

June ~ July 2024 vol 16 ~ issue 17.1



Murder by Chocolate page 3



Trash into Treasure page 8



Autumn Colours in Blackwood pages 14 & 15





EDITOR’S THOUGHTS...

We know that Blackwood is a special place. When I interview people for A Blackwood Profile, I always ask them why they moved here, and the answers are fascinating. Some just happened to stumble into our unique area by accident, others already knew someone here and decided to join them, others just loved the place and didn’t want to leave.

This issue of the Times once again highlights the richness of Blackwoodian life. Against a backdrop of brilliant autumn colours, we’ve enjoyed Murder Mysteries at the Chapel, an ultra-marathon passing through town, a medieval re-enactment and reminisces of three generations of residents, amongst many other events and activities.

A couple of important AGMs are going to take place in July. Progress is calling for new members to strengthen the team that does a lot to support many activities that take place around town. The Blackwood Emergency Resilience Group is also calling for new members to help prepare us for possible emergencies.

We would like to reinstate The Blackwood Times goes to... I remember great photos of Blackwoodians holding the Times next to the leaning tower of Pisa, the Toronto Air Show, the Parthenon in Athens, and on top of a mountain glacier in New Zealand to name a few. So, send in your photos of your travels with the Times, and include a caption.

A special shout out and thanks to Paul Kukiel, the tech-savvy member of our team, and to Alison Acevedo, our capable graphic designer.

I hope you have a good supply of wood to enjoy what looks like being a cold winter!

Jeanne - Editor for this issue

Cover photos Peter Donnelly and John Kemp

the BLACKWOOD TIMES info

The BLACKWOOD TIMES invites submissions from the community. If you’re at a local event please take a photo or two & write a few lines, or even submit a **non-political** cartoon to share in our community news. Deadlines are as follows:

Advertisement bookings	July 15	
Regular contributors, features & items of interest, community groups & clubs	July 15	
Display ad artwork		July 20
Late breaking news (100 words max)		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 105 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 at <https://www.facebook.com/theblackwoodtimes>

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ANZAC DAY 2024



Blackwood once again commemorated Anzac Day with a Dawn Service. As far as anyone can ascertain, this is the second time this has taken place, obviously following on from last year’s service.

The number of attendees was similar to last year. Without a precise head count being performed, a guesstimate puts the figure around 100 persons. This count is roughly one third of our local population. I believe you would be hard pressed to find another locality anywhere in Australia with that turnout per head! Thanks to all those who set the alarm and came along. You did the right thing by honouring the memory of so many who have made a much greater sacrifice than many of us ever will. It surely is a miniscule token of our gratitude to wake up early once a year.

A couple of extra items were added to this year’s service. Firstly, a roll call of the locals we have lost over the years. It was a perfect occasion to honour their contribution to this town and to remember back to when they were amongst us. This was respectfully read by Robyn Zanon. Many names were missed as they weren’t put forward as requested. If you would like someone included next year please send the names to me for inclusion. After next year it will be only the previous year’s deceased included.

Secondly, a brief service biography was read aloud for two of our local servicemen from WW1 these being Alexander Michael Armstong and Henry John Douglas Anderson. Two biographies of service people in our area will be read out each year, in future. Thanks so much to Ru Marsh and Ned Cassidy for reading these out. It’s not easy doing this in front of 100 mostly strangers. Well done guys! You did your parents proud.

The oration for the service was again performed by Pippa Morris, President of the Ballan RSL Club. The last post was played, flags were lowered, the ode was read and wreaths were laid, as per protocol.

Thanks to all those behind the scenes who helped make the morning a memorable one, especially Brett, Terri and Karen for the breakfast afterwards and members from the Ballan RSL Club for the set up. Thanks also to our CFA and Progress Association for the donation towards free brekkie for all, as well as the St Martin’s Chapel committee for the use of the premises. Sorry if I have missed anyone. If so, you are certainly appreciated.

Our Mayor who attended, Ally Munari, was heard to comment later in the day that the Blackwood service was her favourite, as it was ‘unscripted and had its own unique flavour’, whilst allowing for the reverence of the occasion. We certainly plan to keep it that way and add another couple of features next year to help honour our service people from all the world’s theatres of conflict.



Ray Castellin, photos Kathy Berrill

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 '24	6.8	56	1.1	35	24.8	7.5	15.1
Apr '24	83.8	72.1	-0.5	22.7	15.2	5.5	9.9

~ Don Owen

MURDER BY CHOCOLATE



Where in Blackwood would a lady choose to wear her finest ball gown and tiara, or a gentleman his formal suit? If you wished to visit a 1900s Parisian Hotel to eat chocolate soufflé with a silver spoon, where would you go? If you were a ventriloquist’s dummy and had a clue that might solve a murder, where would you take your master? If you somehow found yourself in the midst of a mystery which would challenge Agatha Christie and Hercule Poirot combined where would you be?

St Martins Chapel of course!

Twenty-eight distinguished guests arrived at an appointed hour and were formally seated at an extravagantly laid out dining table. A twitter of excitement passed around the table. A sensational murder had occurred that day! It quickly became apparent that all the guests had known the victim, a wealthy chocolatier, and they all had a possible motive for murder. Ooh la la!

The meal was served as the guests discussed the murder, initially with some decorum, but soon various accusations were being flung across the table. Accusations of secret love affairs, business rivalries and personal tragedies! Clues were dropped as the speculations mounted until in the midst of a heated tirade of scandalous details someone declared... I know who the murderer is!

The evening was a huge success with much credit to our Hostess of the night Louise. She wrote the scripts and storyline for each character in a brilliantly entertaining manner. The wonderful three course meal was prepared by Robyn and Edward with help from Louise and Ben. Thank you to Stephanie for the mini quiches, Sue for the chocolate mousse and Jane for the floral bouquets on each table.

Maitre de Walter, organised his team of small waiters (Nathanial, Ariadne and Louis) for the seating of guests and serving of the meal.

A big thank you to the Zanon Family Team, adults and children for the success of the night!

After the murder was solved the excitement continued as various awards and prizes of chocolate were given. They included best dressed and best detective.

The Teams and the main characters in each team were:

- Chocolat Team
- Monsieur Francois ‘Chocolat’ Bertrand – Owner of the world-famous Belgian chocolate brand
- Mode Team
- Frau Scarlett Maria Von Schnapps – Owner of the world-famous Austrian chocolate brand
- Academics Team
- Dr Doris Johnson – Archaeologist and sociologist, interested in the ancient Aztec culture
- Pugilist Team
- Mr Mike Bison – World-famous heavy weight boxer
- Vaudeville Team
- Little Fitz – Popular ventriloquist
- Avant-Garde Team
- Marchioness Duchamp – Famous artist
- Romantics Team
- Dame Barbara Carthorse – famous romance novelist
- Psychology Team
- Herr Doctor Sigmund Fraud – Famous neurologist with some controversial ideas about psychology



A fabulous time was had by all. Look out for the next Murder Mystery night at St Martin’s Chapel. You too could help solve a mystery. Fabuleux Cheri!

Miss Dorinda Burnes



DOWN UNDER 135



Grant Ward, Chris McAuliffe, Ben Nicholls, Tim O'Loughlin, Chris Norris, Tim Kacprzak, Kate MacMunn

As most people in Victoria were getting ready for work on Friday morning, there were 37 athletes from across Australia ready to take off from Blackwood on the challenge of a lifetime.

This year's 7th edition of the Down Under 135 would see athletes traversing the Lerderderg Gorge between Blackwood and Bacchus Marsh only to turn back and attempt to do it all again inside of 55 hours.

DU135, as its affectionately known, is labelled arguably one of the Southern Hemisphere's gnarliest foot races. The 135 is miles not kilometres, equating to 217+ km with over 13,000m of elevation or 1.5 times Mt Everest! The terrain is technical (gnarly) rocks, slate, shale and river crossings on steep gradients.

2024 saw record numbers in both field size and female participation which created a buzz inside the crazy world of Ultra Endurance. As the athletes headed off, they were self-sufficient and solo, making their way to checkpoints across the Lerderderg State Park. The first two are at 21km & 42km. At these points athletes were assisted by their crews who would follow and support them for the journey. Local volunteers run these checkpoints with some camping all weekend to support.

Most athletes were through the 42km point by night fall and the leaders were stretched out 15km in front to Mt Blackwood Lohs checkpoint at 57km, led by eventual winner Grant Ward from Toowong Qld.

At the 76km checkpoint athletes have the option of a crew member joining them. Mostly we usually see ☐ of the participants taking a pacer with some preferring to go it alone.

The MacKenzie's Flat picnic ground turnaround point we saw a new race leader with Grant missing a marker and doing an extra 8km to get back on course in 7th, so it would be Burt Kennedy (Central Coast NSW) arriving in 20 hours. The trio of Chris McAuliffe (Lara VIC) Tim Kacprzak (Bannockburn VIC) and Guy Schweitzer (Scarborough QLD) not far behind.

To everyone's shock who were watching the GPS live tracking, Burt would not return into the Lerdy. After being advised to keep an injury in check prior to DU135 Burt was risking too much to return for the 112km it would take to finish. As athletes came into the turnaround across the day, 2/3 would push through before the 4pm cutoff chasing another 30 hours of Lerdy trails. The other third having pushed themselves to the mental and physical limits, everyone proud of their efforts.

The turnaround saw no better sight than Kate MacMunn (Macedon) and Claire Healy (Yackandandah) hug it out having spent most of the night together. The maths said both these women looked fresh enough and tough enough to be only the 2nd and 3rd women to finish DU135 with the only previous finisher in 2019. We would find out come 3pm Sunday. For those athletes in the back half of the event, they'd need to meet time targets to be allowed to continue past checkpoints. Slowly across the second night the DU135 course would start to devour the brave. As the Sunday sunrise shone across the gorge, the DU135 followers would awake to see only 8 had survived past the Saturday night 9pm, 142km, 37hr cutoff. A cruel blow for some, a satisfying feeling for others.

By this time Grant Ward had turned around his race and had a sub 48hr finish clearly in sight. It was remarkable considering he had gone off course the previous day and was able to reset, refocus and turn it into a powerhouse display. He would go on to miss the sub 48hrs but still dominate the DU135 course.

