

June ~ July 2022 vol 15 ~ issue 15:1



CORONATION NIGHT DANCING QUEENS

EASTER CARNIVAL BACK WITH A BANG



NEWLY MINTED BLACKWOOD ROYALTY - WILMA & DARYL



HAVANA PALAVA WHOOPS IT UP IN THE EASTER CARNIVAL

The Blackwood Times acknowledges the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Owners of the land, waters & forest where we live & work. We pay deep respect to Elders past, present & emerging.



EDITOR'S THOUGHTS...

Hi Blackwoodians,
What a busy couple of months it has been. Firstly, it is timely to congratulate Sam Rae, our newly-elected member of Federal Parliament. It would be great if we get to hear from you in our next edition, Sam.

I would also like to say a HUGE thank you to Jinny and Brendan for the countless hours of work they have put in to keep The Blackwood Times running for us all for so many years. You will remember in the last edition that Jinny explained that they are stepping away from the paper and are handing over to a new team of volunteers. The knowledge and support they are so generously providing to us newbies is incredible and will ensure that we will have half an idea of what we are doing by the time they finish up all together at the end of the year. As part of this change there is no longer a single editor, but instead the team will be working together to fulfil all relevant duties. You will get to know the various new players as we take it in turns writing something for the "editors thoughts....."

In this edition we are very excited about celebrating the return of events to our lives and to our fantastic little town. The Easter Carnival was an incredible success with some amazing photos capturing the fun. A shout out must also go to Deidre for organising an hugely successful Biggest Morning Tea, raising much needed funds to support people living with cancer.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact us with anything you may like to contribute at the team@theblackwoodtimes.com.au email address. We would love to hear your ideas!

~ Kylie Richardson, Co-ordinator



BLACKWOOD BIGGEST MORNING TEA

I doubt there would be a single community member who has not been touched by the ugly fingers of cancer.

This year Blackwoodian Deirdre Cronin, took it on herself to host Blackwoods Biggest Morning Tea, with proceeds going to the Cancer Council. Blackwood loves a get-together so she wasn't short of willing folk to lend a hand with the organization & set up. Door prizes & donations to be auctioned were sought. The afternoon before the event I swear I could smell the delights being baked in kitchens around the village.

No need to say a lot about the day, let the photos tell the story. About 60 people attended & the best news was that almost \$2k was raised. Amazing for our wee community of 300ish.

Well done everyone who came along or contributed in any way. See you next year.

~ Jinny Coyle



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HOW'S THE WEATHER BEEN?

MONTH/ YEAR	Rainfall (mm)	Rainfall historical average (mm)	Temp monthly min (deg C)	Temp monthly max (deg C)	Temp average daily max (deg C)	Temp average daily min (deg C)	Temp average for month (deg C)
Mar'22	82.6	56.3	4.3	31.6	21.7	9.3	14.5
Apr'22	96.6	71.8	1.1	23.4	16.9	7.2	11.5

Very lucky with the Easter weather as a couple of days later the weather turned pear-shaped!

~ Don Owen

EARLY HISTORY OF THE BLACKWOOD SPORTS GROUND

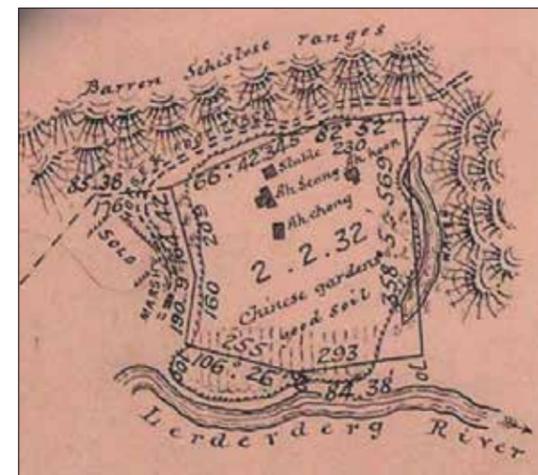
Compiled by Margot Hitchcock, Historian for the Blackwood & District Historical Society, May 2022.

As can be seen at the back of the Blackwood cemetery there are buried in 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.

The shops and stores in Blackwood in 1868 consisted of: 4 Chinese stores, 2 opium shops, 2 cook-shops, 1 barber's shop, 1 butcher's shop and 6 gambling houses.

A report entitled 'Short History of the Blackwood Goldfields' mentions; "On their first arrival the Chinese pegged the main creek (Lerderberg River in Blackwood) for many miles and 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 and 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 and faced the creek properly. Many Chinese miners made as much as a £1,000, a sum which would be considered a fortune in their native land, whither 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".

The Chinese had two known camps at Blackwood, the main one being at Golden Point which covered about an acre of ground, where they had a Joss House, shops, stores, gambling houses and a Masonic Lodge. They also had a Mission House which was built near where the little township of Golden Point is today. The Joss House was said to have been located on a small hill some distance behind where the big rock is at the swimming hole which was named Sebastopol. If one walks in the bush there you can see the small hill with the whole surrounding area has been removed by the Chinese by 'paddocking'. Evidence of their workings can still be seen where they used the system of 'paddocking' where large sections of land has all been moved and



washed, making the area look like piles of loose rocks and stones.

The other known place where the Chinese lived was on the left hand side of the road to the Sports Ground - unfortunately this has now been cleared for a car park..! This area was originally called Ballan Flat and is near where the first gold was found at Blackwood. Evidence of this was some remains of walls where their houses once stood. Before the area was cleared for a car park, members of the Blackwood and District Historical Society had a hunt around with a metal detector and they found a Chinese snuff box and cooking utensils, along with Chinese pottery and several Chinese coins. The area where the Blackwood Sports Ground now stands was originally the Chinese market gardens, and in 1889 they sold the land to the Blackwood Cricket Club, and this land became a recreation reserve. Here Blackwood had their own Cricket and Football teams & a tennis court was in the far left corner. Cricket is still played there today.

Plan of Chinese Market Garden, Blackwood 1882. Source Land file, Public Records Office, Victoria, VPRS 440-266.

From research done by Dr. David Rowe in his 'Forest, Farmland & Gold' a draft document of the Thematic Environmental History of the Western Region of the Moorabool Shire.'

By 1870 the number of Chinese had dwindled and the ones who remained were poor as they were not finding much gold, and too poor to move somewhere else or return back to China.

The only known photo of a group of Chinese in Blackwood was of six Chinese men at the Blackwood Sports Ground ready for a foot race, taken in 1900 at a Sports Day.

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

The only known photo of a group of Chinese in Blackwood was of six Chinese men at the Blackwood Sports Ground ready for a foot race, taken at a Sports Day in 1900. Race was 75 yards & every year for a bag of rice.

Photo courtesy of Seaborn family of Anderson house Barrys Reef and the B.D.H.S.

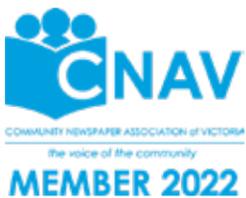


Information noted on back of same photo courtesy of the late Les Armstrong - Names of Chinese left to right – Jack Sugar, Long Ah Toy, Jimmy Ah Foo, Ah Wah, Ah Toy, Happy Jack.

Ah Quay (partly seen right in a suit and top hat) was King of Golden Point Camp.

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

~ © Margot F Hitchcock.



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 & standing of community newspapers, to enable them to fully realise their vital role in communities.

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	July 15	
Regular contributors, features & items of interest, community groups & clubs	July 15	
Display ad artwork		July 20
Late breaking news		July 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.

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• 120TH BLACKWOOD WOODCHOP & EASTER CARNIVAL •



2 WORLD WARS, 2 GLOBAL PANDEMICS & IT'S STILL GOING STRONG

If anyone had doubts (there were many of us) that the Easter Carnival would ever return, this 120th anniversary has proven us wrong; and reminded us just how serious this little town is about the Saturday.



Locals fronted up en masse to set up and support the day, and to get in there and play! Over 4000 friends, family and randoms came (probably a record number). Back in 1879, locals gathered at Easter to sport about all day (shooting, rock drilling and that new-fangled bicycle-racing) then grab a dance band and party til dawn.

