

February ~ March '16 vol 7 ~ issue 8:5



Photo: L-R Local Councillor Pat Toohey, Moorabool Shire CEO Rob Croxford, Minister Neville, Moorabool Mayor Allan Comrie, Stephen Carter CHW, Mary-Anne Thomas MP, Eleanor Underwood Chair Working Group. Photo bombing editor.

A HAPPY OUTCOME FOR BLACKWOOD Town back on track with announcement of WASTEWATER PROJECT (p8)

"I'm glad that we have been able to deliver for the community of Blackwood & provide a solution for existing households & a way forward for those landholders who wish to build on blocks of land they own in the area."

~ Hon. Lisa Neville, Minister for Environment, Climate Change & Water.



Towering over Blackwood the 3 wands of modern communication. Photo - Sue Donnelly



Happy Easter
from
The Blackwood Times



EDITOR'S THOUGHTS...

Hello Blackwoodians & Blackwood lovers,
This has been a most exciting issue to put together, so much good news! After years of meetings, lobbying, broken promises & disappointment it feels like suddenly Blackwood is crashing into the 21st century.

In early December the new Blackwood Localised Septic Program was announced by the Water Minister (p8). Ultimately this is designed to take-away many reasons why we've not been able to build or upgrade our homes for the past decade.

In mid-December a strange sight became common-place as folk were spotted walking around the village chatting on their mobile phones! I don't know about you but I still jump when my mobile rings at home! And what brilliant timing with the fire season upon us!

Sadly there have been a number of criminal incidents in town over the past couple of months: a ride-on mower & trailer & a car were stolen in seperate incidents, our hall was broken into & a home was ransacked. As police numbers are reduced in rural areas, it has been suggested that residents lobby local MP's for a better police presence in town to protect our community assets & property. If you see anything suspicious be sure to call 000!

Have you heard about the Great Blackwood reunion (p4) on Labour Day Saturday. If you have a history in our village, be sure to put this date in your calendar. It is sure to be a brilliant day full of fun, laughs & memories. If you're on facebook, there is a group for the reunion with loads of photos - just do a search for 'The Great Blackwood Reunion of 2016'.

Did you see the article in The Age last month about gold panning in Blackwood? On p17 we have an article about our Post Office but it doesn't mention is that they will be introducing an education component & tours this year! The 1st is a haunted tour in February (see FB) & later in the year will be gold prospecting. Can't wait to hear more, can you?

As always, have a great couple of months & remember us when you are out & about. Take your camera & send us some pics.

~ Jinny Coyle

Thank you our **HANDS-UP** helpers – you are the reason we're able to keep publishing... (along with our regular contributors of course!)

Jimmy Olsen played by...	Brendan Hehir
Gigs co-ordinator	Cat Moser
Calendar of Events co-ordinator	Rachel Palmer
Advertising co-ordinator	Could this be you?
Social Media Manager	or perhaps this?
Co-ordinate contributors	Your name here?
Regular Photographers	The Donnellys, Jimmy Olsen
Event columnists	Do you love to write?
Community Co-ordinator	Sandy Schmidt
Senior Citizens Co-ordinator	Lindy Mundy
Media Co-ordinator	Perhaps this is up your alley?
Distribution Co-ordinator	do you get around a fair bit?
Typist	Di Hewes
Editing	Di Hewes

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BLACKWOOD EASTER ROYALS



2016 Blackwood Easter Carnival Queen & King Update

Nominations have been rolling in BUT we want lots more! So please put a vote in for your favourite Queen & King. Boxes & forms are in the Post Office & pub. Nominations close on Labour Day Monday March 14.

A draw will take place the following week & winners will be notified, & sworn to secrecy...

as much as that is possible in a small town!

The 2016 Queen & King will be officially announced at a crowning ceremony, to be held at the Blackwood Hotel at 7pm on Good Friday, March 25. Please come along & cheer the winners. Free lolly bag to anyone who wears a tiara or crown.

Any further updates will be posted on the Hotel notice board & Post Office window, or ring Sue 5368 6562.



All dressed up & no calls to attend. Our CERT volunteers enjoy the Blackwood Academy Breaking Up Christmas Session and BBQ.

the BLACKWOOD TIMES info



The BLACKWOODTIMES invites submissions from the community. If you're at a local event please take a photo or two & write a few lines to share in our community news. Deadlines are as follows

Advertisers book space	Mar 15	
Regular Contributors, Features & Items of Interest, Community Groups & Clubs	Mar 15	
Display Ad Artwork, Gig & Events Guide		Mar 20
Late breaking News		Mar 20

NO late submissions will be accepted. Please email submissions, display ads & articles to editor@theBLACKWOODTIMES.com.au or post to The Blackwood Times c/o Blackwood PO, 3458.

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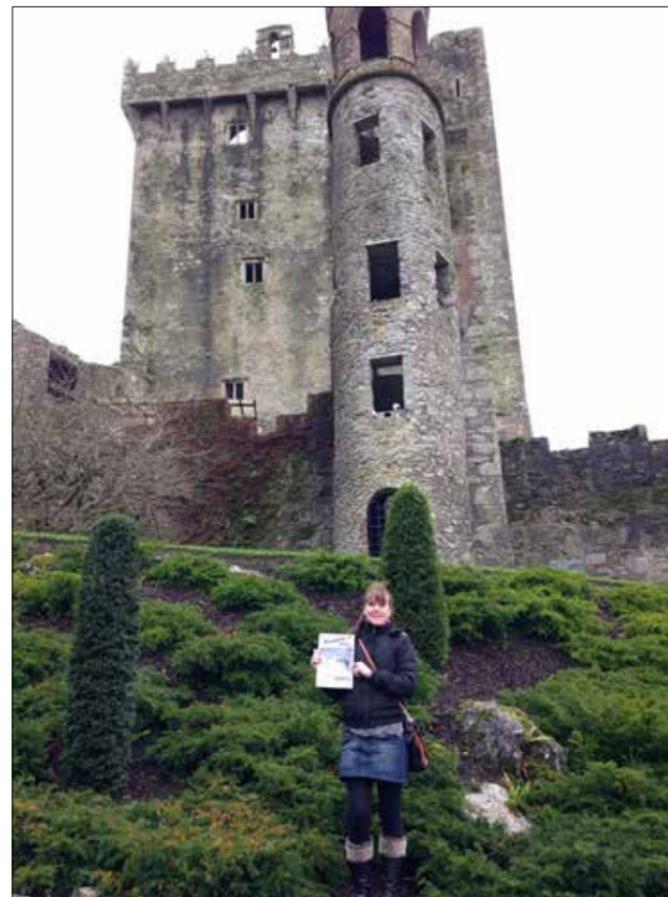
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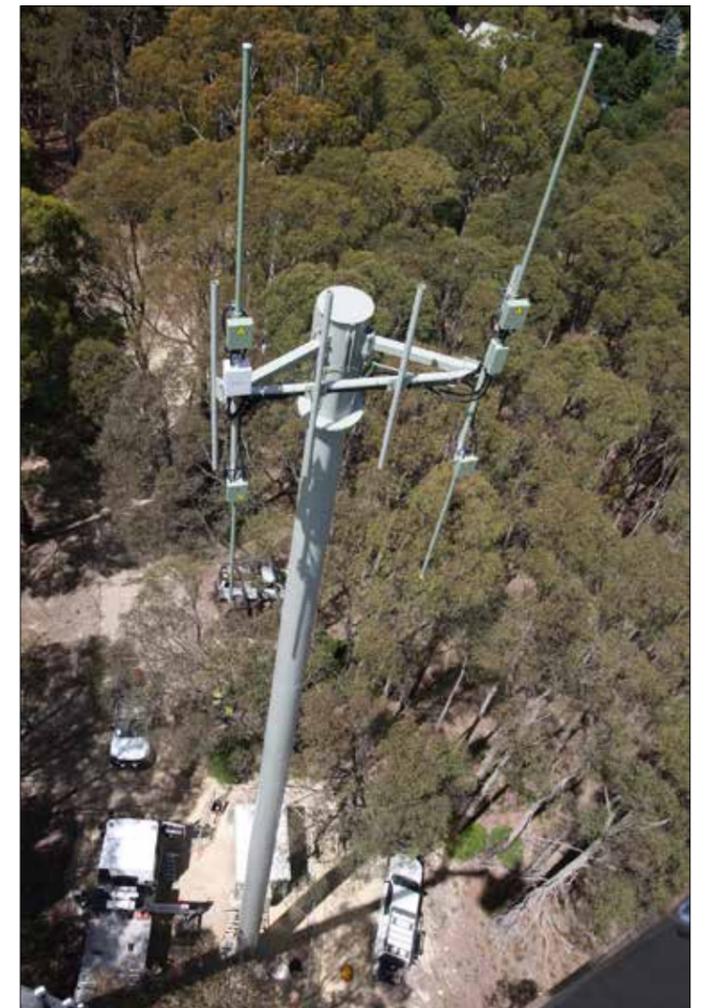
BLACKWOOD TIMES GOES TO ...



