

Blakeville Boys show how it's done (2019 winners)

## LET'S ALL PULL TOGETHER FOR THE BEST EASTER CARNIVAL YET

It's well known Blackwood women are hell raisin' & the men are strong - but sensitive. Once again our strength will be tested at the upcoming Tug of War at the Blackwood Carnival. The Tug-of-War has been going as long as people can remember. Rumour has it that a shipping company at the Melbourne wharves donated the rope! Regardless, it's withstood the passage of time & the efforts of many to tear it apart.

The Tug-of-War is always hotly contested. In the past there were medals, but nowadays it's all about the glory. In 2018, the Blackwood Men's team beat Trentham & Blakeville came in a healthy third. Last year, Blakeville (aka the Binks) took their revenge, beating Blackwood, with Trentham coming in a strong third. The women's teams were evenly matched, with both sides refusing to give an inch. Forget the gym, Tug-of-War is a full-body workout. Tips for success from old hands; callouses prevent rope burn so start swinging a pickaxe, & practice leaning at a right angle. It's fun & casual in true Blackwood style, but when the flag falls, it's all grit & grunt & hold that line!

## BLACKWOOD EASTER CARNIVAL SATURDAY APRIL 11

to help out contact us via our

- facebook page (search for 'blackwood woodchop & easter carnival')
- Email: blackwoodprogress@gmail.com or
- call Karen at the Hat Shoppe (03) 9018 5458



EDITOR’S THOUGHTS...

Welcome to a new year & the first issue of the Blackwood Times after we had to take a recess to find a new team. In January a public meeting was held, attended by a small but committed group of people who were keen to see new life breathed into our community paper.

Lisa Moore, who I first worked along side organising the Blackwood Hotel’s 150th celebration, has thrown her hat in the ring as communications co-ordinator. Her role is to manage incoming emails & respond by directing your query to the appropriate member of the team. So when you email team@theblackwoodtimes.com.au, more than likely Lisa will be your first point of contact.

Kathy Berrill is well known & loved in the town as our local event bus driver, her special school & cricket connections as well as one of our trusty CERT responders. She has worked on newsletters as part of her work & is being trained up to take over the desktop publishing role.

Sue & Peter Donnelly will make a great team. Peter has been our photographer for a number of years & Sue has put her hand up to take on the often onerous task of getting gigs & events together.

When not beguiling world wide audiences with her Scottish songs & words, Fiona Ross will ensure our advertisers are happy with their ads & charm new advertisers as needed.

The last, but certainly not least, newbie on the team is ‘big haired’ Kate whose task is to work through hundreds of photos each issue to find the best of the best & prepare them for Kathy to sprinkle throughout the issue.

Terri is currently doing the Times invoicing but she has a lot on her plate as progress vice-president so we would love to find someone who would like to take on this role.

Brendan & I will assist the new team to find their feet, but only in an advisory capacity, they hope the final hand-over to the community will be completed by the end of the year.

~ Jinny Coyle (acting co-ordinator)

Thank you to our helpers, our regular contributors & our advertisers.	
Jimmy Olsen played by...	Brendan Hehir
Regular Photographers	Peter Donnelly, Jimmy Olsen
Community Co-ordinator	Sandy Schmidt
Helpers	Kathy Berrill, Lisa Moore, Big hair Kate, Fiona Ross

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		Mar 20
Late breaking News		Mar 20

**NO late submissions will be accepted.** Please email submissions, display ads & articles to team@theBLACKWOODTIMES.com.au or post to The Blackwood Times, PO Box 39 Blackwood, 3458.

Download our Advertising Rate Card & back issues (in colour) from www.theBLACKWOODTIMES.com.au &, while you’re there, sign-up to join our eList & follow us https://www.facebook.com/theblackwoodtimes

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Clint O’Grady operates Landcare’s new community chipper

NEW CHIPPING MACHINE FOR LOCALS

There’s a new community service in town – a powerful & mobile chipping machine that the Landcare group wants to share with locals.

Blackwood & Barry’s Reef Landcare Group president, Cat Moser, explained why the group bought the machine early in the new year, “It makes a lot of sense to chip & mulch instead of burning the tops of fallen or felled trees. Heavens knows we have enough smoky days around here without people needlessly burning treetops that could otherwise be turned into valuable mulch,” she said.

“Chipped treetops keep the CO2 in the ground & help keep our soil & tree roots healthy by retaining moisture.”

The Hansa C13 trailer-mounted chipping machine will handle branches up to 90mm in diameter & is best suited to freshly-cut green timber.

It is available for loan for \$30 per day to cover maintenance costs. For insurance reasons, only Landcare group members can borrow the machine but, with membership costing only \$10 per year, there really is no reason why it’s not available to all.

An educational induction is conducted when you arrive to pick up the machine, which you are expected to return in the same condition, the same day.

Ms Moser said the machine would handle all sorts of vegetation but she stressed that weeds should still be burned so their seeds could be destroyed.

“We hope that the chipper will make a real difference around the district,” she said. “It’s a win-win situation as it will help improve our properties while reducing greenhouse gas emissions at the same time.”

People wishing to become members of Landcare should email the secretary at admin@blackwoodlandcare.org.au.

Members wishing to book the Hansa C13 can do so online at www.blackwoodlandcare.org.au/equipment.

~ Shane Scanlan, Landcare Treasurer

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GIGS & EVENTS: FEBRUARY

Sat 1	4-7pm	Cat & Clint	D/ford Cidery
Sun 2	1pm	Brett Franke	Cosmo Hotel
Sun 2	11:30am-3pm	St Anne's Pop-up Paella Lunch	St Annes Winery, Myrniong
Sun 2	2:30pm	Pub Group Song \$12 (kids free)	Palais Hepburn
Sun 2	8am-4:30pm	David Calleja Car Show	Maddingley Park, Bacchus Marsh
Fri 7	6:30pm	Old Time Jam	Blackwood Hotel
Fri 7-Sun 9		Rock Ballarat (RocknRoll Rockabilly) Festival	Armstrong St Nth & venues Ballarat
Sat 8 & Sun 9	1-5pm	Bullarto Art Gallery Bushfire Benefit All proceeds to Wildlife Vic/ Redcross	962 Daylesford Trentham Rd Bullarto
Sun 9	11am-12:30	Create your own small space oasis workshop	Garden of St Erth
Sat 15 & Sun 16	1:00-5:00 PM	Bullarto Art Gallery Bushfire Benefit All proceeds to Wildlife Vic/ Redcross	962 Daylesford Trentham Rd Bullarto
Sat 15	9:00-4:30	26th Annual Australian Gold Panning Championships	Blackwood Recreation Reserve
Fri 21	7pm	Honeyfields	Radio Springs
Sun 23	1pm	Brent Shirley	Cosmo Hotel
Sun 23	2-4pm	Peter Daffy Combo	Radio Springs
Sun 23	5pm	Cat & Clint	C/maine Taproom
Sat 29	8:30pm	Rob Snarski	Mjr Tom's Kyneton

GIGS & EVENTS: MARCH

Sun 1	1pm	The Hornets	Cosmo Hotel
Frid 6	noon	Elvis tribute show & 3 course lunch	Plough Myrng
Frid 6	6:30pm	Old Time Jam	Blackwood Hotel
Sat 7		Voting Open Carnival Queen & King	forms Post Office & Pub
Sat 7	2:00-5:00 PM	ChillOut Human Rainbow World Record Attempt (register online)	Daylesford Holiday Park
Sat 7	7:00-10:00 PM	Ballarat Stampede (gates open 5pm)	Showgrounds
Sun 8	10:00-4:00	Bacchus Marsh Harvest Festival	Village Green
Sun 8	10:00-4:00	Bullarto Vintage Tractor Pull & vehicle display	Bullarto Hall & Railway Grounds
Sun 8	10:00-11:00	ChillOut Parade	Daylesford
Sun 8	1pm	Rosario De Marco	Cosmo Hotel
Sat 14	1-10pm	Macedon Ranges Music Festival (Benefit)	New Gisborne
Sun 15	9:00-4:00	Autumn Festival	Ballan
Sun 15	1pm	Jarod Shaw	Cosmo Hotel
Sun 22	1pm	The King & Easy Trio	Cosmo Hotel
Sun 22	2-4pm	Peter Daffy Combo	Radio Springs
Sun 29	1pm	The Hornets	Cosmo Hotel



STREET PARADE | MUSIC | MARKET

**BLACKWOOD WOODCHOP & EASTER CARNIVAL**

Admission: Adults \$10 6 & Over \$5 5 & Under Free

11AM SATURDAY 11 APRIL, 2020  
RECREATION RESERVE BLACKWOOD, VIC



Family \$25

FACEBOOK.COM/BLACKWOODAEASTERWOODCHOPCARNIVAL  
Brought to you by Blackwood Progress Association



Alex says “Dust off your Viking heritage & join the Swedish Axe Throwing competition at this year’s Easter Carnival”. He’s been busily crafting the double-bit axes for the inaugural competition, all we need is a team.