At the Blackwood finish line, we would see many stories unfold with those still on course. We'd also share in stories with those who were no longer out there, but they had all come to watch their fellow athletes achieve greatness. At the point of 6 finishers there was 2 stories being written from very different perspectives. Kate MacMunn, the mother of 3, was powering to being the 2nd female in history and 26th athlete to finish. While Claire Healy was racing the clock, needing at 4.5hr half marathon on 200km tired beaten-up legs she'd propelled for over 51hrs. Kate would get her dream finish, running across the line to the adorning crowd of admirers, knowing they had just witnessed greatness. This mum had beaten a course that has had a 16% finishing rate, and it never looked in doubt.



The focus was now on Claire Healy, and as the time ticked away it was clear that Claire was not going to be the 8th official finisher. After some communications between her team and the RD's she decided to push to the end. Funnily enough Claire was going to step off course because she thought she was holding everyone up.

In an emotional finish for those who had stuck around to witness Claire's fortitude, there was no bigger smile than hers she had just traversed the full course in 56hrs.

Finishers

Dale Chircop
Biodynamic Marketing Co. Ltd.
0417089167

A GO CLUB IN BLACKWOOD?

Go is probably the oldest board game known. Created in the Chinese Emperor Shu dynasty (approx. 2200 BC), it is a game where balance of



territory is primary but balance of power enables influence and enhances security. I agree that Go is to chess as chess is to checkers, but I'm no checkers expert!

Go is played on a rectangular block with a grid of 2 sets of 19 black lines. Black & white stones are placed on the interstices of these. At the end of the game the player with control of more

territory is the winner.

Unlike chess, all pieces in Go are equal. In chess if a major piece is lost, that probably means the game is lost. In Go, one can lose a battle but still win the 'war'. In the Japanese Tsin dynasty (200 BC - 600 AD), 2 warlords, after much bloodshed, decided to let the resolution of their antagonisms rest on a game of Go played against each other. Now that's an idea!

I would be delighted to find a Go player in Blackwood or surrounds and/or someone who is intrigued and would like to learn. Maybe the start of a Go club in Blackwood?

John Kemp (0400 686 770)

NOLA ELIZABETH (COKER) WHITEHOUSE REMINISCES



Harold & Florence Coker's holiday place at Barry's Reef, 1947. Built in 1866. Once owned by the Sultan Mining Company and used as the Mine Manager's home. All photos courtesy Whitehouse family

So many of us have discovered Blackwood and then been drawn in, often permanently. After 30 years one is considered an old-timer. Nola's story of her connection to Barrys Reef and Blackwood goes back 80 years.

Born in Melbourne in 1942 to Harold Edgar Coker (b 1903) and Florence Irene (Walters) Coker (b 1904), with one brother, Julian, (b 1938). Harold and Florence were born, lived & married (1935) in Ballan before moving to Melbourne for work in the late 1920s, Nola spent every holiday at the family farm at Ballan amongst the sheep and cattle and from the age of five, on the back of a horse.

"From a young age with my family, I would come up to our holiday house, bought in early 1940s, (see photo) at Barrys Reef and the farm at Ballan during holidays. I kept my horses at Ballan and would ride through bush roads to and from Barrys Reef - at times followed discretely by my lovingly protective Dad in his car to ensure my safety." These trips could take up to 4 hours to complete with her love for the bush and particularly bird-life a constant distraction.

"My Mum was an adoring & and gentle mother who was renowned for her delicious cooking. The house was always filled with the delectable aroma of home cooking on the wood stove. I have a rich family history in the local area through my Mum's lineage of Walters-Broad-Gribble-Bawden and Dunn families. My ancestors worked the mines at various locations and some ran businesses such as butchers & general store merchants. My great, great grandmother Ann (Bawden) Gribble and her daughter Jane ran the Gribble General Store, nowadays known as the Cobb & Co on the corner of Terrill Street and Blackwood-Greendale Rd."

Nola spent much of her time with her dad at the farm, camping in an old cabin, handling horses & helping tend the sheep and cattle. Amongst her fondest memories of these teenage years include:

- riding her horses Black Beauty, Smoky and Whodat through bush tracks & along the Lerderderg River;
- attending dances at Barrys Reef Hall with the Fleming sisters;
- playing amongst the mine mullock heaps with friends and Joe Callaghan's goats;

- being lowered down mine-shafts by her brother & friend to see if it was safe for them to venture down, sometimes leaving her there for lengthy periods of time;
- tearing around the countryside on a butcher's cart inherited from her grandfather that resembled a chariot out of Ben Hur;
- time with family and friends playing card games by gaslight as there was no electricity in those days;
- riding into Blackwood to pick up supplies and spending saved pennies on boiled sweets at the kiosk near the Mineral Springs.

In the late 1890s Barrys Reef (Bayup) was bigger than Blackwood (Red Hill), Simmons Reef and Golden Point, and was worthy of six pubs, but in Nola's time the Post Office was the only business in town. The post-mistress, Mrs. (Elizabeth) Murphy allowed her to lick the stamps for her.

"As a reward for working so hard she said I could have the biggest cup of tea I liked. So, I selected the biggest cup from the cupboard, to find, to my horror that it contained Mrs. Murphy's late husband's glass eye!"

The Post Office closed in 1981 leaving 85-year-old Tommy Johnson, on one leg, as the last gold-digger. She remembers this character well and others such as Mrs. Rea who was convinced a young man had landed his plane in her backyard and thought it "a very cheeky thing to do."

"My love for the area has never wavered. Despite being married and living in Melbourne, I continued to spend my weekends and holidays with my 2 children Lance and Samantha at our farm in Ballan and our house in Blackwood, built by my father-in-law, John Kahl. This instilled in my children a love for the region where they have both settled with their families."

In 1976 she bought the property at Blue Mount, Newbury, with a small house and paddocks of thistles. There she hosted children's horse-riding camps and conducted trail rides. In the early 1980s she built Kattemingga (meaning Hill of Trees Haunted by Spirits) and ran this as a camp, function and conference centre for many years. It is renowned for hosting the filming of 'Man from Snowy River' TV series. Kattemingga was sold in 2015 & has since transformed into a Buddhist Forest Monastery. After a few years in Mt Macedon, Nola has come full-circle and "...returned to my roots in Blackwood to live with my daughter and son-in-law (Steve). Blackwood area is where my heart is."

It was my pleasure & privilege to spend an hour or so with Nola whilst she reminisced. Oral histories such as hers are very precious – with so many trails & threads yet to be explored. Whilst many of the tracks she rode on may no longer be there, now over-grown with blackberry, holly & broom, I was encouraged to hear her say that the bird-life is still flourishing and the healthy community spirit as strong as ever.

John Kemp

THE GREAT AUSSIE HIKE

Taking place through the Wombat Forest in late April, the Great Aussie Hike is a team walking challenge over 2 days to raise awareness of mental health and fund raise for Beyond Blue. Individuals and teams are encouraged to participate in the Great Aussie Hike Program of exercising in nature, goal setting, human connection and thinking beyond self, which have all been shown to be beneficial to good mental health. The program includes resources including dietary and training advice as well as challenges to participants mindsets to prepare them for the endurance walking challenge. Teams could choose to walk either 30, 50, 80 or 100 kilometres over the course of a weekend. Starting at the Recreation Reserve in Blackwood on Friday 26th April, teams walked through the Wombat past Nolan Creek Picnic Ground, Werribee River Camping Ground and Leonards Hill to finish at the Daylesford Showgrounds at the end of day one. Those continuing for a second day ventured off through Bolwarrah, Rocklyn, Sailors Falls, Daylesford and Hepburn. Well done to all teams involved!

I want to preface this piece by thanking the wonderful Blackwood



A BLACKWOOD GARDEN

What a beautiful Autumn we had, but there were no days with warm, gentle breezes scattering leaves. The colours in my garden were fabulous but something I noticed this season, was how randomly the trees colour. For years my Mt Fuji flowering cherry was the first to turn golden, and lose its leaves, but this time round; it's one of the last....the reason? Who knows? And if anyone does know, please let me know.



Previously I always left the leaves to rot where they fell during Autumn but now I rake them and build them into stacks where I've made chicken wire columns so that I'll have beautiful rich leaf mould to use later in the year.

In May, I still had bowls of cherry tomatoes ripening. They fruited late, but in the end, I had an abundant crop. I pulled up the plants still with lots of green fruit attached. In the past I used to ripen them on a sunny window sill but now I put them in bowls to gradually ripen and keep them wherever, and they look rather lovely.

Fungi have been slow to appear this year....I've seen very few Slippery Jacks or Pine Mushrooms while out walking. Maybe the Choughs have been eating them. Instead of their usual size flocks of a dozen there's often one of about 30 birds wreaking havoc with the mulch in my garden. Between the Choughs and the bush rats it's a wonder I have a garden and I'm really getting fed up. Again, the rats have eaten lots of bulbs (not daffodils of which I have hundreds, but expensive and rare bulbs), and also my liliums this time. Something has also eaten all my parsley and silver beet right down into the ground.

On a brighter note, lots of things that self-seed are all coming up; Nigella, Cerinthe, Poppy, Aquilegia, Hellebore and even, some Forge-me-not are flowering already. One of the unsung heroes that I do love over Winter are beautiful Violets with their heavenly perfume. Some have started flowering now.

Enjoy cosying up by the fireside, but also take the opportunity to get out into the garden and tackle those jobs which need doing.

Jane Howat

SURROGACY IN BLACKWOOD

community for their support, kindness, and genuine interest in my welfare during my surrogacy journey. They say it takes a village, and despite me not having a baby to raise here, this village has definitely shown me love and I am truly grateful.

My partner Matt and I moved to Blackwood in October 2023, when I was 3 months pregnant. As time and my belly grew, and we started making friends in the community, the word 'congratulations' started popping up. Which was then followed with a pretty different conversation... 'thanks but it's not our baby!'.

Whilst this was my first pregnancy, I'm not entirely new to the fertility game and have donated my eggs twice as an anonymous donor through Melbourne IVF. Having children of my own is not something I want for me, and I knew I wanted to help others whose dream was to have their own family. After two rounds of IVF and collection cycles, I turned to surrogacy to research what exactly it all entails. Through egg donation, I realised pregnancy was something I wanted to experience as a woman, but was never really sure it could be possible.

In 2022 I met a lovely same-sex couple from Sydney in a surrogacy community group. Surrogacy, although not new, has a whole raft of rules and regulations, which also vary state-wide. In Victoria, a woman cannot offer to be a surrogate if she has not had her own live birth. In NSW however, the Surrogacy Act is different and is governed by the intended parents. With that in mind, I decided to offer to be a surrogate for this couple in Sydney.

