

February March 2021 vol 12 ~ issue 13:5



KAREN'S KITCHEN

Welcome to alfresco dining, bang in the centre of town, with hay bale seating and attendant chooks to tidy up any fallen food scraps; a fun, new Blackwood experience. Karen's take-away food van is currently open weekends 8am-4pm, with Tuesday nights soon to be a happening thing. All food is freshly-made (including the delicious baked treats). Expect wraps, pulled beef rolls, grain/salad bowls and great coffee. Karen and the crew are having a ball supplying hundreds of meals each week. See you there.



The pub is pumping! (again) see p4

P6-7: COMMUNITY GROUP UPDATES

P12: HELP NEEDED TO WRITE A GRANT FOR THE TIMES

P17: HOW TO APPLY TO JOIN THE COMMITTEE OF CROWN RESERVES COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT



EDITOR'S THOUGHTS...

Welcome, welcome to 2021!

What a pleasure it's been to put this issue together with so many photos of Blackwood rising from lockdown & getting back to what it is good at - looking after our community & having fun!

2020 was a difficult time for the Times as we were in the very early stages of transitioning to a community owned & produced paper when COVID hit. This meant we could not do in-person training & there was no point in getting the equipment we needed to complete the hand over.

I want to thank a few people from the bottom of my heart for seeing the Times through 2020 - Lisa Moore who has taken on the task of organising email submissions for us, Kath Berrill who has been incredibly patient learning the desktop publishing side of things (especially when I get very bad tempered when things don't go right). Also Terri Simson who took on the role of organising our finances & an invoicing system to hand over to Fiona Ross who is taking on the advertising, invoicing & money side of things. All this has been very chaotic with little in-person contact while still getting the paper out every 2 months. Thank you.

With things getting back to normal again, we would love to be in the hall office when it comes time to put together the April/May issue but we still need to apply for a grant. We are seeking someone who has a few hours to spare who can help put all the bits & pieces we have collected into a logical application. See p12.

~ *Jinny Coyle, Communications co-ordinator*



The Community Newspaper Association of Victoria (CNAV) is the peak body representing not-for-profit community newspapers across Victoria. CNAV works actively with its members to enhance the capacity and standing of community newspapers, to enable them to fully realise their vital role in communities.

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

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>

The BLACKWOOD TIMES reserves the right to edit or refuse any article or advertising. The opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the editor.

The BLACKWOOD TIMES is produced as a community service by Jinny Coyle 5368 6444 & supported by Blackwood Progress Assoc.

theBLACKWOODTIMES.com.au

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**2021 BLACKWOOD
WOODCHOP &
EASTER CARNIVAL**

• NEW PRACTITIONER IN TOWN •



Hey, I'm Fiona. I moved to Blackwood back in June from the city. I moved to Australia from a town in Yorkshire around 8 years ago. It is so good to be living in a small town again next to the beautiful Wombat Forest.

A huge thank you to all the lovely locals I've met so far for making me feel so welcome, and to those I haven't met yet, I'm looking forward to it!

I wanted to share my business Nature Therapy Australia with you and what I'll be offering in Blackwood. My offerings will focus on connecting people to the healing benefits of nature.

To start with I'll be sharing Qigong down at the Blackwood Mineral Springs on Friday mornings from 10am until 11am starting on Friday Feb 12 until Friday March 26. Then I'll be on the lookout for a venue in town to keep us warm from the cold over the Autumn and Winter months.

So what is Qigong?
Qigong (pronounced Chee - Gung) is a moving meditation practice. Through mindfulness, breathwork, gentle flowing movements and stretches we:

- release stress and tension in our body and mind
- slow down and come into the present moment
- expand our awareness
- connect with our sense of aliveness (our Qi)

Qigong originates from ancient China with roots in Chinese Medicine and Daoism. It is simple and easy to learn and can be done by anyone at any age and fitness level.

Qigong as a practice helps to move Qi (our energy) through the body which can; reduce stress and anxiety; boost our immune system; reduce chronic fatigue and improve our wellbeing.

Come along and give it a try, your first class is free anyway just use the code FIRST-FREE, book online at naturetherapy.life/book-now.

Get in touch if you've any questions and I look forward to seeing you there soon!

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OUR CAT & CLINT LIVE AT THE GUILDFORD HOTEL!



It's been a long time between drinks (or should I say gigs!) but the drought was recently broken a few weekends ago, when Cat & Clint again took to the stage & performed to a live audience (not via zoom) at the Guildford Hotel.

A rowdy bunch of Blackwoodians were on hand to dance, clap & cheer them on. A great night was had by all! Here's to many more!

Photos by Annie Hardy, Sue Donnelly & Jodie Bantz



• FROM OUR COUNCILLORS DESK •



As your Woodlands Ward Councillor, I am a passionate believer in loving where you live.

I want to work with locals for the benefit & good of the community.

I would love to hear from passionate community groups who have their eye on an idea. Or maybe you are new to the area & have brought with you a wealth of knowledge.

Whoever you are, if you have an idea, I'd love to hear it.

I want to see our public facilities maintained & beautified, let's bring them back to life & enjoy them once more.

Let's utilise our tourism potential

& attract people to our area.

For many years I have been a passionate advocate for road safety, footpaths are high on my agenda to keep our children safe.

I am ready to be a voice on your behalf & keen to listen to your ideas on what our community wants for this region. Let me be your voice on Council.

Thank you to the many residents that have already approached me by phone or email expressing their desires & thoughts.

Our small Moorabool towns have passionate, dedicated residents who deserve to be heard.

Join me in bringing new ideas to the table.

Please feel free to call me on 0428 116 001 or email me on amunari@moorabool.vic.gov.au

I am excited about what the future holds for our small towns.



Above: The Blackwood groupies & below: crowd shot





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 '20	61.5	75.2	2.3	31.5	22.2	6.9	14.4
Dec '20	52.5	61.8	2.3	33.7	23.1	7.1	14.2



The return of the Old Timey Jam brought out the crowds to the Blackwood Hotel on what must be the rowdiest Friday night in almost a year.



The yearly rainfall was 1009.7mm, which is above the long term average of 975.8mm. This is significantly higher than the 880.5mm of 2019. December was relatively cool compared to previous years.

~ Don Owen

UPCOMING EVENTS ...

Trentham Spud Fest 2021: May 1 @ 10am Planning is full-steam ahead and we'd love your help! If you have even a few hours free, between now and May 1st, we'd love to have you join the organising committee. Enthusiasm and energy is much more important than specific skills! info@trenthamspudfest.org.au

The Peter Carey Short Story Award 2021: Run by the Moorabool libraries, the award is for short stories between 2000-3000 words and is open to all Australian Residents. See shire web page for more details.

Submissions accepted online from Monday February 1, 2021 - 8.30am to Thursday March 18, 2021 - 6pm

Email: info@moorabool.vic.gov.au • Phone: +61 3 53667100

Website: http://www.moorabool.vic.gov.au/libraries

Bacchus Marsh Wings Wheels & Coffee: A unique experience for cars to mix with aircraft both new and old.

February 7, 9am-2pm • Entry \$15 per vehicle

Bacchus Marsh & District Holden Car Club Trevor Oliver 0407 539 041

Understanding AGILE ways of working: This one-day introductory session provides an introduction to AGILE project delivery. The AGILE Manifesto is introduced along with the core of AGILES values. See website for more details.


Friday February 26, 2021 - 8.45 to 5pm

Event Organising Body: Minute to Midnight Solutions

Email: customerservice@minutetomidnightsolutions.com.au

https://www.minutetomidnightsolutions.com.au/courses/agile/introduction-to-agile

The Starry Night Greendale Drive-in will be held on March 26 ... A family fun twilight market ... food trucks & drive in movie night for locals. ... see FB for info.



