rest was too strong for Woodend-Hesket, and Kyneton won the battle for the Tigers against Lancefield.

Women back for Kyneton Tigers

Kyneton Tigers are set to return to the Basketball Victoria Country Basketball League women's competition this season.

Having historically had a strong women's program, the Tigers had to withdraw their women's side weeks before the 2025 season due to a lack of numbers.

The women's side had made the 2023 and 2024 grand finals before falling short to the Bendigo Braves on both occasions.

A core group of players had played together since the formation of the team.

The club announced on social media that after a season away, their women's side would return.

"Expressions of Interest are now officially open as we begin assembling a committed, competitive and connected squad to represent Kyneton," the Tigers said.

"Whether you're a returning Tiger or looking for a new opportunity, we'd love to hear from you."

Registrations for tryouts for the men's side are open.

Tryouts start in August, with multiple sessions.

The men's side last season returned to the winners list after a couple of tough seasons.

The Tigers finished in seventh spot with a 1-9 record.

As well as taking expressions of interest for players, the club has opened up expressions of interest for coaching roles for both their men's and women's sides.

"As we continue to build on the foundations of our senior program, we're looking for passionate, committed and team-first coaches who are eager to make a positive impact both on and off the court," the club said.

"Whether you're an experienced coach or looking to take the next step in your coaching journey, we'd love to hear from you."

The club said it was seeking coaches who are committed to creating a positive, player-first environment and developing athletes and fostering strong team culture.

The CBL season usually starts in October and runs through until December.

Details: <https://www.facebook.com/KynetonBasketballAssociation>

Bulldogs ready for finals

By Tara Murray

Gisborne will continue to work on its connections as it prepares for another big Bendigo Netball League finals series.

The Bulldogs are aiming for another top three finish, and with it a second chance come finals time.

Bulldogs’ coach Tarryn Rymer said it was about continuing to build.

“We’re working on those connections and the connection in the front line,” she said.

“The group we’ve had nearly the whole team all year bar Claudia Mawson.

“We’ve been pretty lucky that all the girls train on Thursday nights and play on Saturday so we have that consistency in the program and it sets the bar for the other teams.”

On Saturday, the Bulldogs had a 51-13 win against Castlemaine.

Rymer said they were focused on what they could get out of it.

“It was just amazing and we build four consistent quarters,” she said.

“We know that Castlemaine is quite a young team and it took a while for us to shake them.

“We took the opportunity for Phoebe Priest from our under-17s to have a run on court and get some A-grade experience.”

The Bulldogs sit in third spot, equal on point with fourth placed South Bendigo.

The Bulldogs have played two less games than some sides having had all their byes for the season, with the ladder not reflecting where every team is at.

After a stop-start year so far, Rymer said they were keen to play every week until finals.

“We’re always around the top three,” Rymer said



Charlee Duff-Tytler. (Ljubica Vrankovic) 567375_06

“If we can beat Sandhurst we might jump into second, but whether we finish second or third doesn’t change who we play in the first week of finals.

“Kangaroo Flat haven’t lost a game yet and they are a step above.”

The Bulldogs face Eaglehawk this Saturday with Rymer saying it would be a good

test for them.

“We want to build some good momentum going into finals,” she said.

“We’ll also have the opportunity for some young girls to get more of an opportunity in A-grade.”

The Bulldogs are hoping to have all five teams in finals again, with three sides aiming to lock in top three spots.

Rymer said it would be ideal to have as many sides as possible with the double chance.

Meanwhile on the football field, the Bulldogs beat Castlemaine on Saturday, 11.12 (78)-8.6 (54).

The Bulldogs set the win up early with five goals to none in the first quarter.

James Gray and Zac Vescovi were named the Bulldogs best.



Ty Coppinger. (Ljubica Vrankovic) 502756_08

Hawks remain focused as finals loom

By Tara Murray

Woodend-Hesket is focusing on what it can do to make sure its ready come finals in the Riddell District Netball League.

The three-time reigning premiers will again play finals and are among a number of teams pushing for top two and the double chance.

While it’s been a season of a few more ups and downs than the past two, Hawks’ coach Ty Coppinger said it had been a really good one for the club.

“It has been a positive season,” she said. “From a whole squad perspective there’s been a positive vibe and there’s been lots of opportunities across all the grades.”

This year has been the closest competition in years, with just 14 points separating the top seven teams with three rounds remaining.

Coppinger said it was good for the competition and that anyone can beat anyone on their day.

After a number of disruptions with the Victorian Netball League, the Hawks are

hoping to have their full team on the run home.

Coppinger said while it’s hard at times to get consistency with players in and out of the side, they had looked at the positives.