I'll spare you all the heavy legal stuff, but will say there are a lot of legal bridges to cross, and counselling is mandated. Both the Intended Parents (IPs) and I had to undergo medical tests, counselling, psych tests, seek independent legal advice, have a Surrogacy Agreement drawn up, and agree to continue with counselling and court requirements after the birth as well. Through this legal process and drawing up of an agreement, it was mutually decided that we will all stay connected after the birth, and I would take on somewhat of an 'Aunt' type role. I was welcome to have involvement in the baby's life, and them in mine, whilst ensuring we were all still comfortable going forward. A Surrogacy Agreement can sound very clinical, but it is there to protect all involved both pre and post birth, and ensures there is no confusion or issues down the line.

I chose Gestational Surrogacy vs Traditional surrogacy, where the embryo was created from an egg donor and not my own eggs. In May 2023 I flew to Sydney for the first embryo transfer. Unfortunately, this transfer was unsuccessful and the egg didn't "stick". Ever the optimists, we all decided to try again as soon as possible, and in July 2023 I underwent another transfer. At the end of July, we received an amazing phone call from the fertility clinic confirming we were pregnant! A number of medical tests later, we found out a baby girl was taking up residence in the Millar AirBnB, due 20 April 2024!

I was extremely lucky in my pregnancy (maybe the magic of Blackwood helped!) in that I didn't have any issues or horrible morning sickness. Throughout the pregnancy, the IPs and I grew and developed a wonderful bond, and we attended lots of family and social events in Melbourne and Sydney. Ever so slowly, my bump grew and in April the IPs flew to Melbourne for the planned birth. On 26th April 2024 I was induced at Bacchus Marsh Hospital, and on 27th April I gave birth to a sweet, healthy, 3.3kg girl - Baby V.

What can I say, the labour sucked, my plan didn't go to plan, and I had an emergency C section. In all the chaos and fear and tears, the team at BM Hospital were absolutely amazing - we all felt like we had been given the royal treatment and were in a private hospital. They were kind, accommodating, caring, and just amazing - to all of us involved!

It has now been 2 weeks since the birth, and all of us are doing really well. Matt and I have a full wine rack again, and I'm getting back to life as a Cat Mum; the Dads and Baby V are back in Sydney starting their new chapter, experiencing Colic and serial outfit changes! Matt and I have been so touched by the care and interest shown in our journey from the community, and I'm grateful to have been able to share my story with you.

Meg Millar

A BLACKWOOD PROFILE - JANE HOWAT

Blackwood Times readers know Jane from her regular gardening column, but she has lived a varied and interesting life prior to her arrival in Blackwood and becoming a garden guru.

When did you come to Blackwood and why did you decide to live in Blackwood?

I first came to Blackwood in the 90s. A friend was living here, and when he got cancer and went into hospital he asked me to do his garden. Prior to that I had no experience in gardens, I wasn't a gardener, but he recognised something in me. I came and stayed in his little house in Simmons Reef. It was winter, it was cold but I just felt like I was in paradise. I would have a fork in the ground and there would be a kookaburra sitting next to me, and there were ferns all around and sound of the river. It was just beautiful; it was like nowhere else. Then whenever a place would come up for sale my friend would let me know.

What were you doing before you came to Blackwood?

I grew up in the country. My dad was a sheep farmer and the land was grasslands as far as the eye could see; nothing like here, where I never get to see the horizon. From a tiny state school class of 3, I went on to an enormous school in Melbourne, followed by RMIT Art School where I studied fashion design. I then started travelling after my studies; first to New Zealand and then S E Asia and the hippy trail as far as Afghanistan. I'm so glad I travelled to all those places when I was young, quite happy hitch hiking and staying often in quite crude accommodation. In Goa, India, we had a house built out of palm fronds for \$1, overlooking the beach and we would help the fishermen pull in the nets.

My working career began at Crawford Productions who produced popular TV shows-Homicide, The Sullivans, Division Four etc. I worked in wardrobe, working on reading scripts, deciding what each character should wear for particular scenes then dressing them, either on set or out on location. After Crawford's, I continued to work in television at both the ABC and Channel 10 but, as a Costume Designer. At the ABC, I also trained as a Set Designer. I also worked in advertising and on several films.

Did you enjoy this work?

Yes, it was great. I really loved it! It was not 9 to 5. No set hours, different people and going to lots of different places was exciting. In wardrobe, costume design and art direction you are the first on set and then the last to leave. When freelancing, and a film finishes you need to find work on another film. But 10 years was enough! People would



always say "wow, that must be so exciting and how terrific to meet all those stars". I finally heard the response I was giving "well no, I work really long hours and half the stars are prima donnas and a pain in the arse". The last film I worked on was shot in Paris. I actually left the ABC to do that.....I mean how many times do you get paid to go to Paris? It was time for a change!

So, I went to Greece and back to Syros, an island I had been to before, and lived in No 1 Cave above the beach with an Englishman. I soon got bored with the drinking and sitting around telling the same stories and jokes and waiting for the next ferry to come in. I got to know a Dutch couple who lived on a beautiful old Spanish schooner built in 1856 and so I moved onto it and in return for board I worked on the various things which always need doing on an old boat. We were getting it ready to cross the Atlantic but after nearly a year of island hopping I was tired of waiting to leave Greece. It was time to head home to family and friends in Australia.

Back in Melbourne, not wanting to go back to the film industry, I asked my Blackwood friend, as he was someone who knows everyone, if he knew of any interesting jobs going. He told me that the only job he knew of was bossing his cousin around. She was a knitwear designer at Panda Yarns and so I got a job as a Design Coordinator there and we produced knitting books. It was my first straight 9 to 5 job. My day would often start with proof-reading knitting patterns. Patterns were written then test knitted checking the patterns, and these would then be photographed and printed. It was my job to organise and supervise each process for the knitting books.

After working with Panda for three years, while overseas with work I asked to stay a bit longer. Unfortunately, when I came back I was retrenched. So, it was time again to ask my friend if he knew of any jobs going. This time he told me about a job at Wenzel's, working with someone who owned the house I now live in. Wenzel's is the oldest textile company in Australia with some men's suiting fabrics selling for \$1,000 a metre, but I worked for the ladies' range. In this job I made story boards, held product information nights for retailers and organised fashion parades. I also launched a new range of fabrics for the home /craft market.

After I left Wenzel's there weren't many jobs around, so I was painting a house with my cousin and out of the blue we came up with the idea of making children's hats. We called it - Lids for Kids. We designed a range of summer hats; photographed them on kids and took the folio around to children's wear shops and took orders and then made them. Our first range was really successful and we got coverage in the magazine Studio Bambini (The children's wear magazine at the time). From there it was easy to get orders and our winter range was even bought by department stores and we had agents selling to shops interstate. We were working out of my cousin's house and making everything ourselves but she wanted out and so I rented premises above a shop in Richmond and hired a cutter and seamstress. The business grew and so I employed others and outsourced sewing. Owning a small manufacturing business, I was sometimes working 18 hour days 7 day a week. During this time, I bought my Blackwood property and made it a rule that when I came here on weekends I was not to bring work. Unfortunately, shortly after, I had a car accident and suffered severe whiplash and was no longer able to work the crazy hours and so I sold the business.

How did you then begin working closer to home, at Cliffy's?

At St Erth one day in 2001 I ran into an old friend from my teenage years, and her partner. They invited me to come and see an old building in Daylesford that had been empty for years as they were thinking of doing something there. Geoffrey and Mary were very clever, and we together established Cliffy's. It was the first country store of its kind. There was nothing else like it. Almost every town boasts one now. It received a lot of publicity. It was, and still is a cafe, wine bar and deli. The business has been sold three times and in fact is now owned by Liam whose first job was washing dishes with us. It was great fun, a whole new lifestyle, also a lot of hard work. Working at Cliffy's enabled me to live in Blackwood, and I worked there for about three years.

Do You think your artistic side is expressed through your garden?

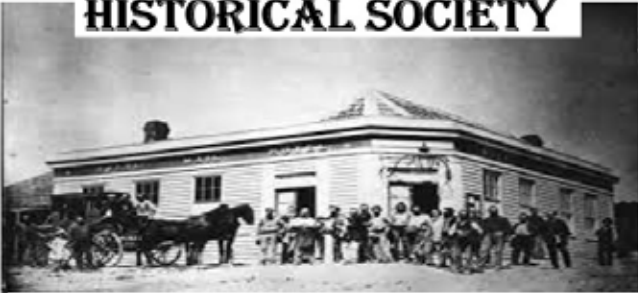
It is, but I am now also making art. My garden, for the last 20 years, has been my creative expression. Recently I've had to think about sustainability as the garden is rather large and on a slope. Living in Blackwood is pretty hard. There's a lot of physical work, especially for one person. However, Blackwood has been the best place for me to live, I am happy here. There's a lot of like-minded people and such a great community. I bought my house as a weekender and I never anticipated finding such a richness in culture and wow ...the nature. I'm so glad I have the time to watch the birds bathe, the bees fly from one flower to another and listen to the frogs, the birds, the river ...you can't get better than that!

Someone once applied the saying to me: 'you can take the girl out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the girl!'

Interviewed by Jeanne Tahini



BLACKWOOD & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Open June 15th and July 6th 10:00am - 1:00pm
Small Donation requested upon entry.

Blackwood & District Historical Society and Police Stable Museum,
Cnr Martin St and Warner St, Blackwood VIC 3458



A MISSED FOUR POUND COBB & CO TICKET, WITH A LONG WALK TO BLACKWOOD

In the early 1850's, my 3rd great grandfather "John Wightman" arrived in good health at Williamstown, mainland Australia, after a long sea passage of 84 days from Liverpool via Launceston, Van-Dieman's Land (Tasmania). Becoming settled and after many fruitless months of trying to get work, he eventually made the long trek towards the "Blackwood Goldfields" to gain in what he had hoped, would be a chance to produce a modest and fruitful fortune of gold, like everyone else. With the gold rush taking place, John assumed there was nothing wrong with this idea except that some 20,000 other individuals from various persuasions and countries had also this thought. Spending money to survive, John's thoughts were of home and his family, he had also carried a heavy burden. The days had turned into weeks as he continued to think about and mourn the loss of a son and daughter these past 3 years in his Irish home of Killinchy, Downpatrick, in County Down, the north of Ireland.