HILARY DIRLAM of the band Orpheus Supertones (featured p18 Oct/Nov '15 issue) is pictured at the Appalachian Trail. They love Australia & the Blackwood Times!



THE BLACKWOOD Times certainly gets around ... the last issue of 2015 travelled with Dee to Blarney Castle in County Cork.



New mobile tower doing a fair job of fitting in. Perhaps an urn on top ...

Blackwood Progress Association Inc.

ABN: 94 772 204 535,
Post Box 217, Blackwood Vic. 3458

Chairperson/Treasurer: Mrs Dianne Volpe
Phone: 5368 6795

Secretary: Mrs Judith A de Groot
Phone: 5368 6697

BLACKWOOD EASTER CARNIVAL WOODCHOP EASTER PARADE

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- Most Imaginative Entry

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All sponsors will have advertising on the Sponsors Board as well as announcements over the loudspeakers by M.C.

For further information please contact Judith on 5368 6697
Or Dianne 5368 6795

LOOKING FORWARD TO A GREAT DAY

<https://www.facebook.com/theblackwoodtimes>

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THE GREAT BLACKWOOD REUNION

Labour Day weekend **March 12, 2016**
1pm til late @ Blackwood Pub

Bring a photo to put on the photo board
 Please book a table if planning to eat
 Blackwoodians from any period welcome



TOP L: Heather & Silvia as Ma & Pa Blackwood with Ernie in Easter parade 1981; TOP R: Paul Migga, Bob Darwen, Glenn Matheson, Rocket & Butch; ABOVE: Gary Matheson, Blackwood woodchop; RIGHT: Jenny, Susan, Marita, Joanne, Heather, Diane & Sylvia. Flower girls: Donna & Claire

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HISTORICAL RE-ENACTMENTS by the Blackwood Historical society

Compiled by Margot Hitchcock, Historian for the Blackwood & District Historical Society. Jan. 2016



After a request by the editor, I have prepared this information on the Re-enactments (see p2 Dec15Jan16 issue TheBlackwoodTimes.com.au) created by the Blackwood & District Historical Society in 1976 & 1977 at Blackwood.

The President then was Adrian Pearce & he was involved in Police Historical research. We then had other friends of Adrian join our society who were interested in restoring our original Police Stables which is now part of our Historical Museum. The Special Schools Camp, on the same property, used to be the original Police Station in Blackwood.

A group of people interested in early police history was formed. They researched uniforms & formed a Police re-enactment group who dressed up in uniforms & re-enacted out 'cops & robbers' with some members dressing up as bushrangers where they had shoot-outs which involved members of the public & in particular Dave Evans who was 'robbed' in his General Store in Blackwood. Wilma Evans made period costumes for herself & her daughters & young Bill Evans dressed as a bushranger. Dave Evans would come rushing out of his store holding a bag of money, being chased by guys dressed as bush-rangers, then others came running dressed in police uniform & a shoot-out would commence in the street opposite the Blackwood Hotel. It was like watching a movie in action. The guys had rifles packed with small wads of gunpowder which went off with a loud bang much to the amusement of the on-lookers lining the streets. These were held on several occasions over Easter & the March long weekend in 1976 & 1977.

Over the March long weekend in 1977 we had a special treat with some of the guys dressed as Mounted Police Troopers on lovely horses which they brought to Blackwood in horse-floats.

Margot Hitchcock also took part in these re-enactments as did several other ladies dressed in period costume. Margot had her dilly bag snatched from her on several occasions by a bushranger!

Margot made her own costume with hoop petticoats as worn by the ladies of Sovereign Hill, as did the partners & wives of the Police re-enactment group. Allan Hall dressed as Captain Moonlight the bushranger! We also took part in the Blackwood Easter parade in costume.

The Re-enactment group also held demonstrations at the Ballan Arcadian Arts Festival & at a festival in Clunes. Margot was chased down the street by Allan Hall as a bushranger & had her dilly bag taken. She screamed for the police, who came to her rescue with rifles going off in the main street of Ballan. Margot & Allan had their photo taken for the Ballan News paper.

Much fun was had re-enacting the days gone by when Police & Bushrangers roamed the Blackwood hills.

Researched by Margot Hitchcock from her forthcoming book 'The History & Pioneers of Blackwood', hopefully to be published soon. Other books published by Margot Hitchcock – "Aspects of Early Blackwood", Some History of Simmons Reef, Blackwood" & "The Billy Pincombe Tragedy". See – www.blackwoodpublishing.com

For help with information on Blackwood ancestors contact Margot Hitchcock – email – margo@hitchcock@bigpond.com



LEFT: Outside the Blackwood Hotel with ladies in costume • TOP: Allan Hall as bushranger Captain Moonlight with police Stuart Duff, Ballan Arcadian Arts Festival • Mid L: Margot being kidnapped by Allan Hall alias Captain Moonlight Mid R: Frank as bushranger & Allan as Captain Moonlight kidnapping Margot at Ballan Arcadian Arts Festival 1977 • ABOVE: Mounted police troopers outside police stables • PHOTOS courtesy Margot Hitchcock

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• BLACKWOOD SOCIAL ALBUM 2016 SILLY SEASON •



• BLACKWOOD SOCIAL ALBUM 2016 SILLY SEASON •



p6: TOP LEFT: CERT at the January 3triple wombat - 5 members (two on duty) at the outdoor radio broadcast last Sunday along with a few off-duty CFA members & others from the community. Pager goes off & the members on duty jump into action to attend a call in Trentham. As CERT raced to the ambulance, the crowd cheered. One CFA member quipped: "How's that for a response time - 35 seconds!" photo - Deidre Cronnon RIGHT: Brendan Hehir & Jinny Coyle celebrate David Bowie's 69th birthday at 3triple Wombat by spinning 1½ hours of his lesser-known tracks (as news broke of Bowie's death the following day, many speculated on the coincidence!) photo - Sandy Schmidt MIDDLE LEFT: CERT 'wine-down' feasting at the Merchant - photo Lynda Henry MIDDLE RIGHT: Our rangers have been enjoying Shaw's Lake. Great for a swim and trying out the new kayaks the kids got for Christmas. Ella-jay takes the time to master the oars. photo - Jenni Panos BOTTOM: Bushfire Building Innovation award winners at the award-winning Blackwood Community fire refuge this page: TOP: Christmas drag bingo & show at the pub photos JC; BELOW: a rare birds-eye view of Blackwood taken from the top of the new mobile tower. photo - Sue Donnelly

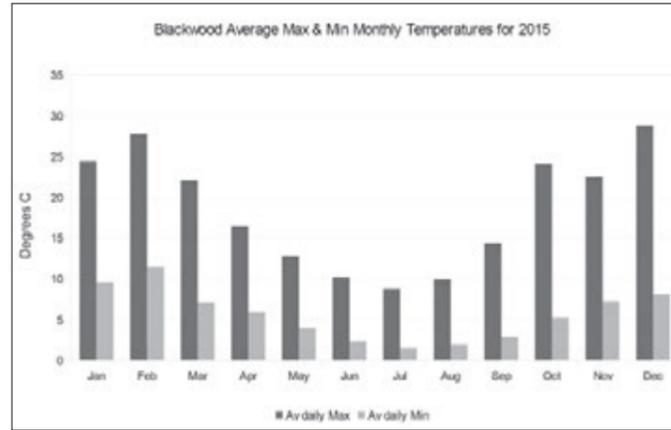
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HOW'S THE WEATHER BEEN?

MONTH & YEAR	Rainfall (mm)	Rainfall historical average (mm)	Temp monthly min (deg C)	Temp monthly max (deg C)	Temp average daily max (deg C)	Temp average daily min (deg C)	Temp average for month (deg C)
Nov '15	32.7	75.1	1.6	30.9	22.5	7.2	14.3
Dec '15	28.5	61.8	1.6	39.6	28.8	8.1	17.8



MY MEASURED rainfall at Blackwood for the year was 646.9mm which is far lower than the average of 976.3mm (about 2/3). We have experienced lower than average rainfall for the years 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 but lets hope that this trend can be broken.

IT IS interesting to note that the average daily maximum temperature for October was higher than that of November. December temperatures were higher than average.

AT THE time of print, the Trentham rainfall BOM details for Dec are not recorded. They are also no longer being officially recorded in Blackwood so those tabled are recorded by a local who is confident they are pretty accurate, so The Blackwood Times has elected to run with them. If you are interested in doing regular rainfall readings whether it be in Trentham or Blackwood, please check p8 of our last 2 issues available at theBlackwoodTimes.com.au.