JOIN THE FUN & STAY UP-TO-DATE ON FACEBOOK
<https://www.facebook.com/theblackwoodtimes>

Foodies looking for something local.....		
Monday nights	Old Farts night	Blackwood hotel
Tuesday	Parma and Pasta night	Greendale Hotel
Wednesday	Locals night	Cosmo in Trentham
Thursday	Thai nights	Radio springs hotel
Sat & Sun 8am-4pm	Karen's Kitchen	Blackwood main Street

Interview with a mystery local

Where did you grow up? I'm a Reefer. I grew up in Barry's Reef, but I live permanently now in Blackwood. I'm a bit of a loner these days. I do seem to get a lot of visitors, but mostly people just drive by.

Are you religious? I do come from a religious background. But don't worry, I'm not an evangelist, or even exclusive in my religion. I like to bring people together. I acknowledge the traditional people of this nation, & those around me often do, too. I am white & from a European background – though I was born here.

What's your style? Some say I have a sense of style, others a sense of humour. What would you think of an older lady wearing frilly knickers around her head? I like all music, but am particularly fond of the oldie time stuff that people around here play. That, & shapenote singing.

Truth or myth? There's a rumour that I was once sawn in half, but now even the finest surgeon cannot find the join. But I will never reveal my secret.

What's your marital status? You know that's such an outdated question. You need to revise it! However, I can say, I've hosted plenty of weddings but have never been the bride.

How old are you? What a thing to ask a lady! You are very rude. Suffice to say, I am old, much older than most. Though there are a few old timers like me still around in town.

How did you fare in 2020? Very well, thank you. In lockdown, when so many were tired & sad, I was getting saggier than most. The only one who fared worse was my neighbour up on the hill. I realised I needed

to do something as I was falling apart. Fortunately, Blackwood is a caring community & the locals gathered round me to help. I received a lot of support & in the end a real makeover. In the beginning, it was a foundational. I got new shoes, because as an older woman, you need good footing. Then my scoliosis got corrected with a good brace. I went on an internal cleansing diet, & really rationalised any emotional baggage.

I'm not too proud to say that I felt sad & saggy often, but am delighted how I've scrubbed up. More recently, I've had a hair-cut & wax. All the weeds from my chin have gone. Then I even had a scrape & smooth - the marvels of modern cosmetic surgery!

One day someone looked inside my head. There are not rocks there, but I could hear the bell ringing. I am pitch perfect. "What's that?" they asked? "It's an F sharp!" Lock down was good for me, I look younger than I did at the beginning. But I want people around me now. I want to see families, visitors, & here singing & music.

What will 2021 bring? I think I'll open some market stalls & make a bit of a fuss about being special & in the heart of Blackwood. I want to see someone get married again – I love weddings. Not so fond of funerals. The last I went to was Robin Bradley, who's writing I adored, & then missed.

What is your strength? I bring people together. I'm grateful for the efforts this year, & I like to think, my own regeneration helped others. If I can do it, so can you!

~ Meg Winterwood



frilly knickers on my head



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to our Blackwoodian Fiona Ross, & Shane O'Mara, for winning 'Best Folk Album' in the Music Victoria 2020 awards. Fiona loved making the album 'Sunwise Turn' with Shane & is "proud to have received this recognition for traditional Scots song in Australia".

CDs can be purchased from the Blackwood Post Office & Blackwood Hat Shoppe or online at: <https://fionaross.com.au/>

~ Sue Donnelly



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• COMMUNITY UPDATES • COMMUNITY UPDATES • COMMUNITY UPDATES • COMMUNITY UPDATES •

Blackwood CFA

Happy New Year everyone. Santa has been & gone & all the children, young & old who were good, received a treat. So far it has been relatively quiet with calls to assist other brigades & a couple of burn offs without permits. We are still in a fire danger period & must always be aware of the fire restrictions & the weather. Check the following web sites for fire restrictions in the Moorabool Shire area.

<https://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/restrictions-during-the-fire-danger-period>
<https://www.moorabool.vic.gov.au/news/prepare-your-property-upcoming-fire-season>

During the summer period it is a good idea to get your fireplace checked &, if needed, get the flue & chimney cleaned.

Check your sheds & garages, are any flammable liquids safely sealed & secured? Do you have many loose rags or paper laying around? It is also good practice to get all your electrical equipment tagged & tested regularly.

Barbies are a great summer activity but have you checked the gas line & the tank?

Check all the connections to ensure they are properly fastened & secured. Check the hose for any cracks or hardening. Check the tank for any signs of rust or deterioration as well as the manufacturing date which is stamped on the tank, if it is older than ten years, take it to a place that exchanges old for new.

To test the hoses for any leaks, after you have completed all the other checks, spray soapy water along the hose & connections & slowly turn on the supply while listening for any leaks & watching for any bubbles that appear. If in doubt swap it out.

THE FIRST PRIORITY IS YOUR SAFETY

Always ring 000 in the case of any emergency. If you have a fire & do manage to put the fire out, it is better to have us responding than to wait until it is too late.

Are fire trucks able to access your property?

Take a walk 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.

How is your Fire Plan? Even though this summer has been cooler & wetter, do not let complacency set in. Keep an eye on the weather forecasts. Make sure your friends & family know your plan & even the triggers that put it into action.

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

Remember that the Refuge is a last resort measure & that you should have your Fire Plan in place.

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

DO NOT USE FACEBOOK IF YOU ARE REPORTING AN EMERGENCY... ALWAYS RING 000

~ Karl Church, Blackwood Brigade

Blackwood CERT

CERT Members were honoured to each receive a Medal for Meritorious Service from Ambulance Victoria at the end of 2020. The Medal was awarded state wide to all serving Paramedics & First Responders to acknowledge their efforts & the impacts of a very

challenging year.

All our Team were officially "chuffed" & delighted to receive this Award, whilst also acknowledging that in our neck of the woods, we had been relatively unscathed by the virus or the fires that preceded them. Nonetheless, we faced our own challenges during Covid & such formal recognition is deeply appreciated by the Team & the Medals will be worn with pride.



Despite the challenges of 2020, our Team remained tight knit (in a socially distanced way) as we adapted to online learning & briefings from Ambulance Victoria – particularly around the measures in place to keep both ourselves & our patients safe. One Team Member commented that the daily science-based updates helped allay some anxieties, particularly in the early days, & meant they felt safe to continue their role in supporting the local area communities.

As Team Leaders, we acknowledge the help & support each of our Members have provided to each other & received from the wider community as we all navigated a difficult year.

One thing that was put on hold in 2020 was the recruitment & training of new Members. As a result we are a bit down in numbers. In 2021 our aim is to grow & support the Team that supports our communities. Ambulance Victoria is again accepting new trainees to join our local Team.

For a quick self-test on whether CERT may be a good fit for you (& you for us) see how you answer the following questions:

- Do you live in Greendale/Dale's Creek/Blackwood/Barry's Reef/Newbury (i.e. within 10km of Blackwood CFA Refuge)?
- Are you looking to join a service-focused community group?
- Are you interested in learning new skills & gaining a new qualification - CERT II Emergency Medical Services?
- Are you reasonably fit, over 18 & have a full driver's licence?
- Are you able to commit to 2 shifts "on call" per month?

If the answer to these questions is "Yes" or even "Maybe" - let's talk. The personal benefits from being a First Responder with CERT are enormous: the most important being that you will have practical First Aid skills to assist your community members, friends, neighbours & visitors to the area in times of need.