Racked with guilt, it had been decided reluctantly by his wife Anna, to allow him to go to Australia to clear his head and perhaps make a modest fortune. Their twine business would survive, and the farm made a modest living. John senior, John's father would oversee the business and Anna would continue the running of the home, relying on neighbours to help bring in an crops and animals. John of course, convinced his wife that he would return the following year. A promise he would never keep and not see her for eight years.

Leaving with an Englishman, he proceeded towards the Blackwood direction, based on the knowledge that it would take only a few days. They could also pay passage on a Cobb & Co carriage if needed, but the problem with this idea was that like most, all the carriages were full and had no room. Perhaps they needed to save their money anyway, as he had suggested. Grudgingly, they left Melbourne and headed out towards the track to Blackwood. In April 1855, around eight months after he had arrived, John had written to his wife "Anna" of his arrival in Australia.

This is part of the letter unedited.:1} "I hope you and family is getting on smoothly. I'm sending a post card. After arriving in Melbourne I found no employment trade, being dull these last eight months. I at once proceeded to the diggings (when I made up my mind to go, I had no time to write home) and expected to write when I arrived at the diggings."I fell in with an Englishman as a mate, to dig for gold. We bought land last night and were getting on well until my mate took a sore hand and in two days more, I got dysentery and have been sick these eight days. I gave up work all together these last six weeks. I am now strong, thank God. The diggings that I am at are 84 miles from Melbourne through plains and forests. I walked all the way, the temperature from 100 to 140°. It was nearly too much for me. "I hope you got the letter I sent per ship before crossing the line. I hope you are all in good health. I know you will have a good many troubles to get through but put full trust in providence and he will not desert you. I hope William is paying attention to you and family as he promised to me. With me being so long bad (sick) it was out of my power to send you money. I have now good health and it will not be long until I send you some, you may expect to hear from me in



Left: There is a picture of John Wightman himself, who became quite a statesman, pioneer, developing a sawmill in Blackwood and employing many people. He also won many interstate prizes for his specialised timbers which he sold to the mines and interstate. His gold it seems came in the form of wood, a smart man. He also had quite a few powerful friends and acquaintances - (Edward Barton, (First Prime Minister) Peter Lalor, (Eureka Stockade) William Haines (Premier of Victoria) Charles Hotham (Governor of Victoria) to name a few.



Right: The woman's picture is my 3rd great grandmother, Anna Matilda Wightman (nee Kennedy) the wife of John Wightman, who is "Anna" in the letters.

the course of a month". "You are all home among your friends (I hope they act so). I am here amongst strangers from every nation of the earth, not excepting the Chinese as there are many thousands from that nation – rifles, revolvers, and pistols, are among dogs barking at night - this is anything but a quiet place".

{1} Letter, courtesy of the Wightman Family and relatives, printed under permission by A. Wilson and Mr. Glenn F. Wolter AMIEAust, MBAI, DipEng, Genealogist.

Glen Walter

TURNING TRASH INTO TREASURED JEWELLERY



When COVID-19 lockdowns left Jess stuck at home with her young kids in early 2020, she unexpectedly started a sustainable jewellery business that is now thriving. Inspired by all the plastic going into her recycling bin that may not actually get recycled, the former ethical fashion designer began experimenting with melting and shaping plastic waste into colourful earrings. "It all started during the

first COVID lockdown. I have a fashion background in clothing but was looking to study something entirely different," Jess explained. "Being home with the kids, I saw all the plastics going into recycling that might not be really getting recycled. I started playing around with shredding and melting it down, then realised I could make colourful sheets to cut shapes out of, for art and jewellery." Her new earrings - endeavour - stemmed from a desire to be more eco-friendly. "The reason I wanted to get out of fashion was because I found the industry pretty wasteful. But making recycled jewellery allowed me to recycle while still being creative in that space," she said.

After 6.5 years of living in the tranquil town of Blackwood, Jess can't imagine being anywhere else. "When our oldest son Abel was born, we were trying to escape the city on our days off. We started looking for a town within an hour's radius of Melbourne and stumbled upon Blackwood. We loved it immediately and never looked back." Prior to the earring business, Jess owned an ethical clothing boutique in Northcote selling her own label and consigning other sustainable brands that minimised waste through smart design and manufacturing practices.

"Everything was made locally so I could ensure proper wages for workers. I would pre-cut fabric layouts myself to reduce scrap waste from industrial cutting machines," she described. Jess prioritized eco fabrics like organic cotton, hemp and low-impact dyes.

When Blackwood's General Store offered Jess a retail space, her recycled earring venture quickly took off. "I started an Instagram page, not meaning to sell anything, but people loved the sustainability aspect and other stores starting placing wholesale orders. I now have about 40 stockists Australia-wide and a dozen overseas."

The Blackwood General provided Jess with an area to use as a workspace, with a small retail section for selling her earrings and accepting community plastic donations. While she does the melting and moulding at home outdoors, she assembles and finishes all earring orders on-site. "I do most of the final assembling, gluing, drilling, and office tasks there," Jess said. "For melting, I use a portable oven outside since being in an enclosed oven isn't healthy." Through research, she learned to only work with certain safe, low-toxicity plastics like #2 HDPE and #4 LDPE, avoiding others. Jess's homegrown business combines her creative passion with Blackwood's laidback lifestyle. "My favourite place is just home - being in my backyard with the boys or working with that beautiful view." Thanks to an innovative lockdown project, Jess transformed her household plastics into an eco-chic jewellery line while doing her part to reduce waste.

@singleuse.multiverse on Instagram

Paul Kukiel

GUGGENHEIMER'S COTTAGE

Barrys Reef, Blackwood. Classified by the National Trust of Australia.



A cottage situated on the Blackwood – Trentham Road on the left as you come into Barrys Reef has an interesting history. The history was written up in 1984 by Mark Burnip and given to the Historian.

A copy of his detailed report and photos of the original construction and plan of the area was also give to the author for her research on behalf of the Blackwood Historical Society.

The first quartz reefs were discovered in Barry Reef in 1858. A Miner's Right enabled a Miner to construct a dwelling on the Crown land that he had claimed. This was much of what happened in Blackwood and the surrounding townships.

Guggenheimer's Cottage was built sometime between 1855 and 1864 using local materials, probably by a team of travelling carpenters who went from goldfield to goldfield constructing buildings for the miners and people running a business to cater to the Miners needs. The cottage appears to be a very early date and was one of five cottages in the immediate area at that time, but is now the only original one remaining.

The cottage was constructed out of split timber palings, external cladding of split weatherboards and roof of shingles (now sheeted over with iron). Residence Site No. 1229, Blackwood.

By 1869 mining at the 'Homeward Bound Co.' mine which was situated at the rear of the cottage ceased operations. Records show that 176 ozs of gold was found to 70 feet.

Not much is documented about the cottage after this date until the 1930's. In 1936 the cottage was acquired by Mr. C. Guggenheimer as a weekend retreat. The Miner's Right governing the land and the cottage was converted to a Residence Area Right No. 1193. But in 1936 the Forestry Commission of Victoria declared a large tract of land in the Blackwood area, which included various dwellings, as the Wombat Sate Forest. Consequently the Forestry Commission would no longer renew the Residence Area Right. However it was agreed between Guggenheimer and the Forestry Commission that Guggenheimer could use the cottage only for the term of his natural life. After that is was up to the Commission's discretion about the cottage's future.

With the deteriorating health of Mr. Guggenheimer, the cottage fell into ruin during the period 1962-1972. It was noticed from the road by Mr. R. Doubleday in 1972 as a rather dilapidated timber cottage overgrown with scrub and blackberries.

From that moment a torrid battle began with authorities to first retain the cottage, and in the later 1970's to restore and renovate the cottage to its former splendour and charm. The Forest Commission were adamant that the Right would not be extended or renewed, but they agreed to the removal of the cottage. But due to the poor condition it was not thought possible to relocate the cottage, risking further damage to the old materials, particularly the split timbers and hand made bricks.

In 1973 the National Trust of Australia (Victoria) was approached to gain their support and it appeared that the only way the cottage was to be saved was for it to be classified.

The Trust stipulates that a building of historical significance must remain in its original environmental setting as the surrounds, in this case, are as important as the cottage itself.

The cottage was therefore classified in 1975 and is in fact owned by the Trust – donated, restored and renovated by Mr. Doubleday who was the caretaker in 1984. In 1978, the Forestry Commission declared a reserve around the cottage – known as Guggenheimer's Cottage Historic Reserve.

The cottage and grounds are now in an immaculate condition. Although the cottage has been renovated for a modern lifestyle, it still retains most of the original details and features of a miner's cottage once in abundance in the prosperous mining districts of Blackwood.

The building specifications lists the stumps, bearers, studs, bracing, ceiling joists, and rafters were all made of varying sizes of split timber. The ceiling joists were split timber alternating with thin saplings. The internal linings were split timber with hessian coated with a lime wash in the lean-to extension. The front rooms were coated with calico. These were later replaced with plywood. The external cladding was 6 inch split timber weatherboards later replaced with sawn timber after 1866, due to the opening of Wightman's Sawmill at Barrys Reef. The external walls were finished with a whitewash. The windows were 12 panes, packed in from the outside. The doors were sawn timber and 4-panel timber. The roof originally had split timber shingles about 3 inches long on 3 inch by 1 inch split timber battens. The chimney had a stone base, handmade bricks and rubble/stone coated with a whitewash. The timbers were held together with handmade wrought iron nails.

The cottage is under 4 squares in size, comprising a bedroom, living room, kitchen area and bathroom. Either side of the front door are twelve pane windows, and over the front rooms is a hipped corrugated iron roof or the rear lean-to extension is also covered by a corrugated iron roof. Both roofs are screw fixed to split timber battens directly over the original timber shingle roof. The timber verandah over the front door with an iron roof and the brick and stone chimneys are characteristic of the early colonial and goldrush periods.

The lean-to kitchen extension seems to be of the late 1860's period. Evidence of this is that the external weatherboards for this section were milled timber most likely from Wightman's sawmill recently in operation. Hanging chains in the fireplace of the living area shows that this area was originally used for cooking purposes adding to the fact that the lean-to section was a later addition.



Researched by Margot Hitchcock from her forthcoming book 'Blackwood History and Pioneers', 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 To purchase any books, please attend the Blackwood Historical Society Museum, open the 1st Saturday of every month from 10.30am – 1pm. Corner of Warner St and Greendale to Trentham Road, Blackwood.

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

Photos have been moved to the coretc location they are here for reference for the captions

Side of Cottage - Photos by Margot Hitchcock 2005.