For the last 70 years the axemen have pulled the crowds, while the crowds have busied themselves throwing gumboots and eggs, running races, engaging in huge tug-o-wars and panning for gold and gems.



This year all that activity took place to the sounds of the many musicians who call Blackwood home. If the combination of axes and banjos doesn't get your heart racing, let me know what will. The bands played on into the night and we partied like it was 1879.

A bleary-eyed crew of volunteers turned up next morning to pack up and clean up, grab an egg'n'bacon roll, swap stories of the Saturday and argue about the silly string; to pick it up or let it rot. One month later, it has rot.

The planning team (Blackwood Progress Association) and event manager, Alice Pollard, thank all our volunteers as well as The Ones



Who Know- previous organisers of the Easter Carnival who showed these novices the way.

So. Who's up for next year? Word has it that there'll be Swedish Axe Throwing and Caber Tossing. Cool.

The last 2 years of planning and subsequent cancelling of the Carnival had taken a toll on our finances and skill base. We'd like to thank again Andy Waugh and his team from Moorabool's Economic Development department for helping us to secure the \$30K grant from Regional Development Victoria to restart this iconic event.

It was a hoot. See you all next year.

~ Brendan Hehir
Pres. Blackwood Progress Assn.



THE GUMBOOT THROW

The day before the Easter Carnival I was chatting with Brendan when he casually asked if I could look after the gumboot throwing competition the following day. "Sure" I said, having absolutely no idea what that might involve. I had never thrown a gumboot before and had barely even worn them. What Brendon couldn't have known, however, was my long family history involving the humble gumboot.

On the January 13, 1847 my (Great x 4 Grandfather), John Richardson, made what I consider a very fortunate error of judgement. A constable by the name of Owen Crowhurst saw John walking away from him quickly with a bundle under his arm. The constable stopped him and took the bundle which he found to contain "two new pairs of Wellington boots" which were said to be worth 2 pound. The court system worked a little quicker back then and on the February 24, 1847 John fronted up to Lewes, East Sussex, to learn his fate. It turned out that not only was great, great, great grandfather John a terrible liar (he had them given to him by a person he knew nothing about) but he also had form. In 1845 he had been convicted of stealing 120 whips. John was found guilty of the gumboot theft and was sentenced to 7 years transportation.

Back to present day Blackwood, and the madness that was the gumboot throwing competition. Literally hundreds of people lined up to throw a boot on the day with competitors from 18 months old to 80+ years of age. Some were beginners, in it just for the novelty. Some were competing against friends and family with the shortest throw being responsible for the next shout. Some were out to beat their own previous personal bests. My favorites were the super confident ones that gave me the "I've got this" look as I passed them the boot and then said "It's harder than it looks" after their attempt!

The boots were thrown literally hundreds of times on the day, and much thanks must go to my very good humored partner, Michael,

who spent a couple of solid hours collecting them and launching them back for the next contender. There were a hand full of out-of-bounds-near-misses but no injuries were reported. The competition was divided into adult and child categories with joint winners in the adult section. Congratulations to Peter and David for both throwing further than the marked area of 30 metres. An even bigger congratulations to Fergus who not only had the furthest throw in the kids section, but also threw further than the winning adults. We definitely need to expand the gumboot throwing zone next year!

To help inspire you all to get practicing, gumboot throwing has become an increasingly popular sport around the globe. An International Boot Throwing Association has its base in Finland but it is Thaihope in New Zealand that is known as the gumboot capital of the world. After all, where else has an annual gumboot day each year, held the Tuesday after Easter? It is even home of the giant gumboot. Despite this, Finland still has bragging rights when it comes to gumboot throwing records. The men's record of 63.98 metres and the women's record of 40.87 are currently both held by Finns. Come on Blackwoodians, we can beat this next year!!

~ Kylie Richardson



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LAKSA NIGHT FUNDRAISER FOR RECONCILIATION WEEK

In typical Blackwood style, the night of Friday, May 6 was a chilly and wet one. Bellies and hearts were warm however, down at "Karen's Kitchen;" at a Laksa night to raise funds for Reconciliation Week activities in Blackwood. The turn-out was incredible and feedback from the night was extremely positive.

The organisers would like to thank Karen for her generosity in offering her van for the night, as well as her invaluable expertise when it came to catering for such a large number of people. Huge thanks to Bobby for the hours that were poured into the delicious Laksa and Mel for her incredible Malaysian desserts. Cat, Clint and an assortment of Blackwood talent provided a beautiful soundtrack for the evening, and it was lovely to see people stay long after the Laksa to warm by the fires and enjoy the atmosphere. Alice weaved her magic with the lighting and Lucas took some wonderful snaps that really captured the feel of the evening. Thanks also to all who came down to support the event. Your enthusiasm and patience with the long lines was extremely appreciated. It was lovely to connect with you all.



This fundraiser was the result of conversations around how we acknowledge the traditional owners of the land that we all live on and love, the Wurundjeri people. An indigenous flag will be raised in the town square on Friday, May 27 at 5pm, to mark the beginning of Reconciliation Week, with other activities to follow (stay tuned to the Facebook Community Noticeboard for more information). Reconciliation Week seemed the perfect time to raise the flag in town; as we reflect on our shared history, cultures and achievements, and explore how we can work together to achieve reconciliation in Australia. All are welcome and we look forward to collaborating with anyone interested in planning future events and activities around acknowledgement and respect of our First Nations people.

Contact: thewombats3458@gmail.com

~ Mel, Anna, Caitlin, Michelle, Alice, Karen and Cat (The Reconciliation Wombats)

DJA DJA WURRUNG TO WORK WITH VICFORESTS TO RESTORE COUNTRY

The Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, trading as DJAARA, is partnering with VicForests to assist in restoring Country in the Wombat Forest following the June 2021 storms.

Under the first agreement of this kind, VicForests will work with DJAARA to restore Country significantly damaged by storm in 2021.

In June 2021, a significant storm caused widespread damage across large areas of Victoria, impacting around 1.97 million hectares of public land, across 34 local government areas, with even more damage done after further storms on October 29.

One area that was severely impacted was the Wombat State Forest and surrounding areas west of Melbourne.

VicForests will assist with recovery works to restore Country in disturbed areas of the forest and contribute to reducing fuel loads and reducing the fire risk to communities.

"Our goal is to ensure that we continue to care for Country. As Traditional Owners we have the responsibility to conduct ourselves respectfully when interacting with the landscape, the animals, and its ecologies after it has been impacted by severe weather. This guarantees a healthy relationship for both Djaara (People) and Djandak (Country) when managing and healing Country," said Dja Dja Wurrung Group CEO Rodney Carter.

VicForests CEO Monique Dawson said:

"We are proud to support the Dja Dja Wurrung as the Traditional Land Owners to restore their Country to health," Ms Dawson said.

"VicForests is committed to working with all Traditional Land Owners to provide technical skills and equipment to assist in Caring for Country."

"To facilitate these operations, the approved Forest Recovery Timber Utilisation Plan (TUP), identifies areas where VicForests will facilitate forest recovery operations in the Wombat State forest.

"Operations conducted under this TUP are limited to windthrown trees from the storm events, other than for hazardous trees felled for safety reasons.

"These operations have commenced this week.

"Managing and recovering fallen trees and debris following the storms is a sensitive operation requiring specialised planning and expertise. VicForests has been engaged to assist with this important work as forest management experts. We deliver that expertise through our highly trained and skilled planners, biodiversity experts, foresters, and contractors and through a developing partnership with the Traditional Owners that minimises risk to cultural heritage and respects their knowledge.

"The operation will treat windthrown debris, contributing to reducing fire risk and assisting in forest regeneration. As part of those works, timber that can be utilised will be removed to provide timber to mills and firewood for community use. Our teams have also been hard at work assessing the damage to prioritise where works are needed most – and when."

End note:

These changes relate specifically to Vic Forest's forest recovery program in these State forests and are separate to the current consultation on the proposed changes to the Timber Utilisation Plan (TUP) and the Timber Release Plan (TRP) which are open until April 12, 2022.