Secondly, as part of Ambulance Victoria, you (& your family) will be supported with a range of wellbeing resources, education options & other benefits.

- There are a couple of ways to find out more about this opportunity:
- Talk to one of our existing Members; or
 - Team Leaders Jan (0409 857 180) or Leonie (0438 797 007); &/or
 - Go online to [ambulance.vic.gov.au/volunteers](https://www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/volunteers).

We look forward to welcoming new Members into our Team as we head into 2021.

~ Leonie Brassier, co-team-leader

Blackwood Landcare

The last meeting of 2020 was finally face to face! Held at the caravan park's camp kitchen & recreation hall, it provided an opportunity to have an end of year drink & nibbles afterwards. Thanks to Amanda & Phil for providing the fab venue.

Work is progressing well on renovating the Uniting Church in Blackwood. In conjunction with the Blackwood Uniting Church Group, Blackwood & Barry's Reef Landcare Group organised a second successful weed removal day in early December. Thanks again to all who participated, & the lumberjack cake & chai prepared by Karen Bruno was most appreciated.

As part of The Blackwood Town Improvement Plan the corner triangle of land on the Church site will likely become a public park with an open, visual focus towards the Church. In December, a productive meeting was had with Moorabool Council's landscape team to investigate the use of indigenous plantings on the site. On

behalf of the Landcare Group, Cat Moser proposed a potential list of local indigenous plants as a living educational resource for the Blackwood community. This includes our local Yam Daisy *Microseris walteri*, referred to as Murnong by indigenous people.

Murnong was a staple food for the Wurundjeri people until the mid 1840's when the introduction of sheep rendered the species virtually extinct. The Yam Daisy produces milky tuberous roots that can be eaten raw, or baked. The leaves are also edible. The bright yellow flowers (similar to dandelion), attract beneficial bees & insects. It is a hardy plant that will hopefully continue to self-seed on the site & expand the



population of this diminished species! Tube stock under propagation will be planted out in Autumn. Stay tuned for more details about the opening of the church & the Landcare planting.

Melbourne Water is assisting Landcare in resurrecting the group's Waterwatch Kit which has seen better days. Waterwatch is a citizen science program whereby community members sample & check on the health of local waterways (Lerderderg River in this case). Once we get the kit up to speed, regular water testing of the river will take place. Let us know if you are interested in helping (a good one for the kids too!).

January/Feb is a great time to get rid of blackberries which are absolutely going berserk this year. They are tenacious weeds with three ways of spreading – berries (seeds), shoots from lateral roots & "daughter" canes which set roots where they touch the ground. Often people need to knock them with chemicals (see our website for guidance), however, some Landcare group members have reported success by continually grubbing out the shoots as they appear, a good technique for small gardens. Either way, go get 'em, before they get into the forest & cause immense damage!

Also, don't forget it's wasp eradication time. Check the town notice board for more info (on ya Brett!).

~ Diana Dawson, President

Blackwood Progress Association

Progress President's Report

In looking back at this year I must, of course, employ 2020 hindsight and declare "we should have skipped it".

This was the year that turned the world inside-out and disrupted life even in our own quiet little corner. Blackwood Progress Association has somehow managed to stay productive through it all. This time last year, preparation was in full swing for the Easter Carnival. After months of hard work and just 3 weeks out from the event, we had to make the necessary but sorely disappointing decision to pull the plug. The loss of our major fundraiser to the coronavirus pandemic affected Progress' ability to financially support community groups and their projects and so we needed to turn and focus on what we could do.

Small (and safe) community events and regular representations to Council have kept us busy through this odd year. From hosting the Meet-Your-Candidate evening for council elections, to the Town Picnic and Sports Day (with its Progress recruitment drive) to the extensive community consultation of the Soup Day and Town Zoom Meeting which informed the detailed Progress submission to Council on the Town Improvement Project, to the updating of the Progress Association Constitution; yes, we have been busy. And we've also become pretty damn good at the monthly Zoom.

Most of us, I think, look back on this year with a little exhaustion, and look forward to the next with some measure of hope and uncertainty. One thing's for certain though, we should be proud of our work this year. In 2020, when everything was falling apart, we did our little bit to keep things together.

~ Brendan Hehir (Pres.)

UPDATE: SO SORRY TO SAY THE EASTER CARNIVAL 2021 WILL NOT BE PROCEEDING DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS & REGULATIONS

Blackwood Uniting Church

The last 3 months has seen enormous progress at the church. Many thanks to Landcare for removing more feral vegetation from the grounds. The church building can now be seen from the road. The verandah looks fantastic as does the painting & the landscaping.

We are now waiting on CHW to connect the water to the site before we can move forward. Nick & his team have completed all work thus far with no water access.

Our committee, who are working on the opening festival, continue to beaver away with developing ideas & planning for this event. This amazing group of people have accomplished so much already & continue to be excited by the possibilities that this community venue will be able to offer.

Raffle tickets for a queen size quilt have gone on sale. Tickets can be purchased at the Post Office or the Hat Shop. Money raised will go towards buying folding chairs for the church space.

Thank you to the people who have already volunteered to make bunting. If you are able to help out, patterns for the size & shapes will be available at the Post Office. Thank you to Carol & Martin for supporting us in this way.

We are also very grateful to Ben for the donation of a fridge & to Ballan Hardware for supplying the hardware for a permanent art display set up. A huge thank you.

Unfortunately we still have no date for our Opening Festival Weekend. There are still jobs to be done, signing off by officials & COVID regulations to navigate & uphold but we will let you know as soon as we are able.

~ Robyn Zanon

Your community wants know about your organisation, what your focus in the community is & how you would like support, please email your regular reports to Sandy at – galaxys@hotmail.com by the 15th of the month prior to the publishing date. See p2 of this issue for the next dates. Sign up at theblackwoodtimes.com.au to get deadline reminders.



BLACKWOOD RIDERS GROUP

We're on the road again!

Last month's ride was to Redesdale Pub for lunch. Eight people attended and we had a great meal at this historic hotel. We recently rode to Talbot Market - this was after watching Cat and Clint at the Guildford Hotel the night before, so we were a little late getting started!

We are hoping to continue our rides on the third Sunday of the Month while the weather is good.

~ Brett Bond

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• THE STORY OF PRIYA BY KAREN BRUNO – 11 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS •



DAY 1



DAY 2



DAY 3



DAY 4



DAY 5



DAY 6



DAY 8



DAY 7



DAY 9

Please let our advertisers know you found them in The BLACKWOOD TIMES. The BLACKWOOD TIMES thanks all our advertisers for their support.

Day 1: Priya is a teddy bear who is in a wheelchair who has been entertaining children & adults throughout COVID lockdown with her antics in the window of the Blackwood Hat Shoppe. All of her windows (approx 135) can be found on the watchpriyawithme FB or Instagram pages. *Priya & her offsider Cat are back to tell the story of Christmas.*

Day 2 Bethlehem: Mother Priya continues on to tell us that the faraway land was ruled by Caesar Augustus & he ordered that a census be taken & everyone had to return to their hometown. Joseph set out from Nazareth in Galilee & travelled up to Judaea, to the town of David called Bethlehem. He did this because he was of David's house & lineage & in order to be registered with Mary, his betrothed who was with child.

Bethlehem is set in the wilderness of the Judean mountains. Karen tells us to look closely into today's window as our 82 year old friend Peter Uhlherr has been busy during lock down creating our backdrops & other features for the Christmas windows. Make sure you look up Lignum & Nigrum & see what it means. The arrow points to where

Lignum Nigrum is. & have you noticed the southern cross? Not really in the night sky over Bethlehem but it is pointing to us here at home & connecting us across the world. There is a lot to see so please enjoy.