Any responsible Viking adults welcome. Contact Nick on 0421 593 998.



Laurie Byers: 31.8.47–14.1.2020



Laurie lost his best mate last year (Linda Byers 21.9.55 – 2.8.19) & now has followed her. We reprint an article from The Blackwood Times, Jun/Jul’14 issue p19.



This year, the Queen’s Birthday Honours should be expanded to include “for outstanding service to the community of Blackwood” – the Order of the Wombat; & the gong should go to a couple who have given their all to this place over the last 26 years. They left recently for Ballan & our town dimmed a little with their parting.

Linda & Laurie Byres have been heavily involved with the Blackwood CFA for over 20 years, with Laurie captain for 6 of those. They were instrumental in building the station into the successful & well-equipped outfit it is today; they turned out to incidents, large & small, every fire season, locally, state-wide & interstate. Their son, Owen, joined the CFA at the age of 16, as did their future daughter-in-law, Natalie. Linda was very busy with CERT for just over 10 years; there are many in Blackwood who owe her a personal debt of gratitude for the care she gave. There would be no early Christmas morning tradition of Santa riding around town atop a firetruck, throwing lollies at bleary-eyed & pyjamed families, without these two. Thank you from my grown children who still front up every year for the thrill.

The Byers’ legacy to this community is plain to see; except, that is, for the one thing they left behind that will probably outlive generations of townfolk, maybe even the town itself. The most beautiful & friendly King Parrot, not seen in Blackwood until a single pair chose the right verandah to rest on some 10 years ago. Laurie & Linda looked after them, as they do. Now they’re everywhere. That in itself deserves an Order of the Wombat.

~ BH



Laurie leaves the Blackwood CFA station one last time, under a guard-of-honour.

Blackwood Cricket Club

all games start at 1.30pm

	FEBRUARY	
Sat 1	Gisborne vs Blackwood, Day 1	Gisborne,
Sat 8	Gisborne vs Blackwood, Day 2	Gisborne
Sat 15	Woodend vs Blackwood, Day 1	Woodend,
Sat 22	Woodend vs Blackwood, Day 2	Woodend,
Sat 29	Blackwood vs St Anthony's, Day 1	Blackwood
	MARCH	
Sat 7	Blackwood vs St Anthony's, Day 2	Blackwood
Sat 14	Cricket Semi-Finals	



Enjoying Blackwood Progress Community Morning Tea, which featured demonstrations from CERT, Cricket Club, Bocce Group & Historical Society. (more photos overleaf)

Also overleaf CERT fundraiser “Whole Town Garage Sale” which was a roaring success.

HELPERS  
NEEDED  
TO MAKE THE  
EASTER CARNIVAL  
THE BEST EVER  
see front cover  
for details

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The BLACKWOOD TIMES thanks all our advertisers for their support.

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 ‘19	81.5	75.4	-1.25	35.6	21	5.7	12.1
Dec ‘19	15.8	62.2	3.6	40.9	25.7	7.5	15.7

AUSTRALIAN GOLD PANNING CHAMPIONSHIPS  
BLACKWOOD VICTORIA – SATURDAY 15TH FEB 2020

9am – 4pm  
Register by 11:00am  
Gold Pans Provided  
Open to all ages and skill levels.  
Category Prizes and Trophies  
Stake Your Claim – Your chance to win a gold nugget.

Where: Blackwood Cricket Ground  
On Recreation Reserve Rd.  
For More Info Contact:  
Marcus Binks Ph: 0418 474 427

A community service notice sponsored by  
Blackwood Progress | like us on facebook

We had very low rainfall in December. The yearly total was 880.5mm which is below the long term average of 975.5mm & is the rainfall pattern nowadays. Interestingly, when I was young we used to go gold prospecting up Yankee Gully creek & wished that the creek would dry up so that we could get to what we thought would give good gold below the water level. It never did. Nowadays it is dry with no flow all the year.

~ Don Owen

MOUNTAIN BRUSHTAIL POSSUMS

There are 2 species of brushtail possum in the Wombat Forest, Mountain Brushtail & Common Brushtail Possums. Mountain Brushies are a heavier possum, with shorter, more rounded ears.

Wombat Forestcare has been carrying out motion-sensing camera surveys in the Wombat for 7 years & has found only Mountain Brushies (no Common Brushies) in the main blocks of the Wombat.

The records for Common Brushies are in the Spring Hill area where the both species overlap, & the Basalt area & Cornish Hill.

It would be interesting to know which species are found in the Blackwood township. (snap some shots & send them to the Times. ed)

~ Wombat Forest Care



## • OUR BLACKWOODIAN COMMUNITY GROUPS • OUR BLACKWOODIAN COMMUNITY GROUPS •





• COMMUNITY UPDATES • COMMUNITY UPDATES •

Blackwood CERT

The team rounded off 2019 with the CERT Christmas Party in December & our 4 new recruits, Marilyn, Jenni, Grace & Tony passing their Ambulance Victoria training in First Responding.

In January & February you will see our recruits around town with the team getting experience on call-outs.

In February we will be straight back into our annual compulsory Ambulance Victoria education & training sessions.

We would like to thank the Blackwood CFA for their numerous media postings keeping us up-to-date with the recent Dales Creek fires. Whilst some members were on roster those days, we felt well informed to make wise decisions about our fire plans.

~ Jan & Leonie, Blackwood CERT Co Team Leaders

Happy New Year to all. The CoM of finished off the year with a lovely evening get-together with the team, our ‘Friends of CERT’ & supporters. Carol & Martin, who are wonderful supporters, generously offered the use of the garden for our private event after they closed for the night, at no charge.

The CERT Committee of Management is an incorporated body made up of community volunteers who help the team by managing admin & fundraising. We are organising a number of activities this year: Pick up a spare coin jar at the PO. Take it home & fill it with those pesky coins that weigh down your wallet & drop it back to the PO when it's full. On Australia Day Saturday we held our 1st Whole Town Garage Sale. This was such fun &, by all reports, a grand time was had by all. We will definitely make this an annual event, so save the date for next year!

Each Friday night in March we will be selling raffle tix at the Cosmo in Trentham. We are seeking a handful of people to help sell from 5.30-7pm. If you can lend a hand, please email president@blackwoodCERT.org.au.

All the funds we raise go toward the on-going costs of maintaining our team & building up funds to put toward a home for the vehicle.

~ Jinny Coyle, President, CERT Committee of Management

Blackwood Crown Reserves COM

Three years goes very quickly & the appointment of all current committee members will expire in March. The committee has the important function of managing the Crown properties within the Blackwood district. Among others, these properties include the Caravan Park, the Blackwood Hall, the Mineral Springs & the Recreation Oval.

The Committee is appointed by the Department of Environment Land Water & Planning on behalf of the State Government. It meets monthly & duties include maintenance of the properties under its control & the hiring out of both the hall & the oval. The work is interesting & comes with it a high degree of responsibility. However, having said that, it is certainly not an onerous task.