WOMBAT FORESTCARE

In the wake of the devastating June storm, there was concern in the community that the fallen trees represented a greatly increased bush fire risk. Whether the risk is as great as the alarmists make out is debatable. The risk needs to be scientifically calculated.

Locally, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) are commencing a program to deal with the storm debris that poses a risk to community members seeking to use roads in event of a fire and to enable DELWP staff to respond effectively to fires that may occur. DELWP have engaged VicForests to remove the larger fallen timber within 2 tree lengths either side of affected roads and tracks. DELWP will then manage the smaller debris, including allowing local firewood collection.



Wombat Forestcare have been in discussion with DELWP for some time regarding this project and although we have concerns about the environmental impacts of machinery and log landings, we understand the need for this project.

It was then a complete shock to find that VicForests, without any consultation, had started a massive salvage operation on Babbington Hill, Lyonville. This is completely separate from the DELWP project. An area of over two acres has been cleared of all trees and vegetation to establish a log landing and machinery depot. Muddy tracks have been carved through the coupe, and there is substantial damage and compaction by large machines (weighing between 20 and 30 tonnes) to the existing vegetation. Large heaps of debris and bark have been generated throughout the area. Work has been carried out illegally within a protected area near a Wedge-tailed Eagle's nest

Large habitat trees, that survived the storm, have been weakened by root damage from abutting track works. These trees provide hollows for the Greater Gliders that inhabit the coupe and are now likely to fall in strong winds.

Although there are blackberries along the Loddon River, Babbington Hill was relatively weed free. To quote Jeremy Neal, Wombat Native Plants "As many land managers know, disturbed soils are quickly recolonised by opportunistic species. Without doubt, we will witness an expansion in many weed species within the forest after these works are done. Blackberry, Sweet Vernal Grass, English Ivy, English Holly, Spear Thistle and the like will enter these environments on wind and wing and will rapidly establish on disturbed soils. Increased light levels, high annual rainfall, and a lack of competition from understorey (which is being stripped), will allow these species to spread rapidly and take hold for the long term."

The larger logs that are being removed do not present a major fire risk and would have become important habitat for mosses, lichens and fungi as well as insects and small mammals and lizards. They are an

important contributor to the food chain that supports life in the forest.

The over-logging of the Wombat Forest from the 1970s onwards produced more than 13,000 hectares of thick regrowth, which is a serious fire hazard, yet no management has been undertaken by the department to reduce this. Instead we are seeing a destructive grab for a resource. If the government were serious about protecting communities from fire they would have addressed this risk years ago.

Without any consultation, VicForests have added 175 coupes to a new Timber Utilisation Plan for the Wombat and Cobaw State Forests, approximately 80 of which are in the promised Wombat-Lerderderg National Park and many encompass Special Protection Zones. We have to ask how this could happen in a forest that has the ecological values that deem it worthy of national and regional park status. We need to carefully manage the forest, not use it as resource to be plundered, as we have in the past.

Salvage works on another 2 coupes have commenced on Wombat Creek Road. Similarly the log landing is large and the machinery huge.

On June 24 the Victorian Government tabled their response to the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's Central West investigation report. Three new National Parks were to be created including the Wombat-Lerderderg National Park. Since that date the government has failed to legislate the promised Wombat-Lerderderg National Park.

In their response to the parliament, the Victorian Government stated that the Wombat-Lerderderg National Park would be used in accordance with the general recommendations for national parks including to "permanently protect the natural environment and natural biodiversity along with underlying ecological structure and supporting environmental processes."

It seems inconceivable, that after recognizing the conservation values of the Wombat, that the government would allow such an environmentally damaging operation.

Members and supporters of Wombat Forestcare campaigned long and hard for the forest's protection from logging and for its protection with park status and are now very distressed and angry to see this environmental destruction.

Wombat Forestcare is calling on the Andrews government to call an immediate halt to this salvage operation and speedily legislate the Wombat-Lerderderg National Park.

~ Gayle Osborne, Convenor



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• COMMUNITY GROUP & CLUB UPDATES • COMMUNITY GROUP & CLUB UPDATES •

BLACKWOOD CFA

WINTER IS GETTING CLOSER

As the cold weather approaches and we start to light our fires again, it is worth getting the chimney and flue inspected and cleaned to remove the creosote that builds up through the use of the fire place. Use the internet to find a business that cleans and inspects chimneys. Creosote builds up in flues and may result in chimney fires. Trentham Fire Brigade have attended a number of chimney fires so far this autumn. Please ensure your flue is clear of creosote and your fire is breathing correctly. For more information on creosote, check the following link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creosote>.

Small electric heaters should be checked before you turn them on for any build up of dust in the vents. Many units these days have a number of safety features built-in such as switches on the base of column types that shut off the power should they fall over. Others have thermal cutoff devices that shut the unit down if the vents get blocked. Consider these types of features when you are purchasing the smaller electric heaters.

Portable electric heaters are high-wattage appliances that have the potential to ignite nearby combustible materials like curtains, beds, sofas, paper, clothing, and flammable liquids. If ignition results from a heater left on and unattended, a major fire could result. Some more reading can be found here: https://www.housing.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/202005/1905344_Home%20heating%20safety%20for%20public%20housing%20tenants%20A4%20factsheet%20layout%20WEB.pdf and here: <https://esv.vic.gov.au/>

Gas heaters should be inspected by a licensed and qualified plumber for continued safe operation. Gas heaters produce carbon monoxide gas which is odourless & colourless & may cause death in large quantities. Check the EnergySafe site here for more details: https://esv.vic.gov.au/campaigns/carbon-monoxide/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw1ZeUBhDyARIsAOzAqQlp4ArFk7T7_nJosMXmwC_Ggq9uY93aaNqc68OLnWrHnfxb-mguO44aAtQOEALw_wcB

And lastly on home heating related topics – CANDLES, Great for creating ambience as well as for filling the house with wonderful aromas but if left unattended or near curtains, drapes or anything combustible they can be an ignition point causing a major fire, so please use them with caution.

On to other brigade news – recently we had our brigade elections and the following were voted in to their respective positions: Ross Hall – Captain; Tom Pywell – First Lieutenant; Garry Amy – Second Lieutenant; Russell Schoenfish – Third Lieutenant & Secretary/Treasurer; Mark Purchase – Fourth Lieutenant & Karl Church – Communications & Community Safety – congratulations to all. As a follow up to the storms we had last year and the outages of power and phone/internet Blackwood endured the brigade has been in talks with Telstra since last year's June storm in an effort to find a solution to the the telephone exchange power issue. We think that our fire station generator has enough capacity to run the telephone exchange during a prolonged power outage. Telstra have been working on a prototype automatic switching mechanism which would allow non-Telstra personnel to swap the exchange over from battery power to generator power. Trentham Fire Brigade are also looking at the same system to power their exchange. We have a meeting with Telstra representatives at the Blackwood exchange on May 24, where we hope to get more details. After a quiet fire season, we have had an uneventful end of fire restrictions too. Plenty of warm weather & still days gave us numerous opportunities for safe burn offs.

THE FIRST PRIORITY IS YOUR SAFETY

Always ring 000 in the case of any emergency. If you have and fire and do manage to put it out, it is better to have us responding than to wait until it is too late. For more information contact the station on 53686526 on Sunday mornings over the summer period and the first Sunday of every month during the rest of the year, as we are there

for training and equipment checks. Never let complacency set in and always be prepared, no matter what the season. 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, Community Safety Liaison Officer, Blackwood Fire Brigade

BLACKWOOD DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Firstly , a big, big thank you to the Easter Carnival committee and all involved .

You pulled off such a large undertaking brilliantly. I feel certain the president of the IOC would anoint it "best carnival ever !"

How lucky were we with the weather ? A week earlier and the entire exercise would have had a very different outcome. After the last couple of years we were dure for some good fortune , and we certainly received it.

Our little hot dog stand did a roaring trade and had its best financial outcome ever ! For a few hours we struggled to whack meat into rolls quickly enough – it was mad !!