Day 3 Journey to Bethlehem: Mary & Joseph travel 90 miles to Bethlehem from Nazareth. It takes 4-5 days & because she is heavily pregnant, Mary rides a donkey for most of the way. They travel south along the flatlands of the Jordan River, then west over the hills surrounding Jerusalem, & on into Bethlehem.

Priya is playing the role of Mary & Sue Donnelly's Jack Frost is playing the role of Joseph. Priya's funny & much loved offsider is Cat, & she is playing the role of a fellow traveler but she has decided to do the journey in comfort in Priya's wheelchair!

Day 4 An Inn of Bethlehem: Bethlehem around 2000 years ago was busy because of people returning to their family towns because of the census. All of the Inns were full. Buildings in those days were built of brick & were mostly 2 story with an inner court yard. The rooms were upstairs & downstairs were the stables where the animals would be housed.

Peter has outdone himself with today's back drop & as is often the



11 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS • CONTINUED



DAY 10

case, the photos don't do justice to his work. So if you can pop down to look, it will be worth it. And our actor today playing the role of Inn Keeper is Kirsty Vella's Paddington bear which was given to her on the day she was born.

Day 5 No Room: When Joseph & Mary finally arrive in Bethlehem, there is no room available anywhere for them. The kindly Inn Keeper, having seen how close Mary was to giving birth, offers them the stables for themselves as well as their donkey & cat. Tired from their long journey, Joseph gratefully accepts.

Day 6 The Wise Men are called: The Star of Bethlehem (or Christmas Star) appears in the sky & summons the three Wise Men (Magi) to come from the East (the Orient) to meet the King of the Jews. They are on the way to worship him & bring gifts of Frankincense, Gold & Myrrh.

Although the Magi are lead by the Star of Bethlehem after Jesus is born, in our little story with Priya, they appear before the birth of Jesus. Our three Magi are played by Edward who is Jinny Coyle's mother's teddy bear, by Peter Uhlherr's Wise old Owl & a beautiful white hand knitted teddy lent to me by Robyn Zanon

Day 7 The Angel talks with the Shepherds: There were shepherds in the countryside close by to Bethlehem who were spending the night in the fields, taking care of their sheep. An angel appeared to them & bathed them in the Glory of God. They were afraid but the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid! I am here with good news which will bring great joy to everyone. This very day in David's town of Bethlehem, your Savior is born - Christ the Lord! You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes & lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great army of heaven's angels appeared with the angel, & they all began to sing: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, & peace to all on earth."

When the angels had gone, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem & see what has happened" So off they went to see if what the Angel had said was true.

I find today's window delightful. Peter Uhlherr's sheep (including that famous one Sean in the front) & the sweet little shepherds played by Fiona Ross's gorgeous little dark teddy bear & Stephanie Kondos's rabbit, make me smile. & Peter's Angel of course is a beautiful teddy bear with the most serene look on her face & is in keeping our theme of animals.

And the Shepherds are a little out of order from the bible accounts of the birth of Christ but here in Priya land we will end this series of windows on Christmas day so we decided to include the shepherds earlier rather than after the birth of Jesus because as they are such a big part of the story.



DAY 11

Day 8 A Stable for a bed: The Star of David shines bright but Mary is exhausted & Joseph concerned. The Inn keeper shows them to his stable underneath the rooms of the Inn. It is full of animals & other things typically found in a barn but there will be room!

I wonder if Priya is the first Mary who is a wheelchair user. It has certainly been more comfortable for her in her pregnant state than a donkey would have been!

Day 9 Settling In: Many months before now, an angel Gabriel appeared to the virgin Mary who was about to marry a carpenter named Joseph from the house of David. The angel said to her, "Greetings, favored one. The Lord is with you." Mary was troubled because she didn't know what was happening. "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. & look, you will conceive in your womb, & bring forth a son, & will call him 'Jesus.' He will be great, & will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David, & he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. There will be no end to his kingdom."

The angel went on to say, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, & the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore also the holy one who is born will be called the Son of God.

And Mary said, "See, the handmaid of the Lord; be it to me according to your word." The angel departed from her.

Priya has brought the culmination of that moment to life as we see Mary & Joseph settle down in the hay & prepare for the birth of their baby. It is quiet & still.

Day 10 Christmas Eve: The children are so enthralled by Mother Priya's story that they can picture themselves so clearly in that stable sitting on the straw & hearing the sounds of Bethlehem.

Mother Priya goes on with the story but this time she bursts in song: "Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed. Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for his bed. Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little child. He came down to earth from heaven, who is God & Lord of all, & his shelter was a stable, & his cradle was a stall."

Day 11 Christmas Day: And unto us a child is born. He will be a leader & shepherd us to ever lasting peace. His name is Jesus which means Saviour.

And so concludes our little story says Mother Priya. She has enjoyed sharing her story of Christmas & wishes you a safe & merry festive time. As for Cat, well she says meow. And Peter says Merry Christmas & all the best for 2021 - may it be a better year than the one just past.

Karen says thank you for all of your support & encouragement & she wishes you all, peace & contentment. Sending you much love.

All of Priya pictures & adventures can be seen on her "watchpriyawithme" facebook or instagram page.

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Cat Moser of the famed Cat & Clint duo with the Blackwood groupies see p3

VALE HELEN RYGIEL



When I first moved to Blackwood, I didn't even realise I had a neighbour, because there were thick trees between our houses. Once day I heard someone talking & I looked out to see who it was. I could see a little light. A small woman with black hair, a glass of wine & a cigarette was talking on the phone on the back veranda. Her voice carried across the way, accompanied by a kookaburra's laugh. The next day, I introduced myself. This was Helen, who was my neighbour for many years. I was working at the Sunshine Community House at a teacher. My students mostly came from Vietnam & South America. They all thought I needed fattening up. At the end of one term they all brought food in & loaded me up. I went home, with baskets full - not knowing what to do with the food. It was winter, dark & about 2 degrees outside when I got home. The power had gone out. I lit my fire, & looked across to Helen's house. What would she be doing for heat as she had no fire? I could see a little candle. I rang her up & invited her over. Helen brought over a bottle of wine & we sat down to a feast of mooncakes, dumplings & Fajitas. We talked about our lives, & hers seemed incredibly interesting. She told me that she'd been a beautician, & worked with horses, been overseas, & now worked at the Trentham Pharmacy.

Helen loved the birds & kangaroos. She took photos of them, & even had them published here. Once day there was a huge buck at her front door. She opened the door & it didn't back off. She closed the

door & snuck around the backway. There was no way she was going to take on that huge thing. It wasn't afraid of her, & knew he was onto a good thing.

Just before Christmas I received news that Helen had passed away suddenly, a day before her 64th birthday. She will be very missed by her friends & family - especially her sister Danielle, her niece Gabrielle, & her great nephew Harrison. She'll be missed by my daughter too - Helen always watched out for her. She was never intrusive, & always generous & kind.

We watched her funeral online, got to share the moment with her friends & family in Geelong. It was a sad way to say goodbye, but I like to think she'd appreciate us beaming in from Blackwood. When I posted on Facebook, so many people were touched by Helen in some way. She was a quiet achiever, & a huge supporter of the underdog. **Vale Helen Rygiel.**

~ Margaret McCarthy

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THE HISTORY OF BLACKWOOD: DEATH OF JOHN CANN



Compiled by Margot Hitchcock, Historian for the Blackwood & District Historical Society. January 2021 ©

Bacchus Marsh Express (Vic.), Saturday 16 February 1895. (article from TROVE -newspapers on-line.)

