

Champions emerge from horrendous

# DISTRICT FIRES

On Saturday 19 December 2015, one of the worst fires ever in this area ravaged some 4000 hectares in the Scotsburn and Clarendon districts. The fire destroyed twelve homes, many kilometres of fencing, shedding, farm and wild animals, and devastated the lives of at least fifteen families. In this issue, the *Buninyong Community News* pays tribute to some of the many people who played pivotal roles during and after the fire.



**Marc Cannan**, 30, took on the responsibility of being Captain of the Buninyong CFA Fire Brigade in 2013.

Since then, Marc Cannan has led his volunteer brigade of 70 members at major bushfires at places such as Dereel and the Brisbane Ranges, as well as local house and building fires. On most of these occasions, the Buninyong CFA was supported by full-time CFA personnel.

But all of that changed in a hurry on Saturday 19 December 2015 when he and the local brigade responded to a call from the Finns Road area in Scotsburn where a fire had started and was being fanned by howling 80kph north-westerly winds with the temperature well above 35°C.

In the first CFA truck on the scene, Marc and his brigade were faced with the critical task of both attacking the fire and checking on the safety of local residents, some not even aware of the fire and their imminent danger. By evening on that day, his CFA pager had registered more than 60 calls.

For many days following, Marc and the local brigade worked long hours to keep the fire under control.

Away from his CFA duties, he is an aircraft maintenance engineer based at the Ballarat Airport.



For much of the year, veteran pilot **Graham Brice**, 65, undertakes charter and surveillance flights for the Ballarat-based company Aerovision. But during summer, he becomes a front-line member of the CFA-contracted aerial support and fire-fighting team.

For 20 years, Graham was the chief pilot for Missionary Aviation Fellowship in Papua New Guinea. For the past eighteen years he has been based in Ballarat.

At about 3.00pm on 19 December last, Graham was on 'fire alert' duty at the Ballarat Airport. "Suddenly there was the call out to a huge blaze at Scotsburn some 30km from the airport, and we knew it was a big one," he said.

For the next six hours straight, he was in the air above the Scotsburn fires in one of Aerovision's Cessna 337 aircraft. Flying at about 2500 feet and with an observer on board, their role was to provide situation reports to ground crews and to direct 'air attack' water-bombing aircraft which came in at about the 1000 feet level.

"It was pretty tough going on that day with turbulence caused by the winds and the heat from the fire, and visibility hampered by the huge smoke cloud. We finished after 9.00pm in the near darkness," he said.

*Continued back cover*

# Christmas eve brought some cheer



The Scotsburn barbecue saw some smiles come back for the first time since the disastrous fires.

The Christmas Eve barbecue held at the Scotsburn Hall was attended by some 100 residents and friends from the surrounding areas hard hit by the 19 December wildfire.

Raw emotion was mixed with relief and thanks as many of those present had not seen friends or neighbours since the fires. While many traumatised residents still were trying to come to grips with the loss of homes, fences, stock and other property, the support given by all at the function was really appreciated.

A large number of local and Ballarat businesses and organisations contributed food, drinks and other goods and equipment to make the barbecue possible.

The event was organised by the Scotsburn Hall Committee and the Upper Williamsons Creek Landcare group.

The next community get together hosted by the groups, is at Scotsburn Hall, Friday 29 January, from 6pm. Contact **Andrea Mason** at [scotsburnhall@gmail.com](mailto:scotsburnhall@gmail.com) or 0427 338 482. All welcome!

## Three honoured with RSL Life Membership

Three Buninyong RSL Sub-Branch members were presented with a State RSL Life Membership during the December meeting.

Branch President **Ray Mende** congratulated each member for their dedication to the ideals of the RSL during their membership.

**Bill Akell**, a member of many RSLs over the last 40 years, has served as a President and Secretary at Buninyong since joining in 1994.

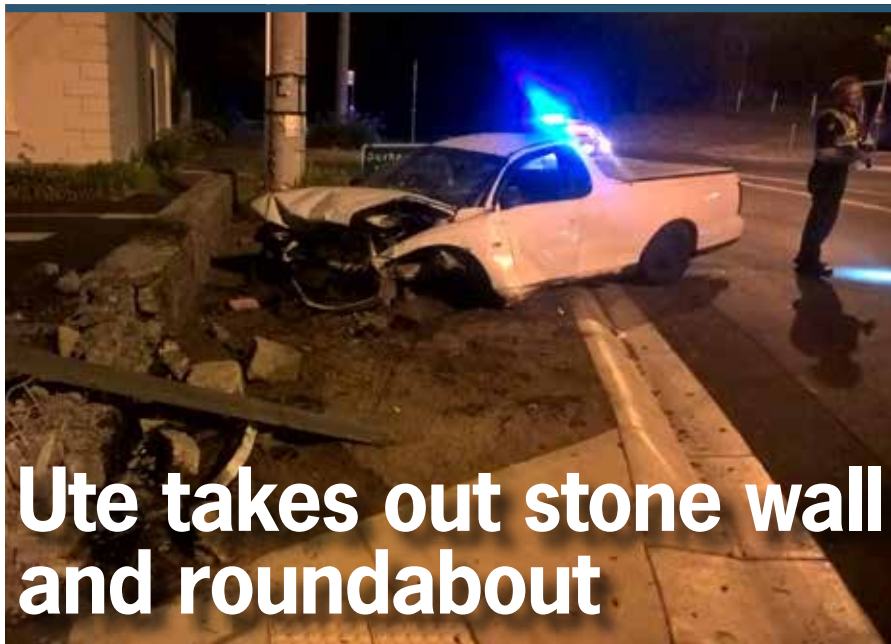
A Vietnam veteran with service recognised by a Mention in Dispatches and subsequently with a Conspicuous Service Medal, is currently co-ordinating the restoration of the white crosses displayed on Anzac and Remembrance days.

**Russ Hocking** is a three-tour Vietnam veteran, past Secretary and long term organiser of the Anzac and Remembrance day appeals. Russ first joined the RSL at Mornington before transferring to Buninyong in 1983.



Club Secretary **Bob Bennett**, **Russ Hocking**, **Max Thorne**, **Bill Akell** and President **Ray Mende**.

**Max Thorne** is a former CMF member who joined Buninyong on transfer from Horsham in 1975. He has served as President and is active in the fund raising Golf Day, Annual Dinner and recently co-ordinated the restoration of the WW1 Honour Boards at the RSL Hall.



# Ute takes out stone wall and roundabout

Taken shortly after the crash, this picture shows the white vehicle up against the newly completed bluestone wall near the old bank building.