*By Margot Hitchcock,
Historian for the Blackwood & District Historical Society.*



LONG LIVE BLACKWOOD!



Left: It shows my father Fredric Parsons (born 1908) with his father Rev. Frederick Hundy Parsons and his mother Rosie (nee Legg). This was either taken just before they left UK or soon after they arrived in Victoria, where my grandfather had gladly accepted the invitation in an English newspaper offering to train young men for the Anglican priesthood in rural Victoria. He was in time ordained by the Bishop of Bendigo.

Right: The ceramic painting



Firstly, I want to thank past and present Blackwood Times editorial teams for keeping alive my wonderful memories of Blackwood.

For your interest I am sending you the attached photograph of the ceramic tiled wall hanging I painted some years ago which I feel reinforces the Blackwood version of the roughly borrowed quote, 'You can take the girl out of Blackwood, but you can't take Blackwood out of the girl.' This wall hanging is now in my garden in a Kincumber, Central Coast, Retirement Village - to remind me of Blackwood that, since childhood, has been the place closest to my heart.

The ceramic painting is a pretty faithful copy of a black and white photograph of my English Grandfather, Rev. Frederick Hundy Parsons, his American-born wife Rosie Elizabeth Legg, and their firstborn son (my father), Fredric Hundy Parsons (born 1908). They are shown outside the then Blackwood vicarage which I understand is now a private home. Grandpa was a lay preacher with the Anglican Church Army in Northern England. His family did not have the money to finance his studies towards ordination. So, he brought his wife and three-year-old son Freddie, to Australia in response to an invitation in a local English newspaper to young men to come to Victoria to study and be ordained for the priesthood. The conditions were that they paid their own fares by ship and were willing to be assigned where they were most badly needed in Victorian rural areas. Grandpa was later ordained by the Bishop of Bendigo.

Blackwood was, in a sense, Grandpa's first 'parish', forever so loved by the family that later when he was the incumbent priest in Maldon, Bamawn, Geelong and other Victorian parishes, they returned to Blackwood for their holidays. Grandpa bought two rooms from a friend, a Catholic priest who was leaving Blackwood. These two rooms were carted on a truck and erected on a small plot of land on the road that leads downhill to the cricket ground. Two rooms were added on later to become 'The Rest', the loved family home where Freddie and his ten years younger brother Gordon, continued to bring their own children years later - all of us kids were lovers of Blackwood. My Dad, a bit of a tearaway as a kid, (witness the slingshot in his hand) had a life-long heavy stutter he turned to his advantage by making people laugh. He grew up to become a leading comedy writer at the Melbourne Tivoli, and later in radio and TV, writing sketches for Graham Kennedy. As a kid I soaked up Dad's treasured fund of historical stories of Blackwood bushrangers, the gold-rush era etc. His colourful stories no doubt inspired the fictional bush towns in my four published Australian historical novels: Ironbark, Ghost Gum Valley, The Lace Balcony, and Golden Hope.

Now for my two teenage grandchildren, Eadie and Gus Cassim, I am writing my childhood memoir about Janice (my given name at birth) in which Dad's stories and my own loved memories of our holidays with Grandma Rosie in Blackwood play an important role. My Rev. Grandpa died far too young in his fifties, worn out by his heavy workload in poor parishes during the Great Depression. Grandma finally retired to The Rest, where she later married the widower of an old friend. I was her young bridesmaid at their Wedding in Blackwood Anglican Church. So, it is possible some older Blackwoodians of my generation will remember her as Mrs Jack Nelson. She was quite a character. Knee-high to a grasshopper but full of energy and kindness. She died at age 97 and was still mentally bright. She had lived happily alone in Blackwood until she was 94 and was still mowing her own little front lawn.

Grandma was thrilled, when in honour of my late Rev. Grandpa, I brought my baby son from Sydney to be baptized in All Saints Anglican Church, Blackwood. He is now the well-known film and TV actor, Nick Cassim.

While searching through my files, whilst writing my childhood memoir, I came across a list of my Woman's Day features. This states that my Bridesmaid at my Grandma's Wedding story was published in the 24 June 1957 issue of Woman's Day. As Grandma Rosie (nee Legg) Parsons was born 5 May 1881 in U.S.A. this shows she was 76 at time of her marriage to Jack Nelson in All Souls Anglican Church, Blackwood.

If anyone remembers stories about my family, I'd be most happy to hear them. As my Dad would say... all stories are welcome, 'warts and all!

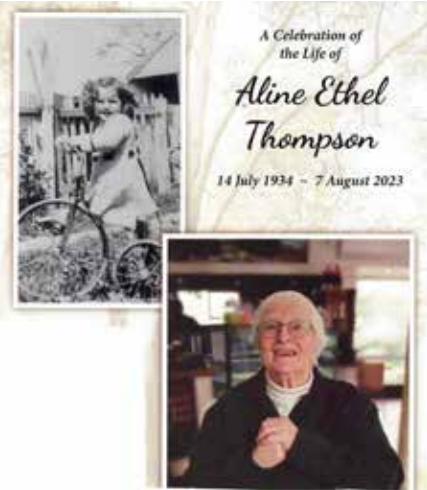
Johanna (Parsons) Nicholls

IN MEMORY OF ALINE ETHEL THOMPSON (14 JULY 1934 - 7 AUGUST 2023)

Aline had a long-time family association in Blackwood and district.

Her descendants moved to Barrys Reef in the mid 1860s. Her great grandma, Elizabeth Anderson (née Pryn) was the local midwife. Her great grandfather, Alexander Anderson, owned and worked a timber-mill in East Trentham. Her mum, Ethel Maryanne Seaborn (née Holman) and her grandma, Ethel May Holman (née Anderson), were born in and went to school in Barrys Reef.

Aline Thompson (née Seaborn) was born in Tatura in 1934, had many holidays at Barrys Reef and started bringing her family in the late 1950s. No power, no running water and a dunny-can up the back. In the 1960s and 70s Aline relied on the Trentham baker and milk van for deliveries.



In the mid-1970s Aline and her husband Jack became involved in the Barrys Reef Historical Society. They continued to holiday at Barrys Reef for many years. In 2004 Aline went on to join Blackwood & District Historical Society. Aline was an archivist, sharing her knowledge and love of history. She remained an active member until her sudden death in August 2023.

Aline's family still live and holiday in the area.



• COMMUNITY UPDATES •

BLACKWOOD MOTOR CYCLE CLUB

Blackwood Motorcycle Club had an adventure to Tooborac on Sunday 20th April 2024. Five bikes left Blackwood with six people going through all the beautiful surrounding hills of Lancefield, Pyalong and onto Tooborac Hotel where we sat in a fantastic beer garden enjoying the warm weather. Meals were great and most of us took home one of their famous pies for dinner. We recommend this place for a Sunday drive/ride for lunch. Watch out for our next ride.

Brett Bond

CFA REPORT

On the 25th of April Blackwood hosted a dawn service to commemorate ANZAC Day. It was a solemn and memorable service with a number of speakers including those from the Ballan RSL. The service was attended by quite a large crowd including two friends of mine I served in the Army with. The dawn service was followed by the lowering and raising of the flag along with playing of the Last Post and the minute's silence concluding with Reveille. At the end of the commemoration there was a gunfire breakfast put on by Progress and volunteers.

It has been a reasonably quiet start to the end of the Fire Danger Period with two call outs for the brigade. The first call out was on the 27th March to Barrys Reef for a small grass fire and the second was on the 3rd April to the Mineral Springs for a shed fire which is why keeping aware at all times is critical even with the cooler weather.

Be especially careful of candles and heaters that are left unattended, especially near children and hanging material such as curtains, drapes or clothes left to dry.

On Sunday the 28th of April, the Ballan Rescue Unit gave a presentation of all the equipment carried on the vehicle for rescues including securing a vehicle in a precarious position, the tools used to cut or open a damaged vehicle among other pieces of rescue gear. The presentation was very informative and we gained a lot of insight into operating procedures and techniques.

On the 5th of May, the first Sunday of the month, we had our regular training and equipment check day. As part of training with some new members, we conducted a fuel reduction burn along the boundary of the cemetery which had a significant build-up of leaf litter, grass and other fuel sources. The burn was completed on the day and patrolled for a number of days afterwards to ensure there was no points of re-ignition.

As Daylight Saving has ended it is time to ensure your smoke detectors are checked and the batteries changed.

Download the Vic Emergency app to your phone which will keep you up to date on any incidents and warnings and alerts through the App Stores or on your computer using this web site:

<https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au/respond/>

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 or the morning of the first Sunday of each month or drop us an email to blackwoodcfa@gmail.com

DO NOT USE FACEBOOK IF YOU ARE REPORTING AN EMERGENCY...

ALWAYS RING 000 or 112 on a mobile

*Karl Church
Communications and Community Safety Liaison Officer
Blackwood Fire Brigade*



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• COMMUNITY UPDATES •

ST MARTIN'S CHAPEL

It really is a time to be thankful. Thankful that the summer was not as hot as predicted and that we were not threatened by bush fires. Thankful for the blue autumn skies that provide the contrasting backdrop for the vibrant oranges, reds and yellows of the seasonal foliage in our streets and gardens.

Thankful for the people in our town who organise and pitch in and help at events such as Blackwood's Easter Carnival, the Whole Town Garage Sale, the Dawn Service on Anzac Day, the Easter Bingo, The Biggest Morning Tea and St Martin's "Death by Chocolate" fundraiser.

Thankful for those who share their talents in the town by offering well-being events such as yoga, music, poetry and writing workshops and having common interest groups available at our doorstep.

We say we are the "lucky country", I think we could describe ourselves as a "lucky town".

St Martin's Management Committee is proud that the Chapel space has been utilised for some of these events.

We have some others of our own planned for the rest of the year as well. On the agenda so far is another Trivia Night, an exhibition of men's art, a gardening workshop on building above ground garden beds and a planting day combined with a family barbecue.

We will also have another 'Murder Mystery Night' in the first part of next year.

Enjoy the autumn sunshine, lighting the fires of an evening to toast your toes and being thankful for all the good things in our lives.

Robyn Zanon

LANDCARE NEAR YOU



Your local Landcare group, Blackwood Barrys Reef Landcare Group (BBRLG) covers the townships of Blackwood (including Red Hill, Golden Point and Simmons Reef), Barrys Reef, Bullarto South, the Greenhills district and into Dales Creek.