A special thanks to Mark , Elizabeth , Gen , Valissa . Layla and Ken for volunteering their time. Layla must surely become involved in business later in life , she was relieving the punters of their hard earned before they knew it , you go girl !

For next year we hope to resurrect our popular Bingo night (keep your greasy mitts off it, Senior Cits!) We were a little gun shy in running it this year due to the C word.

We continue to hold our monthly meetings on the first Saturday of the month, 10am sharp at the Police stables. Once again, new members are more than welcome to join our fascinating pastime.

~ Ray Castellin

CEMETERY UPDATE

The trust have recently felled a couple of troublesome trees that have been responsible for incursion into occupied plots , thanks Scott.

Another few have been uplifted to make clearance for the public and machinery to pass safely underneath them.

We are rapidly running out of spaces in the popular Gazebo area, we are currently in the process of ascertaining the best way of increasing their number.

A couple of other worthwhile projects have stalled a little for want of trades to quote the work. Most are too busy or downright apathetic towards it .

The wheel will turn one day and they will appreciate the business!

~ Ray Castellin

BLACKWOOD MOTORCYCLE CLUB

Only activity for the Blackwood Motorcycle Club was on the weekend of March 28, when a few of us rode over for a 3 day ride visiting Bright, Omeo & Mitta Mitta. Due to winter coming on faster than expected, we have not been able to pick a good Sunday for a day ride. Bikes are staying safe out of the cold and looking for that perfect day for a ride. Picture of a couple of us at the Blue Duck Inn after Omeo.



~ Brett Bond

BLACKWOOD CRICKET CLUB

The award winners for the 21/22 season.

The Wally Sweet memorial (best player) - Luke Whitehouse also best batting average.

The Ron Salmon trophy (highest score) with 192 Luke Whitehouse.

Ray Meade memorial - James Cann.

Bert Suturs award. Jodie Sanders.

Jack Stringer trophy for best bowling with 6/17 - Travis Smithard.

John Davies memorial (for under 21) - Kayde O'Brien.

Matt O'Brien won the best bowling averages.

We will be starting a junior cricket (Milo) next season, but most likely for home games to start with. More info later in the year.

We would also like to thank our sponsors Jindurup, The Post Office coffee shop & store, Western Land Services, NGV Heavy Equipment Services, Greendale Country Pub & Mark Keogh Transport.

~ Brian Suturs

LANDCARE NEWS

We have been busy tackling the weeds in the Mineral Springs Reserve, including along the road, the path, the park bank and along the riverbank. Approximately 80 person hours so far along with about 25 trailer loads of weeds. Troy's provision of morning teas has been very welcome! We were also excited to see evidence of biocontrol agents at work on the gorse and english broom (mites munching on the plants). The grounds of St Martins Chapel have also had the Landcare touch with the removal of remaining hollies (mainly) around the back (20 person hours here!).

The organisers of the Easter Woodchop and Carnival are to be congratulated on a fabulous event. Landcare took part in the parade, taking out the creative float prize involving Wilbur the Weed (metal sculpture) and an awesome troupe of "weeders" in their "uniforms".

We also held an interactive display of waterbugs (from the river) and weeds as well as give-away native plants for the kids and their gardens.

Plans for the near future include holding some informative workshops on the topic of Gardens for Wildlife, how to increase the wildlife friendliness of your garden.

Drop us an email if you want more info - 3458landcare@gmail.com

"Ultra-Weed-a-thon" June 1, Radiata Pine & June 8, Spanish Heath

~ On Behalf of Landcare

CERT - 20 YEARS YOUNG

In 2002, Blackwood and District's first community Emergency Response Team was set up.

This December we will be celebrating 20 years of our Community Team supporting our Community through provision of Emergency Medical Response. (More on our anniversary celebrations later)

A lot has changed in the last 20 years - and will in the next 20 for sure! What hasn't changed is that Blackwood and its surrounding communities are geographically distant to their closest Ambulance Stations, which are in Ballan & Daylesford. These stations, in turn, service vast geographical areas, with dispersed populations.

All of this means that communities like ours rely on locals to be

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that first point of call in a medical emergency – for injuries, accidents, illness requiring Ambulance assistance.

It is one of the challenges and joys of living in a regional area that we rely on each other to provide the supports and services we need as there is not the same level of infrastructure and delivery as exists in more populated areas. We support each other in lots of practical and tangible ways – be it volunteering through formal means such as CERT or CFA, putting out this Community newsletter, caring for our environment or informally being there for each other.



NEW TEAM MEMBERS WANTED and NEEDED:

After changes and challenges over the first years of Covid, we ask new members of the Community to come forward and join CERT so that we can continue our tradition of 20 years of service.

We have a great and committed Team. Where we need assistance is in having more full-time locals join so CERT can provide full time 24/7 coverage and respond to all the local medical emergencies referred by 000. (Currently over half of our Team do not live in the area full-time. Some even come to the area just to volunteer to support the Community – we need more " local" locals to set us up for the next few years as our Community numbers grow).

If you:

- Live and/or work in Blackwood/Dales Creek/Greendale/Newbury and surrounding areas.
- Love the challenge of learning – You receive free training in Cert II Emergency Medical Services
- Want to be part of something bigger (Ambulance Victoria) whilst helping out locally
- Want to be equipped with skills and experience helping you, your family and neighbours
- Want to make strong connections with the Community through this Team effort

Then joining CERT may be the local volunteering opportunity for you.

20 YEAR CELEBRATIONS:

As above, this is our 20th year of operation. We would love to hear from any past Members of the Team or the Committee of Management as we look to mark this milestone in our Community.

FUTURE HOME:

We also hope as part of that 20th anniversary celebration to see building works start on our long awaited permanent home – this is something that we have been working toward for years (20 years) & thanks to the efforts of dedicated Community Members in researching, planning, lobbying and fund-raising, we are on the verge of making this dream a reality. More on this next time!

CONTACTS:

Please forward your enquiries about joining CERT or information about past Members/events to either Jan (0409 857180) or Leonie (043879707).

~ Co-Team Leader

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• FLETCHERS ADVENTURES •

Hello to all my friends in Blackwood.

It has been a very busy time for Joanie and Myself over the last 10 weeks as being a father is a very demanding job and even harder for Joanie. She did not leave the side of the 5 puppies for a long time but we are now enjoying them running outside with us and exploring the property with us.

They love it around the dam and eating and chewing on mum's plant which she goes crook at all the time at them. But mum loves cuddling them all and they are very cute and cuddly. So our lives have been very busy but happy and we are pleased to say we are keeping the little boy who will make our family of three.



The weather is beginning to cool down a lot and Joanie and I had our haircut yesterday so I'm feeling much colder today with not much hair. I sure hope your mums and dads have your fire going as I sit as close as possible to ours. It's hard to move me really because it is so warm. I haven't been out much lately in

the car with looking after puppies and all but I plan to catch up with my friends in Blackwood as soon as I can. So I say adios to you all and see you in the soup so we can have a pea together!

~ Papa Fletcher

WOMBAT BOOKCLUB

Hello again from Wombat Book Club, it's a nice chance to bask in the still warm Autumn sunshine, well, in between the rain that is. Although, we are now losing the last of our beautiful Autumn weather, to trade for curling up next to the fire with a good read. Here at bookclub, we read a book a month, then meet the third Sunday in each month. Times and venue are subject to change. Mostly of late, this venue seems to be at the Garden of St Erth, a lovely relaxing setting to discuss the novel we have done and socialise over a glass of wine. Ideal. If you would like information about our lovely, informal gathering please contact Rose at rcarrington1@hotmail.com

The last two books we enjoyed were 'The Good Wife of Bath' by Katren Brooks, and 'Not My Father's Son, by Allan Cummings.

THE GOOD WIFE OF BATH (A mostly true story)

Sandy: A great story about the protagonist Elanor Comfed. The story is set in England back in the 1300's. This story is told with humour from Elanor's point of view with a mix of the disempowerment of women to historical events at the time. She is a strong, resilient woman whom after several marriages and business attempts, reverts to the woman's strongest attributes. In an age-old profession, she was more prosperous and gave more power to women than other opportunities we all had...back in the day.