**A single cab utility travelling from Ballarat along the Midland Highway careered through the new Buninyong roundabout just after midnight on 2 January demolishing signage, veering hard to the right and finishing up smashed into the bluestone wall adjacent to the Old Bank.**

A police spokesperson said that some of those in the utility had been identified and interviewed. It is understood that the Ballarat City Council will be taking action to recover costs associated with the repair of the wall.

# Feedback on Cycling Championships

**Cycling Australia has invited comments on ways to improve the annual championship cycling event. Here's a starting list for 2017 gathered on the day. Email any ideas to rpermez@gmail.com.**

- Give 'Buninyong' some prominence on all the roadside and other signage which now almost exclusively refers to 'Ballarat'. A leaf could be taken out of commentator Phil Liggett's book – he clearly places the races in and talks happily about Buninyong
- Spend a few dollars (perhaps a donation to a Service Club) to have some local "guides" about the town to answer questions. The orange jacketed crew might have their 'Traffic Controller' tickets but know little about the village. One was heard

telling an enquiring motorist looking for the local pool that Buninyong "didn't have a swimming pool."

- Local providers to have the opportunity of selling food/coffee up on the mountain.
- Now that there are some good spaces near the Town Hall, provide some music or other entertainment there during, between or after the races. The Town Hall veranda could be a great location.
- Move those red SRA bike maintenance trucks from the area in Warrenheip Street near the bank around the corner into Eyre Street to improve viewing and not intrude into the space outside the Red Door Pizza. They can fix bike wheels up just as easily from the suggested new location.

## streettalk

**EACH YEAR** the calendar produced by the local fire brigade comes up with a good angle. This year its photo is of the brigade's historic 1899 Merriweather fire engine, the re-discovered 1895 bell, together with a bearded 1890s fire fighter replete with brass helmet (see picture). Disappointed to find out that the bearded character was the brigade's life-member, volunteer **Bruce Morley**. But, then again, he could have been around in the 1890s!



**SOME INTRIGUE** around the wide strips of plastic which now adorn the elm trees near the bakery and chemist shop. It seems that arborist, **Tony Coxall** installed them recently to protect the new growth on the struggling old Memorial Avenue trees that had become part of the staple diet of the local possums.

**SEEMS THAT** there might be a move afoot to locate the new street sculpture work of artist **Cliff Burtt** somewhere in one of the newly paved areas on the south side of Learmonth Street. Original plan was to have it erected on the opposite corner – which is now looking good with the up-market al fresco set up in front of the Old Bluestone Café.

**OUR BALLARAT DAILY** apparently got quite excited about a hot news story recently concerning an outbreak of "looting" in Buninyong. Certainly was 'news' to the local police who knew nothing about any such nasty events.

**PEOPLE FIGHTING** fires get food provided from many great sources. But there was a first at the recent local fires where some of the food came from the banquet for the wedding set to be held at a private property in Pryors Road and which had to be switched to the Crown Hotel.

# Councils help in recovery efforts

**A Recovery Centre has been established for residents of Moorabool and Ballarat municipalities affected by the Scotsburn fire. The Recovery Centre provides recovery and clean-up information, advice, support and referrals to health and other agencies. Residents can also utilise a computer and printer with free internet provided by Moorabool Shire.**

Located at the community cottage at 407 Warrenheip Street Buninyong, the Recovery Centre is open daily between 10am and 2pm. The recovery phone number for residents of Moorabool Shire is 0400 324 551 and for City of Ballarat residents the number is 0419 883 699.

Regular information is being provided to affected residents through Moorabool Shire's Facebook and Twitter accounts and text messages.

## Blaze Aid

BlazeAid is a volunteer-based organisation that works with families and individuals in rural Australia after natural disasters such as fires and

floods. Working alongside the rural families, the volunteers help to rebuild fences and other structures that have been damaged or destroyed. BlazeAid relocated to the Garibaldi Hall, Hardies Hill Road, Garibaldi on Sunday 17 January to continue their great work.

If you require assistance please contact BlazeAid via [blazeaid.scotsburn@gmail.com](mailto:blazeaid.scotsburn@gmail.com) or telephone David on 0419 875 432. For more information or to donate to BlazeAid see [www.blazeaid.com](http://www.blazeaid.com)

## Stock Feed

Council has established a Stock Feed and Fodder Depot in Scotsburn for the collection and donation of feed for animals affected by the Scotsburn fire. Supplies of hay and feed are running low



*Michelle Richards (Moorabool Shire) working with Pam Hillas (left) and Maree Burnett-Dorn of the Victorian Council of Churches' Emergency Ministry at the Recovery Centre*

and donations of good quality feed would be appreciated. Donations of feed can be made by contacting **Shannon Walsh**, Community Safety Officer on 5366 7100.

## Donations

Financial donations to support the affected families can be made through the Bendigo Bank Appeal. Account Name: Scotsburn Bushfire Appeal BSB: 63300 Account Number: 156382715

## A Clarendon resident writes on the fires Lucky and grateful

**Saturday 19 December 2015 dawned an awful day. I was in Ballarat when I learned about 3.30pm that there was a fire at Scotsburn. I drove home as quickly as possible, to find a massive plume of smoke and flames to the north and west of my property.**

Emergency service vehicles were already on the road, advising us to evacuate. I collected my son, a box of precious documents, a change of clothes, and the cat, and drove to my son's place in Ballarat. We could not return until Monday afternoon. It was a very anxious wait, spending Saturday night sleepless as I followed the emergency response of the CFA crews on the Fireready app.

Sunday – another very hot day, with a north wind, and predicted south-westerly change in the afternoon that would bring the growing fire back to threaten

the township of Clarendon. I attended an overflowing Community Meeting at the Buninyong Town Hall at 10am, and learned the devastating news that neighbours at the lower end of Clarendon had had their homes wiped out when the fire crossed the Midland Highway below the Clarendon cemetery.

I was on tenterhooks all day until the change came through about 3pm, with some drops of rain, and thankfully the wind was moderate. We attended another Community Meeting in Buninyong on Monday 21 December at noon. Excellent support, and information, with a fantastic response from the Buninyong community. After the meeting, the Midland Highway was re-opened, and we were able to return home. I was so relieved to find all safe and sound. But just down the highway, there was total devastation.

We visited John and Anne Smith, and heard John's remarkable story of saving his 1,000 sheep from the bush paddock up Hopgoods Lane. As the fire loomed, the 80-year-old got on his quad bike and drove up into the teeth of the smoke to his flock, and guided them to the safety of a paddock near the highway. His 300-acre paddock, which borders *Narmbool*, was black, but his sheep had been saved! Not so lucky the *Narmbool* flock, where many sheep were incinerated. Fortunately the homestead and education centre were safe.