It is extremely important the Blackwood community maintains the control & management of these very important assets to Blackwood. However, if a new Committee is not formed, through lack of applicants, the management & control of these vital assets will probably revert to the Moorabool Shire. That would certainly not be in the best interest of Blackwood.

If you believe in making a contribution to Blackwood & have the time to attend the monthly meetings & do some work on behalf of the Committee in between meetings, please give consideration to putting your name forward. The process is to apply to DELWP using the application form & your application will be considered.

Should you have any queries regarding the Committee or require an application form, please contact David White 0418 372203.

~ Dave White, Chairman

EASTER CARNIVAL APRIL 11, 2020

Blackwood CFA

Welcome to a new decade

To start off Santa wishes to thank Progress for his new clothes. Many commented on the suit during the Santa run.

It was with great sadness we heard that past Captain, Laurie Byers passed away. (see p4)

It has been a busy time with the fires to the east & in New South Wales & Blackwood has been supplying crews to assist other emergency service personnel in those areas.

Our thoughts go out to the firefighters, support staff, other emergency service workers & victims who have suffered during the past few months with these large fires.

We have also had a few incidents locally, with a couple of fires that are presently under investigation by Victoria Police. We ask everyone to keep an eye out for anything that looks out-of-place, & if you have any information, please contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or the new Police Assistance Line on 131 444.

We still have a long way to go before the fire season is over. During this time, please look around your property & make sure that the brigade can access it easily in the event of an incident. Low-hanging branches & gate widths are something to consider. If in doubt, contact the brigade & we can take a drive to your property & see if the trucks will fit.

Can we find your house? You would be surprised how hard house numbers are to see at night & even during the day. To help us, have a good look at your number, is it clearly marked & easily seen from the road? Is it visible at night? Signs with good-contrasting colours & large numbers make it easier to see.

Don't forget about your nearest hydrant. Look around the roadside & nature strip to see if you can locate the fire hydrant closest to your property, these are marked by a white post with red stripes & a blue cats-eye on the road.

Have you got your Fire Plan ready? Keep an eye on the weather forecasts. Make sure your friends & family know your plan & even the triggers that put it into action. Please remember that the Refuge is a last -resort measure & that you should have your Fire Plan in place.

Remember that Blackwood Fire Brigade has an electronic message sign at the Fire Station. The sign will be used predominantly for CFA fire & safety messaging, but can also be used for community messaging. Use this sign, the other signs & the Vic Emergency App to help you make the decision to leave early. Keep watching our Facebook page for any updates on fires or other events around the area.

For more information contact the station on 5368 6526 Sunday mornings over the summer period & the first Sunday monthly during the rest of the year, as we are there for training & equipment checks.

If you're interested in joining, we always welcome new members. We can be contacted at the station or through the Brigade Facebook page.

~ Karl Church Blackwood Brigade Community Safety Coordinator

Blackwood & District Landcare

Landcare purchases chipper for the community - see article p2

Blackwood Historical Society

no report this issue, see article p13.

~ Elizabeth Hall (secretary)

Blackwood Progress Association

Progress are in full swing organising the Blackwood Woodchop & Easter Carnival. This year the major beneficiary of the proceeds raised will be CERT, with funds provided going towards a shed for the vehicle.

This is our town's biggest fundraiser for the year & is supported by many individuals & local groups. It's where the magic happens.

We have had to increase ticket prices in order to make the carnival viable now & into the future. To offset the increase in price there will

be more free entertainment & activities. Anyone who volunteers for set-up or volunteers on the day will get free entry.

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Karen, reach us through the FB page or e-mail blackwoodprogress@gmail.com

Thank you to all the team that have already put in many hours in the background to plan this event. It wouldn't happen without you.

~ Terri Simpson on behalf of Blackwood Progress Association

Blackwood Uniting Church

Contact Robyn on 5368 6792 for info.

~ Robyn Zanon

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.

The Post Office Coffee Shop & Jindarup Store



This cute and quirky little store has everything:

Great coffee	Gifts	Cakes
Toasties	Homewares	Ice-cream
Hot pies	Jewelry	Drinks
Pastries	Vintage pieces	Groceries

Not to mention a warm fire and a tranquil garden with beautiful forest views.

Open 7 days a week  
23 Martin Street Blackwood. 5368-6542.

• WEEK NIGHT STUFF TO DO •			
DAY	TIME	EVENT	VENUE
Mon	5pm	Old Fart's Night	Blackwood Pub
Tues	5pm	Tuesday Date Night	Radio Springs
Wed	5pm	Locals Night	Cosmo
Wed	5pm	Judder Bar Eats food truck	Lyonville Hall
Thur	6pm	Thai Night	Radio Springs
Fri	5pm	Judder Bar Eats food truck	T/tham Railway Station

WOMBAT BOOK CLUB

Hello from Book Club. Welcome to the New Year. With some nice weather still around through Summer & leading into Autumn, there is still time to find nice sunny spots & have a good read.

Book Club is a mix of conversation about what we read & a good social catch up. We meet monthly on the 3rd Sunday & presently we are meeting at 2.30pm at the Garden of St Erth. This is subject to change, so for further information, please contact Brenda on woodbinelodge1@gmail.com

The 2 books we have recently read were – ‘The Book Club’ by C J Cooper & ‘One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest’ by Ken Kesey.

‘The Book Club’ is set in the Cotswolds, where Lucy moved to from busy London for peace & serenity among the quaint cottages & slow moving village. Life was good until her new neighbour, Alice, moved in next door. Alice suggested starting a Book Club so she could meet new people & integrate into the community. However Alice's agenda was sinister & Lucy's secret past had come back to haunt her.

Sandy: This was an easy read & a page turner for me. The story keeps the reader intrigued to the end. For Midsomer Murders lovers - this one is for you.

5 Wombies

The movie version of ‘One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest’, with the infamous Nurse Ratched, left an impression on viewers. The novel is complex & at times bogged down with detail. The protagonist, Randle Patrick McMurphy, is sent to a mental institution in place of doing time on a prison farm for crimes of assault & statutory rape. He thought it would be an easier time than in prison. However he realises that if he served his time, he would be free again. Unfortunately, being committed, he was there indefinitely.

Electric shock therapy was routinely used on patients, which had little effect on McMurphy. One day after a night party, an inmate suicides because of what Nurse Ratched said to him. McMurphy became enraged & attacked Nurse Ratched. McMurphy has a lobotomy performed on him.

Sandy: The story has interesting plots but might be difficult for some readers.

4 Wombies

The previous books read were: ‘The Circle’ by Dave Eggers, & ‘The Girl Who Was Taken’ by Charlie Donlea.

For us ‘Orwellians’ out there, ‘The Circle’ is a must read. Dave Eggers has brilliantly brought 1984 to modern technology, but with the same insidious & suppressive outcome.

The protagonist, Mae Holland, secures a job at a much coveted techno company called the Circle through a friend of hers who is already employed there. This company is a combination of Facebook, Google, Twitter, PayPal, Huawei & other online services to which we have become all too familiar with. This is a one-stop-shop for all, which Huawei & others are also fast becoming.

The company comprises a ‘cast of a thousands’, but at the top are the ‘Three Wise Men’ who make most of the decisions. Mae finds ways to close The Circle as she progresses up the chain. Her family & friends abandon her, the people who founded the company try to warn her & escape from it.

Sandy: A compelling read, 5 Wombies

‘The Girl Who Was Taken’ is about forensic pathologist, Livia Cutty. Her sister Nicole has gone missing. With a spate of kidnappings, some have been found with an unfortunate end to their lives. One girl, Megan McDonald, manages to escape. Simultaneously, there is a group obsessed with these kidnappings & replicate the scenario on unsuspecting girls as a joke. Nicole Cutty was a member of this group because she was in love with the leader, Casey Delevan.

Megan & Livia form a friendship & work together to try & resolve what may have happened to Nicole.