~ by Don Owen

WHAT IS IT ABOUT AUNTIES?

~ by Ewan Cameron

Every family has its uncles who are rightfully proclaimed as heroes because of their strength, courage & commitment. My own father, an example of that style of man, endured a tough life after coming to this country as a teenager entirely alone. He worked through the Great Depression, married, then raised & educated 4 children to be responsible, caring adults. Upon his death in 1975 his sole debt was the milkman's final bill of about 3 dollars. Uncles in the family had experienced similar life trials of fighting in both World Wars &, thereafter, carried war-related injuries & illnesses. Much is made of such fine men, but the wonderful qualities of aunties can be obscured by the deeds & well-deserved reputations of their men.



From my own experiences, my mother's sisters gave me so much love & support that it would take many pages to relate them all. But there are several qualities common to the family's aunties that we all admire & are grateful for. An auntie's love is unconditional & in those years when you need someone other than your mum & dad, aunties are always there to offer support, love, kindness & generosity.

My beautiful, shy, kind Auntie Dulce was hospitable, cheery & laconic. Worries could be disclosed to her in strict confidence & she was never judgemental. She was a great listener who was gentle & generous in so many ways. Dulce passed away when I was quite young but I think it's nice that we all still think of her with love almost 50 years after the end of her life.

My wife, Faye's, Auntie Beryl in Sydney was wonderfully supportive in different ways. She would accept a whole lot of young people into her home at all hours of the day & night, housing them, feeding them & always welcoming with open arms. Brave as Ned Kelly, she would take on challenges many people would shy away from. In her 70's she once drove a one-tonne ute fully-loaded from Sydney to Geelong in record time, on her own & in the dark. Although she has passed on more than 20 years ago, she still brings a smile to our faces. One day while sitting at the lights in her bright-yellow, hot Valiant, some young guys in the car next to her asked, "How fast does it go, grandma?" With her well-practised vague look Beryl replied, "Oh, I don't know, boys." Sitting beside her in the passenger seat, Faye noticed Beryl's foot slide to the accelerator. At the change of light she left the boys opened-mouthed as she laid rubber & dragged them off. What a character!

My wife's Auntie Shirley is similarly a wonderful & inspiring person. In her mid 80's, she is fiercely & totally independent. Shirley drives from Drysdale to Geelong to visit friends & do errands. Recently, annoyed at the incursion of a weed into her neat back garden, she persevered

for 3 hours until she'd pulled it all out by hand. When you visit Shirley you never leave without a wonderful spread, lovingly prepared. Ever thoughtful, she's always trying to send you away with some kind of gift. Our cottage is graced with things she's given us such as a beautiful rug that we treasure because of the very reason it was once hers. Some lady! Class never ages!

I'm convinced that in my youth I had the best aunty in the world. My Auntie Rit lived in the bush at Sailors' Hill, near Daylesford. It was a young boy's paradise to go to her house & live a life of undeserved privilege. Although she had to mind her pennies, I was always welcomed with love & she took pride in any small achievements I made. As a very little boy, I remember her rigging a fishing rod, helping me to catch the fish in her dam, preparing it for cooking & finally serving it to me as to a king. Later, as a young man, I could blow in with friends & treat her house as a camping ground. All the while I was fed & feted upon. Wandering the creeks all day, I'd return home to a cooked meal & a bed, all made ready with love. How lucky was I! Did I take it for granted back then? Of course I did! All aunties did that, didn't they?

The greatest tribute I can give these ladies is to say that we all would know & love such wonderful women inside our own families. I'm sure that everyone would be so grateful to have an aunty like Shirley & I can certainly say that every boy deserves an Auntie Rit!

BAG HAS BAGGED IT!

Dig out those plans of your dream home, your business upgrade, your long-delayed renovation and extension. Blackwood is back in business.

By March, a project manager and a building application facilitator will be at work in Blackwood, upgrading our septs and helping us to build again. Congratulations and thanks to all who worked long and hard for this outcome. Thank you especially to Mary-Anne Thomas MP for her support.

BAG has requested that the project support a community-based online forum to monitor and provide feedback on the project.

The State Government has announced a \$2.75M assistance package in the wake of the Wye River and Scotsburn fires. Apart from covering demolition and cleanup costs, the funds will provide a one-stop-shop for building, planning and environmental regulatory approvals. This service is much the same as Blackwood will receive under our Wastewater Project.

Kate Cotter, a regular visitor to Blackwood (see p.6), has been involved in discussions at Wye River regarding rebuilding under current bushfire codes. Kate started up the Bushfire Building Council of Australia (bbca.org.au) to help bring an evidence-based approach to building in our fire-prone landscape. We look forward to a commonsense approach from government in the rebuilding of these towns.

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FEBRUARY

when	what	where
Fri 5	Jazzdeuce	Perfect Drop
Sat 6	Family Farm	Perfect Drop
Sun 7	Zeebs v's Miss Vitula	The Cosmo
Sun 7: lunch	TOF	Greendale Pub
Fri 12	The Cartwheels	Perfect Drop
Sat 13	The Capo Brothers	Perfect Drop
Sun 14	3 triple Wombat Community Radio:*	TBC
Sun 14	Phil and Trudy Edgeley	The Cosmo
Sun 14	Jan Cam Kettle	Greendale Pub
Fri 19	Phisha	Perfect Drop
Sat 20	Liz Frencham Duo	Perfect Drop
Sun 21	Lark	The Cosmo
Sun 21 3pm	Bryan	Greendale Pub
Fri 26	Michael Sunjack	Perfect Drop
Fri 26	Jan Cam Kettle	Greendale Pub
Sat 27	Evie Tozer and Cyndi Boste	Perfect Drop
Sat 27	Burn City	Greendale Pub
Sun 28	Demi Louise	The Cosmo

To the best of our knowledge all information correct at time of publication, it is advisable to check times, dates & venues with the organisers.



As an 18 year old, he happened across these images in a café. They were on one of those free postcards by the till and, despite his tender years, he was wise enough to take the card to Chinatown for a translation before committing to ink.

Westerners are renowned for trotting about with Asian-language tattoos of dubious meaning: "Evil Bird Camphor", "Tree Rides on Turgid Model-Mode", "Chicken Noodle Soup", "Meany Crime Poet" and, one I'd be tempted to wear, "This is a Tattoo".

Of course, Asians are equally capable of English-language travesties, usually emblazoned across T-Shirts: "Crap Your Hands", "Think Less. Stupid More", "The Baby Wore the Clown" and "Precise Dwarf Bravery". Huh?

So the young man fronted up to Tattoo Magic on Gertrude Street with a figure portraying Agony and Ecstasy and a Chinese character, based on a doorway and an open mouth, and loosely translating to "Why?" (we think).

Apparently, Chinese people who have seen it over the years, smile in recognition. They don't laugh. Just as well, because these 2 images, half a lifetime on, still hold profound (and real) meaning for the wearer. You chose well, young man.

MARCH

when	what	where
Fri 4	Jali Buber	Perfect Drop
Sat 5	Jazzdeuce	Perfect Drop
Sun 6	Family Farm	The Cosmo
Fri 11	Guy DJ	Perfect Drop
Sat 12	Go Go Boys	Perfect Drop
Sun 13	3 triple Wombat Community Radio*	Prayer Hill
Sun 13	Phil and Trudy Edgeley	The Cosmo
Fri 18	Memphis Joe	Perfect Drop
Sun 20	Slim Dime	The Cosmo
Sun 20 3pm	Bryan	Greendale Pub
Fri 25	Cat and Clint	Perfect Drop
	Jan Cam Kettle	Greendale Pub
Sat 26	Chris Harold and Loveland Jazz	Perfect Drop
Sun 27	Tony J King	The Cosmo

* Blackwoodian locals

SILLY OLD GOOSE

You may recall the true stories of mirth, mayhem & personal injury which regularly graced these pages. Silly Old Goat (p9, AugSept '08: John Davies' spiral fracture from seizing a billy by the horns) & Silly Old Wally (p11 Dec'08/Jan'09: Wally Zanon's ladder disaster, resulting in his plastered hobble down the aisle, led by his daughter on her wedding day) come to mind.



Due to popular demand & a recent wealth of minor accidents, Blackwood Times is pleased to reinstate this column with the cautionary tale of Silly Old Goose.

THE HORSE was getting far too fat on lucerne in the top paddock & needed to be moved. The geese as well had to be herded out from there & the gate shut. It went well enough till Susie, about to close the latch, noticed the straggler; one of the geese had been left isolated in the far corner of the paddock & it wasn't happy.