To top off our dramatic December at Clarendon, a serious accident happened outside my house on the Midland Highway on Christmas Eve. Two cars collided and ended up almost in my house. Emergency service vehicles were quickly on the scene, and an air ambulance helicopter landed on the highway to take one injured victim to Melbourne.

That is quite enough drama for Clarendon! We look forward to quieter times.

*Anne Beggs-Sunter, Clarendon*

# Community shows amazing support

**One of the risks of writing about a community disaster such as the December wildfire in the district, is that some who gave immediate assistance or who are still providing important help in the aftermath may be overlooked.**

However, bearing that in mind, the *Buninyong Community News* will attempt to place on record some of the superb examples of support given by local groups, businesses and people in the period since the fire. Four specific examples of this can be seen in the feature story *Fire Heroes* in this month's edition.

But the list of those who have helped in many ways is extensive and includes:

- **Volunteers of the Buninyong CFA Brigade.** Not enough can be said of the role played by the members of the local brigade who were first to the fires, who put their own lives in danger fighting them, who doubtless saved lives of some residents caught unawares by the imminence and speed of the fire, and who spent day after day with their colleagues bringing the fire under control in extreme weather conditions.
- **Local businesses** such as the Buninyong Newsagency which raised some \$3000 through a 'small change' appeal, the Foodworks supermarket which provided large quantities of bottled water to firefighters and others, the Buninyong Community Bank which kicked off a public appeal with a donation of \$10,000 and has since raised a further \$25,000 from customers and the community, and the Buninyong bakehouse which provided many trays of food.
- **Buninyong Police** who spent almost 24 hours straight at the Incident Control Centre, and who had responsibility for road closures, traffic movement in the affected areas and involvement in the public meetings immediately after the fire.
- **The ever-responsive community groups** such as Lions, Rotary and the

Men's Shed who have assisted with temporary accommodation for fire victims, providing meals to BlazeAid volunteers, gathering and distributing goods, and generally undertaking whatever tasks were needed in the short and longer-term.

- **Other groups** such as the Upper Williamson's Creek Landcare Group and the Scotsburn Hall Committee which arranged the community barbecue and community-support function on Christmas Eve at the Scotsburn Hall.
- **Local residents** who have baked cakes, made meals and given all forms of material and personal help to neighbours affected by the fires. Some have offered stock feed or agistment for animals, some have provided accommodation, many have offered generous quantities of hugs or shoulders to cry on.
- **Volunteers** at the Anglican Church hall, at the community cottage or at the Town Hall working to meet immediate needs for clothing, household goods, furniture, tools and food.
- **People and groups from outside of the area**, such as Berringa residents, Shirley, from the Berringa Hall Committee donating considerable quantities of food, and Susie from Angels in the Kitchen who has made desserts and cakes for the BlazeAid workers. Sebastopol CFA's Jason Adams has raised some \$7000 through his Go Fund Me trust.
- **Special fund-raising events** such as the concerts held at Irish Murphy's pub and at the Woody Yallock Equestrian Centre.

As noted at the outset, this list will certainly be incomplete. But it does attempt to pay tribute and to express the thanks of the Scotsburn, Clarendon, Durham Lead and Buninyong communities to all those who have shown amazing community spirit since the dark afternoon of 19 December 2015.

Buninyong & district  
COMMUNITY NEWS

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All contributions (copy, letters or advertising) must be submitted **before the twelfth of each month to [buninyongnews@gmail.com](mailto:buninyongnews@gmail.com).** News enquiries to 0439 300 756. Advertising enquiries to 5341 2844.

Copy should not exceed 400 words and a maximum of two photographs per item may be submitted (but not necessarily published). Material may be edited because of space, style, or clarity, or for legal reasons.

The name and address of the person submitting any material must be provided (address not for publication).

The Editorial Advisory Committee reserves the right not to publish material considered to be offensive or inappropriate or not deemed to have community interest or relevance.

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### Looking for weather reports

The Buninyong & District Community News would like to introduce a brief monthly column detailing the local daily temperature and rainfall for the previous month. If anyone in the Buninyong area presently keeps or is willing to keep and report such detail we would be grateful to hear from you. Call 5341 2844.

### Have you seen this frog?



The Leigh Catchment Group is working with local ecologist **Ray Draper** and landholders to conduct research into the deadly Chytrid Fungus, which is responsible for declines in frog populations over Australia and world-wide.

The group has recently been awarded funds via the DELWP threatened species grants to conduct research into this deadly fungus and monitor populations of the threatened Growling Grass Frog in the catchment.

They are looking for landholders in Napoleons, Cambrian Hill, Garibaldi and surrounds, who have suitable habitat and are interested in assisting with this research. Suitable habitat may include a dam, wetland, river or creek. Participation only requires a small amount of time and anyone can do it.

An information session is being held on Saturday 30 January at the Napoleons Memorial Hall (4715 Colac-Ballarat Road, Napoleons) between 10am and 12noon. Refreshments will be provided.

If you're unable to meet the above criteria, but would like to learn about these fascinating frogs, Leigh Catchment Group would still love you to attend.

Please RSVP to **Kate Constance** at [katelcg@inet.net.au](mailto:katelcg@inet.net.au) or 0409 585 998.

### Historian on the Avenues

Most residents will be aware of the present project being undertaken by the RSL to restore Buninyong's main Avenue of Honour with a view to a "re-opening" on the centenary of its planting in mid-2017.

At the February meeting of the Buninyong & District Historical Society (7.30pm on Thursday 18 February), noted Ballarat historian **Phil Roberts** will speak on the origins of the World War I Avenues of Honour projects in this district.

Community members are invited to this presentation in the old Court House at the Buninyong Town Hall.

### Snippets from the bike race

In a tribute to the good work of the fire authorities during the recent Scotsburn fires, three CFA vehicles were invited to do a lap part of the track immediately prior to the start of the Cycling National Road Championships.

Buninyong's Command Vehicle and tanker, together with Mt Helen's tanker, headed up the tough King of the Mountain section of the Buninyong cycling circuit before CFA volunteers walked back down through the crowd with their collecting buckets.

It wasn't all bicycles at the Championships after **Marion McKenzie** rode her horse Ernie from her home at Scotsburn to watch the race. Marion had an anxious time during the fires as her parents were away and she was looking after the horses. Eventually she managed to get her four horses out just in case the fire came their way.



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# Andrew's high over Buninyong



**Helicopters in the air above Buninyong are now an accepted part of the annual National Road Cycling Championships. This year three were in action. One was used for the aerial television shots of the riders battling out around the iconic 10.2km mountain circuit. Another relayed the TV pictures from Buninyong to the SBS telecasting centre.**

The third one used vacant land at the Buninyong Golf Club as a helipad for the day. It carried VIPs and team sponsors from Melbourne to Buninyong, and flew them around the circuit during the afternoon.