Megan remembers something, which to her horror, uncovers the kidnapper & murderer.

Sandy: A clever plot with a twist at the end, keeps the reader turning the pages.

4.5 Wombies

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## 2019 BERRY LONG RUN

### Some high level stats:

99 starters- 66 in the 70km & 33 in the 40km.

First finisher 70km: 6h57

Last finisher 70km: 11h49

Elevation/climb in the 70km: ~2000m

**WRAP:** What a weekend! The elements really embraced us this year. Despite the forecast & the reality, so many brave souls showed up to toe the line regardless, demonstrating the mindset & hardiness that comes with a love of trail running. Did we hear any whinging? No. Did we see lots of smiles? Yes. Everyone got home without major incidents, bar only a very few DNF's (Did Not Finish) & only a couple of relatively brief moments of lostness. Well done everyone! & thank you for supporting the event & the cause, Berry Street. Seeing those finish-line smiles makes all the hard work & stress more than worthwhile.

The 70km was quite a race! The men's podium was only separated by about 5 minutes from 1st to 3rd. I know Andy 'Snakeman' Turner was hard on the heels of our enigmatic winner – Stefan Taranto (he of the improvised gear: Gatorade bottles held in each hand, a borrowed non-tech shirt, some K-Mart shorts & some rather battered sneakers), although Andy's version of breathing down the neck of first place included stopping to chat when he overtook the 40km sweeps, & with anyone else he came across. Meanwhile, Jason Rawlings was only a few minutes behind, tearing up the trails. The ladies race was a little more spread out, but what a solid smashing of the course record by Nicole Paton! She took around 22 minutes off Nicole Vaughan's previous CR. So great to see 2nd & 3rd go to two previous podium finishers in the race, Martine Nield & Trish Yates, respectively.

These guys are pure gold, & I hope to see them back again in future years. It wouldn't be the same without them! The 40km was also a close & exciting contest. Showing her elite stripes as well as her unmatched familiarity with the course (having run & won 4 out of 5 editions of the Somewhat Long Run), Kellie Emerson held off Ryan Hawson with a couple of minutes buffer to take out the overall win, her second at this event. Girl power! Ryan had a bit of a lead on

'Disco' Jules Bowring, who was just a few minutes out of the reach of another BLR veteran, Stephen 'Rendog' Rennick, who was then erroneously announced as 2nd place by a tired & arithmetically-challenged race director. Naturally, Disco & Rendog quietly exchanged trophies & vowed never to take financial or any other advice from the RD. Another familiar & much loved face, Bec Howe came home admirably strong to take out 2nd in the ladies race, with Jessie Vogel just a whisker in front of Toni Gracia, for 3rd place.

You would think after 5 years I'd be more inured to it, but I continue to be completely gobsmacked by the efforts & attitudes of our volunteers, so many of whom are the same faces each year. These people create the atmosphere that makes the event what it is. I can't do ALL the names here, but here's a start: the MCR crew, who run Swans Rd for us & send out a rear-guard each year to sweep the back half, which is such an important job: getting the majority of our course markings

in & taking care of our slower runners. This year we had not only the sweeps to thank, but the crowd waiting for them at the finish, who kept the atmos going for our final finishers.

The guys from Down Under 135 – arguably Australia's closest thing to the Barkley Marathons, in terms of being off-the-scale difficult: Dale Chircop, who does so much for this race, from supplying fruit, to cooking enormous batches of soup, to mustering the MCR guys for Swans Rd, taking amazing photos, undertaking ad-hoc logistics throughout day...we love you, Chirka! Tom Cullum, also from DU135, always there for us in some capacity, again showed up to set up the DU135 clock which we again borrowed (yes, we're a not-for-profit) before casually towing the line in the 70km.

Team George! Anyone who has been to Party aid station knows what I'm talking about, & probably had trouble LEAVING Party aid station. George Mihalakelis, the man himself (hugs), & Olivia & Andrew Blackney assisted by Mark Taggart, but also Team Moxham – Ali & Jamie (darlings of the scene), SO much energy & joy.

Mel 'Yankee' Deefholts marked the southern section again. Cam Mckerral helped us get the race packs & aid station supplies sorted on Friday, before setting up Start/Finish at sparrows', including the all-important fire pit, & helped run the place & marshal for most of the day. Josh 'Kahuna' McGoldrick once again donned the Akubra to marshal the road crossing, another iconic face of the BLR. Margaret Wilde & Alan Thomson again tag-teamed with local legend James Chadima & Betty for the O'Briens Crossing aid station (SO sorry you guys weren't allowed to light a fire).

Tracey Donald, who was also at Swans with MCR again, completely rebuilt our website using an end-to-end Human Centred Design process, & the results are amazing! Ross Burborough got cars parked & got out on course marshalling as well as joining the ranks of our volunteer photographers, & he really has a great eye! Speaking great eyes, our other volunteer photographers Kristen Kelly, Bernie, Emmeline Fisher, Stephen Liston – wow!

I went through the photos last night as I was putting them up on the website – such great coverage & such excellent framing/locations!

Robyn Taylor & Emma Padgett from Berry Street came to join us, congratulating finishers with medals & thanks for the fundraising. Before that, they reached out to Berry Street's corporate network to secure us some excellent new prize sponsors, for which we can't thank them enough.

Closer to home. Faye Phillips & Alix Lee, as ever right in the heart of the operation, leading car parking, marshalling, everything! Caroline Jones & Kat Pivetta sweeping the 40km with Brian Jones, original Wolfrunner, who also course marked & helped us in a million ways. Adam Waites, Wolfrunner, was a huge support this year: shopping supplies, course marking, setting up, marshalling, ferrying supplies. Really made a difference!

Rachel Lewis, my lovely wife. So amazing. Getting the race packs done, the aid station packs, registration...the list goes ever on, not to mention supporting me with all the earlier prep throughout the year. & lastly Ben Phillips, my co-race director, always full of beans. This year you even further improved the volunteer logistics plan, which has now matured to a well-oiled machine, & nailed everything else. Anything is possible if you have a Ben. Thanks mate.

~ Joe Lewis

MORE PHOTOS: <https://www.berrylongrun.com/copy-of-2018>



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## PAT TOOHEY

Our local Shire Councillor for 15 years, Pat Toohey, was a passionate advocate for this town, championing Blackwood causes such as mobile coverage, the long-running building and sewage issues, the fire refuge, music festivals and infrastructure improvements. He served 2 terms as mayor of Moorabool Shire.

Pat passed away on September 18, having achieved so much while battling a long-term illness. An inspiration.

LEFT: Pat Toohey opens the Blackwood Festival of Music and Culture

## Lawry Borgelt: Our new local councillor (pre-election statement)

One of the first things I want to do if elected to council is to set up an open, transparent, strategic system of grant allocation. One that concentrates on a different specific area of the Woodlands ward on a rotating roster. This will provide more "bang for buck" in terms of projects and facility improvement as well as seeing a far more equitable distribution of funds.

I also want to work with the relevant water authorities to monitor groundwater usage from catchments within the ward, throughout the shire and surrounds. With the express purpose of maximising efficiency of usage for increasing water flow through our precious rivers.

Increasing tourism throughout the ward & shire as a whole is another area I feel we haven't utilized to our full potential. There are many tourist buses that travel from Tullamarine to Ballarat that we could tap further into. As well as working with surrounding shires to take advantage of our unique geographical position that allows for both day trips and weekend getaways from Melbourne. Healthy rivers play a large part in this. A personal wish of mine is to work to bring back the Blackwood Music Festival.





# A single ember can spread bushfires as far as 40km.

Burning embers from bushfires can travel up to 40km, starting new fires in seconds, destroying homes and making escape impossible. If the Fire Danger Rating is ever extreme or above, don't hesitate. Leave early.

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BLACKWOOD UNDER CONSTRUCTION

I would like to share my experience with getting approvals & hopefully shed some light on trying to build within Blackwood. I have read some of the previous editions’ comments & can understand their frustrations.