4.5 Wombies

Jane: A great read. Eleanor the central character is a very strong and capable woman who has a different role in each of her 5 marriages. Although set in England in the 14th Century there are continual references to how when women marry, they had absolutely no rights and even whatever wealth they brought to the marriage became the husbands' property.

4 Wombies

Sandy: Not My Father's, son is a memoir written about Alan Cummings upbringing. He is a well-known actor who tells his story - who do you think you are, in a memoir.

His father is brutal in the treatment of both of his son's, in particular to Alan. The father is convinced Alan is not his biological son and he feels trapped in a relationship for the sake of the 'boy's' and takes it out on his sons. Unfortunately, this is not an isolated story, and content of this book, some readers may find unsettling. However, when Alan gets older, he confers with his older brother to have DNA test done. No spoilers here, one might just have to read his story if this topic piques interest.

3 Wombies

• TIPPLE TIME •

Set in the beautiful rolling Pentland Hills at Myrniong sits the 40 year old St Annes Winery. This family-owned jewel produces a large range of wines that are grown under sustainable operating procedures. The McLean family let the sheep do the mowing and weeding, have an onsite water recycling plant and practice organic cultivation techniques which all bodes well for the future of our environment.

The Family has set up satellite operations in Echuca, Moama, Lorne and Bendigo as well as exporting wines all over the world. There is a wine for every taste with varieties such as Pinot Gris, Sauvignon Blanc, Moscato, Shiraz and many more on offering.

St Anne's Magenta

One of the few Wineries that offer a sweeter style red and this is a bit of an institution! Serve it chilled and you get a full flavoured, fresh red wine which exhibits a luscious sweetness on the palate and yet well balanced with spicy fruit characteristics. Try it with a platter of your fav cheeses.

St Anne's Heathcote Shiraz 2018

Take a big sniff of this darkly coloured Shiraz and you will get wonderful aromas of spice & plum as well as hints of oak. It is a beautifully rich wine with silky tannins, leaving a long lingering mouth full of blackberry and a little bit of pepper. Have it with anything slow cooked or just by the fire, it is a beauty!

~ CHEERS Michael

• WHOSE TATT'S THAT? •



Butterflies have been a popular tattoo design for many years and have many, often very personal, meanings. It is often thought that butterflies symbolize hope and rebirth. They are also a particularly feminine symbol that are known to represent beauty and freedom. Like most insects, they are a reminder that time is precious, and they are also a strong symbol of transformation. For this Blackwood local the butterfly tattoo has a very close family connection and also commemorates a special moment in time.

~ Lynn Brooke

BLACKWOOD, BOCCÉ & BAXTER

Once upon a time in the lovely town of Blackwood, set in the Central Highlands of Victoria, a group of well respected locals gather most Sunday morning's to play the dignified game of Bocce at the Recreation Oval. The players vary, but are mainly comprised of loyal and devoted mature Blackwoodians, who brave the many seasons of Blackwood's weather. Allow me to set the scene with the key character's involved - Dusan, Stephanie, John, Jane, Michael, Susan and young Jim. And then there is Baxter. A pintsize, feisty, cheeky and energetic 6 year old miniature Fox Terrier, belonging to Jane, who believes he is one of the team. Visualize the long pitch - team player's holding either gold or silver Bocce balls ready to toss. Then there is Baxter, who also joins in the fun with his own special ball - covered in dog saliva, ground clippings and mud, and small enough to fit into the mouth of one determined furry player. As each human player stands at the end of the pitch, focused on being able to throw the Bocce Ball closer to the Jack than their opponent, Baxter is also ready with his ball. Dangerously winding between legs, dropping his own ball and staring at it, primed with the vital energy required to make his own score.....As long as someone would throw the blasted thing!! Great patience is required in getting the humans to pay attention to Baxter's great need to play Baxter's Bocce. But finally - yes - his ball is thrown away from the pitch. Watch out!!! What fun to chase my own Bocce Ball, retrieve it and bring it back to start again with another human player. This scenario is played out over and over again for the full hour these Blackwoodians play, until it is time to go home. Great vigilance is required by all team member's to make sure no humans are injured by the interference of Baxter's Bocce. But Sunday games would not be the same without him. Join if you would like at 10:00 on Sunday mornings, but remember there will always be Baxter!

~ Noelle Shader

• LETTER TO THE EDITOR •

The clean up and salvage of fallen trees in the Wombat State Forest following the June 2021 cyclonic storm event has finally begun in one of the hardest hit areas near Lyonville. Harvest and haulage contractors have been doing an impressive job which will enhance forest safety, amenity and access for a future National Park and importantly reduce fire hazards near the township prior to next fire season.

It's sad and hard to fathom why some people would see the need to protest about these restorative works finally being undertaken as they did on Good Friday. The timber is also being utilised at a time when there is a real shortage of this valuable resource and all hollow and moss covered logs are retained for ground habitat along with others to meet Ecological Vegetation Class benchmarks.

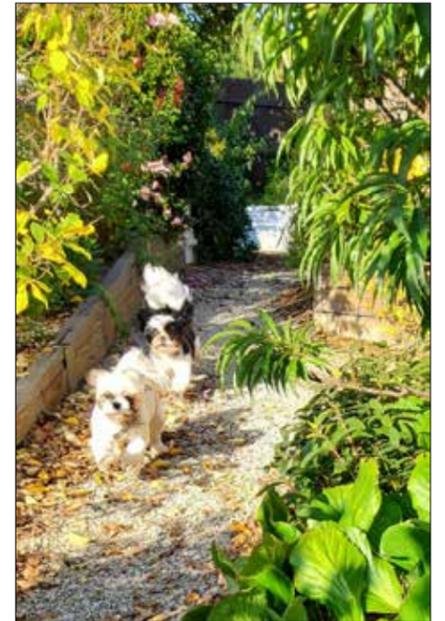
~ Gary McIntosh, Retired Forestry & Landcare Consultant, Bullarto

NEWBIE BLACKWOODIANS

Hello Blackwood

It's Lucy and Rocky, the coolest Shih Tzus in the cosmos (if we do say so ourselves). We thought we'd take a little time to introduce ourselves, and our pet humans Scott and Kath, and tell you how happy we are to have joined this lovely community. We've moved into what was Brenda's gorgeous little house, Woodbine Cottage (now Shih Tzu Manor if we get our way). You may have seen us walking around with Kath. We're quite the circus as we walk her with our husky pack member, Meeka. But we've almost got Kath trained and she's starting to walk nicely on the leash. We spent the first year of our lives in Newport and thought things were pretty cool. We lived near the Newport Lakes dog park and spent a bit of time at the beach. But we had no idea how much better they were going to get! A bit about our humans so that you know them if they get out without us and can let us know. Scott has been a bit busy interstate so hasn't been around much, it's likely that a lot of people haven't seen him yet. But he does exist! We've put him on notice and he is

starting to settle in and really enjoying being in this beautiful area. You'll get to know him pretty quick. He's really looking forward to meeting you all and getting out more on his motorbike to relax. Kath has a scooter but doesn't quite cut it as a touring buddy so we reckon he'd be up for a ride with other people that are interested sometimes (when we say it's OK). A lot more of you have met Kath, we're sick of her stopping to talk when there are great things to sniff. She is loving walking around the area which is good for us and for her. She says that everybody she's met is lovely and she's really feeling welcome and can't believe her luck to have landed in such a lovely spot. She's a bit sorry that she hasn't gotten involved in things but we're thinking of giving her some time out soon once she's finished unpacking the boxes. It's not been easy for us supervising them fitting everything into our little house and there's still overflow but we're getting there. Their kids have grown up but the grandkids visit and are SO much fun', so much to do! Thank you for making us all feel so welcome, we're so pleased to be here. We can't believe that we're still so close to the city if we need it but in such a wonderful place. It's a different world. And Wombats, have you seen those things? So cool! We hope that our humans don't get out and cause trouble but if they do you'll know where they belong!