NOW, WHEN you chase down & catch a goose, tuck its head under your armpit & it'll be carried quietly. That's what Susie was about to do when Bud the greyhound, who had been helping, decided to help even further by subduing the bird. Suzie jerked the goose into the air, away from Buddy's snapping snout, just as the bird let fly with its wing, wacking her in the face.

NOW, AT this stage of the story, it's fair to ask the question, "Hit by a bunch of feathers. How is that supposed to hurt?" It turns out that a goose wing has a skeletal system similar to ours, with a humerus, ulna & radius & a stonking great bony elbow, which collected Susie in the face.

IT'S BEEN a few months; the bruising & swelling have disappeared & now she flashes a smile as she tells the story, a funny, still slightly crooked smile.



COMMUNITY GROUP UPDATES

Blackwood All Saint's Anglican Church

The church is currently in recess. At this time you are most welcome to join nearby parishes of Christ Church Myrning or Holy Trinity Bacchus Marsh. Rev'd Darrell Couch is still able to assist with pastoral issues & conduct Weddings, Baptisms & Funerals at Blackwood. For details of services at Myrning & Bacchus Marsh including, Cafe Church, Messy Church,

Senior Citizen's Services & Sunday & Wednesday services please see www.bacchusmarshanglican.org.au or contact 5367 5362.

~ Nina Harbison

Blackwood Action Group

see front page & p8.

Blackwood CEMP

The group continues to meet regularly, consulting with agencies & local stakeholders. At our last meeting:

We reviewed a draft plan submitted by Moorabool Shire's Cherie Graham.

Kate Cotter (Bushfire Building Council of Australia) gave us an overview of her group's work & discussed possible areas of collaboration with Blackwood CEMP.

The group discussed ways of better understanding our local fire risk & the benefits resulting from that understanding. A goal of BAL29 was adopted as a realistic fire-risk level for the Blackwood township, both in terms of personal safety & practicality of building.

~ Brendan Hehir

Blackwood CERT

Hello from your CERT Team

Blackwood & District CERT needs a home – for its vehicle

For over 15 years the district around Blackwood (basically from Greendale through to Trentham) has been served by volunteer, Ambulance Victoria trained, first responders. Our vehicle is supplied by Ambulance Victoria but storage of it & our supplies is not.

Currently the ambulance is kept at the home of one of the Team (thanks Tim) – however, it needs a more permanent home, one which will provide protection from the elements & which would also provide storage space for supplies.

Over the last year or so lots of work has been done in looking at options for a "home" & various sites have been looked at, including space under the Blackwood Hall – thanks to Brian Moore for his assistance in this. However, for various reasons, none of these sites have been quite right.

Finally, a solution looks imminent as we are close to entering into an agreement to use land near the Telstra tower – fingers crossed that we will be able to confirm this over the next couple of weeks.

That will bring us to Stage 2 – building a shed in which to keep the ambulance secure. The Team is looking for donations - either money, in kind or by way of labour – everything is welcome.

We are setting up a crowdfunding campaign & will advise details very soon. In the meantime, please feel free to donate at one of the tins at the Blackwood Hotel, The Blackwood Merchant or the Post Office.

Special thanks to Ivan for his strong work on this project.

HAPPY RETIREMENT: Speaking of thanks, we are losing one of our committed Team & thank Anne Vergona for her work over the years. Anne has been a dedicated Team member, both as a first aid provider with exceptionally strong skills & as both past Secretary & Treasurer. We wish Anne all the best in her retirement!

COMMENDATION FOR SERVICE: None of the Team volunteer with the aim of receiving recognition, but when it happens, it's great.

Recently, 3 CERT members, Ivan Johnston, Margaret McCarthy & Caroline Parker attended a car crash which involved SES, CFA, police, Ambulance Victoria & the air ambulance. It was a very serious situation & due to the efforts of all involved, the driver's life was able to be saved.

In recognition of their valuable input, the three received commendations from Ambulance Victoria for the assistance they provided & they were described as being "exemplary" in their roles &

for working "within the collective paramedic team as integral members".

Congratulations on such great work which reflects the strength of commitment to ongoing training & service.

Cert had a dinner at the Blackwood Merchant to catch up, come together as a team & enjoy some pizzas (see social p2 & 6). These are some of the friendly faces who may appear at your door, should you need to phone for an Ambulance.

Just a reminder if you do need an Ambulance call 000 & hopefully a CERT team may get to you ASAP.

Until next time, take care, from your CERT Team.

~ Sandy Schmidt, CERT

Blackwood CFA

As everyone knows, the bush is very dry.

The CFA estimates that the fire season is 4 weeks more advanced than normal. We are now in mid February like conditions.

The Brigade has been busy assisting neighbouring regions & interstate with some large fires. Before Christmas the Blackwood crew assisted with the transfer of tankers to South Australia & fireground operations there. Our tanker saw duty at the Scotsburn fire & the new Ultra Light tanker had multiple deployments at the same fire.

The Ultra Light tanker also attended the Daylesford Secondary College incident as the fire threatened to escape into surrounding grassland.

As we have had below average rainfall over winter & spring the forest areas are very dry & we ask that people take extra care out in the bush, so please be alert & aware.

Please note that the brigade is obliged to inform Police about any illegal burn offs.

Don't forget our Adopt a Fire Hydrant program where all residents are asked to check for fire hydrants & plugs in their immediate area & keep them mowed so we can easily locate them, if you need further assistance feel free to come up to the station as we are there each Sunday from 9:30 am to around 12.

Many thanks to Lt. Steve Long for his assistance to a stranded motorist in Trentham. Well done Steve.

Take it safely over the summer months & remember in the event of any emergency, call 000 & look out for your neighbours.

~ Karl Church

Blackwood Cemetery Trust

- The Trust was successful with the application of a grant for a new ride-on mower
- The Trust is looking into the erection of a layout placard of the names & grave locations, to be erected at the front gates
- Also, a monument to the unnamed grave is being investigated.
- Negotiations with the NBN is still ongoing
- Nothing in sight with regards Optus or Vodafone

~ Wally Zanon

Blackwood Committee of Management

Great News! We have received a grant from the Victorian Mineral Water Committee to upgrade the BBQ's & damaged picnic tables in the Springs Reserve. see DELWP media release p13.

~ Jenni Panos

Blackwood & Barry's Reef Landcare

Landcare is a community-based conservation group. Most groups are agricultural based - reforestation, vermin control, weed control, etc. Farmers love it because it improves their bottom line. In Blackwood, it's all about weed eradication. Unfortunately, most of the volunteers have retired, & like any other volunteer group, there is a need for more volunteers. If you are interested, & would like to learn more, you can contact Shane Scanlan via email shane@mediacomms.com.au or call him on 0488 978 684 he would love to hear from you. For other information about the group, their website is - <http://blackwoodlandcare.org.au/>

~ Shane Scanlan

Blackwood Historical Society

The Blackwood & District Historical Society's last Committee meeting for the year will be held in the upper rotunda at the Mineral Springs at 10.30am followed by a BBQ. New members welcome. The Historical Museum was open on the Sunday of the November Cup weekend with a disappointing attendance despite notices around the town. The next Committee meeting will be held in February 2016 with no meeting in January. For further details contact the Secretary - Elizabeth Hall on 53686 537.

For anyone interested in further reading, the website is www.blackwoodpublishing.com there are very interesting historical facts & characters of Blackwood to read about. Also on that site I saw a press release about Margot Hitchcock's latest book..

~ Margot Hitchcock

Blackwood Progress Association

The 2016 Blackwood Easter Carnival & Woodchop will be held on Saturday March 26, commencing with a traditional Street Parade through the town arriving at the reserve at 11:30.

A large number of visitors are anticipated with this year's Woodchop Program is set to be even bigger than previous years, along with attractions for all ages.

Over the years, stalls have proven to be really popular & we extend an invitation for stall holders to set up a stand for the day. Stands are approx 5m in length at a cost of \$25 per site. Booking forms can be downloaded from theblackwoodtimes.com.au

For more news about the 2016 Easter Carnival see p2 & 3

Blackwood Senior Citizens

It was all fun, food & games at the Blackwood Senior Citizens' Christmas break up on December 13. A smorgasborg of food was brought in on the day by club members to kindly give kitchen staff a break & join in the fun. Deliciousness abounded especially with desert choices of cheesecake, pavlova, chocolate log & fruit salad - some tried them all! Lucky door raffle prize draws & bingo extended into the afternoon. (see photos on p20)

~ Lindy Mundy

Blackwood Uniting Church

Meditation will commence on Monday, Feb 1 at Blackwood House at 7pm, then 1st & 3rd Monday of each monthly. All welcome.