My partner & I have a block in the heart of Blackwood & hope to build this year in November. We are currently in the process of finalising our town planning permit for a 27sq home on a 850m sq block.

As you all very well aware, Blackwood is a special place & it comes with special conditions in the form of endless planning overlays & not to mention the addition of 3 water authorities WOW! Un-heard of!

Disclaimer: the information below will apply to every allotment however as every allotment & building design is different, your proposal might have to account for extra considerations, so no guarantees .

New homes:

**Blackwood Building Tip number 1:** The bigger your allotment, the more bedrooms you can have, as your septic effluent will have a larger surface area to disperse water, however there is a caveat in that the closer you are to a rock reef (depth) the smaller the effluent zone hence less bedrooms.

**Blackwood Building Tip number 2:** If your allotment is not large, for example less than 1000m sq & you want a larger home, then do not remove any soil from site (site cut) & place the dwelling on stumps. Concrete slabs, though great for energy efficiency & cheaper to build, take up more surface area, hence less water retention from the effluent & stormwater. On the plus side, stumps are better for termite management.

**Blackwood Building Tip number 3:** You are in a bushfire prone area, the closer you are to the forest ie. On the boundary with state park. The more expensive your build will be as it will be considered a BAL 40 or BAL FZ (Flame zone). Anything above BAL 40 requires non-combustible and/or fire rated materials, therefore you will need to consider this on the building design, hence no timber.

**Blackwood Building Tip number 4:** During the town-planning process, start obtaining your building permit information. You will definitely need a Council Property information report Building Regulation 51 & your Legal point of Discharge Report. Both these reports are obtainable from the building department at the shire. You will also have to apply for a septic tank permit during this stage, however you will need to consult your plumber or builder in regards to this as a plan will have to be submitted to council building department for approval. Existing dwellings: note the above tips also apply for existing dwellings.

**Blackwood Building Tip number 5:** If you add additional bedrooms & habitable rooms to the dwelling there is a high chance the council might ask you to upgrade the septic system, to cope with the additional floor area.

**Blackwood Building Tip number 6:** (VERY IMPORTANT) If you are extending the dwelling & the extension is less than 25% of the existing floor area then you can apply for Building Regulation 233(6) consent to not upgrade the remaining building into compliance (not including septic tank). Example I have a three bedroom house with a rumpus to the rear & I want to make the rumpus bigger. If that extension area is less than 25% of the existing area then I can leave the remaining house as it is. If the extension is greater than 25% of the existing floor area, then the whole dwelling will have to be brought up to compliance with the current regulations. At this point you will have consider if it is worth extending your dwelling at all as it might be cheaper to build a new house.

Note that if you wish to remodel (internal alterations) your dwelling but not extend, you are limited to only 50% of the existing volume of the dwelling under Building Regulation 233(2) without bringing the remaining dwelling in compliance.

I hope the above is clear for everyone & that it brings clarity on your proposal. My partner & I hope to have our house completed by Christmas next year & look forward to living in Blackwood, bonding with the community.

~ Heinz Scheel. Assistant Building Surveyor



PET SHENANIGANS WITH SEAMUS



**WOOF:** In this month’s edition I would like to talk about HEAT STRESS. We have had some really hot weather recently & this not only affects humans, but has a devastating effect on some animals. Heat stress, or heat stroke, can occur suddenly & without much warning. In hot environments like unshaded backyards or cars, pets can quickly feel the effects of rising temperatures. All pets

can be affected by heat stress. However, dogs with short noses, such as the Bulldogs, Pugs, & Boxers are at higher risk. Smaller animals, like young puppies & kittens or rabbits, guinea pigs, & birds are also particularly susceptible.

**What are the signs?** When suffering from heat stress, a dog will initially show an increase in activity associated with panting & vocalisation. Barking, whining & a worried or furrowed expression is a sign of their distress. As the heat stress progresses, panting becomes excessive & laboured & breathing may become increasingly difficult. Some dogs may drool excessively & even vomit. If the suffering continues, dogs will experience circulatory collapse & their gums will appear blue. They may convulse or become unconscious.

Cats show very similar signs, although it can be harder to identify heat stress in felines.

**What you can do to help:** It’s vital that your pet’s body is cooled to their regular temperature, especially the head.

- 1. remove the pet from the hot environment
- 2. place the pet in towels dampened by cool water. A fan blowing over the damp skin will also help to cool the pet
- 3. contact a veterinarian as a matter of urgency
- 4. transport your pet to the nearest veterinarian wrapped in dampened towels

Your veterinarian may put your pet on a drip, perform other emergency procedures, & administer medications to counteract shock & other disorders that occur in heat stress.

The most important thing you can do is take steps to prevent heat stress from occurring.

How to prevent heat stress

- 1. NEVER leave an animal in a car, especially in the hot sun
- 2. If the weather is hot, avoid exercise during the warmest times of the day. Take your dog on a walk only in the early morning or late evening. Exercise in moderation if the weather is very hot
- 3. Make sure that plenty of cool water & shade is always available at home, on walks, & during car travel
- 4. Do not leave pets inside hot, closed houses. If your pet cannot go outside & rest in a cool area of the garden, & you would have had the air conditioner or fan on if you were inside, then you should leave it on for your pet also.
- 5. Plan car trips carefully during hot weather – make sure the car can be kept cool, water is available & you make frequent stops.

The effects of heat stress can be fatal. Always contact your local vet if you’re worried that your pet is suffering from the effects of the heat.

Woof for now ... Seamus

download an information sheet at the bottom of this page <https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/pets-and-bushfires>

FUN & GAMES IN BLACKWOOD

FEBRUARY		
Sun 2: 1pm	Wombat Forest Tour. Loris (Landcare) will lead a driving tour.	Meet at PO
Wed 12: tbc	InterPlay: fun through movement, sound & story (locals free)	Blackwood Hall
MARCH		
Wed 11:tbc	InterPlay: fun through movement, sound & story (locals free)	Blackwood Hall
Sun 29: 9-3	Lerderderg hike Aw Kow Circuit, M+ difficulty, 14km - Contact Louise	Essend BW Club

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Top: Local builder, Matt Laux (0402 119656) expects to be busy.Left & Below: Some of the many works underway in Blackwood.

BLACKWOOD BUILDING REVIVAL

It’s so good to see homes going up again in Blackwood, after some 16 years of a no-build regulatory wilderness. Congratulations to the community who refused to give up and many thanks to all those from the Blackwood Action Group, who took the (long) fight to Spring Street.

~ Brendan Hehir





THE HISTORY OF BLACKWOOD - ‘CHINESE IN BLACKWOOD.’



Compiled y Margot Hitchcock, Historian for the Blackwood & District Historical Society. September 2019

As can be seen at the back of the Blackwood cemetery there are on un-consecrated ground the graves of many Chinese miners, some of which have stone headstones with Chinese inscriptions on them. From my early research – many Chinese from Canton, arrived on the diggings in Blackwood in 1858.

About 50 Chinamen arrived from Castlemaine in that year, & before the year 1861, their number had increased to 200. On their 1st arrival, they pegged the main creek for many miles, & (except in a few cases) the Chinamen held possession of the creek workings for nearly 30 years.

It is interesting to note in Warder Schuter’s report of January, 1860 that he lists the population on the Mt Blackwood goldfield as 430 adult males, 130 adult females, 220 children, 220 adult male Chinese. No report of female Chinese at all, & total population being 1,000.

The Bacchus Marsh Express paper of June 5, 1889 had a report by James Ferguson who was a Justice of the Peace in Blackwood, which was also in the Mining Departments reports for Sept 1888.