~ Kathleen Molloy

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• MEDIA RELEASE •

Mary-Anne Thomas MP
LABOR MEMBER FOR MACEDON



**BUILDING CONNECTIONS
WITH NEW MEN'S SHEDS GRANTS**

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting wellbeing in communities across the state with further funding to establish, expand or improve men's sheds. Today member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas announced applications have opened for grants through the \$1 million men's sheds program. Men's sheds provide a place for people to get together, work on common projects and contribute to their community. In the 2022-23 grant round, men's shed groups can again apply for a grant of up to \$80,000 for the construction of a new shed or the extension or refurbishment of an existing shed. There are currently more than 360 communities with men's sheds throughout Victoria. For information about the 2022-23 Men's Shed Funding Program and how to apply, visit providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/mens-shed-program Quote attributable to Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas MP "These grants will help men's sheds grow and welcome new members, providing a place for people across our community to connect and supporting their wellbeing." Quotes attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers Anthony Carabine "Men's sheds play such an important role, providing a place to learn new skills and share interests, as well as the opportunity to make friends and contribute to the community." "This investment will support upgrades for men's sheds throughout the state, delivering more opportunities for Victorians to reconnect after a difficult couple of years."

**NEW TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE
RELIABILITY IN HIGH FIRE-
RISK AREAS ROLLED OUT IN
BLACKWOOD**

Electricity distributor Powercor is installing a new generation of smart devices in a trial to improve reliability without compromising our world class safety system which protects communities from powerlines. Crews will install twenty-five new-generation Automatic Circuit Reclosers (ACRs), on powerlines protected by bushfire safety devices known as Rapid Earth Fault Current Limiters (REFCLs), with most set to be installed by the end of the year. The first of these advanced ACRs has been installed at Blackwood, a community supplied by a powerline that experienced a series of outages in March. Our investigations found that the REFCL protecting the line was accurately detecting a defective fuse on a pole and activated as designed to switch off power along the 250km powerline, disrupting supply for more than 2000 customers each time. The new ACRs aim to improve restoration times by narrowing down fault locations, reducing field-crew patrol times, and allowing network controllers to switch the power back on for customers who might be on unaffected parts of the line. Powercor Network Reliability Manager, Daniel Smith, said the trial of the new-generation ACRs was the next phase in the network's operation of the sophisticated REFCL technology. "REFCLs have operated on our network for several years now and are undoubtedly keeping communities safer," Mr Smith said. "This next phase is about optimising our network and introducing new technology, like these new ACRs, to get the best out of the REFCL system and improve the experience for our customers." Mr Smith said Blackwood was a suitable location for the start of the rollout, following earlier pilot sites near Ballarat, the Otways and in other parts of the Central Highlands (including Trentham and Gisborne). "We understand what the Blackwood community and other communities along that line went through in March and we're doing everything we can to improve reliability, while also maintaining safety for the area." Background REFCL devices are being installed in high-fire-risk locations around the Powercor network and act like a giant safety switch, reducing voltage levels within milliseconds to mitigate the risk of fire if a tree strikes powerlines or lines hit the ground. During the declared fire season and, in particular on days of Total Fire Ban, REFCL devices are placed in their most sensitive setting, which can lead to more frequent power outages for customers.

Victorian electricity distribution businesses pioneered the use of REFCL technology for bushfire mitigation several years ago. The technology was implemented to fulfil a key recommendation of the Victorian Bushfire Royal Commission, with networks required to complete a state-wide REFCL rollout by 2023.

Current at May 17, 2022 - https://www.powercor.com.au/media-and-resources/media-centre/powercor-installs-new-technology-to-improve-reliability-in-high-fire-risk-areas?fbclid=IwAR3fD3f-XuYNuJ57Xh_CvzVHYtZBmUrgSSMUG9m1YGYZndJ0ic1_zA9Nqb8

**MY GARDEN & ME WITH
MARGARET, ROBYN & JANE**

Margaret's Garden

How long have you had your garden?

We came and looked at the property 16 years ago and I fell in love with the garden before we even inspected the house. It was a very established garden but very overgrown. There was a lot of cleaning up and general reshaping including spending the first year pulling out thick ivy, which was everywhere. It then took a couple of years to redesign spaces so they worked for us. There were a lot of trees which provided good bones but we did remove a few to create more light.

What do you like most about your garden?

I love the size of the property and the perspective the garden provides. The view from our lounge room is amazing and changes with the seasons. It is principally a European garden with a native backdrop. I am not a good veggie gardener, but I love design and colour. I like to create a garden that flows and makes sense as you walk around. I love creating a colour palette that pops and makes me smile.

What do you like least?

I like all elements of gardening, even the maintenance. Things are always improving and changing. The only thing I hate are the rabbits. Recently rabbits have made it to Blackwood and they eat whatever they can reach, especially new growth which is really annoying. I do cage young trees to keep the kangaroos and wallabies away. The sulphur crested cockatoos are a bit of a pain because they can be destructive, but I believe that we all need to share our gardens with local wildlife. It's all part of supporting a healthy ecosystem.

Do you have any current plans for change?

I am happy with the overall structure of the garden so my plans are to continue to renovate and revitalise sections as needed. When I first planted the garden 16 years ago, I was looking for quick results. Some of the plants I put in, particularly the native shrubs, have become woody and leggy so I have pulled out sections and replanted but I do it gradually so that it isn't so noticeable. I will replace them with more natives, which have a 10-15-year life span. I love seasonal colour in the garden so I plant to ensure that something is always in flower. I mix natives that flower in Autumn/Winter with lots of bulbs and perennials that flower in Spring/Summer. I try to ensure that there is something of interest in every season including foliage. I'm now at the stage where I need to discipline myself to stop buying plants as I am running out of spots to plant them!

Can you give any advice for beginner gardeners?

I learned a lot from studying other established gardens in the area. I went to open gardens and went to local nurseries. I would also recommend finding a good mentor, who knows the region. Gardeners are very generous people and love sharing advice, cuttings and their joy of gardening. Observe what grows and thrives here. Things that grow in Melbourne don't grow in Blackwood and vice versa. I have geraniums that I treat like annuals because they freeze in winter here. I would also say that gardening is trial and error for everybody, and don't worry if you lose a few plants or make some mistakes along the way. It's all part of the process.

What gives you the greatest joy in your garden?

My garden is my creative outlet where I can express creativity in the design and planning. It's my canvas. The garden is a great place for

mindful practice. After a busy, sometimes stressful week of work, I feel myself relax as I immerse myself in gardening. I'm outside, exercising and enjoying myself. What could be better? I will always need a garden in my life!

Robyn's Garden

How long have you had your garden?

I grew up being surrounded by this garden. I have lived in Blackwood for most of my life in this house. I moved to Ballarat to complete my tertiary education and lived in Bacchus Marsh when I was first married. My family and I returned here over 30 years ago.

I remember the garden from when Dad was in charge of the planting. He was a great gardener. Vegetables, flowers, shrubs, trees... he grew them all. He was great mates with Dennis Norgate who owned the nursery where Frogmore Gardens are now. Most of the rhododendrons in the garden came from there. Dad also liked unusual plants. I can remember him growing a giant bean once. The pod was about a metre long. Dad visited the Royal Melbourne Show for many years and would come home with different plants. For a few years it was all about daffodils, he grew hundreds, particularly the more unusual ones such as those with pink trumpets. Dahlias were another favourite and then he had a huge variety of fuchsias.

I grew up being surrounded by beautiful plants and hearing garden talk. I was taught the horticultural names of plants and shown how to propagate them. When I took over the garden I changed the vegetable garden to a rose garden, adding terraces and dry stone walls. I was lucky to inherit good soil that Dad had improved over the years. The many



varieties of roses I have thrive here and I love that they bloom from November until May when we get the first frosts. I have also planted many bearded irises. I enjoy the different forms and colours. Gladioli have been a recent addition. I planted 150 last year. The colour range is spectacular. I can see the influence my dad has had on me here.

What do you like most about your garden?

I admire gardens that are beautifully maintained and manicured but I like that my garden is a bit wild and eclectic with a riot of colour in the warmer months. There is

always something happening, a surprise around every corner. I enjoy the anticipation of different plants coming into bloom and how much growth has occurred. I love the spring bulbs poking their strong green shoots through the soil and seeing the fat buds forming. During the first winter of COVID I planted lots of bulbs when we were in lockdown, my hope being that when spring came and the flowers were blooming the worst of the pandemic would be over.