BBRLG cares for Crown Reserves and private land within our designated area, when invited. While the group has no authority in the Lerderderg State Park or the Wombat State Forest, the group does assist in citizen science and approved projects. Waterways and the Lerderderg River are part of the Melbourne Water's remit, who we liaise with. We also keep in touch with the council regarding roadsides. Recently BBRLG has been working with neighbouring "care" groups to explore opportunities to work together, including pooling funding to tackle the highly invasive holly and cherry laurel which will transform our forest if not kept under control. As weeds are our main focus, we are fully aware that a weed does not respect boundaries. Keeping weeds out of the beautiful forest is our ultimate goal.

We have just wrapped up our workshop series about koalas and food trees. Koala Clancy gave a great talk about koalas in our area and David from Seeds2Leaves showed ways to propagate local trees and bushes. Thanks to Moorabool Shire Council for the funds for this workshop series. If you spot a koala, take a photo and upload it onto the citizen science app iNaturalist as your information will go into the Moorabool Koala Count.

The other Moorabool Council grant we received this year was for Fungi Town kids' art workshops which culminated in the Easter Carnival parade. Well done to our local artist Kathy Holowko for her amazing ideas and energy.

Regular working bees are a mainstay of the group. Controlling the infestations of weed species brings members from far and wide to help protect our local environment. This year we have worked behind Garden of St Erth/Jack Cann Reserve (heaps of holly there!), the Mineral Springs reserve and in April we assisted a member on their property where weeds had "got away". Working bees have also been occurring in Bullarto South where holly is highly prevalent and is making its way down the Lerderderg.

Our June working bee will continue the work behind the Blackwood Hall. This is a lovely bush spot which had become overgrown with broom and blackberry. While work is still needed, we've definitely made progress. Have a sit in the area and enjoy the views and the bushland.

We also support local community wasp control by the provision of insecticidal dust through the PO. In addition to wasp powder, BBRLG members can borrow a range of powerful equipment - chipper, trailer spray unit, hand tools and a limited range of herbicides (donation appreciated) - for use on their own properties.

With forty paid-up members BBRLG is one of the most active community groups in town! Come along to our regular "Landcare in the Pub" meetings. You are most welcome.

Check us out at www.blackwoodlandcare.org.au

or contact via email 3458Landcare@gmail.com

or keep updated through Facebook

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

Landcare Victoria Values

- Grounded in the community and knowledge of local landscapes
- Empowering individuals and communities to make a positive difference to their local landscapes
- Respectful of the knowledge of diverse groups of people with a connection to the land, including First Nations people
- Collaborative in our approach to achieving outcomes

OVER 55s SOCIAL CLUB

Attendance has been good at our Wednesday lunch get together, despite the cold. Come and join us for a delicious three course meal in a warm environment. It's only \$10 per person, starting at 11.30 am at the Community Hall. Happy Birthday to Wendy Bridgman, who just turned 90. She is a regular at Wednesday lunches and is a life member of our club.

Every six weeks Bernadette, the hairdresser from Trentham, comes to make everyone look stunning, for a mere \$20. All welcome on a Wednesday...if you are over 55!

Diane Volpe



Photos by John Kemp



Photos by John Kemp



Photo by Jeanne Tahini



Photo by John Kemp

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• COMMUNITY UPDATES •

MEDIEVAL RE-ENACTMENT

Over the years I have witnessed many events at the Blackwood Springs Reserve: weddings; concerts; cricket matches; feasts and budding engineers trying to dam the Lerderderg. However, the Medieval Re-enactment held on 11 February this year was a first.

Whilst collecting our weekly supply of one of the best mineral waters in all of the Moorabool & Hepburn shires I stumbled on fairies & pixies; sirens; laughing mushrooms; creatures with horrifying rat features; Blue-bird of Death (presumably to escort to after life) and maybe unicorns, dragons, griffins but definitely no Hircocervus - 1/2 deer & 1/2 goat creature.

I was to be witness to a Medieval Re-enactment, a collective activity that spans centuries, from the ancient world to the medieval world, after the fall of Rome to the end of the 15th century. These re-enactments were created at a time of legends, folk-lore and mystery and were 'performed' by creatures that captivated the imagination of people, reflecting their hopes, fears and desires. They are a rich tapestry of medieval importance and affirm the enduring power of story-telling.

Leon Bamford, Game Master on this occasion, advised me that the 2 tribes/teams/factions were over-seen by 'adjudicators' to ensure fair play and safety. These 4 Gamesters run the show - they tell participants who to fight. They intermingled more with one group than the other - highly questionable non-separation of powers, it seemed to me.

The Story: one faction is trying to find a friend in an unfortunate situation having been bitten by a vampire. Someone/something has been stolen by pixies but they are trying to find out how to save him/her.

If the priest is killed, then.... I'm not sure what, but it matters. There are rules such as scaven it up and 5 hits and you're out, but it seemed one could be brought back to life, or at the very least severe injuries cured with a wave of the hand and a chant. Leon suggested the re-enactment is very tactical and is a bit like 'real life' dungeons & dragons. Conspiracies abound. The worst weapon is a rubber sword.

Would that more conflicts were resolved in such a way: dress up in fantastic costumes, run around in ever-decreasing circles, have a laugh and then off to the pub for a glass of mead to recount skilled exchanges and moments of chivalry.



Photos & text ~ John Kemp

Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Labor Member for Macedon

Delivering for Macedon

📧 mary-anne.thomas@parliament.vic.gov.au


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• COMMUNITY UPDATES •

CROWN RESERVES COMMITTEE

On 12 April 2024, a new Blackwood Crown Reserves Committee of Management Inc (BCR) was appointed by the Department of Energy Environment & Climate Action (DEECA). The appointments are until 22 March 2027, but new members can be appointed at any time. DEECA will be scheduling an initial meeting & induction session shortly and office bearers will be elected at that meeting.

BCR Committee of Management is:

Brian Suters
John Kemp
Peter Fowler
Rose Carrington
Sarah Kukiell
Wendy Brown

The final, handover training session for the Energy Resilience Solutions system at the Springs Caravan Park was conducted by DEECA and BEON Energy on Friday 17 May. The system ensures the Caravan Park has back up power through an integrated mains, solar, battery & diesel generator system for an extended period of time. In case of an extended power cut in Blackwood, this will provide an invaluable resource for locals, A safe haven & somewhere to have a hot shower, cook a meal & charge your mobile phone. And it's something to boast about. There can't be many caravan parks that can absolutely guarantee 24/7 power no matter what!

Last but not least, the new committee wishes to recognise the work over the last few years by Bruce and Bev Butler.

Without their willingness to perform important Treasury, Project Management, coordination of various kinds and being available on short notice and importantly liaising with council and the associated "Red Tape" when required - it would have been difficult for the committee to operate.

Along with DEECA we thank them both for their assistance and support of the committee and more importantly the assets that belong to this wonderful community that are uniquely Blackwood and wish them both safe travels.

Peter Fowler & John Kemp, Crown Reserve Committee members



Brad & Jack doing the clean-up - with shovels!!

Forest Fire Management Victoria (FFMV) have done a great job restoring town boundary tracks around Blackwood. These are tracks close to the rear of houses backing onto the forest. Thanks for a job well done.

CERT



Our small but dedicated Team has had a busy first quarter of 2024. Whilst CERT is very much a Team effort, we are proud to acknowledge that the individual efforts of three of our members were acknowledged with personal commendations from Ambulance Victoria.

CERTs are the First Responders on the ground, providing immediate care in emergencies, before handing over patient care to Ambulance Victoria professionals. CERTs share their skills, commitment and care with locals and visitors in need. To have efforts acknowledged at the

higher levels of AV is appreciated and well deserved.

We congratulate them and all the Team who have, so far, this year:

- Responded to a number of 000 calls including, vehicle accidents, allergic emergencies, suspected heart attacks, handyperson injuries, falls and animal bites.
- Undertaken our ongoing clinical skills training to ensure each of us maintains our ATPs (Authority to Practice).
- Some attended our Ambulance Victoria First Responder Conference in Ballarat, where the focus was training for multi-casual trauma incidents (something we have had practical experience of recently).
- Worked with AV and CFA on finalisation of the long-awaited shed to house our response vehicle
- Taken part in the annual Blackwood Easter Carnival.

As part of the parade for the Carnival, it was wonderful to see so many children and young families taking part in their resplendent mushroom outfits. It was a reminder of what a vibrant and growing community Blackwood is, with new residents making this wonderful area their home.

We invite anyone who has recently moved to the area (Greendale, Dales Creek, Blackwood and through to Newbury and surrounds) to get in contact so they can be part of the renewed future of this vital community volunteer group. Becoming part of CERT is a practical and dynamic way to volunteer and contribute to local health and well-being. It's also fun, friendships, challenges and community.

If you'd like to have a chat about this opportunity you can call either Jan or Leonie, OR go online at www.ambulance.vic.gov.au/careers/become-a-first-responder/

We'd love to welcome new people to join us as CERTs.

*Leonie Brasier
Co-Team Leader*

COME MEET US AT THE PUB!

Blackwood Emergency Resilience Group (BERG) is holding its Annual General Meeting on Thursday 4th July. The meeting will be held at the Blackwood Pub over dinner, starting at 6pm and we would love you to join us.

BERG is a small, low maintenance and fun group of locals who meet every 2 months at the pub to discuss and plan for ways we can increase awareness of, and preparation for, potential future emergency events in Blackwood and surrounds. To keep chugging along we need some new members. Come along to our AGM to see groups done different!



• COMMUNITY UPDATES •

BLACKWOOD CRICKET CLUB

Although the season is well and truly over, there is a set of bats, balls, and wickets at the oval for all to use. Please return them to the grandstand when finished for the next crowd. I have seen them used a number of times and it's been good. Looks like locals have been filling up Ollies can bin and this is fantastic, it will be emptied soon, so if it's not there it will only be for a day or two.

If anyone is interested in playing or volunteering for the next season, you are more than welcome. Either through myself 0428686680, Benny 0427225155 or email blackwoodcricketclub@gmail.com

Regards

Brian, President.

THE BLACKWOOD AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Blackwood and District Historical Society met on the 4th May and had a few visitors come through the Museum. Just a reminder that if you haven't had a chance to visit, you really should come down and see some of the relics of Blackwood's past.