The report entitled ‘Short History of the Blackwood Goldfields’ mentions: “On their first arrival the Chinese pegged the main creek (Lerderderg River in Blackwood) for many miles & except in a few cases the Chinamen have held possession of the creek workings for nearly 30 years. During this time thousands of tons of debris were sluiced by miners into the main water channels & when floods came it was spread throughout the river. The result was that places in the river that were previously barren of gold became enriched with the imperfectly puddled auriferous clay. This gave the Chinamen a splendid harvest as they cut tail-races & faced the creek properly. Many Chinese miners made as much as £1,000, a sum which would be considered a fortune in their native land, wither they invariably proceeded when they had amassed sufficient wealth. There are now at Blackwood only about 60 Chinese (in 1889) most of whom are extremely poor”.

An article was found on Trove in 1892 regarding their living style.

Bacchus Marsh Express. Saturday February 13, 1892

BLACKWOOD. (From our own correspondent.) The **Chinese New Year** & holidays have just been completed, but now-a-days are a poor display to what they used to be when **700 Chinese** were plodding about the creeks & gullies; as, all told, they hardly muster 50 now. But still they are able to present Joss with his annual feast of a whole roasted pig & other dainties. For a thousand crackers that used to be fired off to frighten the Devil

from the camp at holiday times a few feeble spasmodic volleys suffices. Amongst the most notable cracker fizzers for many years was a company of **Chinamen** who used to work about Tipperary flat & the Main creek; & they were reputed to have got almost buckets full of gold; certainly many of them made their pile & went to the Flowery Land to spend their earnings, & leave their bones in their beloved land. A remnant of 3 still reside above the Springs, & in the neighbourhood of former triumphs where tens of thousands of volleys of crackers were wont to be fired in holiday times, until Monday afternoon this week, when Ah Toy & his 2 mates’ hut was totally consumed by fire. The brothers Croker, who are re-erecting Mr. Cocciardi’s flume in the neighbourhood saw the smoke ascending from the Chinese hut, & were quickly at the scene, but, owing to inflammable nature of the hut, it was only a question of a few minutes when John’s hut was doomed to be in ashes. The only things saved were some blankets which Mr. M. Croker got hold of, & some Celestial clothing dragged out with them. The Chinamen lose £60, & one great misfortune was that one of them had £30 in a tin box- £10 in notes & £20 in gold, silver, & copper. After the fire the most of the coins were recovered.

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 – margothitchcock@bigpond.com



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COMMUNITY OFFICE HUB OPENS

A dedicated space for community groups has opened at the Blackwood Hall. The build included a major rewiring, carpeting, painting & a professional office furniture fit-out, including filing cabinets, whiteboard & shelving (thanks Jenny & Robert Bridger). Insulation & a split-system unit are next on the list. All work was funded by Progress, Crown Reserves & Moorabool Shire.

The office will provide a home to The Blackwood Times, CERT, Progress & Crown Reserves. If you have any suggestions for other uses, call David 0418 372203.



Robert tests a newly-assembled stool, using his finely-calibrated measuring device.



Daughter of Morgan Cann & Mitchell Quarrier & little sister of Jax James Quarrier; Billie Faye Quarrier.  
Born at Bacchus Marsh hospital on the September 10 at 10:01am.

THAT WINE GUY



Welcome to a new part of The Blackwood Times dedicated to all things wine. I am the wine guy & here to answer your questions about wine.

There is so much snobbery around wine & everyone feels uncomfortable with their knowledge at some point – my job is to make wine so much easier to understand for everyone. So, please send me your questions & I will do my best to answer them.

An initial question I received is: Sometimes I will pour a glass of my latest favourite wine, only to be disappointed at the very first taste. What is happening when we fall out of love with a wine?

I think this is a great question & it comes down to an answer as simple as circumstance. If we ignore that some years are better than others for wine, or you might (rarely) buy a bottle that is faulty .... The rest comes down to us as humans.

There is much research on how our olfactory system (the system for how we smell) works & it is affected greatly by environmental factors as well as our health. Beyond this, we react with wine based on what mood we are in, what social setting we are in, what we have eaten & so much more. Try a wine before & after coffee & see the huge difference. Change what/where you drink this wine & try it again.

Like many other things in life, too much of a good thing can be bad. If you find yourself getting “blah” with Sauvignon Blanc for example, switch it up for a month or so & try one of Australia’s amazing Rieslings.

A super technical question also came through: Do vine roots really travel many metres down through the earth, picking up mineral characters for the fruit?

The average grapevine will have roots to around 2 metres deep (sometimes deeper). The vines do this to chase water. If you plant your vineyard near a dam, guess where the roots go!

The mineral characters in wine can come from a few sources. Some varieties (such as Semillon) can have natural esters (chemical compounds) that our mouth & nose interpret as minerals.

If your vineyard is surrounded by large rocky hills, the water washing down can hold trace elements of minerals small enough to pass through the root system – this happens quite a bit in wine from South Africa’s Stellenbosch region.

The final way that minerals could get into the wine is if there is an abundance in the soil – iron is the most likely – however the particles have to be small enough to move through the roots & this does not happen often.

While the most likely culprit is the grape style itself, the French often talk of their “terroir” which loosely translates to a sense of place – the soil, the weather, etc in that particular farm. As with everything wine related, everyone has their own opinion.

The third question for this edition came from a friend who called me from a restaurant bathroom in absolute panic because she had been asked to select the wines for the table – a heart stopper for many of us. What wines do I choose for a group of people?

If you get stuck with the job you will need a few safe wines to go with. So, here are a couple of suggestions.

**White wines:** Ordering a chardonnay can be dangerous – some people like them big & oaky & others like them sharp & steely, so avoid it. If you have a big wine list, look for something a little different like a ‘Gruner Veltliner’ from Austria or a ‘Gavi’ from Italy. If the wine list is simple, look for a dry Riesling, as it is most likely to please a cross-section of drinkers.

**Red wines:** Red wines can be equally scary to order. My safety advice here is that Grenache is always your friend, especially if blended with other wines. In Australia we have some stunning GSM’s (Grenache, Shiraz, Mourvèdre) that are just the ticket.

If you have a big wine list (& a fat wallet) you can order a Chateauf-neuf-du-Pape from France. It is their GSM. If you want to try a good Australian example, try the Aussie “Nine Popes” (a clear play on the French name) by Charles Melton.

If there are no GSM options, then head to Sangiovese (the Italian name for this is Chianti).

I hope you have learnt something here. Please get out there & explore wines, it is the best way to learn – buy a random bottle & give it a go!

Send me any questions you have, & until next time, remember that .... Life is too short to drink bad wine!

~ Simon Kriss

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FLETCHERS ADVENTURES



Well hello again my friends. Fletcher here with more news on my life in Beautiful Blackwood.

Getting through my first winter here & coming out the other end relatively unscathed has been quite interesting! The cold hasn't really bothered me but the rain is a different story.

Every time I run around outside doing my thing & want to come back inside to my toasty fire, Mum stops me at the door & towels the living daylight's out of me every single time it rains.

Not my fault that it's been a soggy first winter. Now the sun is out & it's drying out, even Mum & Dad are venturing outdoors after their hibernation in winter.

I love helping Mum in the garden when she is raking up to burn. She rakes & I take it out. She calls me the foreman because I believe I am a wonderful help to her in the garden. She doesn't seem to mind I'm there because I run & run & run. Not like the city doggies, that haven't got the freedom I have in Blackwood.

When Dad takes me for coffee up the street, I know I can run around & not be in any danger here. I feel so free & happy here. I chase the birds most mornings as Mum & Dad both feed them on the deck. The birds are used to me now, I think, as they flutter around my head & play games with me. The parrots are my favourite. They tap on the window most mornings, I think to play with me, but Mum says it's because they are hungry. Oh well. I'll just continue chasing them anyway.

Dad bought a new ute & I now, for the first time in my life, have the ultimate privilege of sitting in the front seat. Dad takes me for rides in the bush around Blackwood & these times are the best. It's bumpy & rough & I love it. Life couldn't be better!

I'll leave you with a favourite photo of me that Dad says I have what he calls is my new toupee.

See you later alligators.

Until next time. Arf-Arf.. Fletcher



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FROM THE DESK OF TELSTRA

Well done to local resident & Telstra customer who took our recent telecommunications issues up with the company & got results!