The glistening red aircraft which landed at the golf club was a Eurocopter EC 130 – able to carry six passengers, and had been chartered by one of the major cycling teams.

The helicopter owned by Microflite Helicopter Services, was under the control of Andrew Tredinnick, 36, who said he really enjoyed the experience of flying over Buninyong and district during the cycling race.

His company has its base at Moorabbin Airport and a helipad at North Wharf on the Yarra River. It operates fourteen helicopters – five of which are currently under contract to the CFA during the fire season, and another two being the “Westpac” life saving helicopters on patrol over Victorian beaches.

“It makes an interesting change to come to Buninyong for the bike race, after usually flying clients to Yarra Valley wineries and to other tourist destinations,” Andrew said.

Pilot Andrew said his move to becoming a helicopter pilot had been somewhat

unusual. A graduate in Business Management from the University of Newcastle in 2001, he then decided to see the world as a ski/snowboard instructor – with stints in California, Vancouver and France before returning to Australia to take up a position at Perisher, NSW.

In 2011, he completed requirements for his helicopter licence – involving seven theory subjects and 105 hours of dual and solo helicopter flying, and has been flying helicopters – a “dream job” for him since then.

## Local help

Andrew was very positive about the help received from the golf club’s **Sue Tatt**, and neighbours living adjacent to his temporary pad in the golf club car park.

He said he greatly enjoyed sharing a couple of on-the-ground stand by hours sitting on **Bill Snowden’s** back porch, only about 50 metres from the temporary helipad, relaxing with a ginger beer and a few slices of pizza provided by other neighbours who stopped by to chat with this friendly and very competent young helicopter pilot who said he had a “great day in Buninyong”.

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## Back to granny's cottage

Their visit to the Good Life Festival was extra special for a family from the Bacchus Marsh district. The grand-daughter and great-grandson of **Mavis Bath**, the long-term occupant of the Warrenheip Street cottage, were interested to look through the property now being used as a bookstore by the Lions Club. Meredith Lundberg said she had many memories of visiting her grandmother Mavis who lived in the cottage for some 68 years. Here (L to R) are **Meredith Lundberg**, husband **Geoff Morrison**, Mavis Bath's great-grandson **Daniel Bath**, and brother **Phillip Bath**.



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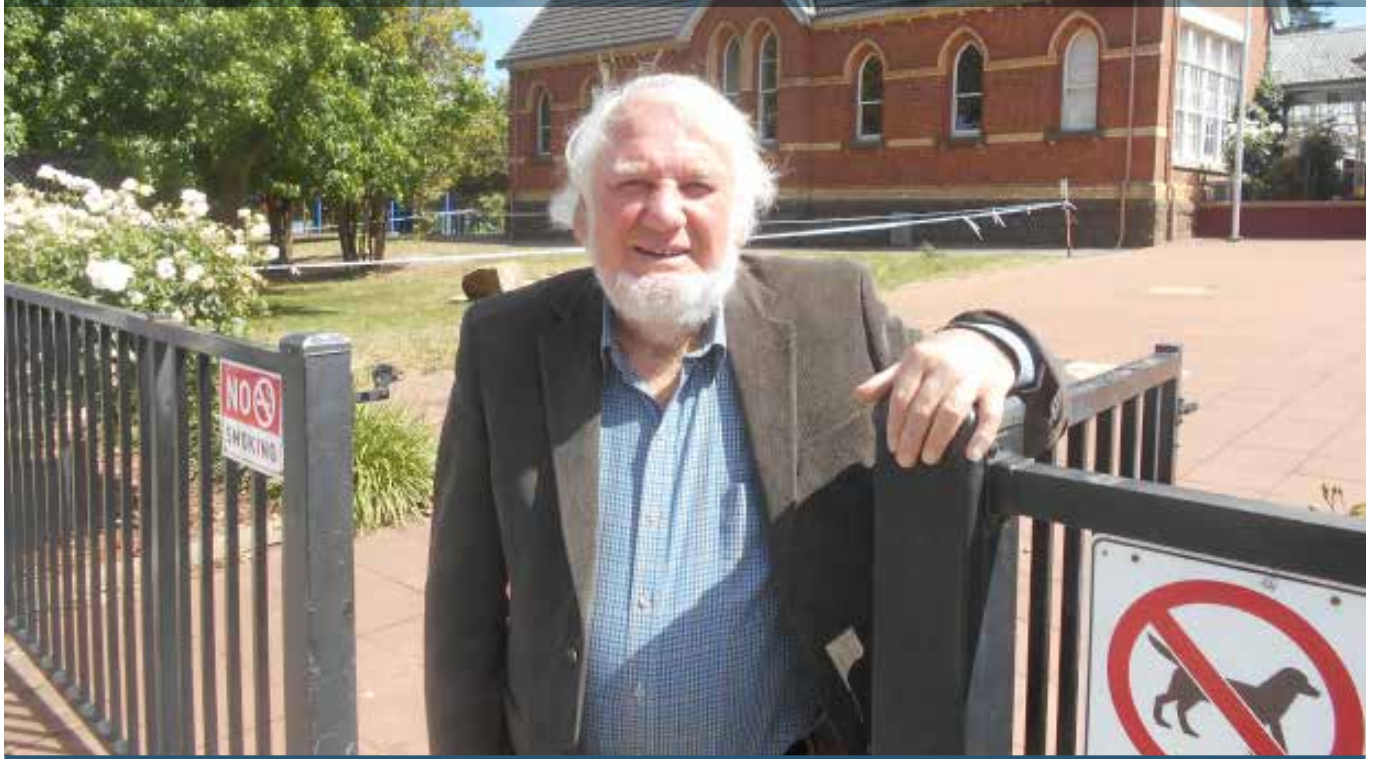
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# Australian boxing star...but Bob's still a Buninyong boy



*Bob Bath returns to the Buninyong Primary School where he first attended some 74 years ago.*

**Although he hasn't lived in Buninyong since 1962, 79 year old Bob Bath still loves the place and regards it as his home.**

His ties to the village are many. For example, his mother **Mavis** was a member of the local Innes family that, next year, will have been in Buninyong for 175 years.

He attended the local primary school, knew the best rabbiting spots, learned the skills that later made him a champion boxer at the local Methodist youth club and Police Boys club, and grew up in the Warrenheip Street cottage that is now home to the Lions book shop.