Our next meeting will be Saturday 15th June and we will be open from 10am till 2pm. On the long weekend, King's Birthday, possibly open Saturday 8th June if volunteers Ray, Paul or myself are available (keep an eye out for the signs). Sam Rae, our local MP for Hawke, visited the Historical Society and donated an Australian flag. He was given a tour and spoke to our committee members. We have organised a social day out to Bendigo Central Deborah Mine Tour and lunch at the Historical Shamrock Hotel. The society also discussed the possibility of the Jackson's Creek Gully stolen plaque to be replaced. The historical society is also planning to attend Trentham Primary to deliver a lesson of Blackwood History to the students. Also, we have a new first aid kit in our tea room.

Also a special shout out to Maralyn and Kieth De La Rue for organising and running the Bingo event that helped raise funds for the society as well as Karen Bermingham Margret Develin and Jan Vanderloo who put on an amazing spread after the event. Volunteers, hard work and donations are the foundations of the Historical society and we couldn't keep going without your continues support.

We look forward to your visit and questions and feel free to contact the team at: team@blackwoodhistoricalsociety.com.au

Caption for Historical Society_1 photo

Ray Castellin, Aleks Kukiel, Sam Rae, Mark Devenish, Liz Hall

Photo - John Kemp

Mark Devenish – President, photo John Kemp

WOMBAT BOOKCLUB

Hello and welcome sunny Autumn, nice days and cooler nights. Our happy Bookclub meetings take place at the Blackwood Pub, usually around 3pm on the 3rd Sunday of each month. We are an informal, friendly bunch and enjoy exchanging views about the book and enjoy a nice social chat as well. Venue and times are subject to change, if you are interested in joining our group, please contact Jane Howat at jane.howat@gmail.com

The two interesting novels read lately were - 'The Plant Hunter' by T.L. Mogford, and 'The Language of Food', by Annabel Abb.

Sandy: The Plant Hunter, took me while to get into the story. There were a lot of detail and characters to absorb. The story of Harry Compton sets on a quest for a rare plant after he escapes from the Tyrant who owned the nursery Compton worked for. Harry eventually finds his hidden gem which changes his life around finding love and great fortune. Once into the story you keep turning the pages to find out how he outdoes his previous, narcissistic boss. This has been compared to an 'Indiana Jones' style of epic.



Wombies

Jane: I loved this book. Particularly its subject matter interested me. Great hunger for new and exotic botanical treasures became the Victorian obsession. The descriptions and detail of horticulture in times of discovery are a great background to a terrific tale of adventure. Though somehow I felt cheated by its ending.



Wombies

Sandy: The Language of Love is based on the true story of Eliza Acton who lived with her mother and tried to make a living from writing poetry. Much to her mother's consternation that Eliza, a woman of 'affluence' never cooked in her life, would start working in their kitchen alongside a hired not so well-to-do young maid, Ann Kirby.

They begin a friendship and share cooking ideas as well as Eliza combining her newfound skills with poetry. Ann finds solace working in the kitchen whilst trying to visit her mother in an asylum and her destitute father. The story takes on a few twists which keeps the reader interested. An easy read once the reader is hooked into the story.



Wombies

Sandy Schmidt-Jones

HEY, WHAT'S YOUR BIG IDEA

Have you got a great idea about something you would like to see happen around town?

Are you part of a community group or sporting club that needs a little bit of help? Or an individual with a great idea?

Blackwood Progress wants to hear from you.

Send your ideas to blackwoodprogress@gmail.com

Please have your ideas in by the 23rd June.

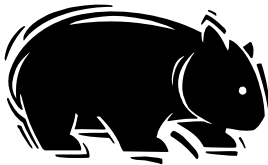
Community Invitation

Blackwood Progress would like to invite you to their Annual General Meeting.

The meeting will take place at the Blackwood Hall on Thursday 18th July, commencing at 7:30pm.

New members are always welcome. We hope to see you there.

This should go in Around Town.....



• COMMUNITY UPDATES •

DINNER CLUB

Dinner club is held on the first Thursday of each month, we have a few who attend regularly but it is open to anyone who likes to try different cuisines, to have a chat and a laugh. If we have enough people we take the bus (\$10 each to cover costs) or we car pool and meet at the venue.



Notification is usually via the Community Events Facebook page a week before, but if you would like to go, but don't have Facebook, we will attend locals night at the pub the Monday before, or you can leave a message at the post office. Anyone who has attended or expressed interest is added to the messenger group.

For our night out in April we finally went to the Kyneton RSL. It was only a small group but the food was good and reasonably priced.

For our night in May we went to the Indian restaurant in the new area in Maddingley, called Bombay Chopati this was recommended as some of 'the best Indian food I have ever had'. (Dee C) We had quite a large group who ordered a range of dishes so there was lots of fabulous food.



Here is what our Dinner Clubbers thought....

Amazing food Bombay Chopati. Slow service but got to take home lots of takeaway. Thanks Dinner Clubbers
Dee

Good choice D. Quality, and more importantly, Quantity.
Ray

Loved the food thanks for recommending D.
Rose

Great night, food and company were some of the best.

Good suggestion Dee.

Terri

Great choice, next month is June (we all know what that means!!!)

So any ideas where we could go?

Kathy

So far we have had a few suggestions, we like to keep the close venues for the colder months so we don't have to travel so far. If you would like to join us contact Janette D, Rose or Kathy B.

Photos Kathy Berrill

• AROUND TOWN •

CURRAWONG RESOURCES UPDATE

We are continuing to drill at the Comet. As of today we expect to drill another 3 holes after the current one. Then we will review all the results and decide upon any further exploration as is usual.

There has been a lot of encouragement in the drilling to date and as we see it, the Blackwood goldfield has enormous potential, which we are continuing to assess. Previous mining at Blackwood has reached a maximum depth of 800 feet (240m) at the Sultan Mine, whereas the Fosterville gold mine is operating at depths of over 1000m.

The Blackwood goldfield could be the next big Fosterville gold mine, based upon our geological information which compares very well with the geology of Fosterville. Fosterville has been an absolute treasure trove for all Victorians over the past decade, with 2023 production totalling 277,694oz valued at \$1 billion. Agnico Eagle Mines' Fosterville mine in Victoria is the largest gold producer in the state.

The Australian gold price continues to improve and is currently at the record price of \$3624 per ounce.

Rex Motton

WHOSE TATT IS THAT NOT A SPIDER!

It is no secret that if I fall I break! I have so much metal holding me together that I have to take my X-rays through customs at airports. I've even been strip searched on my way to Kazakhstan in a little enclosed tent by a woman in full Abaya Dress with Hijab who communicated in grunts and hand signals.

Of course, this also means I have a lot of scars! I have one that runs down from my elbow on my forearm and another that runs up my forearm from my wrist. There is a 4cm gap between them so they don't meet. Many people used to get distracted when they noticed them. Something had to be done! Ah, a tattoo would do the job! A fine poke tattoo, a popular technique which uses a very fine needle instead of a gun. A pixie or a fairy flying between the scars would have worked if I was that sort of person. I realised what suited my personality more was a Pholcid spider, better known as a Daddy Long Legs, climbing from one scar to another down my arm.

As a girl, I used to love Daddy Long Legs and I'm sure, dear readers, you have them around your places. Funny thing is that I never realised how many people had arachnophobia. Ah well, too late now - but I love him (or is it a she?).



Jimmy Coyne



• AROUND TOWN •

LUXE BUNCH



My name is Katy and I have been running my floristry business Luxe Bunch for just under 2 years after switching from a career in publishing. I’m usually based in inner-west Melbourne but in September we moved to Blackwood for a year to take a break from the city and test out country life. Safe to say, we’re loving it!

My business model is simple: I create a weekly seasonal bunch with the best flowers and foliage I can find at the flower market and then offer them in 3 sizes. I also offer arrangements in vases. This makes it simple for customers to choose a bunch according to their budget and enables me to run a nearly zero-waste business.

My bunches are wrapped in hessian and twine and with a recycled message card attached. I source the flowers and foliage, condition everything, make up the bunches and look after all of the associated admin (messages, payments) myself. I also hand deliver every bunch ensuring they arrive in perfect condition. I offer a hessian wrap recycling service which has been taken up by so many of my customers whose values regarding sustainability and waste align with my own. Regulars and subscribers make up the core of my business and it’s a pleasure to chat with customers who have become friends when I deliver. Since moving to Blackwood I have been delivering bunches every Friday to customers everywhere from Greendale to Trentham and it has been so lovely getting to know the locals who share my passion for fresh flowers.

If you need a bunch for yourself or a friend, please do get in touch!

Instagram: @luxe_bunch

Facebook: facebook.com/luxe.bunch/

RAW SALT POETRY BOOK LAUNCH AND OPEN MIC

2-4pm, Saturday 23 June

St Martin’s Chapel Blackwood

Join local poet Izzy Roberts-Orr to celebrate the launch of her debut poetry collection, Raw Salt, published by Vagabond Press. Hear Izzy in conversation with local author and herbalist Caroline Parker, plus poetry performances by Izzy and guest poets Manisha Anjali (Naag Mountain, Giramondo) and Sam Morley (Earshot, Puncher & Wattman, You Do You, Upswell).

Following the guest speakers, get up on the open mic and share your own poetry for the chance to take home a book, wine and tea prizes!

https://events.humanitix.com/raw-salt-poetry-book-launch-and-open-mic



• MEDIA RELEASE •

LEDERDERG INTREPRETATIVE SIGN LAUNCH

Walking group reduces the footprint of its interpretive signage

Volunteer hiking and biking group, the Great Dividing Trail Association, last week launched an innovative, environmentally friendly interpretive signage project along the length of the 87km Lerderderg Track from Daylesford to Bacchus Marsh.

Signage has been reduced to small placards on top of existing directional posts marking the way. Each of the placards includes a QR code that links to more extensive information and images on the Great Dividing Trail Association (GDTA) website (gdt.org.au).

“This approach has minimised the environmental ‘footprint’ of our interpretive signage,” commented Gib Wettenhall, who manages publications for the GDTA.

Over 40 people gathered at the Garden of St Erth in Blackwood to celebrate the launch of the GDTA’s Lerderderg Track Interpretive Signage project.

The signage tells the stories of the people who lived along the track and gives insights into the geology, the flora and fauna and the place names that track users encounter along the way.

Guests including GDTA Patron, Steve Moneghetti, and Mountain Bike Ambassador, Lisa Jacobs praised the project for bringing the history of the track to life and making it easily accessible to track users.

Sponsors were represented by Moorabool Shire Mayor, Cr Ally Munari and representatives of three local Bendigo Community Banks – Trentham, Bacchus Marsh and Daylesford.