BLACKWOOD. The death of Cr. John Cann early on Monday morning last, at the comparatively early age of 51 years, is, perhaps, one of the severest losses amongst its prominent public men that Blackwood ever suffered. How general was the recognition of his exceptional business ability is well shown by the fact that, at the time of his death, quite apart from his position as coach proprietor & leading hotelkeeper in the district, he held the public elective offices of Shire councillor, member of Ballarat Mining Board, & of the district School Board, & his services on local committees was always availed of whenever possible. As Mr. Cann occupied for so long a time a leading position in the public affairs of the district, the following brief sketch of his career may not be without some interest. His parents, with their family, came to Blackwood at the time of the first rush in the "fifties," (1855) & opened a butchering establishment "down the creek" at Kangaroo Flat. The rapid developments peculiar to those times soon caused additions to be made & within a very few months, besides general stores & hotel business was added, & the place became known as the Kangaroo Inn. I have a faint recollection of the sign board being graced with the picture of a gigantic kangaroo, painted in the highest art of the times. Although at this time the subject of our sketch, then a lad of about 14, filled in portion of his time with fossicking round with pick, tin-dish & shovel, yet it was the horse work connected with bringing in supplies of cattle for the butchering business that inculcated in him such a love of horses as to much influence him in his after career. I may incidentally mention one of his cattle driving experiences in which he & another lad were driving a particularly wild specimen to the yards at Kangaroo when it broke away, & when going full tilt down Jackson's Gully. The beast, immediately after jumping a big log, suddenly disappeared. On coming up to the spot the riders found that the animal had dropped into a hole about 14 feet deep, & a shot gun & dray had to be brought into requisition to finish up the delivery. Like most rushes, this one "down the creek" soon subsided, & the Cann family removed to the Southern Cross hotel at Red Hill; the father, however, in conjunction with W. Vigor, still keeping up a connection in the butchering business. The Southern Cross was a large two-storied building with theatre attached, & good business was done for a time. In those days practical joking was wonderfully rife, & I may be forgiven for mentioning one in which our subject was concerned. The stage of the theatre before mentioned had a canvas ceiling lightly tacked to the rafters, & in the angle of the roof a large tub was kept full of water for use in case of fire. (The building did get burned down several years later). One night, in the midst of a performance, our Johnny, with a friend, perhaps with the idea of adding to the realism of the "Storm in a kitchen" scene that was being acted, tipped the tub of water over on to the ceiling, which, of course gave way, & the unrehearsed efforts of the actors to get out of the way of the deluge of water, & the effect such an event would have upon the audience, I leave to the imagination of my readers. At about this time "Johnny" Cann first entered into the coaching business, & for several years drove for Mr. James Millyard on the coach that ran daily to & from Kyneton. Anyone acquainted with the roads in those days will well understand the difficulties of the task, particularly as the worst part of the stage (the Blackwood end) had to be done in the darkness, & there is some doubt as to whether an injury received in one of the almost inevitable accidents on such roads was not the



There were once 32 hotels at Blackwood. That shown in the photograph is one remaining. It was once the starting place for Colib's Coaches and is now a comfortable headquarters of numbers of tourists who visit the old goldfield, and find it an esquisse holiday resort. A nugget was found last week not far from this place.

ultimate cause of his death. When the coach between Myrning (then known as Blow's Flat) & Blackwood was started on Cobb & Co. lines Mr. Cann was driver, & by steadiness & application was able to save sufficient money to enable him to become proprietor of the Royal Mail hotel at Golden Point; & whilst still keeping to the coach driving was able, with the valuable assistance of his wife, to carry on the business successfully. The usual goldfield changes were taking place, & Cobb & Co having removed their local terminus to Buckley's hotel at Red Hill, & as business at the Royal Mail naturally declined, Mr. Cann, when a favourable opportunity occurred, became the landlord of the hotel at Red Hill, & by his business tact soon made it the leading hotel in the district - a reputation which it still retains. As regards Mr. Cann's illness I need say little more than that he made a marvellous recovery from a serious dropsical attack a year or so ago & that the attack of hepatitis (or liver complaint) which carried him off after a 3 or 4 week's illness appeared to be beyond the power of medical skill. The arrangements for the funeral, which was one of the largest that has ever assembled on the like sad errand in Blackwood, were carried out by Mr. P. Duncan in his usual efficient manner, with the members of the Board of Advice as coffin bearers, assisted by the Shire Councillors & school teachers. The Rev's R. Buchanan & E. C. Knox officiated at the grave, the latter clergyman giving a feeling address suited to the occasion.

The burial would have been attended with Masonic ceremonies but that the time was too short to complete the necessary arrangements; although I understand that a large number of the brotherhood were present in their unofficial capacity.

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

Photo: Blackwood Hotel once owned by John Cann. Courtesy of the Blackwood Historical Society.

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CAN YOU HELP WRITE A GRANT?



During the restrictions of 2020 we were unable to use the hall office so full transition of the times to the community was made very difficult - however things are looking better this year & we are again looking to apply for a grant to purchase the equipment we need. Can you help write the submission? This will involve some research & probably a few hours. Please contact editor@theblackwoodtimes.com.au.

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NO WOMBAT GOLD

Our campaign to stop commercial gold mining in the Wombat State Forest is ongoing.

On June 11, 2020 disruptive exploratory drilling by Currawong Resources began near Blackwood, Victoria. No Wombat Gold was started by concerned residents to ban commercial Gold mining in the Wombat State Forest.

This petition was started that has over 5,500 signatures <https://www.change.org/nowombatgold>

Ministers Lily D'ambrosio & Jaclyn Symes were contacted, voicing our concern that mining for gold could even be contemplated in an area that is the head of 7 rivers, a water catchment, home to endangered species & a popular tourist destination. Both Ministers referred us to Earth Resources & Mining regulations with no response about the appropriateness of allowing mining exploration in such a sensitive area.

Two lots of survey markers were found not long after, near Trentham. They looked like the ones near Blackwood, so were likely the next place Currawong Resources planned to drill. Contact was made & they said they had no further plans to drill in the Wombat, & were moving to private property elsewhere on the tenement (exploratory licence area). Exploration Licence EL006656 runs from near Blackwood up to Taradale. <https://earthresources.vic.gov.au/licensing-approvals/location-of-mining-petroleum-licences/mining-licences-near-me>

Fosterville South Exploration, owners of Currawong Resources, have not made any public statements about the exploratory drilling they did near Blackwood, nor the results of that drilling.

A second West Australian company, Cauldron Energy are now keen to start their exploratory drilling that will run from Barrys Reef to near The Garden of St Erth. Exploration Licence EL5479 <https://www.cauldronenergy.com.au/victorian-gold-projects/> They have a 51% share of Blackwood Gold Mines Pty Ltd.



Map of Trentham pegs

In December 2020, a few of us met with Simon & Jess from Cauldron Energy, to start community consultation. They seem amenable to not working on weekends for the tourist businesses, & a later start on weekdays for the locals if noise is a problem. Their first location is the furthest from residents, so we can get an idea of what is involved. They are yet to get full approval & will do a larger community consultation once they receive that.

They want to small scale mine, going down existing mine shafts. They are focusing on small rich gold seams that don't require truckloads of rock to be processed. The miners go down with hand tools to dig it out. They seem to think the water in the mines is potable & there will be no issue with contaminants like arsenic & heavy metals being released into our water. We are highly skeptical, but it is not an issue at this exploratory stage.

Cauldron Energy's exploratory work is going to use diamond drilling, not RC drilling like Currawong Resources. It should not be as disruptive.