If you would like to let your community know about your organisation, what your focus in the community is & how you would like support, please email Sandy at - galaxyss@hotmail.com. We'd love to hear from you.



Moorabool Mobile Library

It's quite exciting that we now have online access, as I can now provide a much-improved service to Blackwood borrowers!

Two things to note: the library service is now provided by Moorabool Shire, not the City of Ballarat (that was only when they provided us with their Mobile Library a few years ago), plus I wanted to let people know that we wont be coming up to Blackwood on Extreme Fire Danger days, due to council OHS requirements.

~ Kerith, Rural Library Officer 0419 519 650



Blackwood CRICKET CLUB

As we go to print for this edition we are currently 2nd on the ladder by only .33 points. Our last game before the Xmas break was against Bacchus Marsh & we defeated them by 139 runs in a two dayer, Wayne Robinson top scored in the batting with 175 runs. We won the first game after the Xmas break with a fantastic bowling effort by Wayne Robinson 4/35 & Luke Whitehouse 3/42. We lost the game last week by only 15 points, we were chasing a total of 247 & fantastic batting performances by Ben Whitehouse (56), Steve Thomas (55) & Alan Salmon (34) nearly got us over the line.

Our next home games are Saturday February 20 & 27. With Saturday February being our PINK STUMPS day it would be great to see everyone down at the sports ground to support the players as they hopefully head to the finals & also to support this worthy charity. On the day we will run raffles with gifts kindly donated by local business & the community & all proceeds will go direct to the charity. Food & drink will be available on the day. Follow us on facebook for more information <https://www.facebook.com/BlackwoodCricketClub/>

~ Jodie Bantz

BLACKWOOD & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM

Open 1st Saturday monthly 10am-1pm
Historical Society Meeting 10.30am-12.30pm
ALL WELCOME
Martin St, Blackwood ph 5368 6537
www.blackwoodvictoria.com

A community service notice sponsored by FLUX Design Studio... like us on facebook FluxDesignStudio

INAUGURAL GARDEN CLUB MEET-UP

Our 1st meeting for the Garden Club was a really nice get-together for people who are passionate gardeners with diverse interests & knowledge to share . We've planned some great activities for the next few months.

We meet at the Blackwood Merchant on the 3rd Saturday of the month & for our next meeting on Feb 20 we have a garden visit to what sounds like a veritable food forest with wicking beds & a greenhouse from recycled materials.

In March we'll have a chance to visit a garden, a large landscaped garden with beautiful Autumn colours & a massive array of trees.

We are planning a planting guide specifically for Blackwood & will share tips, info, seeds & excess produce. I know I'm really excited to gain knowledge from others about our success & failures & how to enhance our own little piece of paradise in Blackwood.

~ Jane Howat 5368 6772

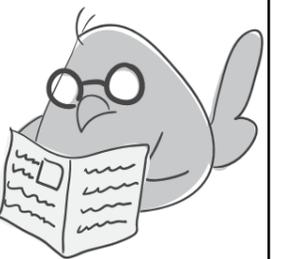
Blackwood Library visits – now online!

The Moorabool Shire weekly library visit to Blackwood Hall, Wednesdays 1:30 -2:30pm has just become so much better, as we are now online, which means that your friendly Rural Library Officer, Kerith, can access the catalogue & library system for you during each visit to provide a more efficient & complete service.

There are shelves of fiction & non-fiction, children's & adult's, to browse in the hall in addition to the reserving service provided by Kerith.

Blackwood borrowers can now access the library catalogue from home if they have an internet connection & place holds that can be picked up from Blackwood each Wednesday by selecting 'MSOutreach' from the list of pick up locations. You will need a PIN to log-in, so please come & see us up at the hall for any further information, or call Kerith on 0419 519 650.

Please note that the service will not come to Blackwood on any Wednesday that is declared an Extreme Fire Danger day.



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Playpen, Blackwood style starring Tayla & Rylee. Photo Jaime Henderson



Coming home from doing the school bus pick-up, Blackwoodian, Mr Dad had to stop to rescue a little ball of fluff sitting in the middle of the road. It was a baby ring tail possum!

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• OUT & ABOUT • OUT & ABOUT •

FEBRUARY:

DATE	TIME	EVENT	VENUE
Sat 6	10:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Blackwood & District Historical Society meeting	Blackwood Museum
Sun 7	10:00 AM	Cafe Church (Anglican)	BM Grammar
Sat 13	7:30 PM	Trentham Film Society	Trentham NH
Sun 14	1:30 - 5PM	Music Makers	Trentham NH
Sat 20	11:00 AM	Blackwood Gardening Club	BW Merchant
Sun 21	3:00 PM	Wombat Book Club	BW Merchant
Sun 21	9:30AM - 4PM	Ballan Tractor Pull & Vintage Rally	Old Ballan Racecourse

MARCH:

Sat 5	10:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Blackwood & District Historical Society meeting	Blackwood Museum
Sun 6	10:00 AM	Cafe Church (Anglican)	BM Grammer
Sat 12	7:30 PM	Trentham Film Society	Trentham NC
Sat 12 - Sun 13	10:00 AM - 4:00 PM	Lost Trades Fair	Kyneton
Sun 13		Harvest Festival	Bacchus Marsh
Sun 13	1:30-5 PM	Music Makers	Trentham NH
Sat 19	11:00 AM	Blackwood Gardening Club	BW Merchant
Sun 20	3:00 PM	Wombat Book Club	Blackwood Pub
Sun 20	8:00 AM - 3:00 PM	Ballan Autumn Festival	Main Street, Ballan
Sat 26	11:00 AM	Blackwood Easter Parade	Blackwood TC
Sat 26	11AM-5PM	Easter Carnival & Woodchop	Blackwood

To the best of our knowledge all information correct at time of publication, it is advisable to check times, dates & venues with event organisers.



At the announcement of the Waste Water Project: Mary-Anne Thomas, Member for Macedon & Lisa Neville, Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, with Paul O'Donohue, Managing Director, Central Highlands Water with members of the Blackwood community & the Blackwood Action Group. (photo BH)

FROM THE DESK OF DELWP

New members appointed to Blackwood Committee of Management

The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) announces the appointment of four additional members to the Blackwood Crown Reserves Committee of Management.

Following an Expression of Interest process in late 2015, the four new members were chosen under a skills-based selection process to ensure that members have skills suitable for managing the complexities of the seven local reserves.

The new members are Jenni Panos, Naten Van Gossum, David White, and Michael Boyd.

DELWP Land Planning and Approvals Regional Manager Grant Hull congratulated the new members on their appointment to the committee.

"DELWP is committed to enhancing the value and community use of public land and will continue to support the expanded committee of management to fulfil its role and responsibilities," Mr Hull said.

"The Blackwood reserves are a significant asset for the community due to their number, diversity and complexity.

"The reserves in the Blackwood area vary from the Mineral Springs which is an important tourist attraction, sports ground and pavilion which provide a hub for local community events, caravan park and the local hall."

"The strengthening of the committee will ensure ongoing appropriate management for these important reserves into the future."

• MARKET CALENDAR • MARKET CALENDAR • MARKET CALENDAR •

1st SATURDAY	1st SUNDAY	2nd SATURDAY	2nd SUNDAY	3rd SATURDAY	3rd SUNDAY	4th SATURDAY	4th SUNDAY
BALLAN MARKET 8am-1pm Inglis St	DAYLESFORD MARKET 8am-4pm Railway Station	KYNETON FARMERS 8am-1pm St Pauls Park	DAYLESFORD MARKET 8am-4pm Railway Station	CRESWICK COMMUNITY 9am-1pm Victoria St	DAYLESFORD MARKET 8am-4pm Railway Station	BREAKFAST BAZAAR from 9am Hepburn Springs	DAYLESFORD MARKET 8am-4pm Railway Station
DAYLESFORD FARMERS 9am-1pm D'ford PS	CASTLEMAINE ARTIST MARKET 10am-3pm (not Jan) Theatre Royal	BALLAN FARMERS 9am-1pm Mill Cottage	MALMSBURY VILLAGE MARKET 9am-3pm (Sept-May) Gardens	RIDDELLS CREEK FARMERS 9am-3pm (not Dec) PS	TALBOT FARMERS 9am-1pm Scandanavian Cres	LANCEFIELD & DIST FARMERS MARKET 9am-1pm High St	LANCEFIELD/ROMSEY LIONS 8am-2.30pm (not Jan, Jun, Jul) Main St
DAYLESFORD MAKERS 10am-3pm Town Hall	CASTLEMAINE FARMERS 9am-1pm Mostlyn St			DARLEY MARKET 8am-1pm Gisborne/Grey St Darley	WOODEND 9am-3pm High St	BALLARAT LAKESIDE 9-1pm	TRENTHAM SUNDAY MARKET 9am-2pm Victoria St
TRENTHAM INDOOR 9.30am-1.30 TNH Centre	GISBORNE OLDE TIME MARKET 9am-2pm Hamilton & Aitken			TRENTHAM FARMERS 9am-1pm Town Square			
DARLEY MARKET 8am-1pm Gisborne/Grey St Darley	GISBORNE ALL SEASONS 9am-3pm Brantome St			TRENTHAM MAKERS 9am-1.30pm Cosmo			

To the best of our knowledge all information correct at time of publication, it is advisable to check times, dates & venues with the market organisers.