“It’s provided more opportunity for other players to develop further throughout the club,” she said.

“Isa Munro, who is an under-19s player, made her debut on the weekend.

“Sabah [Tan] and Macca [Mackenzie Svendsen] have both come up from B-grade. Ange [Angelique Doherty] and Esther [Annett] are both under-19s.

“There’s lots of moments and opportunities and the girls remaining in the side have enhanced the group.”

Coppinger said the younger players had a willingness to learn and that while they were keen for success now, they were also building for the future.

She said while ideally making the top two would be the aim, but their focus was just taking it week by week.

“We’ll take each game as it comes,” she said.

“We want to refine our game plan and not worry too much about anyone else.

“We want to continue looking at where we can improve on each week and be in the best position come finals.”

Coppinger said there was still a chance four of their five netball sides could make finals which would be pleasing.

She said it was a good reward for the club as it continues to go from strength to strength.

On Saturday, the Hawks were too strong for Diggers Rest as they won, 65-29.

Milla Howard shot 37 goals for the Hawks in the absence of Kaylia Stanton.

Natalie McDonald shot 28 goals.

The Hawks sit second, two points off top spot.

In other games, Riddell got an important win against the Gisborne Giants, 42-38.

Lancefield won the battle of the Tigers against Kyneton, 42-33, in another match will shape the top six.

Elsewhere, Wallan beat Melton South 69-32 and Romsey beat the Melton Centrals, 62-43.

Men’s netball boost

Sunbury male netballers will get the opportunity to test themselves against some of the best players in the state.

The Sunbury Netball Association is entering teams in the Victorian Men’s and Mixed Netball Association’s M-League competition for the first time.

The M-League is the top men’s competition in the state, while it has introduced boys competitions in recent seasons.

There will be under-13, under-15 and under-17 competitions this season.

The competition also has open mixed competitions, with an influx of new teams and clubs in recent years.

Sunbury Netball Association’s Aaron Lofts said it was exciting for the association to take this step and provide a place for male netballers to play.

“Obviously the game was invented primarily as a female sport,” he said.

“There’s boys and men getting into it and there’s mixed competition and male only competitions.

“We have done some mixed competitions and already have some boys competitions.

“There was some interest there, so we decided to enter some teams.”

Sunbury will enter teams in the under-13s, under-15s and senior men’s competitions.

The junior sides will kick off their season in August, with the senior season starting later on.

Lofts said the association had received a number of expressions of interest for males wanting to join all their sides which was a positive sign for the program.

Last season, the closest club in the M-League to Sunbury was based in Essendon.

Lofts said they wanted to further get males involved in the sport with male netball still in its infancy compared to female netball.

He said with not everyone into football or basketball, it gives them another opportunity to not only play, but at a high level.

“We’re looking to put together some pretty strong sides,” he said. “We’re pretty confident we can have a good crack.”

Cats into fourth grand final

By Tara Murray

Macedon is doing everything it can to be ready for a fourth straight Riddell District Football League women’s grand final.

The Cats, who are undefeated, have already qualified for the grand final on 15 August having finished on top of the ladder.

They will face the winner of the preliminary final between Lancefield and Riddell, which will be played on 8 August.

Cats’ coach Matt Laing said it was a massive achievement for the side to play off in four straight grand finals.

They will be going for a third straight premiership.

“It’s an amazing effort,” he said. “It’s my first year and I’ve been able to build with the players. It’s been a great group.”

Laing said one of the hardest things was knowing they had a good side, but making sure they all come together to strive to be a better team.

They had continued to move players around to challenge them, while giving others opportunities.

“It’s about team first,” he said. “It’s been great to see the development of the whole side.”

For several Cats, they will be playing in their fourth straight grand final, while for others it will be their first.

The challenge now is handling two weeks without playing before the grand final.

The regular season finished on Saturday and the grand final isn’t until 15 August.

Laing said they had been training hard

and would continue to push, while also looking at other group activities including possibly a hike or camping.

“There’s only one final for us and we’re looking to keep the momentum leading up to it,” he said.

“We’re trying to keep everyone motivated and not losing focus or direction before the grand final.”

The Cats finished their regular season on Friday night against Lancefield.

Laing said ahead of the match that the group had been looking forward to the match.

They completed the perfect regular season with an 11.10 (76)-0.6 (6) win. against the Tigers.

Charlotte Noonan kicked three goals, while two other players kicked two goals

each.

Shakira Parker and Alex Cairney were named the Cats best.

Molly Libardi and Laura Lonergan were named the Tigers best.

In good signs for the Cats, their youth girls side is also on top of the ladder.

A few girls had played up this season with Laing saying they were looking forward to having some of them play with them next season.