Dear (Blackwood Resident - name withheld),

Thank you for getting in touch with us on 11 December 2019 about a complaint relating to Telstra infrastructure.

I'm sorry that you've experienced an issue with back-up power generator batteries, but I'm pleased to offer you the following resolution.

You were concerned that:

- You've lost landline & mobile reception on the recent power outage happened at Blackwood (high fire risk area)
  - As a resolution, you would like Telstra to provision some back-up power generator batteries at Blackwood exchange & mobile tower to ensure no loss of landline connection & mobile coverage during power interruption.
- I've confirmed that: This issue has been investigated by our Facilities & Maintenance Team
- They've figured out that one of the Field Technicians have mentioned that Blackwood Exchange had two sets of 100amp batteries that were faulty, on the 21/10, they installed a temporary set of 100amp batteries, the site load is 25.2amp
  - On the 21st of November they had a major storm go through Western Victoria, due to so many faults by the time, the technician was called to Blackwood, the Exchange had failed, some 8 hours into the outage. The reason why it took so long for them to be called to site, was because it had the wrong SOS rating applied to the Exchange. The SOS rating has now been upgraded along with special conditions to recall straight away during mains fail
  - On the 26th of November the technician went to Blackwood Exchange & installed two extra 55amp batteries to give extra capacity. The only reason the Mobiles failed is because the transmission paths go through Blackwood Exchange, so if the Exchange fails so does the Mobiles. The Mobiles still has good batteries which lasted longer than 10 hours. In the last couple of weeks the technician have obtained some good 100amp batteries which he can install on Monday if required

- The technician will install 4 good sets of batteries, which will give Blackwood Exchange twice the capacity it originally had. Given the hot weather coming it would be good to do it sooner than later.

We know you've been put out by this matter so we'd like to fix things by .... I hope to hear from you soon, so we can quickly resolve this matter for you.

Best regards, Maria, Employee Number D942271  
Customer Relationship Manager International Complaints Operations

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FOREST VS PARK

The Potential Negatives of changing the Status of Wombat State Forest & Lerderderg State Park to “Wombat – Lerderderg National Park”.

I am sure most locals of this region are aware of the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's, (VEAC), study over the past 2 years designated the “Central West Investigation”

This covered public land west of Melbourne & includes the Wombat, Wellsford, Mount Cole, Pyrenees State Forests & Lerderderg State Park. This investigation was initiated by Hon. Lily D'Ambrosio, MP. in March 2017 & has gone through 2 stages of draft with required public submissions & final report issued June 2019 to be tabled in Parliament early 2020. I myself read every submission to the 2nd & final round of public comment to the draft report & found nearly 65% of submissions were opposed to the recommendations compared with just 33% for. The Wombat State Forest & adjoining Lerderderg State Park have a long history dating back to the gold rush days & in more recent times was an area of commercial timber harvesting. Over the decades, the overall forest area has also been a refuge & release from the day-to-day routine of life in the surrounding suburban areas of Melbourne to enjoy some form of recreational activity. These activities include open & free dispersed camping with family or friends, horse trail-riding, dog walking, prospecting & fossicking, 4WD adventures, trail bike-riding, orienteering groups & car rallies. Also this forest provides for domestic wood-gathering that many rely on for heating during winter. Much of this will become illegal or be restricted heavily under National Park rulings.

If you have read the final report, do not be fooled by the table showing detail of allowances in National Parks for recreational activities, there are plenty of fine-print caveats to ensure rigid control over access & use.

Access to the majority of the forest will be controlled by a so-called Management & only major gazetted tracks will be open. Camping will only be allowed in designated areas, determined by Management & you will likely pay a fee to enjoy a caravan-park type environment, corralled into a fenced-off area. Bush lovers want solitude & isolation when camping, something this forest has provided for decades due to its accessibility to Melbourne city & environs.

The people who have enjoyed this freedom bring much-needed business to the local communities, the lovely bakeries, hotels, small accommodation places & general traders &, despite what VEAC states

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in the report that this will be a boom for locals, this has been proven false in areas where National Parks already exist. These areas have not enjoyed increased passing trade; the suggestion that National Parks provide protection of threatened fauna & flora does not hold water when history shows existing National Parks have been exposed to major bushfire disasters, feral animal & weed infestation & issues when emergency vehicles find access tracks are closed by management gates, overgrown or blocked by fallen trees. In a nutshell, the existing National Parks have no funds for management, why add to this burden?

The majority of bush lovers have respect for the flora & fauna. Some may think that those who love 4WD activities are just out there to crash & trash the tracks & bush. They don't make new tracks but do help in keeping existing tracks clear. They also have meets in the forest to clear dumped rubbish deposited by less-caring people.

This report by VEAC, if accepted by Victorian Parliament, will lock out open & free access for people who enjoy the outdoors in a wonderful forest close to town. Twelve months ago a group called the Prospectors & Mining Association of Victoria, (PMAV), created a Facebook page called Bush Users Groups United, (BUGU), to contest the draft recommendations of VEAC with the Central West Investigation & now has a membership of 14,000+, with many interest groups from Victoria, interstate & overseas. Many members and/or groups joined because they have witnessed poor management in their local areas & see a desperate need for change. The BUGU group is self-funded & has created a groundswell of protest.

The VEAC group that heads the Victorian Government funded organisation is made up of educated environmentalists who may not have enjoyed a rough-it type of camp or other outdoor activities in their life. BUGU wants to dissolve the current VEAC structure & members, change the profile of this council & have a more balanced representation that reflects actual users of our beautiful bush before any further decisions are made by the Victorian Government. BUGU would like to see local community & actual users based management of the current forest without change in classification of this public land. BUGU has the support of a number of Members of Parliament from the Legislative Assembly & Legislative Council, major parties & independents but this support does not extend to the current party in power nor the Greens. If you have concerns relating to National Park status, please make it known to your Local Member(s) of both Houses of the Victorian Government.

(This article was submitted by Stephen Smitham, a member of the Admin Team of The Bush Users Groups United Facebook page & statements made are not necessarily the opinion of “The Blackwood Times”).

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BushUserGroupsUnited/>

REGULAR STUFF TO DO

WEDNESDAYS		
Senior Cltz	10:30-1pm	Bwd Hall
Mobile Library	1:30-2pm	Bwd Hall
	2-2.30pm	Martin St
SUNDAYS		
Bocce	10am	Bwd Oval
Mass	4pm	St Malachy's
MONTHLY		
1st Sun	Historical Society	Stables
2nd Mon	Progress	Bwd Hall
2nd Wed	CERT CoM	CFA
2nd Sun	Landcare	TBC
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The Blackwood Merchant works pretty hard on PR throughout the year & everyone benefits; it brings people to Blackwood at all times of the year regardless of different, individual businesses trading hours.

Both Martin Street Coffee & Blackwood Ridge have been showcased on CNN Worldwide, as good reasons to discover our beautiful township. SEE: <https://edition.cnn.com/travel/article/australia-travel-fires-recovery-destinations/index.html>

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## Mary-Anne Thomas MP

LABOR MEMBER FOR MACEDON

**Welcome back to The Blackwood Times, and welcome to 2020!**

As your local Member of Parliament, I am keen to hear from the community and assist with any State Government matter.



Shop 14, Nexus Centre, 9 Goode Street, Gisborne, VIC, 3437  
P: (03) 5428 2138 E: [mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au)

**f** MaryAnneMacedon **@**maryannethomasmp

Authorised by MA Thomas, Shop 14, Nexus Centre, 9 Goode Street, Gisborne. Funded from Parliamentary budget.