Autumn sees all the deciduous trees reflecting the sunlight on their changing leaves which look truly magnificent against the bluest of skies.

Winter has its own grandeur in my garden. The skeletons of the trees are covered in moss and lichen that attest to their age and the generations of my family that have looked out on them.

What do like least about you garden?

The weeds, without a doubt. Onion weed and blackberries in particular. We use manual eradication - lots of digging and sifting through the soil to get out those tiny onion weed bulbs. We can't poison as we have cats and plenty of birds and other wildlife. Digging out weeds is a constant activity.

Do you currently have plans to change any areas?

Yes, the front garden. I mistakenly planted some tall plants too close to the path. They were never that tall in their old position. I will move them



closer to the fence and graduate the planting from the back to the front. There are also more bulbs to go in but whenever I find a sunny spot to put some in I find there are already bulbs planted there!

Do you have any advice for beginner gardeners?

I would say to make sure the soil is in good condition before you plant, keep water up to new plants and don't forget to mulch and fertilise.

What give you greatest joy in the garden?

Seeing the changes throughout the year. Watching plants I have put in the garden flourish. Being overwhelmed by the beauty and diversity of plants. Swapping plants with friends and being reminded of them as I walk around the garden. The plants are like an extension of our friendship. I can lose myself in the garden. It is a wonderful place to practise meditation and mindfulness. It is completely absorbing!

Jane's Garden

How long have you had your garden?

I came to Blackwood, to this block, roughly 20 years ago. There was no garden here, just a bush block and I have created what you see today. It is my first garden and has been a huge learning curve.

What do you like most about your garden?

The garden pays back ten-fold. I put in an enormous amount of work but the results give me so much pleasure. For me, gardening is about sharing. Sharing plants and tips for growing successfully. Sometimes I won't remember what the plant is called but I will remember who gave it to me and the story that came with it. I love giving plants that have done well for me, to other gardeners. There are lots of memories of friends in the garden; of people who gave me plants that I now enjoy seeing grow. I have strong memories of an old garden that my family left when I was 6, and I've planted many of the plants I remember from there. I've planted my garden for Autumn. My favourite season. I love colour and berries.

What do you like least in your garden?

Weeds, not having enough sun or good soil. Had I known more when I started, I would have chosen land with good soil and lots of sun. I have spent too much time weeding. Every year new weeds appear or plants I've planted become weeds. Originally there weren't snails here but they have come in pots and there are tons of slugs. I also hate all the fences which are necessary to keep out the wallabies.

Do you have any current plans for change?

I am always changing things. A garden is never static. There is a whole section of the garden that I have changed several times. It gets quite a lot of sun and should be a showpiece but it's not. I plan to rework it with different plants. The blackboy rose has the most beautiful perfume and is the most successful plant in that area.

Can you give any advice for beginner gardeners?

I would say go for it. There is no right or wrong when gardening. Learn from your mistakes and ask others for advice. There is a lot of easily accessible information on the internet and it's mostly trial and error to see what works. Soil is all important and should be continually worked on to improve its structure. Buying small plants is often better than buying large. They establish more easily. When I began, I bought 6 mature trees - 4 Japanese Maples, a Weeping Elm and a Mt Fuji Flowering Cherry to establish the bones of the garden. I then built around these. People told me to cut down most of the Gum and Blackwood trees and I wish I had followed their advice. I've continually had to remove trees which have grown, and been a hazard and have been too close to the house.

What gives you the greatest joy in your garden?

I love the continuing changes which each season brings. Every plant has its time to shine. I love the changing colours of Autumn especially with the Japanese Maples of which I have 15 varieties. The bare branches, the heavenly scent of Daphne and the emergence of the first Snowdrops in Winter. Spring brings the incredible green of new growth and the bulbs bursting forth. Then there's Summer with a riot of colour and flowers in abundance. I just love being in my garden and spend most of my time there - rain, hail or shine. My garden keeps me fit and is wonderful to enjoy!

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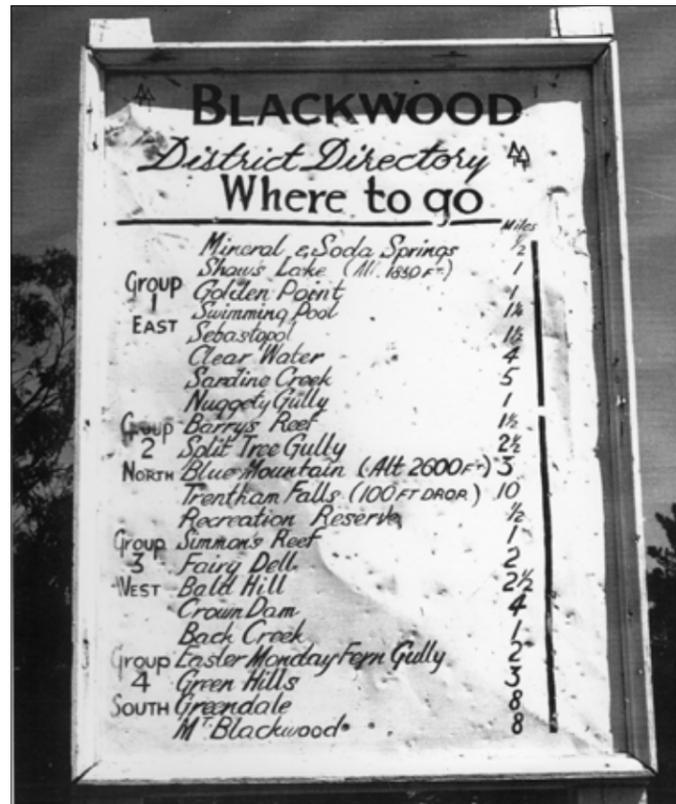
• GIG & EVENTS GUIDE •

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
JUNE		
Wed 1	Drag Bingo \$10	Commercial, Ballan
	Paranomal investigation & dinner \$57	Blackwood Pub
Thur 2	Disco Bingo	Blackwood Pub
Sat 4	Rock n Co	Blackwood Pub
	Ballan Lions Club Market	Ballan
Sun 5, 6:30 - 10pm	Old Married Couple Album Launch	Bacchus Marsh Bowling Club
Thur 9, 6pm on	Comedy with Dave O'Neil	The Taproom, BM
Sat 11	Bacchus Marsh Market	Maddingley Park, BM
Thur 16	Trivia	Blackwood Pub
Fri 15, 9:30pm	Dulcet	Flanagans Hotel, BM
Fir 24, lunch	Lunch with Jeff Fenech & Sam Greco \$79	Commercial, Ballan
Sat 25, 9pm	Live at Flanagans	Flanagans Hotel, BM
Sat 25, 1:30 - 9pm	Moorabool Live & Local Micro Festival	Blackwood - venue TBC
Thur 30	Disco Bingo	Blackwood Pub
JULY		
Sat 2, 1:30 - 9pm	Moorabool Live & Local Micro Festival	Gordon - venue TBC
Sat 2, 7pm	Leela Misel	Flanagans Hotel, BM
Sat 9, 2 - 9pm	Moorabool Live & Local Micro Festival	Bacchus Marsh - venue TBC
Wed 13	Paranormal investigation & dinner \$57	Blackwood Pub
Thur 14	Trivia	Blackwood Pub
Sat 16, 12 - 9pm	Moorabool Live & Local Micro Festival	Ballan - venue TBC
Sun 24	Christmas in July, market, food & music	St Anne's Winery
Wed 27	Medium Night	Blackwood Pub

GLUTEN FREE COLCANNON

4 LARGE 'white' spuds, mashed with butter & milk
 3 CUPS (about 200g) finely shredded 'green' cabbage
 8 SPRING onions, finely chopped
 PARSLEY TO serve
 METHOD:
 FRY CABBAGE in butter/oil until soft & slightly browned, add onions, sauté a little.
 ADD TO still hot/warm mashed potato, season to taste & maybe add a touch of nutmeg.
 SERVE WITH finely chopped parsley on top.
 ~ RECIPE spotted at Trentham Farmers Market