In the family, there were six boys and one girl, **Wendy**, who still lives in Warrenheip Street opposite the post office. All of the boys were members of the local Fire Brigade where his father Don was Lieutenant.

Bob's boxing mentors were **Herman George** – “a wonderful man and great all-round athlete” – and later, local Buninyong police officer **Len McCole** who himself had been light-heavyweight champion of the police force.

Even though small in stature, Bob even played football with the inaugural Buninyong ‘Seconds’ team in the early 1970s as a forward pocket/rover, kicking six goals in the Grand Final. Other members of that team were (now Dr) **Bob Brownfield, Keith Innes and Bob Northey**. The Captain-coach of the team was **John McCarty**.

## Olympian

But it was as a member of the Australian Olympic boxing team in 1956 that he became one of Buninyong's most famous sons, and the first-selected Olympian from Ballarat.

As an amateur boxer Bob Bath had a great record, winning 48 of his 50 fights. He was Victorian bantamweight champion for three years between 1954 and 1956, and Australian champion in 1956.

He was a first round winner at the Melbourne Olympics but was later beaten by the eventual winner of the Silver medal. After the Olympics he turned professional, fighting for the Australian featherweight title in 1958, being stopped by a badly cut eye.

Two of his brothers **Allen** and **Charles** also won Victorian amateur boxing titles.

## Grammar

After finishing his boxing career, Bob briefly thought about opening a sports store but was soon approached by **Mr Jack Dart**, Headmaster of the Ballarat Grammar School, with an offer to become the school's Sportsmaster.

He subsequently underwent “off-campus” training as a PE teacher at the Ballarat Teachers' College under the auspices of Buninyong's **Bob Croft**.

He retired after 37 years at Grammar, and was inducted as an honorary “Old Boy”, and a Life Governor of the school.

Bob said he has always loved Buninyong. “It's small, has great community spirit, and everyone knows everyone,” he said. Now he keeps in touch with Buninyong with a weekly visit to his sister, who passes on copies of the new *Buninyong Community News*, that he says is a “terrific local newspaper that I look forward to reading every month”.

# Fast work at Desoza Park

**Walkers, dogs on the leash and joggers are all common sights on the beautiful track around Desoza Park. But after 4.30pm or so there's a group of runners who speed things up a little – and not just for a few metres, but often lap after lap.**

These runners belong to a group coached by Buninyong resident **Rod Griffin**, and he will be there overseeing proceedings from the Lumeah Road end of the Park.

Rod has had a lifelong involvement with athletics, and was a foundation member of the highly successful Eureka Club more than thirty years ago. Following both intense experience and formal study since then, he has recently been named as the Athletics Australia's National Junior Distance Coach, which involves facilitating the development of 15 – 18 year old athletes through both the organisation and leadership of National programs and the mentoring of coaches.

Rod has managed a number of squads attending international track and cross-country competition. Over the years, both the Eureka Club and Rod's own squad have provided many competitors in National and International competition, including two Olympians. At present,

Rod coaches more than twenty runners, including **Duer Yoa**, formerly of Sudan, who has represented Australia several times and is one of the few runners to travel on foot around Lake Wendouree in less than 17 minutes.

You will also see Rod's wife **Sandra** running (not shuffling or jogging, and she's almost old enough to qualify for the Age Pension) around Buninyong, and together they have assisted a group of initially rather unfit adults to improve their running and to actually enjoy the process.

## Coaching philosophy

Rod's success here points towards a philosophy of coaching and of sport that is most instructive. To quote his motto 'it is better to be slightly underdone and running than cooked and injured.' Implicit in this motto is to encourage and build the young athlete's running ability as just one part of their development as a person, and to endeavour to maintain unbroken involvement through avoidance of injury. Athletes vary in their potential, but to at least achieve that potential is a wonderful thing.



*Rod and Sandra Griffin*

This current role keeps Rod very busy, but he continues to put a great deal of energy, expertise and, most importantly, a caring approach to helping young athletes to enjoy running to the best of their abilities.

*Richard Lea*



*Rod Griffin and Duer Yoa*

*Valentine's Day*

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## POLICE BEAT

**BALLARAT CIU** is investigating several instances of theft and damage at the sand quarry on Scotchman's Lead Road. The latest incidents have seen a substantial amount of damage caused to electrical wiring on machinery at the location. Police and security patrols have been stepped up and police are currently analysing some key pieces of evidence in order to identify the offenders. Any suspicious activity at the site can be reported to Police via '000'.

**THE BUNINYONG CAR SHOW** was well attended on 6 December 2015 with some interesting displays of motoring history. It was exciting to see a restored ex "Interceptor" Holden Commodore Police Car. Whilst these events are supported by the Police and are great for the town, unfortunately, this year's event was marred by a few "idiots" who thought the main street of Buninyong was a good place to do a burn-out. It would be disappointing to see the event cancelled next year due to these incidents and Buninyong Police will be speaking to the Ballarat City Council before any scheduled events in 2016.

**THE BUNINYONG BP SERVICE STATION** was the target of an attempted burglary on 2 November

2015 and a burglary at the Carwash on 29 November 2015 when cash was stolen. The Ballarat Burglary Crew are Investigating both incidents. The Buninyong Tennis Club's storage shed was also broken into, by force on 7 December 2015. However, nothing was stolen. We would like to remind the community that offenders often trawl the streets at night on foot and in vehicles and any suspicious activity should be reported asap via '000'.

**AN UN-LOCKED VEHICLE** was entered in Palmerston Street overnight on 6 December 2015. A number of items were taken. Buninyong Police are concerned that people aren't locking cars to avoid having windows broken by thieves to gain access. Interestingly, not one vehicle entered by thieves in Buninyong in 2015 has been locked. Lock it... or lose it!

**ALMOST DAILY**, Police are observing unattended and unlocked vehicles at the Service Station, Supermarket or shops, with the car running and keys in the Ignition. The community is reminded that not only is it an offence to leave a vehicle running while un-attended, but that any insurance claim will likely be forfeited should it be stolen. Thieves are opportunistic! Police will begin enforcing this Rule in the near future to avoid unnecessary thefts.