Exploratory licence applications for gold in Victoria have increased greatly <https://earthresources.vic.gov.au/licensing-approvals/have-your-say> We have been in contact with other communities concerned about exploratory licences such as Don't Undermine Steiglitz <https://www.facebook.com/NoSteiglitzMine> & the Ovens Valley <https://www.facebook.com/groups/693414034875984>

~ Phaedra Morris



• LETTER OF OPINION •

There are people in Blackwood that are against the mining but if it were not for mining, Blackwood would not exist.

Only 20 years ago, there was a mine in Barry's Reef, it lasted for 5 years & created 30 jobs. Now it is gone & people would not realise it was even there. Everybody wants a job but if it involves your backyard you do not want to know about it.

If mining started on the Yankee Line of Reefs, it would not be forever. The amount of Wombat State Forest that would be destroyed would be minimal & it is likely that most of the mining would be done underground & nobody would even know.

At present in Ballarat there is a gold mine 700 meters under McDonalds at Baker Hill & no one even notices.

Everything should be tolerated at a sustainable level.

~ Ken Whiffin

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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.



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FROM CATHERINE'S DESK

Funding opportunities for Blackwood community groups - by Hon Catherine King MP

Community groups are part of what makes our region so great, but I know that it is an endless challenge for them to secure the funding they need to survive & grow.

This is why I am so pleased to once more be managing the Stronger Community Programme through my office, delivering \$150,000 to community groups across the Ballarat Electorate.

The Stronger Communities Program provides up to \$20,000 to community groups to fund small capital projects that improve local community participation & make our region a better place.

I know that many community groups have been waiting for the next round of the Stronger Communities Program - & I look forward to seeing the wonderful projects which are put forward for funding.

Grants made in previous rounds saw the Blackwood Cricket Club purchase a mini-bus, Ballan Recreation Reserve build a new playground, Ballarat South Senior Citizens upgrade their kitchen, Legacy House upgrade their kitchen, & the Neighbours Place in Bacchus Marsh expand their emergency food bank & microfinance services.

If you are involved with a community group that could use a funding injection, I encourage you to get in touch & apply.

Expression of interest forms for the program will need to be submitted to my office by 19th February 2021.

For any further info, please contact my office on 5338 8123.



PAT O'NEILL (NEE HARRIS)



Meet Pat O'Neill. She turned 90 last November, & on January 3 re-visited Blackwood with her son Michael O'Neill.

She first came to Blackwood after contracting whooping cough when she was 8 or so. Her mother sent her here to her mum's sister at the general store - Kath Richards, wife of Jack Richards. There was no electricity & she went to the primary school for a while. She was

disappointed to hear it had burned down since. Where the Post Office is now was the Coop. She remembers the kiosk across from the springs turn-off where they could get an ice-cream. The mineral water was so strong it could exclude the bottles," she said. Some things have not changed.

But many things had - the town is bigger, there's a lot here now. She spent some time talking with Kenny Cann & they came up with all the big names - including Kenny's granddad.

She wishes us a better year than the last!

~ Michael O'Neill



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PET SHENANIGANS WITH SEAMUS



Woof! This month I am again discussing dog breeds & suitability. Formally, this breed is known as the Staffordshire Bull Terrier, but most Australians know this playful dog as the Staffy. It's thought that these dogs were originally bred in England from the 'Bull & Terrier' that is an extinct type of dog (the progenitor of the American Pit Bull Terrier, American Staffordshire Terrier, Bull Terrier, Miniature Bull Terrier & Staffordshire Bull Terrier) or possibly from the old fashioned Bulldog & English White Terrier, which is

also extinct. In the early 1800s, they were bred for bear baiting, but by 1835, the Cruelty to Animals Act had shut that practice down. The name 'Staffordshire Bull Terrier' didn't appear until 1930 when it began to appear in advertisements for dogs of this type. Today, it's no secret that the Staffy is a beloved Aussie breed. They actually ranked second in the top 10 Australian dog breeds – right behind the Labrador!

Trustworthy & dependable: In terms of temperament, this breed of dog is fearless, friendly, tolerant & totally reliable, in particular with children. Staffordshire Bull Terriers are well known for their love of people. Indeed, they have a zest for life, & are happy to partake in just about any activity. As long as they're with their loved ones, they're easy going, however, they can be a little stubborn when it comes to training. So if you're a first time Staffy parent, it may be best to consult a professional trainer. Keep in mind, they need a confident leader & 100% consistency. They also love to chew, so give them plenty of chew toys (& hopefully they'll leave your furniture alone!). Despite them being gentle creatures, they will stand up for themselves if another dog is challenging them. This is especially common in adults. Most of the time, however, they are lovers not fighters.

Appearance: Strong & athletic, the Staffordshire Bull Terrier is a medium-sized, well-balanced dog with a short, close coat with a natural gleam. Their head is broad & the jaw is strong. They have a short muzzle & very distinct cheek muscles. Their coat can come in a variety of colours, including red, fawn, white, black or blue that's smooth in texture & lies close to the skin. They usually have dark round eyes but this can vary a little depending on the colour of their coat.

Suitability: There's really no better companion than a Staffy, especially for families with kids. They're known for their caring, affectionate & trustworthy nature. Staffys do require lots of attention, so it's important that you have the time to spoil them with love. They'll be sure to return the favour! If they get too bored they might get a little cheeky & take it upon themselves to do a little gardening or help with the washing. Make sure you get them into puppy school & teach them good habits from the get-go! This is a breed that must be well trained.

Health & Wellbeing: As a breed, Staffys do have some potential health problems. There are of course some hereditary diseases to be aware of, but most reputable breeders will test for these. These include L2-HGA (a metabolic disorder) & Hereditary Cataracts (HC) – there is actually no record of Hereditary Cataracts ever being in Australia in this breed. Other health issues may include skin allergies, Mast Cell Tumours, Inverted Canines, Tibial Crest Avulsion & Epilepsy. Skin allergies are probably the biggest issue.

Grooming: Staffys don't require too much maintenance. A complete & balanced diet should keep their coat healthy. Chew toys are good for their health! A regular bath & a brush once a week is enough. Just like humans, they need their teeth brushed daily. If they're not wearing their toenails down naturally in nature, a little Mani Pedi doesn't go astray!

Staffys certainly are a much loved popular breed & would make a great addition to any family.

~ *Woof for now ... Seamus*

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BLACKWOOLS



Knuckles preparing for the javelin event.

IN THE towns from Darwin to Alice they call their local (and much-loved) breed the Darwin Special. Out bush it's called a Camp Dog. This mutt is a well-adjusted & sociable mix of terrier, boxer, staffy, kelpie, heeler & dingo (and whatever else is around at the time).

I REMEMBER in Blackwood some 30 years ago the streets were patrolled by hordes of Jack Russells. These days, if ever there were a Blackwood Special, it would surely be the burgeoning Kelpie/Heeler mix (thanks, almost entirely, to Johnny Boy & Wiggie of Golden Point). We have interviewed many of their children for this column & found them all to be charming.