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
REGULAR STUFF		
Mondays	Old Farts & meat tray raffle	Blackwood Pub
2nd & 4th Mon, 7 -9pm	Christian Meditation	St Martins Chapel
Tuesdays, 10 - 11am	Yoga	St Martins Chapel
Tuesdays, 11 - 11:30am	Meditation	St Martins Chapel
Tuesdays, 4 - 5pm	Lenten Study	St Martins Chapel
Tuesdays 4:30pm on	Date night - movie and pizza	Radio Springs Hotel
Wednesdays	Taproom Trivia	Taproom, BM
Wednesdays	Locals night dinner specials	Cosmo
2nd Tuesdays pm	Disco bingo	The Pig and Whistle Tavern
2nd Wed, 10 - 11:15am	Interplay (6/4, 20/4, 4/5, 18/5)	St Martins Chapel
Thursdays	Locals night dinner and drink specials	The Pig and Whistle Tavern
Fridays 10 - 11am	Qigong	St Martins Chapel
Fridays 5 - 8 pm	Meat tray raffle + cocktail hr	Greendale Pub
Friday pm	Meat tray raffle	Cosmo
Last Friday monthly	Flashbank Friday with Ian Banks	The Taproom, Bacchus Marsh



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• BEYOND BLACKWOOD •



GLUTEN FREE POTATO BAKE

(aka "POMMES DAUPHINOISE")

ABOUT 1K waxy spuds

- 1 EGG
- 1 CUP milk
- 4 TAB grated cheese
- PINCH NUTMEG
- SALT/PEPER
- A FEW onion slices
- CUT GARLIC (to taste)
- BUTTER/MARG



METHOD

PEEL SPUDS & slice thinly. Arrange in ovenproof casserole dish, sprinkle with salt, pepper & nutmeg. (adding grated cheese if desired) in layers until all used up.

YOU CAN add some ham & mushies into the layers to make it more yummy.

HEAT MILK with onion slices & garlic, strain & combine with beaten egg.

POUR OVER spuds.

SPRINKLE TOP with grated cheese & dot with butter.

BUNG IN a moderate oven & bake for 45-50 mins or until the spuds are soft/cooked.

~ RECIPE adapted from recipes spotted at Trentham Farmers Market



The beginning to the 2022 season has been a little challenging LOL however in true Saints form we pull together and get the task done. The club is now in full swing with all the temporary facilities in place and operational, construction of the pavilion is well on the way and we've been informed on track for completion in September 2022. The installation of the new gate house at the entry is also progressing well too. Thursday nights are a buzz at the club with our Auskick & NestSetGo programs having over 30 participants, following is Junior levels training and Seniors conclude the evening under lights. Regular Thursday night meals are served in the marquee where coaches announce players for the upcoming game and the weekly club draw is performed by our club President. A big shout out to all our volunteers for putting up their hands to make all this come together, it's no small feat, it is not unnoticed, and it is greatly appreciated. As always with any organisation, many hands make light work, get involved where you can and join in the excitement behind the scenes. All members, sponsors and supporters are welcome to join the fun. Game day begins at 8.30am with the U11 games first siren, 13 & under netball begins with the first whistle at 9.25am. A great club like the Saints is as good as those that volunteer and support it, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all our loyal sponsors that have signed up this season and extend a warm welcome to new sponsors too. We ask our members regularly to engage the services of the sponsors that support our club where they can, this is more of a partnership that assists us to reach our club goals and uphold our values.

- Upcoming events to put on the calendar
- June 4 is the annual sponsors & life member lunch.
 - June 25 is our annual buddy day where juniors and seniors team up for a bit of fun & the day will be followed by last ticket out competition. Tickets will be on sale very soon.
 - July 23 Home games entertainment, details to be confirmed.
 - August 6 annual seniors club ball at Macedon.
 - August 20 The last round for the season we will celebrate 130 years of the saints formation, also hosting the reunion of our 1992 premiership teams. If you would like to get onto the organising committee for this sensational event or have any memorabilia to share, please reach out
 - October 1 Presentation night & major raffle draw. Tickets have been ordered and will be in circulation shortly.
- All our info and contacts are on our website www.trenthamsaintsfn.com and as always watch out on our social media platforms for upcoming events. Like and share the info you find and tag #TrenthamSaints
- ~ Corina Sabo, VP / Netball Administrator





• WHAT'S ON AT ST MARTIN'S? •

EVENT	TIME & COST	CONTACT
Spaghetti Western Poster	Saturday 28th (& market) & Sunday 29th May	Robyn Zanon 53686792
Bible Study	Tuesday 4pm-5pm	Robyn Zanon 53686792
Little Ones Story & Activity Time	Last Wednesday of the month - Sponsored by Anna of Engage and Grow Therapies Speech Pathology	Robyn Zanon 53686792
QiGong	Friday's 10-11am \$15 per session Starts Apr 8	Fiona Haigh for details 0406523406
Market	Saturday 30th July	Robyn Zanon 53686792

MEET SAM RAE

Sam Rae, as we were putting this issue together, was voted in as our new federal member for Hawke.

Together with his partner and their 2 young kids, Sam and his young family love Hawke's vibrant community.

Growing up he saw first-hand the transformative power of good public education: his mum was a public-school teacher and a union activist. She instilled in him the principles of a fair go, community contribution and responsibility.

These are the principles by which Sam lives his life.

The communities of Hawke have so much to offer, but families are doing it tough. The extraordinary rate of growth is putting infrastructure under pressure. Housing affordability issues and a lack of public and social housing denies people the promise of a better future. Local kids deserve access to great schools, and this area deserves world-class healthcare where it is needed.

Sam put his hand up to represent Hawke because he wants to address these challenges and build back stronger across the region.

Sam can be contacted by email sam.rae@vic.alp.org.au, facebook, insta or LinkedIn.



AGAPE SERVICE

Toward the end of May there was quite a special day for the congregation at St Martin's Chapel. Holy Communion was conducted by Rev Jenny Hayes and this was followed by an Agape service where visitors from Bacchus Marsh and Daylesford shared a meal with us.

THE HIGHLIGHT of the event was the singing of Psalms by Gavin Fenech. Gavin has been inspired to write music for a number of Psalms. He explained that the Psalms were written to be sung and that while we still have the words, the original music has been lost.

Many of the psalms have previously had music written for them but Gavin's aim is to make his music basic enough so that even beginners can play and them and by singing them the words become internalised. He is working with a small group of others to achieve this. The undertaking is called the Praise God Project. They have recently recorded the 23rd Psalm and this will be available for free download in the near future. Gavin performed this for us as well as Psalm 130.



IT WAS a wonderful time of worship, fellowship and friendship.

NEWBIE TO DALES CREEK

Hello Blackwoodians & our beautiful neighbouring towns!

My name is Caitlin Hansford and I moved into a beautiful property in Dales Creek just over 12 months ago. Growing up as an Army Brat I was often on the move. Although born in Melbourne my first flight and move was only 14 days after my birth moving to the 'always warm' Darwin. Not long after that we were on the move again to the U.S.A. I grew up in a town most Australians know from a taco box in their pantry - El Paso, Texas. My life has consisted of constant travel and a variety of cultures. After a number of years seeing the world, couch surfing and living out of a backpack in my late teens and early 20's I made a move "home" to Melbourne where my parents had settled.



After moving back to Australia I became a dog-Mom (and yes, I learnt to spell in the U.S.A. so don't judge) to Theodore and Blue my beautiful Australian Shepherds. Knowing I wanted them to have land I began a search for a block of land that gave me the space of the "country", even just - my own space - but importantly the feeling of community (knowing it'd just be me and the pups moving). By pure accident I stumbled across Blackwood and although the house I originally sought after fell through (after some wonderfully unique meetings) in Blackwood I was lucky enough to find a gorgeous property in Dales Creek. Adding the addition of a kitten (Camper) we are happily loving the country and community life! Taking over production of The Blackwood Times I am hopeful to become more and more part of the community. It sure is wonderful!



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