## Dear Pet Guru,

Last edition's letter about the basilisk prompted me to write because I have a mythical monster too. My pet wyvern, which as everybody knows is a two-legged dragon with a barbed tail, has lost his ability to breathe fire, so this winter I shall have to rely on firefighters. What do you think?  
Weird of Williamstown



Dear Weird of Williamstown,  
I suggest you are better off with firefighters.  
Good luck to you both.  
Pet Guru

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## • WHOSE TATT'S THAT? •



The barn swallow is a regular visitor to tattoo design. The bird that reliably returns home to nest and mate was first worn by British sailors as a talisman for their own safe return from sea. Some wore swallows to mark their surviving 5,000 nautical miles under sail. The poor souls who didn't make it back were lifted by the birds from the briny depths up to heaven.

Swallows mate for life and so are often employed as a symbol of fidelity. If you, however, come across someone with swallows on the back of their hands – best avoid them. They are saying “these fists fly”.

This beautifully detailed swallow pictured carries a sprig of flowers, the lower end of which was intended to cover an older design. It doesn't, not quite. The wearer is torn between her love of the bird and annoyance at that fuzzy little mess at the bottom. It's enough to reduce an old sailor to tears.

A. Fiona Ross

## • BLACKWOOFs •

When Vinnie & Ness stand up you will be surprised to see that they're not, well, quite all there. That's because this Border Collie brother & sister team have Corgi Legs. Safe to say their interesting cross breed won't be herding flocks of sheep any time soon. 10 years ago, the Border Corgi pups were found abandoned atop a rubbish dump in Mildura &, narrowly avoiding being put down, they found their way into a foster home via Victorian Dog Rescue ([victoriandogrescue.org.au](http://victoriandogrescue.org.au)) then on to permanent bliss with Mum & Dad.

It's Ness who wears the trousers in this relationship. She loves bossing her brother Vinnie around. If they're out chasing the ball, after a few goes Ness will decide she's had enough. Vinnie usually wants to keep on playing... but Ness just picks up the ball & takes it straight back to the house. Once she's had enough...no one else gets to play! Poor Vinnie looks on – somewhat bewildered. Mind you, she is considerate in other ways....Vinnie has a gammy leg so he can't run as fast as his sister. Ness always gets to the ball first. But she'll always only bring it halfway back then drop it for Vinnie to carry it in on the home stretch, so he gets a go too....



Cute! Same thing when they're swimming – Ness will swim out to get the stick, bring it halfway back - & Vinnie swims out to meet her halfway & brings it home...that's teamwork!

Before bed they get a night-time snack. They each get to choose what they want from the big tub of doggie treats. They know they can only have one each – so, one after the other, they stick their noses in to check out what's on offer & pick out the one they want. Very well mannered dogs!

In the past Vinnie & Ness slept in their lovely comfy, purpose-built dog beds on the floor. Through the chilly Blackwood winter... they took to jumping up & sleeping on their humans' bed. Vinnie now likes to get to bed first, stretches out full length - with his head on the pillow no less...and growls disapprovingly when he's told to shove off & make room for the bed's rightful owners....!!

bed. Vinnie now likes to get to bed first, stretches out full length - with his head on the pillow no less...and growls disapprovingly when he's told to shove off & make room for the bed's rightful owners....!!

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## • BEYOND BLACKWOOD •

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More info: Trentham Neighbourhood Centre  
Phone: 5424 1354 or Mez 0403 007 761

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### Climate adaptation in the Central Highlands

Community members in the Grampians region are invited to a presentation & workshop that will shape the way we adapt to climate locally.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Community & Partnerships Program Manager, Tim Hudspith, said: "Following the formation of our Regional Climate Adaptation Group last year, we have established a series of adaptation focus topics for our region.

"Topics include agriculture, biodiversity, economy, fire, health & wellbeing, heat, storms & flash flooding & water. We are inviting everyone to share their ideas & expertise to help resolve how as a community we might further adapt to climate change in our region.

"Throughout the morning, we will have a series of short presentations about some of the innovative ways people in our communities have adapted to the changes they've seen already.

"As well as sharing knowledge about our changing climate, the workshops will provide an opportunity for people to contribute their suggestions for inclusion in the development of the Grampians Region Climate Adaptation Strategy," said Mr Hudspith.

The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy will create a shared community vision & actions to adapt to some of the risks of climate change in the future.

The Central Highlands workshop will be held on Tuesday 11 February 2020 at the Mercure Ballarat Hotel & Convention Centre from 9.30am until 3pm.

Info about the Grampians Region Climate Adaptation Strategy & upcoming workshops is available at: [www.engage.vic.gov.au/grampians-region-climate-adaptation-strategy](http://www.engage.vic.gov.au/grampians-region-climate-adaptation-strategy)

The Regional Climate Adaptation Strategy & Regional Climate Adaptation Group support the 'Supporting our Regions to Adapt' initiative, a 3-year program providing practical support for communities to prepare for the challenges of a changing climate.

## • BEYOND BLACKWOOD •

### LET'S HANG OUT AT THE TNC

#### Water Aerobics

...yes you read correctly, is now being offered at the Trentham swimming pool Thursday from 2pm.

Class starts Thursday the February 6 & will run for 5 weeks - only \$30 for all 5 classes! Come along & make a splash, we would love to see you there!

#### Evening Pilates/Barre classes

Pilates / Barre is an intense class with maximum results concentrating on toning the arms, glutes, legs & improving your core strength.

Claire will be returning to run the original Thursday evening class.

TNC would like to welcome our new instructor Jessica who will be teaching the Monday evening class.

Starts Monday Feb 3 at 6.30pm with Jessica

Starts Thursday Feb 6 at 7.30pm with Claire

**ENROL BY EMAIL:** [admin@trenthamnc.org.au](mailto:admin@trenthamnc.org.au) with the class you want to join in the subject line.



### NOW RECRUITING

Trentham Football Netball Club is a Vibrant, Family Focused Club in the Maryborough Castlemaine District Football Netball League  
We offer Great Facilities & Social Functions for All Age Groups  
We field 11 teams - 5 Football Teams - U11.5, U14.5, U17.5, Reserves & Seniors  
6 Netball Teams - U13, U15, U17, B, C & A Grades  
New players for all grades are invited to join our great Community Orientated Club  
Game Days Saturdays, Cheap Registration Fees!!  
We have Membership & Sponsorship available packages for our Saints Supporters  
Volunteers are always appreciated and welcome

### The Saints are on the March to 2020 Glory



Pre-Season Football Training for Seniors, Reserves & U17s recommences Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January @6:30pm and will continue Tues & Thurs nights  
Junior Football & Netball training will commence early February  
Auskick & Net Set Go - dates to be advised  
Keep an eye out for further details on facebook and our club website  
All welcome to come along, join in a training session & meet our Coaches  
Bring a friend or two!!

### Club Vacancies 2020

We currently have the following vacancies for the 2020 Season: -

- > Head Sports Trainer
- > Club Sports Trainers - Football & Netball
- > Football U17.5 Coach  
U14.5 Coach
- > Netball A Grade Coach  
B Grade Coach  
U15 Coach  
U13 Coach

**Further Enquiries:** - E. [trenthamsaints@gmail.com](mailto:trenthamsaints@gmail.com)  
Ph. Cello Matricardi - Club President - 0419 161 002  
Sam Whitehouse (Football)-0438 686 794 / Miky Fleming(Netball)-0417 248 934  
<http://www.trenthamsaintsfc.com>

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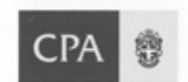
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Set on approximately 703m<sup>2</sup>, this elevated site has panoramic views, township zoned, prime retail location (currently let as accommodation/B&B) on two street frontages. Magnificent terraced yard. wrap round veranda and decking, garage and storage under house.

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## 1 Martin Street BLACKWOOD



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### BUILD YOUR DREAMS ON THIS BLACKWOOD BUSH BLOCK

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## 9 Martin Street BLACKWOOD



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### LOVELY BLACKWOOD BLOCK

This approximately 860m<sup>2</sup> block is ideally located in the heart of Blackwood's village, steps from the Blackwood Pub, Martin Street Coffee and the Blackwood Post Office. With Township Zoning and mountain views to the west, this is the perfect opportunity to build a dream country home or weekender (STCA). Current permit in Place.

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