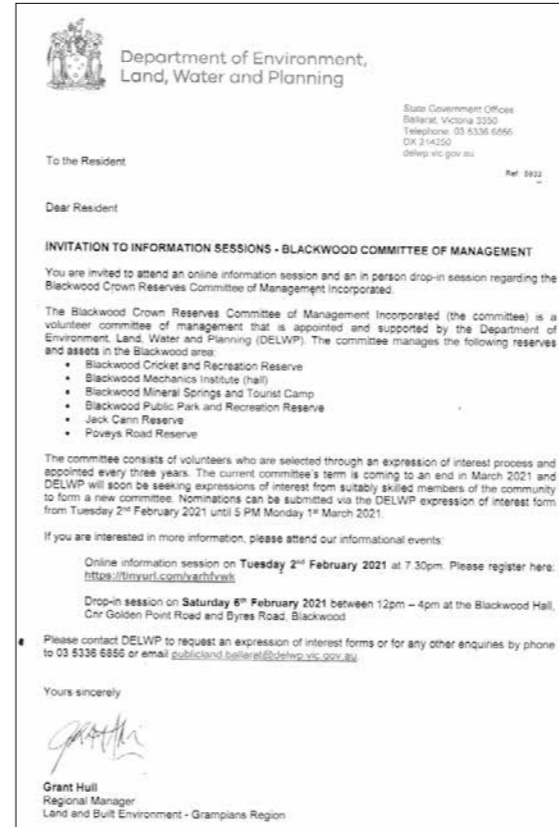
AND THEN there's Knuckles.

WHEN I first met Knuckles he was swinging a rope with a doll's head attached to the end. "Bob" I think was the doll's name. Round & round Knuckles went as if he were winding up in a hammer throw competition, or in this case a Bob throw. The track & field chops of this young fellow were on show; just as skilful on the Sudsie Throw (a challenging & wildly unstable laundry detergent bottle on-a-rope) also, I'm told, the Sharkie Throw. He even recognizes the names & will choose the correct item for each event when announced.

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FROM THE DESK OF DWELP



The following letter has been received by some, not all, residents of Blackwood.

INVITATION TO INFORMATION SESSIONS – BLACKWOOD COMMITTEE OF MANAGEMENT

You are invited to attend an online information session and an in person drop-in session regarding the Blackwood Crown Reserves Committee of Management Incorporated.

The Blackwood Crown Reserves Committee of Management Incorporated (the committee) is a volunteer committee of management that is appointed and supported by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). The committee manages the following reserves and assets in the Blackwood area:

- Blackwood Cricket and Recreation Reserve
- Blackwood Mechanics Institute (hall)
- Blackwood Mineral springs and Tourist Camp
- Blackwood Public Park and Recreation Reserve
- Jack Cann Reserve
- Poveys Road Reserve

The committee consists of volunteers who are selected through an expression of interest process and appointed every three years. The current committee's term is coming to an end in March 2021 and DELWP will soon be seeking expressions of interest from suitably skilled members of the community to form a new committee. Nominations can be submitted via the DELWP expressions of interest form from **Tuesday February 2 until 5pm Monday March 1 2021.**

If you are interested in more information, please attend our informational events:

Online information session on **Tuesday February 2, 2021 at 7.30pm**
Please register here: <https://tinyurl.com/yarhvwk>

Drop in session on **Saturday February 6 between 12pm-4pm** at the Blackwood Hall, Cnr Golden Point Road and Byers Road, Blackwood.

Please contact DELWP to request an expression of interest forms or for any other enquiries by phone to 5336 6856 or email publicland.ballarat@delwp.vic.gov.au

Yours sincerely
Grant Hull
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BLACKWOOD WOMBIES

Hello & Happy New Year from Wombat Book club.

We get together the 3rd Sunday of each month. Unfortunately we have not set a place to call home as yet, but new members are still welcome, & can contact Brenda at - woodbinelodge1@gmail.com for information on our next get-together.

Yes, we discuss books, but also use it for social chatting as well, which makes us a warm & friendly bunch.

The 2 books we read this month were 'To Cross The Line' by Sandra Jones, & 'Finding my Place' by Anne Aly.

'To Cross the Line', is about Doctor of Languages, Reanne Symes, an Australian, who goes into Albania as she has an interest in the 'Tosk' language. She falls in love with the Tour Guide and raises suspicion with Authorities when she returns to Albania. The story unfolds them planning a daring escape which goes horribly wrong. It also leads to the unmasking of a traitor.

'Finding my Place' is the story of Anne Aly who we all know as a Journalist & Politician. She reveals much about her family background, & the daring stances of the female relatives who stood up to repressive regimes on women. This is a story of courage, & determination of a young woman with her own mind deciding what she wanted in life.

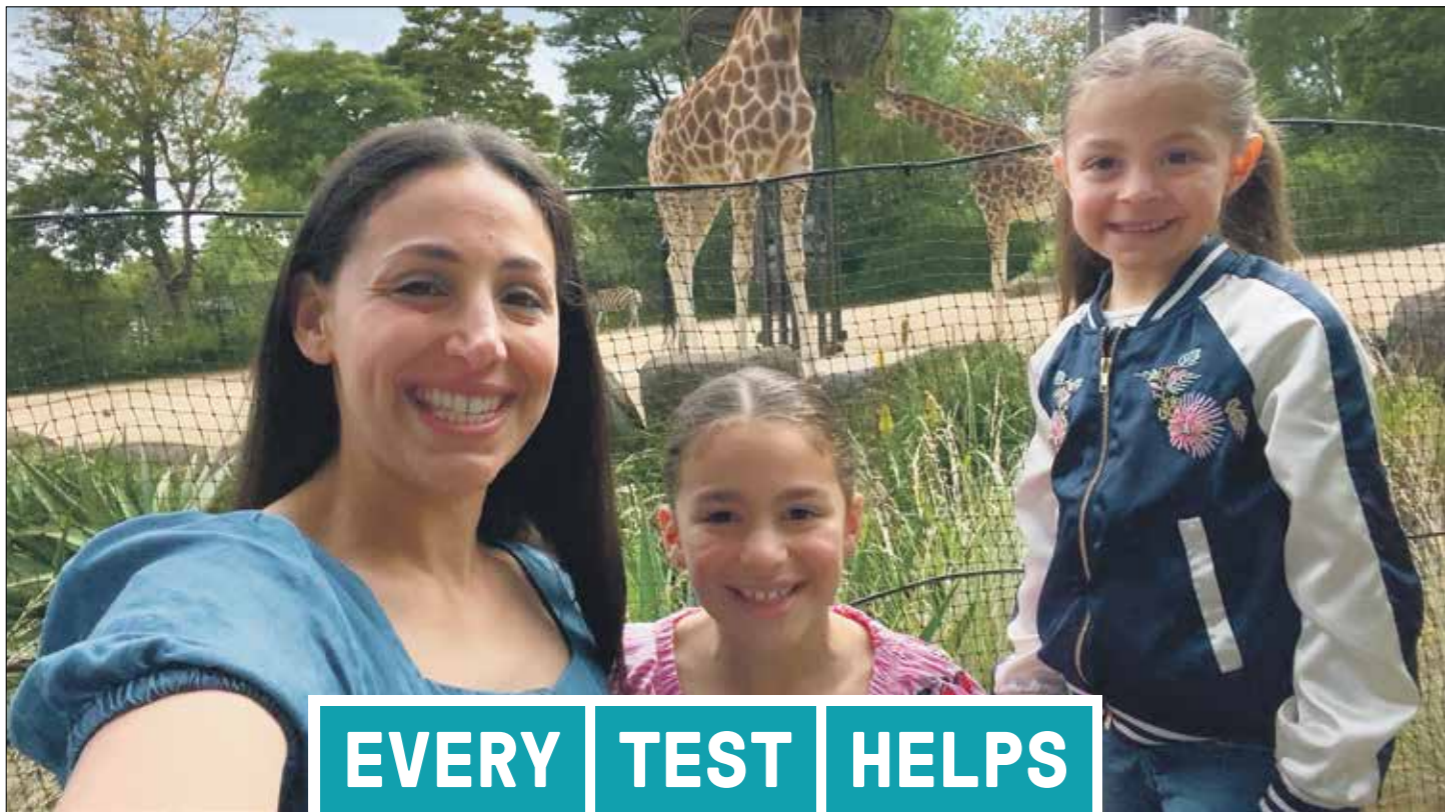
Anne – "CROSS THE WIRE" written by our own Sandy.
Who knew I would ever enjoy a book written about a country I knew nothing about - ALBANIA!! No preconceived ideas at least.