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NATURAL RHYTHM:



Going With The Flow

by Kathie Strmota

Our Earth turns on its axis daily, orbits the sun annually, and is orbited by the moon monthly. These cyclic movements create a range of rhythmic dynamics which influence all things on the planet. Plants sprout in the warm vibrant energy of spring, animals hibernate through the cold dark of winter, and ocean tides move with the pull of the moon.

Human experience, behaviour & physiology, are also influenced by, and reliant on, the Earth's cycles. Living in harmony with the flow of our planet's natural rhythms can provide a deep foundation for both physical health and inner satisfaction. While the technological advances of our age have given us the freedom to live outside the natural order, our genetics have not. We can choose to sleep during the day, work at night, do a gym workout at 8pm or have a snack at 3am, but our physical and mental health will suffer for it.

Like plants & animals, our evolutionary development has been intricately entwined with the natural environment for millennia. By comparison, our industrial history is so short as to be negligible in evolutionary terms. In a few hundred thousand years, our genetics may well evolve to suit this modern way of living, but today's human body is still a creature of nature, and depends on natural rhythms for its optimum function.

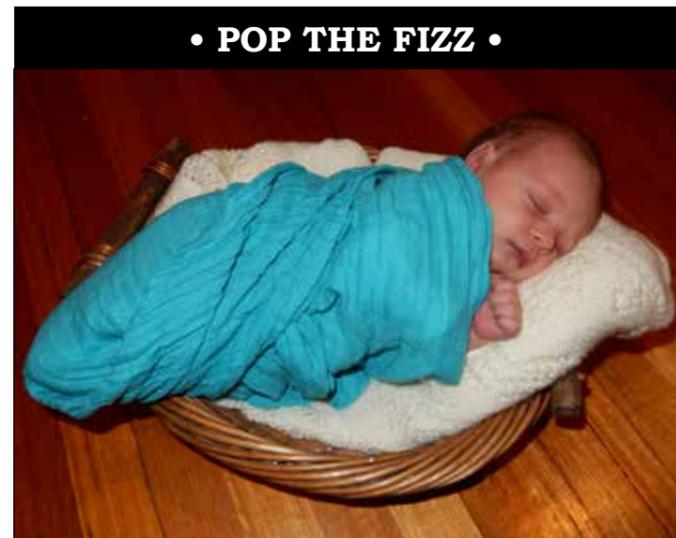
We all have a central biochemical 'body clock' (in the brain's hypothalamus) which runs on a 24hr cycle. We also have many organ & cellular clocks throughout the body which attune to the central clock but can also be individually 'set' by other environmental triggers. These clocks synchronise to vary biochemical activities over a 24hr period, with different types of activities being given priority at different times of day. These rhythmic patterns are adjusted further by light & temperature changes that come with moon cycles and seasonal shifts throughout the year.

We experience cyclic shifts in many areas (energy metabolism, brain activity, hormone production, immune functions, circulation, muscle strength, digestive processes, mood & perception, etc), as day turns to night, as the moon waxes & wanes, and as the seasons change. When we observe the timing of these functional shifts we see a body that is designed to perform complex brain work in the morning, manual body-focused activities in the afternoon, and restful creative activities in the evening. It is a body that expects to be asleep during the hours of darkness. We have more action-energy in the spring and feel a need to withdraw during winter.

If you arrange your own lifestyle to align with these body rhythms, not only do you create optimum conditions for getting the most from your efforts, but you also provide your body with the conditions it needs to do its own work most efficiently. This means a smoother life experience and healthier body with little effort on your part!

When your daily activities are out-of-sync with these optimum dynamics, your tasks become more challenging and require greater effort. Your body also needs more energy & resources to manage its own daily tasks and, depending on the kind of disruption in routine you've created, it may simply fail to do certain important jobs altogether, because the conditions it needed weren't met.

Many life challenges and health issues can be prevented or improved by simply going with the flow of your body and the planet which sustains it. In coming issues, I'll explore some of these body cycles and planetary dynamics in more detail and look at ways to improve your health, mood and personal success by aligning with natural rhythms.



• POP THE FIZZ •

LEANNE AND Nils Thiele-Wittig from Blackwood are proud to announce the arrival of Fynn Seth Thiele-Wittig. He was born on December 18, 2015. He arrived 2.5 weeks early just in time for Christmas. Born at the Bacchus Marsh Hospital at 12:48am weighing 3160 grams. Fynn is a little brother to Morgana.



AFTER 4 years living in Perth, Blackwoodian Jess Coyle returned to Melbourne in May '15 with longtime partner, Anthony Graham. In January the couple announced their intention to wed.

WHAT A handsome pair!

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COLD BREW ICED TEA

~ by Caroline Parker



Happy New Year to you all! Here's hoping that you've come out the other side of the festive season still in one piece & surviving the Summer heat.

I'm normally an avid tea drinker but the thought of drinking hot tea while it's 41C outside makes me want to melt into a puddle. You can buy Iced Tea from the shop but these can be full of sugar, artificial preservatives & flavours, so I prefer to make my own, plus it's cheaper! Here is an easy way to make a Cold Brew Iced Tea & you don't even have to turn the kettle on.

CHOOSE CONTAINER – you can use anything from a trusty old tea pot, mason jar or French Press (coffee plunger), as long as it has a secure lid.

ADD TEA – pop out into your garden & pick a handful of fresh herbs (mint, lemon balm, fennel, basil, parsley, spearmint, lemongrass anything your tastebuds love), or a few teaspoons of your favourite ready-made herbal or black tea will do, loose leaf or teabag is up to you.

ADD WATER – fill the container with cold or room temperature water (our lovely Blackwood town water, rain water or filtered water) & pop on the lid.

WAIT – place the container in the fridge & let brew for 4-10 hours. I usually leave mine overnight. The longer you leave it the stronger the tea will be.

SERVE – strain & serve as is over ice, or get really creative & add fresh fruit, frozen berries, orange & lemon slices & herb garnishes, whatever takes your fancy.

Here are some of my favourite combinations:

- Lemongrass & Ginger tea - garnished with lemon slices
- Applemint, lemonbalm & fennel – strained & garnished with fresh herbs & lemon slices
- Green tea & mint – garnished with fresh mint
- Black Tea with frozen blueberries – garnished with fresh mint & berries
- Chai – you can cold brew with milk instead of water
- Green Tea & jasmine
- Chamomile & rose
- Licorice

~ Enjoy! Caroline xx

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Dear Pet Guru,

In spite of growing up among lots of kangaroos, my pet koala can't hop. Do you think he is mentally deficient?

Signed,
Concerned,
Kyneton

Dear Concerned,
No, I don't think he is deficient. After all, how many of the kangaroos with which he grew up can climb trees?

Pet Guru



Blackwood Post Office to stay put!

Almost 12 months ago, Blackwood hotelier, Michael Boyd, bit the bullet & leased the building opposite the hotel so he could move the Post Office off the pub premises & into a bit of a community hub. His plan was to give it ago for 12 months in the hope that locals would support the operation. In its first year the business has broken even, conducting usual Post Office business. Locals can buy their daily papers, top up on milk, bread & essentials while tourists can peruse an assortment of local arts & crafts, antiques & retro recycled clothing.

Michael wants to thank everyone who has supported his venture to date & looks forward a bigger & better year ahead.

Photo: Michaels' nephew, Cody Lynch, at Unawatuna Beach, Sri Lanka wearing the very new release "Straight Outta BLACKWOOD" t-shirt



Be prepared for power outages

This summer, electricity businesses will be modifying their powerline safety settings on Total Fire Ban or Code Red days to reduce the risk of bushfires. This may result in a temporary loss of power if a fault occurs.

Households and businesses should consider the need for back-up power if they are highly reliant on electricity. Remember power outages can also affect phones, radios and water pumps.

- Have a battery-powered radio and spare batteries or a wind-up radio available to hear alerts and warnings in case power fails;
- Have a landline with a cord, a fully charged mobile phone as backup and a spare battery and;
- Have a non-electric pump available that can be operated from an alternative water supply such as a swimming pool, concrete or metal tank, or dam.

If you lose power, contact your electricity distribution business on the "Faults and Emergencies" number or website shown on your most recent electricity bill.