### Road RULE 213 (4)

*213(4) – leave vehicle without removing ignition key when driver is over three metres from the closest part of the vehicle and – (i) there is no-one left in the vehicle; or (ii) there is only a child or children under 16 years old left in the vehicle*

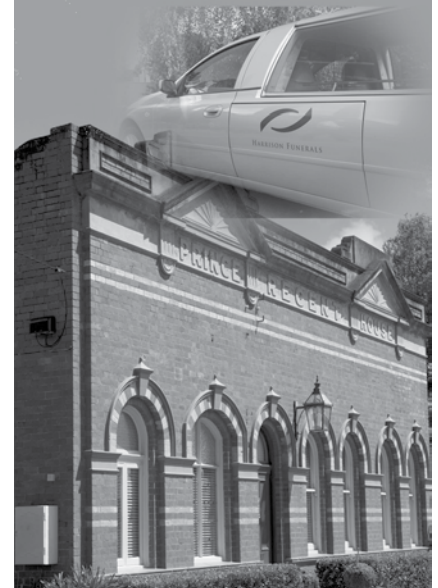
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AUTHORISED BY CATHERINE KING, 5 LYDIARD ST NTH BALLARAT 3350

# Residents meet on draft park plan

**Nine residents attended a meeting, arranged by the Desoza Park Planning Group, in response to written comments received after the release of the 'Draft Master Plan for the Park'.**

**Cr Peter Innes** opened the meeting and asked **Graeme Kent** (Community Development Officer, City of Ballarat) to explain the background to the Master Plan and the proposals as circulated.

There have been various ideas for development and/or better use of the park for some years, however, Graeme emphasized that most were not, at this stage, "locked in".

Council has allocated \$20,000 to undertake some immediate works but most projects are dependent on the future allocations of grants.

Some of the proposals summarised at the meeting included:

- The sculpture will remain but the plaque will be relocated because people trip over it.
- Paths would be added and improved.
- Some dangerous trees to be removed.
- A new toilet is the number one priority, to be located on the southern boundary behind the

existing block, cost of approx. \$120,000 – yet to see this commitment in the Council's Budget.

- Current rotunda converted into a BBQ space. The Lions Club shelter moved to a location yet to be determined at the back of the park.
- The second priority is a new playground – our suggestion is that it be angled more to the west and connected to the mound. There is strong support for a historical mining theme. Some ideas have been gathered and will be presented to a designer when the group can obtain project money. Again, the project is dependent on the availability of a grant in the vicinity of \$150,000.
- The performance space/stage relocated further back into the park, making use of the slope and surrounds to utilise the space better.

It was explained that a permanent building was not suggested, but rather a flat performing space that will have low stone seating and the ability to have a temporary structure erected for the event

It was emphasised that Council wants to support Buninyong as a whole and encourage more income for the town.

*Cassandra Carland*

## Public Notice



**Peter Mould and family want to thank the Buninyong Community for its kind and caring thoughts during Heather's illness and following her death.**

Heather, Peter and the family found much comfort and solace in knowing that so many people cared for them all during this time and every message, kind word, card, food parcel, flowers touched them deeply.

"We felt so lucky to be involved with, over the years, such a wonderful community of people," said Peter.

"Thank you also to those who were able to be at Heather's Celebration of Life, I am sorry if I did not get to talk to you but the numbers far exceeded anything we expected and that in itself has also given us much comfort. All we can say is thank you all for everything."

Peter and family extend a sincere thanks to all.

### ADVERTISEMENT



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Authorised by Geoff Howard MP, 15 Main Road, Ballarat VIC 3350

This advertisement is funded from Parliament's Electorate Office and Communications budget

# Regional park gets close

Intensive lobbying prior to the 2014 State election by local conservation group, Friends of the Canadian Corridor (FOCC), seems set to result in a new 629 hectare regional park in the district in the near future.

Honouring a pre-election commitment, the Andrews' Labor government introduced legislation to establish the Canadian Regional Park into the Victorian Parliament on 8 December 2015. It has now been referred to the Legislative Council where a vote is expected in February.

The new park will comprise the former Mt Clear plantation land and the Canadian State Forest.

Following extensive community consultation, the agreed uses for the park will include bushwalking, cycling, nature observation, horse riding, dog walking and even prospecting. The park will also create a north-south wildlife corridor and protect the area's natural and historical values.

Member for Buninyong, **Geoff Howard** said that the creation of the new regional



FOCC members (L to R) Jeff Rootes, Blake Gordon and Bob Hartmann at the park with Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews and Member for Buninyong, Geoff Howard

park was “an exciting development”. He said that while many local groups and individuals had supported the greater use of the Canadian Forest area, the hard lobbying work had been carried out by the FOCC group led by **Jeff Rootes**, **Linda Zibell** and **Bob Hartmann**.

This group recently met on site with Parks Victoria staff and looked at some key features of the new park.

Parks Victoria also has just announced that a position having the task of establishing the Park will soon be advertised.

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Bowling club grows with

# Success on the greens



**Buninyong Bowling Club is perhaps a hidden gem in the Buninyong community. Situated in the tranquil surrounds of the Buninyong Botanical Gardens, the Club continues to grow in every way.**

After a 12 per cent increase in membership this year, they have just over 100 bowling members and approaching 20 social members. The club has also increased its pennant competition teams to four teams in Weekend Pennant (divisions 1, 3, 5 and 8) and two teams in Midweek Pennant (divisions 2 and 4).

The end of 2014 saw the club's old facilities demolished and the new

clubrooms completed in time for the 2015 season. The building works were the result of a wonderful partnership between the club, the City of Ballarat and the State Government.

On the greens, 2014-15 saw Buninyong have one of its most successful seasons to date, winning premierships in Weekend Division 4 and Division 6 and Midweek Division 3 – a wonderful achievement.

Buninyong has started this year off very well with the Division 1 team remaining undefeated throughout the first five rounds. Other teams have had a slower start but put together some good wins recently, with the Club

thinking that a repeat of last year's success may be possible.

## Corporate Cup

Corporate Cup bowls is a Thursday night competition run in February/ March that enables community groups and members to enter teams and come and experience the enjoyment of bowling in a socially competitive atmosphere. The Club finds that each year, a number of Corporate Cup bowlers enjoy it so much they go on to become regular bowling members in the following season. Please contact the Club if you would like to be involved in this season's Corporate Cup, as spots generally fill up fairly quickly.

The Buninyong Bowling Club welcomes all members of the community to come visit and have a look at their facilities (which are available for hire for functions), or just to have a social visit and catch up with friends. Open on Wednesdays and Friday evenings from 4.30 pm onwards and Saturdays from 1 pm onwards.

Locals are also invited to come and watch competition bowls and cheer the local teams along. Pennant is played on Mondays from 10 am onwards and on Saturdays from 1.30 pm onwards.

For further information, contact the Buninyong Bowling Club on (03) 5341 3577, email [buninbc@gmail.com](mailto:buninbc@gmail.com) or visit their website at [www.buninyongbowlingclub.com.au](http://www.buninyongbowlingclub.com.au).