It was a readable fictional account based on the factual experiences of a female journalist who travelled there & returned a few times more to reconnect with a local tour guide. But apart from the romance, the writer describes so well the everyday life & the politics which controls everything. Movement in & out of the country is restricted, food & goods are restricted, with the people having no idea of life in the outside world.

It had to be read to the end! Congratulations Sandy!

Sandy – I found Finding my Place an enjoyable & easy read. Anne takes us back to Turkey where her Grandmother defiantly took off her veil at a railway station. Anne gives her account of struggles she faced, not just being a woman, but Muslim & person of colour. A success story with humour & humanity.

4.5 wombies



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YOUNG TRADES AWARDS

Nominate a young tradesperson for their effort & contribution to their trade.

We invite you to get involved & nominate a young person who you believe shows exceptional skills, commitment, & community engagement.

Whether they're qualified or apprentices, trainees, or diploma students, these awards show our appreciation for their hard work & acknowledge young tradespeople in our district.

If you employ young workers learning their trade through training, please consider nominating them in the Young Trades Awards Program. If you're a young, qualified tradesperson you can nominate yourself.

Nominations opened 26 January & close 26 February 2021. There are generous (\$5000) prizes in three categories:

1. Apprentice or trainee – Employed & learning
2. Qualified tradesperson – Employed
3. Entrepreneur or Self-employed Tradesperson

Nominations are open for tradespeople aged between 16 & 30 years old who work in: • Carpentry & building • Electrical & plumbing • Hair & beauty • Automotive • Nursing & childcare • Civil construction • Landscaping & gardening • Hospitality • Fitness & health • Agriculture & farming • Other trades.

Nominations can be made at the Community Bank Trentham & Districts branch or register your nomination www.bendigobank.com.au/branch/vic/community-bank-trentham-districts/young-trades-awards/

We look forward to you being part of this community initiative sponsored by CCCE & Community Bank Trentham & Districts.

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Young Trades Awards

Nominate a young tradesperson for their effort and contribution to their trade.

Nominations close 26 February 2021.

Nominations can be made at:

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LYONVILLE NEWS

2021 Wood Chop Cancelled

As the current limit on public gatherings is 100 people & we usually get more than 200 contestants & attendees at the Wood Chop, the Hall Committee has made the sad decision to cancel the wood chop that was due to be held on Saturday Feb 6. We hope the event can be held again in 2022 once COVID is under control.

Lyonville Hall Pizza Oven Grand Opening

You are invited to join us at the opening of the Lyonville Hall Pizza Oven on Sunday February 7 from noon to 3pm. See the oven being put through its paces & join us for pizzas & more. BYO drinks. Entry is \$5 & pre-booking is required so we can monitor the number of attendees. Bookings close Thursday 4 February.

Online booking: <https://www.trybooking.com/BNXGD> or contact Vicki by phone 0438178150 or email vickicj102@gmail.com

Café de Lyonville

The Café is open every Sunday from 10am to 1pm in the hall, serving great coffee & delicious home made cakes. Local produce such as strawberries & raspberries is often for sale too.

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CHURCH SERVICES

Services have resumed at Holy Trinity Bacchus Marsh, Christ Church Myrning, and St Georges Balliang.

Holy Trinity Bacchus Marsh - Wednesday 10am & Sunday 9am.

Christ Church Myrning - 11am on the 1st & 3rd Sunday monthly

St Georges Balliang - 11am on the first Sunday of the month & 9am on 3rd Sunday of the month



Lyn Plummer (manager) & Pheadra with Knuckles ready for deliveries

Ballan & District Community House

We have been working with CASI, the Moorabool Shire's Community Activation & Social Isolation initiative, that was funded by the Victorian Government for COVID-19 Community support.

We had high hopes to receive a grant, applied for by CASI, to start food support from the Ballan Community House & other social initiatives. Unfortunately, due to the enormous number of funding applications, the CASI application was not successful, but there are other plans afoot to ensure our community is supported through our volunteers & their organisations, Heart of Ballan (HoB) is a vital part of this project.

CASI pooled its resources to support The Neighbour's Place in Bacchus Marsh with Christmas Hamper preparations & delivery for the Moorabool Shire. Ballan Community House put its hand, 'and paw' up, to deliver hampers in Ballan & surrounds.

The Ballan Community House received a very crucial \$5,000 grant from the Bendigo Bank - Ballan & District Community Bank Branch's Community Grant, to increase the capacity of our Commercial Kitchen to prepare & serve the planned weekly community meals to those in our area who have been isolated over many months of this year, due to the COVID lockdown.

HOB (Heart of Ballan) plans to start these luncheons early next year, (COVID permitting) at the Mechanics' Institute, with a team of volunteers with specialist expertise.

Please see attached a selection of photos of Community House Volunteer, Phaedra Press & her dog Knuckles who are off to deliver some Christmas Cheer with a truck load of essential fresh food items in the Christmas Hampers to Ballan residents. Also featured in the Photos are Lyn Plummer, Manager & Rodney Browne Co-ordinator of the Mechanics' Institute.



Ready to deliver Christmas hampers to Ballan residents
photos Concetta McFall



TRENTHAM SAINTS

TDFNC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: The Trentham District Football Netball Club AGM will be held on Tuesday February 2, 2021 at 7:30pm at the Trentham Clubrooms. All positions will be considered vacant with some key positions to be filled. We are hoping for good community turnout to ensure a successful 2021 season after the impacts of COVID last year.

SENIOR COACHES REPORT: After working so hard throughout the pre-season of 2020 it was obviously extremely disappointing not to be able to play any games last year.

Unfortunately, COVID hit the week after our training camp where Purce had once again put the boys through a gruelling, but enjoyable weekend.

With the boys itching to get back into it after the long layoff, we began our assault on the 2021 season on the November 17 with our sights firmly set on breaking the 26-year senior premierships drought.

Whilst numbers have been up & down the boys have set a good foundation that will hopefully carry across the break & hold us in good stead. We returned to training on Jan 28. With most players having already recommitted & a few more recruits in the mix, things are looking promising with good numbers across the whole senior squad.

Dolf & I are excited about the young group we have coming up & are both really looking forward to a strong & competitive season.

~ Rick Dowling - Senior Football Coach

FOOTBALL & NETBALL PRE-SEASON TRAINING

Senior Football & Netball pre-season training recommenced on Thursday January 28, 2021. The club welcomes & encourages all new, old or aspiring players to join or anyone who just wants to come along, have a run around & a long overdue catch up! U17s are also encouraged to train with the seniors.

VACANT POSITIONS: The club is seeking applications for the following positions:

Netball Co-ordinator | U/17 Netball Coach | U/17 Football Coach

Exciting times for the Club & Community heading into season 2021 with lots going on behind the scenes to make sure it is a very successful year for all involved! Keep an eye out on our social pages for announcements, updates & information leading up to the new season.

If you have any questions, queries or wish to apply for any vacant positions within TDFNC or offer a helping hand, please contact:

TDFNC - trenthamsaints@gmail.com • Cello Matricardi - marcello@pinnaclfresh.com.au Mikaela Fleming - 0417 248 934 • Samantha Whitehouse - sam@westernland.com.au • Josh Murphy - 0429 886 261

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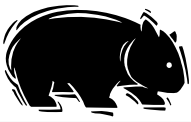
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