Moorabool Shire Mayor, Cr Ally Munari remarked on the importance of the project saying: “Projects like this make it more attractive for people to get out into our beautiful natural surrounds and keep active and healthy.”

The GDTA team who planned, researched and wrote the signage text and web stories for the 17 signage sites were Tim Bach, Arie Baelde, Ed Butler and Gib Wettenhall.



The interpretive signage project is the second stage of the GDTA’s work to refurbish the Lerderderg Track. The Track was built by the GDTA as the final stage in the 310km Great Dividing Trail Network, which includes the Goldfields Track from Ballarat to Bendigo. In recent years, the Lerderderg Track had fallen into disrepair. The GDTA obtained a substantial grant from Victorian Department of the Environment (currently DEECA) in 2018 to renew posts, signage and other infrastructure along the Track. This first stage of the refurbishment was completed in 2020.

For more on the interpretive signage project see www.gdt.org.au/tracks/lerderderg-track/lerderderg-track-interpretive-signage

Contact for further comment and images: GDTA Publications, Gib Wettenhall

mobile: 0419 370 342

email: gib@empresspublishing.com.au

• GIG & EVENTS GUIDE •

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
JUNE		
Sat 1, 6-8	Brett Franke	Pig & Whistle
Sat 1, 3-5	Victoriana Gaye	The Cosmo
Fri 7, 10am	NBA Final game 1 live	Hotel Trentham
Sat 8, 2-4	Pop Paella, live music and wine	St Anne's Winery
Sat 8, 3-5	Al Carr	The Cosmo
Sat 8, 7-9	Marlee Grace	Pig & Whistle
Tues 11 - Wed 19, day	Youth Art Exhibition	Lerderderg Library, Bacchus Marsh
Sat 15, 3-5	Jess Parker & Rebecca Jane Howell	The Cosmo
Sun 16, 12:30-3:30	Bryan Sadler	Greendale Pub
Thu 20, 6-8	Youth Art Exhibition, award presentation	Lerderderg Library, Bacchus Marsh
Fri 21, 9:30pm	Friday night feels	Flanagans, Bacchus Marsh
Sat 22, 3-5	Ellen James	The Cosmo
Sun 23, 3-5	Dave Graney & Clare Moore (ticketed)	The Cosmo
Sat 29, 6-8	Brett Franke	Pig & Whistle
Sat 29, 3-5	Jeremy Beggs	The Cosmo

REGULAR STUFF		
Mon from 5	Old Farts Night & meat tray raffle	Blackwood Pub
Wed, 7 - 10	Taproom Trivia	The Taproom, Bacchus Marsh
Wed evenings	Locals night dinner specials	The Cosmo
Thu evenings	Pizza and movie night	Radio Springs
Mon	Locals night dinner and drink specials	Pig and Whistle
Fri, 5 - 9	Meat tray raffle & cocktail night	Greendale Pub
Fri pm	Meat tray raffle	The Cosmo
Fri, 6-7	Meat tray raffle	Hotel Trentham
Fri pm	Raffle	Pig and Whistle
Last Fri monthly	Flashbank Friday with Ian Banks	The Taproom, Bacchus Marsh
2nd/4th Sun: 2	Regular service	St Martin's Chapel
2nd/4th Sun: 2	Regular service	St Martin's Chapel

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
JULY		
Sat 6, 3-5	Victoria Gaye	The Cosmo
Sat 13, 3-5	Jesse Lawrance	The Cosmo
Sun 14, 4	Free Sportsmans Day featuring Anthony Koutoufidis	Hotel Trentham
Sat 20, 6-8	Brett Franke	Pig & Whistle
2nd/4th Sun: 2	Regular service	St Martin's Chapel

MARKETS WITHIN 30 MINUTES

Date	Market	Locatiuon
June		
Sat 1: 9-1	Woodend Farmers Market	Cnr Forest & High Streets
Sat 1: 9-1	Ballan Lions Market	Inglis Street
Sat 1: 8-2	Darley Community Market	Cnr Fitzroy & Grey Streets
Sat 8: 9-1	Ballan Farmers Market	96 Inglis Street
Sat 8: 8:30-1	Kyneton Farmers Market	35 Piper Street
Sat 15: 9-1	Trentham Farmers Market	Town Square
Sat 15: 9-1	Glenlyon Farmers Market	Glenlyon Hall
Sat 15: 8-2	Darley Community Market	Cnr Fitzroy & Grey Streets
Sat 22: 9-1	Daylesford Farmers Market	102 Vincent Street
Sun 23: am	Trentham Railway Market	Trentham Railway Station
Sun 30: am	Trentham Railway Market	Trentham Railway Station

July		
Sat 6: 9-1	Woodend Farmers Market	Cnr Forest & High Streets
Sat 6: 9-1	Ballan Lions Market	Inglis Street
Sat 6: 8-2	Darley Community Market	Cnr Fitzroy & Grey Streets
Sat 13: 9-1	Ballan Farmers Market	96 Inglis Street
Sat 13: 8:30-1	Kyneton Farmers Market	35 Piper Street
Sat 13: 8-2	Darley Community Market	Cnr Fitzroy & Grey Streets
Sat 20: 9-1	Trentham Farmers Market	Town Square
Sat 20: 9-1	Glenlyon Farmers Market	Glenlyon Hall
Sat 27: 9-1	Daylesford Farmers Market	102 Vincent Street
Sun 28: am	Trentham Railway Market	Trentham Railway Station



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Without doubt, one of the best days in Blackwood each year is the Easter Carnival. The autumn sun is (usually) shining, the air is crisp, the trees are glowing with colour, and the streets and reserve are packed with people (and so many dogs!), both locals and visitors, enjoying the shared experience. It is also the one day of the year which showcases the generous locals - the groups and the individuals who volunteer in many different ways throughout the year to make our community so wonderful. As part of the Blackwood Community, our volunteer members appreciate all the work that goes in every year to make the Easter Carnival such a success.

*Thank you, Jan & Leonie
Co-Team Leaders
Blackwood CERT*

Dear Editor,

I attended Blackwood's second dawn service only to be very disappointed. To attend last year's was a service to be proud of. There were a couple of things which I believe should not have been included this year.

Unfortunately, there was an extraordinary long wait for the service to begin. Music was played while we waited; why... I'm not sure, whether because we were waiting or it was planned.

We then listened to a long list of names of residents of Blackwood who have died, some of whom have taken their own lives. I believe this has no place in the dawn service which is specifically to honour, not only those who have died, but all who have served in the forces of our country.

I have attended many dawn services and have found them to be a moving experience at that hour of the day and a chance for reflection on those in my family and friends I know have served. Perhaps as we have so many musicians in our town someone might play the 'Last Post' at our next service....just a thought!

Jane Howat

More locked up State Forests to come?

Here we go again with our State Forests, this time in the Central Highlands. While this designated Regional Forest Agreement, (RFA), area plus East Gippsland is still reeling from the recent early timing of cessation of native forest harvesting the proposal is to create an additional 350,000h of National Park from State Forests to become the much touted Great Forest National Park. Again the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council, (VEAC), the so-called unbiased independent group of experts, is the champion of the proposal. This time

the report, although at this stage not making firm recommendations to Parliament, was released with limited general consultation. One does wonder if this will be rubber-stamp form of creation by this Council. Hey..... you might have missed it but "Engage Victoria" provided, some suggest with stealth, an opportunity for Victorians to have some input and comment with an online questionnaire as to their State Forest of interest, for what activities and how frequently visited. This was titled "Help shape the future of state forests in the Central Highlands". This is now closed. There are many who consider decisions have already been made and this online survey was just an attempt to create some credibility to the consultation period. There were a number of Local Community Engagements during April and May that were well attended with a resounding answer to the VEAC panel, NO MORE NATIONAL PARKS. After the Central West Investigation by VEAC and the recommendations made, despite the majority of the public submissions against National Park status, regular bush users are fighting again to save Victoria's public land from the moves to closed access, restrictions on usage and eventually total lack of management. Melina Bath MP is a National Party Member for Eastern Victoria in the Legislative Council. Melina has been a very active supporter of the concerns of Bush Users in the past and is now showing her hand again with sponsorship of a Parliament petition. Below is link to the petition plus the description of the petition. If you share the concern and consider that there must be a better way to protect our native flora and fauna while still allowing access for legitimate recreational activities please think about signing the petition. It is open to residents of Victoria only but there is no age limit.

Stop the creation of any new national parks (parliament.vic.gov.au)

The Petition of certain citizens of the State of Victoria draws to the attention of the Legislative Council the potential for the Allan Labor Government to establish more national parks in Victoria including the Central Highlands, and Gippsland regions.

In accepting the formation of three new Central West national parks, the Victorian Government has shown disregard for the interests of bush user groups who participate in traditional recreational activities, which not only contribute to rural and regional jobs but also have a positive impact on people's well-being and the natural environment. Locking up public forests increases the risk of bushfires, placing communities and the environment in greater peril. Neglecting public land leads to overgrown tracks, the proliferation of invasive weeds and feral pests, which degrade the environment and pose a threat to native flora and fauna.

*Stephen Smitham
Darley, Victoria*

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

Blackwood Times supports our community.

The Blackwood Times is a community newspaper, run by volunteers, that connects the community of Blackwood and its immediate surrounds by dispersing information, news and items of general interest. It aims to foster understanding, as well as provide a platform for locals to voice opinion, showcase their creative skills and provide a service directory through advertising.

The Blackwood Times is a bi-monthly community service published by The Blackwood Times Vic Inc. Publication costs are met through the support of advertisers and donations and in return The Blackwood Times will continue to support community groups and projects.

Your advertising investment will ensure that your business will be seen by residents and visitors to Blackwood, Trentham and Greendale with a print run of 500 copies and average of 800 downloads per issue from our website: www.theblackwoodtimes.com.au

Your investment can be as small or as large as you would like as we offer various sizing and pricing options which are outlined on our website.

For further information email team@theblackwoodtimes.com.au

Your advertising helps Blackwood directly.



SAM RAE MP

LABOR MEMBER FOR HAWKE

Get in touch

- ✉ Sam.rae.mp@aph.gov.au
- ☎ 03 9070 1960
- 📷 [SamRaeForHawke](#)
- 👤 Sam Rae
- 📍 100 Mckenzie St, Melton VIC 3337



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Sat 8am - 4pm | **Sun** 10am - 2pm

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