Be prepared.

For further information please visit energyandresources.vic.gov.au/power-outage-guide



FIRES MOVE FAST.

PLAN NOW, NOT WHEN A FIRE IS APPROACHING.

Fires start and spread quickly. That's why it's important to talk to your family or household **today** about when to leave, where to go and how to get there. Remember to pack an emergency kit, so you can leave quickly when the need arises.

GET PREPARED.

For more information on how to prepare for fire, visit emergency.vic.gov.au or call **1800 240 667**



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

BLACKWOOFs



MEET ARCHIE, aka "The Beast of Blackwood". He's a 3year old Rhodesian Ridgeback with a taste for couches. And mattresses and credit cards and sunglasses and books and electrical cords and... well, you get the picture. No, wait. He's already eaten the picture.

NOT THAT it's his fault. Rhodesian Ridgebacks were bred for lion hunting. Precious few of them around here for the Beast of Blackwood. So he's just very sensibly "making do" with what's at hand.

APART FROM taking lion-sized chunks out of the scenery, Archie likes jumping in the water, rolling in mud and sitting in your lap. In that order.

• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •

Hello Blackwood times, it's your van family here, Well we're happy to say that we are spending the 1st night in our new home in Daylesford .

Firstly we would like to thank the most caring, giving & the most kind community that myself or my partner have ever come across (we'd also like to call Blackwood our home too if that's okay). Without Blackwood we literally would not have survived. There were days we would be trying to figure out how we were going to get milk or food for the boys because we were literally beyond flat broke & then there would be a knock at the door from someone in your precious community baring a hamper with food & milk, just at the right time.

Words cannot express our gratitude & thanks for the wonderful things this community has done for us, I know almost every time someone brought something over my partner seemed to be in the caravan, this is because he could not hold back his feelings & would tear up at the thoughtfulness of everyone towards his family at such a time (he's a big softie).

We just don't know what to say... thank you seems so inadequate, words just cannot explain it.

Blackwood we cannot thank you all enough for all your support through out this very tough time & we will be back to say thank you in person very very shortly Blackwood has made our family really understand & see the true meaning of a community we thank & love you all so very much, have a very merry Christmas I know we will.

~ Sharni (Dec 23, 2015)

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PET SHENANIGANS WITH SEAMUS



Woof: In this month's edition Summer is certainly with us. & as the temperatures rise with total fire ban days in force in Blackwood, heat stress can not only affect humans but us furry critters too.

Most animals can't sweat to reduce body heat. Instead, dogs & cats lose heat by panting but there is a limit as to how much they can cool themselves down.

No matter how healthy you think your pet is, dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs etc. of all shapes, sizes & age can be affected by Heat Stress (or heat stroke) however, dogs with short noses, such as the bulldog, pug & boxer are particularly at risk.

Heat Stress occurs when animals are confined in hot environments, often when locked in cars where the temperature can rise to lethal levels very quickly & in many circumstances it is life-threatening.

Modifying your exercise or walking routine should be considered in the warmer months also. Jogging or walking early in the morning or late in the evening is recommend as the temperatures are definitely cooler at these times.

Ensure that your pet has adequate shade in their backyard & refrain from tethering a dog to something that can prevent them from seeking different areas of the yard throughout the day.

Signs that your pet could be suffering from heat stress:

- Excessive panting
- Bright red gums & tongue which turn to blue
- Salivation
- Vomiting
- Anxious pacing, uncoordinated, stumbling
- Seizures or strange behaviour
- Collapse
- Coma

Heat Stress can affect pets so quickly that they can become comatose within a very short timeframe of being exposed to the heat & direct sun.

If you suspect that your pet is suffering from heat stress you should contact your local Vet for advice immediately. In the meantime, there are a few techniques that you can do to keep your pet quiet & try to lower their body temperature.

First Aid techniques for Heat Stroke in pets:

- Soak a towel in cool water, drizzle the water on your pet concentrating on the head, stomach, neck, inner thighs & pads of the feet
- Wrap your pet in a cool wet towel
- For larger pets, gentle hosing or bathing with cool water, followed by cool towels applied to the head & stomach
- You want to cool your pet slowly to avoid hypothermia, which is why it is important to use cool water not iced water

Tips on preventing heat stress in your pet:

- Ensure that you pet has access to plenty of fresh, cool water at all times
- Modify your exercise routine with your pet to avoid the midday sun
- **NEVER** leave a pet in a car even if the windows are open or even if it appears to be an overcast day
- Remember that all pets can be affected by heat stress but pets with long hair, overweight, older animals & specific breeds are at a higher risk
- Make sure that outdoor pets have access to lots of shade & prevent tethering them to an object that may not allow them to move freely around their yard. Inside animals also need to have access to lots of fresh water & well ventilated spaces.

REMEMBER IF IT'S TOO HOT FOR YOU, THEN IT IS TOO HOT FOR YOUR PET!

Woof for now, Seamus

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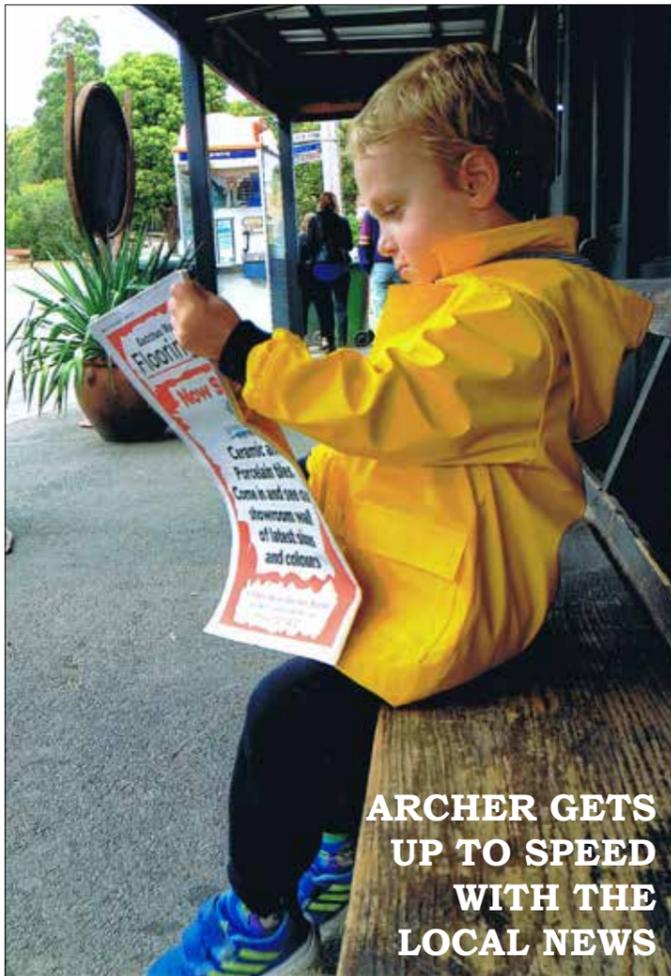


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Senior Citizens' Christmas Break-up

TOP: left - Coveted raffle prize, the 'sexy soap'; TOP middle - "The punch is good" says Bev; TOP right - Bingo caller of the day RIGHT: "Have some chips" says Harry Photos courtesy Lindy Mundy



ARCHER GETS UP TO SPEED WITH THE LOCAL NEWS



FROM THE DESK OF CATHERINE KING MP KING CALLS FOR URGENT FUNDING FOR MOBILE BLACK SPOTS

The Turnbull Government has been urged to ramp up its priorities in Ballarat & region under the Mobile Phone Black Spot Programme.

"Today we have yet another total fire ban across our region & soaring temperatures, emphasising again the urgent need for these mobile blackspots to be funded & the work done," Federal Member for Ballarat, Catherine King, said.

"There can be no further delay. The Government must recognise that drip feeding this funding is not good enough & that all mobile black spots across this fire prone region need to be funded now," Ms King said.

In a letter last week, responding to the Department of Infrastructure's request to nominate three more priority locations for the programme, Ms King said more areas in this region of high bushfire risk should be included.

Ms King noted that Ballan, Mt Helen, Smeaton, Dales Creek, Dean, Dereel, Elaine, Enfield, Morrisons & Napoleons should all be priorities for further Mobile Blackspot funding.

The letter concludes: "There are more areas of high bushfire risk within my electorate than I am allowed to nominate & all should be high priority,"

"With areas of my electorate having already been devastated by fire this summer, local communities have a fair expectation that resources be allocated prioritising safety, & I urge the Department & the Minister to direct the programme with that in mind."