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# Lions Youth of the Year Mt Clear's Maggie takes top prize



**In a four-way contest Maggie Murphy of Mt Clear College took out the top award at the 2015 Buninyong Mount Helen Lions Club Youth of the Year program.**

In 2016, Buninyong-girl Maggie is studying Year 12 and has been also announced as School Captain. During her time at the school, she has taken on a wide range of leadership roles.

After completing school this year, Maggie plans to undertake a Forensic Science course at Deakin University.

Entrants had to participate in a 30 minute interview with a team of four independent judges. Then later in the day, before a crowd of parents, teachers and Lions Club members,

entrants had to answer two impromptu questions and then present a five minute prepared speech.

Judges for the contest were **Gayle Ringin** (NAB, sponsor of the contest), **Bob Bath** (former Olympian and Ballarat Grammar teacher), **Dr Barry Fitzgerald** (former Director of Aquinas/ACU, Dean of Education, BCAE) and **Vanessa Wilson-Browne** (Red Duck Brewery).

Other finalists in the program were **Clare Shelton** (Phoenix College), **Julia Richards** (Loreto College), and **Isabella Geri** (Ballarat Christian College).

In the separate Public Speaking section, judged on the evening presentations, the winner was Julia Richards.

## AROUND THE CHURCHES

**Schedules of the services and happenings at local churches.**

### ST PETER & PAUL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

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5341 3243

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1st, 3rd, 5th Sundays at 10.30am.  
2nd and 4th Sundays at 9am

### UNITING CHURCH

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**Rev Lindell Gibson** 5341 3200

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Buninyong: Sunday 9.30am  
Meredith: 2nd Sunday 11am  
Sebastopol: 2nd, 4th, 5th Thursday 11am

### HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH

Warrenheip Street, Buninyong.  
**Rev Mark Schnerring** 5341 3281  
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### BAPTIST CHURCH

Pastor Tom Buscombe 5330 2657  
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### SCOTSBURN CHURCH

Midland Highway, Scotsburn  
Contact **Heather Stokes** on  
5341 7609  
First Sunday in the month at 10am

## Contributions and advertising

Email contributions and advertising for the *Buninyong & District Community News* to **buninyongnews@gmail.com** before the twelfth day of each month.

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ADK 01/14/2016

## Community Bank AGM

# Five good years... and goodbye John

**The Buninyong and District Financial Services Limited held its AGM in November 2015 and, after five years operation of the local community bank, customers and investors in the bank can be very proud of its achievements to date.**

Investment back into the community is now in excess of \$200,000 to fifty recipient organisations for projects such as purchase of a driver education vehicle for L2P in Buninyong, support for the *Buninyong Community News*, sponsorship of Ballarat High School's Link Up Young Parents program, the youth skate park and basketball court, the Buninyong Avenue of Honour and various scholarships.

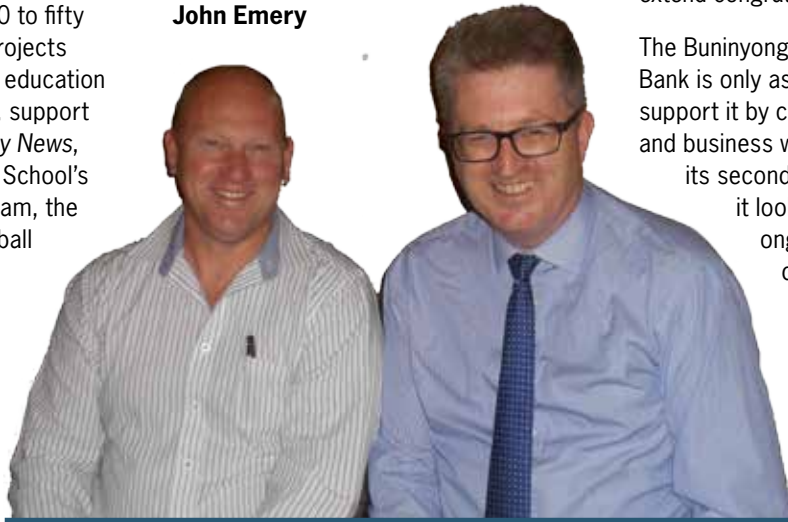
As part of the bank's 'Shared Value' principles, the Community House at 407 Warrenheip Street was also purchased

and refurbished. This is available to the community for a variety of different uses. Please contact the bank to discuss possibilities for use by any community group.

In 2016, there will be some changes in membership of the Bank Board, with a foundation member, **John Emery**

retiring and two new members **Peter Mees** (a commercial lawyer) and **Michael Scanlon** (a Business Manager) joining the volunteer board. John Emery's tireless dedication and energy as inaugural Chairman was instrumental in establishing the bank and making it so successful. The staff, and Board and community members extend congratulations and thanks to him

The Buninyong and District Community Bank is only as strong as the people who support it by conducting their banking and business with it. As the bank enters its second five years of operation it looks forward to new and ongoing support from the district.



*Two new members of the Community Bank Board – Michael Scanlon and Peter Mees*

# FIRES MOVE FAST.

## PLAN NOW, NOT WHEN A FIRE IS APPROACHING.

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

## GET PREPARED.

For more information on how to prepare for fire, visit [emergency.vic.gov.au](http://emergency.vic.gov.au) or call **1800 240 667**

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## Local resident, Bill Pryor's Global vet career



*Ann and Bill Pryor amongst their beloved roses at their Buninyong home*

**On 2 June 2016 it will be the sixtieth wedding anniversary for local couple Bill and Ann Pryor. But that is just one of many milestones for them.**

The local connection started when Bill's grandfather, **John Pryor**, came out to Garibaldi in 1855 from Cornwall with his wife **Charlotte** and worked in the mining industry. Bill's father and uncle bought land in what became Pryors Road, Scotsburn, resulting in an early link to agriculture.

Although raised in Horsham where his father was Town Clerk, Bill and his family came home to Pryors Rd to live and farm some thirty years ago before retiring into Buninyong.

A veterinary science career only happened because the Victorian

government of the time wanted to train vets. Bill was selected for a studentship and spent one year at Melbourne University and the subsequent four at Sydney University: then the only Veterinary Science faculty in Australia.

### Camperdown

Private practice followed in western Victoria where Bill ended up in Camperdown where he met Ann. There was much veterinary work to be done here especially with the soldier-settlers after WW2 when footrot in sheep, cobalt and copper deficiencies all needed to be overcome to improve animal production.

After Camperdown, Bill worked for the Nicholas Institute in pharmaceutical research before turning to academia at

Queensland University, then to a posting as Dean and Professor of Veterinary Science at New Zealand's Massey University.

Agricultural policy became his main role upon joining the Bureau of Animal Health in Canberra as Assistant Director with responsibilities for protecting Australia's vast and diverse animal health industry from exotic animal diseases.