In the other women’s match, the Mount Alexander Falcons finished their season with a win against Riddell.

The Falcons did most of the damage in the first half, as they kicked four goals, on the way to a 5.0 (30)-1.5 (11) win.

Kiara Fasham and Madina Nabole were named the Bombers best.



Murphy Boyd. (Ljubica Vrankovic) 560115_09

Lions are slowly building towards success

By Tara Murray

The Sunbury Lions have got back-to-back wins for the first time in the Ballarat Football League this season, despite some poor goalkicking.

Having dropped the earlier match up against Bacchus Marsh, the Lions were keen to get some revenge at Maddingley Park.

Throw in the two sides entered the round in sixth and seventh, there was plenty on the line.

Lions’ coach Matt White said they had been seeking that consistency all season long.

“It was nice to get across the line,” he said. “We maybe made it easier for ourselves if we were able to kick straight.”

“It was the first time we’ve doubled up for the year and it’s been a long time coming.”

White said they had a more settled side with only a couple of changes that played a big role in backing up from the previous week.

The inclusion of Harry Minton-Connell was another big one for the Lions.

“It was his first hit out after a couple of

hamstring injuries and that had the boys up and about,” White said.

“We brought back a couple of guys who missed last week as well.”

Having been blown out early against the Cobras the first time, the Lions wanted to get off to a good start.

While scores were level at half time, the Lions had their opportunities, having had five more scoring shots.

White said there were a few choice words said at half time.

“We were leading into every indicator besides kicking straight,” he said.

“It came down to conversion In Bacchus Marsh style it took a while to break them.”

Jack Newitt kicked three goals for the Lions, while Nathan Doyle and Minton-Connell kicked two goals each.

Newitt and Minton-Connell were named in the best, along with Josh Guthrie.

White said while they would love to have Minton-Connell available in the coming weeks, he suspects he’ll head back to Victorian Football League level.

“It’s the first time he has played under me in my time as coach,” he said.

“Him and Cody Bramble coming off half back was really important. Cody is still in great form and knocking down the door with Footscray’s VFL side.

Daniel Johnston earned a VFL call up on the weekend.

White said depending on who they have available, including maybe having Jake Sutton down from Sydney, they could have some selection headaches to come.

“We could be a scary prospect,” he said. “Whoever misses out will be stiff.”

The win moves the Lions into fifth spot ahead of Melton.

They face ladder leaders Sebastopol this Saturday.

White said the Burras had gotten better since they beat them at Clarke Oval earlier in the season,

“They have some midfielders who kicked goals on the weekend,” he said.

“It’s a challenge ahead of us and it will be a good one.”

Meanwhile in the A-grade netball, the Lions lost to Bacchus Marsh 41-40.

The Lions had five B-grade players playing and now slip to fourth on the ladder.

Sports shorts

VTCA

Sunbury has signed all-rounder Riaz Khan for the Victorian Turf McNamara Shield season. The Roar said Khan is a gun top order batter and genuine fast bowler. “A lovely bloke, passionate about his cricket, team-first mentality, built for our culture,” the Roar said in its social media post. Last season, he made 548 runs and took 38 wickets.

Ballarat FL

The Sunbury Lions went one step closer to sealing a top six spot in the Ballarat Football League on Saturday. Facing Bacchus Marsh, which was sitting in seventh, the Lions were wasteful in the first half. Scores were level at the main break, but the Lions had five more scoring shots. After the main break it was seven goals to four as the Lions won, 10.14 (74)-8.7 (55). Jack Newitt kicked three goals in a best on ground performance for the Lions. The win moves the Lions to fifth on the ladder, now two games clear of the Cobras, who remain in seventh.

EDFL

The Sunbury Kangaroos lost a thriller to Glenroy in the Essendon District Football League division 2 competition. The Kangaroos led at each of the three breaks but couldn’t hold on as Glenroy won, 13.15 (93)-14.3 (87). Glenroy kicked the final two goals of the game, the last coming in the 29th minute. Tie Cuffe and Jakeb Coles were named the Kangaroos best. The Kangaroos slip to sixth, now a game and percentage outside the top four. Elsewhere, East Sunbury lost to Coburg Districts, 21.19 (145)-16.10 (106).

East Sunbury added another win to the tally in the Essendon District Football League women’s division 1 competition. Facing Taylors Lakes, the Thunder won, 9.10 (64)-0.5 (5). Rhianna Kirk and Jacinta Lee kicked three goals each. Elsewhere, the Sunbury Kangaroos lost a close one to Tullamarine, the Sunbury Lions lost to Keilor Park and Gisborne lost to Westmeadows.

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