LEFT: 3yo Archer Hobbs catches up on the news outside the Blackwood Merchant. Archer is one of Robyns' 5 grandchildren. Photo courtesy: Robyn Lukey

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WOMBAT BOOK CLUB 2016

Welcome to a new year of reading. Bookclub meets the 3rd Sunday monthly. Due to the busy season, a few of us were away & didn't get time to do much reading, hopefully this will change now we are into the new year.

The books we read are diverse & sometimes confronting. Each member chooses a book they think the group will enjoy we then request the library to collect as many copies as they can (so many thanks are due to our mobile library!).

One such book was 'The Narrow Road to the Deep North', by Richard Flanagan, winner of the 2014 Man Booker Prize. Australian Surgeon, Dorrigo Evans, struggles to save the men under his command from disease & starvation whilst they are POW in a Japanese camp. A story mixed with hope, love & passion, & dealing with the horrors of war.

Sandy: A difficult story, however, one which must be told. A story of hope & humanity in the midst of horror. Well written.

4½ wombies

Sue: This book is not an easy read, but I'm glad I read it as it was an education.

4½ wombies

Rach: This is a savage but beautiful story about the violence & cruelty of war. The struggle of Australian soldiers as Japanese prisoners of war building the Thai-Burma railway is harrowing, but also full of love & moments of hope. Absolutely faultless writing.

4 Wombies

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THE 3 MAXKETEERS



The local lads named Max finally met

The next book to peruse was a good Summertime romance ... although not quite. A title most suitable to Summertime called, 'The Language of Flowers' by Vanessa Diffenbaugh. A moving story about an orphaned girl, Victoria Jones, who was moved from one foster home to another. She lived with one foster carer who taught her the meaning of flowers, which became an integral part of her life, leading eventually to people who would show her how to trust & love.

Sandy: This was a story about someone who trusted & loved nobody. Through someone who cared about her, she learnt about what flowers meant & how they can communicate emotions to others. This led to success, & love. You became involved with Victoria as Vanessa took you back & forth through her life. An uplifting & well-written story, overall a great read.

4½ wombies

Sue: A good book to read over the holidays; easy & interesting, with a happy end!

4½ wombies

Rach: A unique story about family & love, tied to the Victorian tradition of messages through flowers. The protagonist in this story is wonderful because she is so unconventional. After an upbringing in many foster homes she is aloof & untrusting. Her behaviour could in some cases could make her unlikeable, but this author allows us to understand her true hopes & fears. An easy & enjoyable read.

4 wombies

Deirdre: What a fantastic novel. It captures the struggles & achievements of a defiant, resilient woman. Her understanding of the Language Of Flowers changed the lives of people around her & helped heal her damaged soul..

4 wombies



Bookclub 2015 break-up brunch at Blackwood Ridge L-R: Jane, Robyn, Sue, Rach, Brenda, Anne, Sandy, photo - JC

• BOUQUET •

We love the benches around Blackwood - so many places to pause, chat & think. Where has the bench in the cemetery gone? Without this much-appreciated bench, we have been left to gaze over Blue Mount while perched on the edges of graves. Hardly respectful. Or is the beloved bench coming back? Please let us know.

~ Margaret & Noelle

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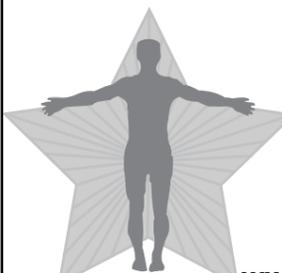


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BEYOND BLACKWOOD...



Proposed floor plan Trentham Hub

COMMUNITY HUB IS HUMMING ...

The Trentham Community Hub will be a new multi-purpose community facility that may combine the operations & community services including the Trentham Neighbourhood Centre, The Mechanics Institute Hall, Library & Visitor Info Centre. The Hub will be an accessible & welcoming place that brings together a range of community activities in a modest, practical, sustainable & cost effective manner. The project aims to:

- Maximise the synergy & collaboration between organisations that might arise from co-location in a single building
- Create a vibrant facility consistent with town character & which creates a landmark in the township & is embraced by the community with pride
- Delivers best practice in sustainable design & respects the cultural heritage of the site
- Achieves a whole of life project costing (construction, operation & maintenance) for the project
- Be placemaking, providing a space that can help define the identity of the community
- Be a recognised meeting place that strengthens connections within the community
- Offer an accessible & welcoming place that brings together a range of community activities & people with shared interests read up on what the hub will mean for you @ trenthamhub.com

LOCAL REAL ESTATE AGENT CHANGES HANDS WITH A FRIENDLY SHAKE

After building the successful real estate business, Fitzgerald Property, from scratch 14 years ago, John Fitzgerald is moving on to other ventures & passing the baton on to Trentham local Frances Harkin.

John is of course very well known in the Trentham/Blackwood area & has built the business up by strengthening his relationships with the community. So he is happy that the new owner, Frances Harkin, shares the same values with her passion for community-building.

John shared, "As with all businesses there comes a time to move on. There is a need for any business to inject fresh management & faces with a new round of enthusiasm & the ability to take the business to another level. I have thoroughly enjoyed building the business from scratch & developing the relationships in the greater area. I have especially enjoyed watching all the changes take place."

Since moving to country Victoria almost 10 years ago, Frances has taken pleasure in the close-knit & artistically diverse region in which she lives. Frances has been involved in starting many community galleries through her art & silver smithing. Although she said art would always remain a part of her life, she said it was heartening to have established another way to give back to her local community.

Fran formerly worked for the Eview group as an independent agent in the Macedon ranges region. Now she is really excited to see this challenge before her.



Fran shares, "When people sell a home it can be stressful so it's important that I help them through that whole process. After all, home is where the heart is," she said "The biggest thing for me is for my vendors to be confident & comfortable & to be able to trust me."

In the next 6 months, John will still be in the office as he hands over the reigns. Rhonda Holcombe, who has also contributed to a lot of local's sales stories & is acknowledged for dedication to locals, will still be in the office part-time.

For John, whose family first settled in Trentham & Fernhill in the 1850's, the business has been an extension of family enterprise in the area.

We wish John all the best in his next venture & thanks for all the great work you have achieved. Welcome Fran to Fitzgerald Property, we wish you great success!

~ Genevieve Messenger

TRENTHAM EASTER ART & CRAFT SHOW

The Annual Show will be held over Easter from Fri March 25 to Mon March 28, 10am to 4pm, and on Mon 28 from 10am to 3pm. The venue is once again the Trentham Mechanics Institute Hall, High St, Trentham. Opening night will be Thurs 24 March, when the awards will be announced and presented. Works will be available for sale from 7.30pm, along with wine and a delicious supper (\$15 per person) All welcome!

Enquiries – Jill McCallum 0403 650 811 jillmccallum@live.com
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Getting Into Hot Water

~ by Simon Reid

Almost everybody uses hot water daily. So while it can get complex for an Energy Assessor to prioritize the economic benefits of solar power versus a more efficient heater, I can be confident that a right-sized solar hot water or heat pump hot water system will deliver savings. When comparing heating water with an electric element, gas storage or even instant gas, these sustainable options can reduce energy bills by 2/3 to 3/4 over a calendar year &, for a family of 4, pay for themselves in 3 to 5 years.

A solar hot water system uses roof-mounted collectors that convert light into heat. This provides almost all of the energy needed to heat water in the sunnier 6 months of the year, a fair bit in late autumn & early spring ... but will need significant boosting in the darker months of winter with either an electric element, gas or a wood-fire.

A heat pump uses a small amount of electric energy to extract about 3 times as much heat energy from the air using the same technology found in a refrigerator or air-conditioner. It uses a more constant amount of energy all year but runs longer & harder in winter when less heat is available. Despite earlier problems with low quality heat pumps that some readers might be aware of, there are now reliable & effective models on the Australian market. A properly installed &

operating heat pump or solar hot water unit will not be damaged by frost.

Solar hot water tends to cost more up-front but have longer warranties. Heat pumps have shorter warranties but cost less up-front, typically about 2/3 of the price of solar hot water.

Solar hot water tends to be almost silent while a heat pump sounds like an air-conditioner – this troubles some people but not others.

Solar hot water requires roof real-estate; a heat pump does not, so if your roof is shaded or covered with solar electricity panels, a heat pump could be the choice for you.

To me, the future looks all-electric with solar power & either solar hot water or a heat pump on every home. A heat pump can be run either overnight off-peak or during the day using your solar power. But if you need more of your solar power for other purposes, you might chose solar hot water requires as it almost no electric-boosting in Summer. As an Energy Assessor, it is my job to tailor a solution to each households energy use pattern, but with hot water I can be confident that they will be sustainable options that reward the householder with savings.



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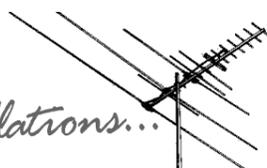
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