### International work

International veterinary work took him to 40 countries in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and South and North America working for the United Nation's Food and Agriculture Organisation and the Australian Council for Agricultural Research. These were mission-based projects where Australia could assist with improving world-wide animal health and animal production.

Back in Scotsburn, Bill again became involved with academia through his appointment as the Chairman of Council and Deputy Chancellor in the University College's transition to the University of Ballarat, now Federation University. Historian **Geoffrey Blainey** was Chancellor.

It's a quieter life now though ... except that the Scotsburn fire came very close indeed to the farm in Pryors Road, in fact to the lawn – just when a wedding was about to be held there! Fortunately the guests were able to escape and hold the reception in safety.

Ann and Bill are part of the fabric of Buninyong. "It's the services we love here and the friendly 'coffee and chat' culture with the fusion of old and new residents that creates the enjoyable social life of this village", they concluded.

He was awarded an AO in 2000 for his services to global veterinary health and animal production.

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Men's Shed invitation to

# Look, try or buy

**The Buninyong Men's Shed, located in Forest Street opposite the swimming pool, helps out with many community projects.**

But 'the Shed' is also happy to take on work from the public.

When someone from the public drops by the Shed to inquire if a particular item can be made, the answer will generally be a very positive "Yes". After a chat about what is required a quote is given and, if agreed upon, the project will be taken on by one or more of the many capable and skilled members of the Shed.

## Festival orders

Following up on a successful stall at the Buninyong Good Life Festival, the Shed has been very busy working on orders received there, including items such as wooden chairs and large garden vegetable boxes.

The Festival provided the community with the opportunity not only to see and purchase items made by the Shed members, but also to discuss the benefits of being a member of this community group.



*Shed members Bill Jolly and Ian Voigt finishing off a large vegetable box.*

The well-equipped Shed is a great place to come to try making things, generally out of wood, and to socialise in an easy and relaxed environment with other men from within the community.

## Range of projects

The range of projects that the Shed has undertaken has included the making or restoring of honour boards, old chairs and outdoor benches, to restoration of an old wooden flagpole and a church pew, and even an old fly-wire door.

Other items made have included playground equipment for local primary schools, planter stands, bookcases, storage cupboards, flower boxes, egg baskets, bird feeders, and carry baskets.

A current project is to make and erect a heritage-style picket fence around the old Police Station in the grounds of the Buninyong Primary School.

## Guest speakers

Guest speakers are also invited to come along to share their knowledge and experiences on a regular basis. Beyond Blue ambassador, a local doctor, a wildlife rescuer and rehabilitator have all given interesting and informative talks.

The Men's Shed is open every Tuesday and Wednesday (between about 9.00am and 4.00pm) and new members are most welcome. Likewise, the public is welcome to come in to discuss anything that they may want made or restored.

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# Bobridge takes out Road Cycling Championships “Greatest ever” solo ride

Buninyong and district was again showcased in the SBS telecast of the 2015 National Road Cycling Championships. The TV broadcast to a national and international audience spanned three hours on Sunday 10 January.

Weather was pleasantly warm for four of the five events held in Buninyong, but rose quickly to temperatures in the mid-30s for the Men’s Championship held on the Sunday afternoon.

This race featured an heroic solo ride over about 90km by South Australian rider, **Jack Bobridge**. Bobridge held on to win the race by 2 minutes 52 seconds from **Cameron Meyer** (WA). Bobridge had previously won the race in 2011. After the race Cycling Australia officials described his ride as “one of the greatest solo rides ever!”

Bobridge’s ride was all the more amazing when the heat took its toll on 112 of the 127 man peloton which started the race. High profile international riders such as



Photo courtesy of Peter Williams, Buninyong.

**Richie Porte** and **Caleb Ewan** were among those who did not finish

On the Sunday morning, the Women’s championship was taken out by **Amanda Spratt** (NSW) who won in a sprint finish from **Ruth Corset** (Qld). She also won the title in 2012.

A crowd estimated at 3000 was centred on three main locations – in the village centre, where the new infrastructure facilities were well used, on both sides of the Midland Highway, and on the “top” of the mountain where crowds are growing each year.



## Buninyong

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# Fire champions *continued*



**THE BLAZE AID LEADERS**

Until early 2015, **David Adby** worked in the electrical appliance industry in Queensland. Now retired, he has joined BlazeAid, a volunteer group that assists rural communities after natural disasters such as fires, floods and cyclones.

BlazeAid was established after the horrendous Victorian fires of Black Saturday 2009 when volunteers came to assist farmers in the Kilmore East area to clear and re-establish their fencing.

A volunteer with BlazeAid for the past two years, David Adby travelled to the Scotsburn fire grounds from Queensland to take on the role of Camp Coordinator for the team of thirty or so volunteers. Most are still in the Scotsburn and Clarendon areas, assisting farmers and others to clear burnt fences and debris and to rebuild many kilometres of new fencing. Assisting in the coordination work is **Jainee Lale** from Melbourne who formerly worked in aged care.

The group has been based at the Back Creek Farm campus of the Geelong Christian College, off the Midland Highway at Scotsburn.

The volunteers, from all over Australia, have been living in vans, tents and in the school's bunkhouse. Meals were being provided by local service clubs, the Men's Shed and other residents.

"These groups have been just fantastic to us," Jainee said.

Over the next three months the BlazeAid workers will be responsible for the massive task of helping erect up to 1000 km of fencing, clearing burnt materials, lopping dangerous trees, and generally providing support to those affected by the fires.



**THE RELIEF WORKER**

From the day after the fires, the historic old hall at the rear of Buninyong's Holy Trinity Anglican Church began to fill with clothing, furniture, tools and toys.

Firstly as one of many volunteers, and then for six weeks or so as Co-ordinator of the relief effort, long-term Buninyong resident **Pam Sutcliffe** was at the heart of the action to assist families affected by the fires.

Pam was on leave from her position as Manager of the Alumni Foundation at Federation University, and had put her hand up to help from day one.

She has been working at the old Church Hall site pretty well every day since then. The hall is packed with clothing and goods donated by people from all parts of the district.

Pam soon put together a spreadsheet with data on each of the fifteen families whose properties had been devastated by the fires.

She compiled detailed lists of items needed – tools, furniture, household goods, clothing and toys – by each of the families. Clothing sizes and other details were recorded and used to provide the much-needed assistance.

She praised the work done by other local groups such as Rotary and the Lions Club in gathering and distributing the goods.

"It's really emotional work trying to talk with and help people whose lives have been devastated... but it's worth it to share a tear, and to get a hug from so many people who have lost everything," she said.