



## At Yendon and Elaine **WIND FARM START**

After years of objection and legal challenges from local residents construction work on the *Lal Lal Wind Farms* is due to start at sites at Yendon (38 turbines) and at Elaine where 22 turbines are planned.

The construction timeline will involve the following four phases

- **First Quarter 2018** – road and substation construction
- **Quarters 2-4 2018** – infrastructure construction and turbine erection
- **Quarter 4 2018** – Q 1 2019 – substation commissioned and completion of turbine erection
- **Quarters 2-3 2019** – turbines commissioned, wind farm operational

### New owner

After acquiring the *WestWind Energy* project last year, *Macquarie Capital* has become the owner of the project. *Lal Lal Wind Farms* (LLWF) expects to commence the construction of the project in the first quarter of 2018. The sale followed amendments to the permit reducing the turbine number to 60, but increasing the maximum wing tip height to 161m.

The permit issued to LLWF requires that various steps must be taken to allay fears of neighbouring property owners having concerns about the impact, particularly of

noise. These include a range of noise testing and monitoring, a landscape screening program, revegetation and land rehabilitation elements.

### Information

Community groups should note that LLWF has established a *Community Benefit Fund* committing some \$100,000 annually to assist local projects. Late in 2017 initial grants from this fund totalling \$20,000 were made to the Mt Buninyong CFA, the Bungaree Recreation Reserve, the Elaine Cricket Club, and the Dunnstown Netball Club.

A dedicated website ([lallalwindfarms.com.au](http://lallalwindfarms.com.au)) and phone contact (1800 187 183) have been put in place to respond to questions, concerns or employment enquiries. A company representative will also be on site at



*Tracey Ward, Community Engagement Manager, is on site at Buninyong's Old Library.*

Buninyong's Old Library on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays between 8.30am and 12.30pm.

The LLWF is also recruiting new members for the Community Reference Group. Enquiries can be directed to the freecall 1800 number or by email to [info@lallalwindfarms.com.au](mailto:info@lallalwindfarms.com.au)

## Swimming in Buninyong Special Feature p 9, 10, 11

A series of recent working bees at the Buninyong Pool/Aquatic centre has drawn attention to the history of public swimming in Buninyong. Inside this edition are feature stories on both the present pool in Forest Street and earlier ones in the village.





# Training Elsa.... Jan's dream job

*Ella and Jan's grandson Flynn Lesley, 4 at The Gong.*

**When Buninyong resident Jan Roberts retired recently she looked for something to 'give back to the community'. So, with the support of husband Dave, Jan took on the role of a volunteer Guide Dog puppy-raiser.**

After the necessary checks and interviews, which included an inspection of every room in the home plus the security of the garden, she was accepted as a puppy trainer. Labrador puppy **Elsa** is now with them until she reaches twelve months of age.

## Basic rules

During this first training stage the puppy learns the basic rules of how to walk as a guide dog, how to 'toilet' on command

before going for a walk and before coming inside the home, and what is or is not 'allowed'- for instance no getting on the bed!!

Initially Jan and Elsa were at the training facility in Melbourne every three weeks. Together with six other puppies and their new handlers, Elsa learnt to be sociable by visiting places such as the Children's Farm and coffee shops. Recently Elsa was taken for her first train ride and did really well.

To prepare her, Jan and Elsa sat at the Ballarat station for a couple of

hours so she became used to train noises, whistles blowing, and people coming and going. The pup always wears her training coat when out and about.

## At work

She also gets to know that when the training coat is on, she is 'at work'. Soon Elsa and Jan have to do a busy city walk along Spencer Street, visit Flinders Street station and catch a bus.

The guide dog puppy has to be with her trainer or other responsible person almost all the time because when she is a guide/companion dog she will be with her owner all the time. So if Jan and Dave need to be out for more than three hours then Jan's daughter in Mt Helen will mind her. And for holidays there are other designated minders to call on.

At the moment Jan is the only guide dog trainer in Buninyong and she has been delighted with the co-operation of the businesses here. Elsa has visited the shops, cafés, doctors' rooms, service station, bank, and the chemist shop. Everyone has helped to socialise her. However, it is important that people ask before touching an assistance dog.

## Need

There is always a need for more volunteers. A new trainer, a student, is starting here soon and will take her dog to the University. All dogs are free of charge and all the food and vet needs are supplied and vaccinations covered. The trainer has only to provide a water bowl, toys and travelling costs to Melbourne.

Jan said that it is great fun having Elsa but it will be hard to say goodbye when she moves on to her further training. But Jan and Dave definitely plan to do it again. For more information contact Guide Dogs Australia - 1800 804 805 - or go online.

*-Cassandra Carland*



# Walls cut assists parking

**Affable Irishman Paul Nolan of Celtic Stone was back in Buninyong recently to carry out minor modifications to some of the landmark bluestone walls he had built in late 2015 near Espresso Depot.**

Council had responded to complaints from businesses and people parking in the area that the long and low 'wing' walls to the parking bays made parking very difficult and had resulted in damage to a number of vehicles.

The work carried out removed about 1.5m from each of the wing walls, leaving just a short return where the walls meet the wall at the front of the parking bays (see



picture). Additional stone paving work has been carried out, and the area is now improved and more functional.

*Master stonemason Paul Nolan (right) with his team working on the changes to the bluestone walls in Learmonth Street*

# Shock with police station closure

**The decision to close the Buninyong Police Station for a period of over two months came as a surprise even to some local police officers as well as to the community.**

The station will be closed until mid-April for exterior and interior renovations. At present the station is home to tradesmen, their utes, a rubbish skip and 'keep out' tape. It is reported that a substantial sum will be spent to rectify serious flooring and ventilation problems.

## Will reopen

Local Area Commander Acting-Inspector **Alistair Nisbet** said that the frontline policing of the Buninyong area will be maintained during this period. He said that the police station will definitely be reopening after completion of the present works.

Buninyong police officers will be stationed in Ballarat and calls to the Buninyong police station will be diverted to the Ballarat Police Station in Dana Street.

The 'new' police station in Scott Street, Buninyong was opened on 27 June 2012. The first station here was opened in 1851, and Buninyong was the last to have an active country mounted police force.

The former goldfields police station, now in the grounds of the Primary School, was recently refurbished and is now used both by the school and as a meeting place for the *Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens* group.



# State elections 2018

## Michaela's run for local seat

Endorsed ALP candidate for the State seat of Buninyong, Michaela Settle, has already started to do her homework on the village. She came out to Buninyong recently to chat with *The News* about local issues.

She certainly brings quite a bit of political experience to her bid to follow the retiring member **Geoff Howard** as the representative for this electorate. For example she spent several years working with local State MP, **Sharon Knight**, and also was the campaign manager for **Libby Coker** in the 2016 Federal election for the seat of Corangamite.

### Farm

After being brought up in Castlemaine, in her late teens she then lived on her parents' sheep farm they purchased near Ararat.

Subsequently, Michaela Settle's career took her to Sydney and London (where she worked in both cities in a marketing role in the entertainment industry), then back to Ararat, and to Great Western as a part-owner and manager of the *Garden Gully Winery*.

Since 2012 she and her two teenage sons have been living in Ballarat where she now works part-time with Ballarat Community Health in marketing and communications.



Michaela Settle took time to inspect Buninyong's newly-restored Avenue of Honour.

In 2012 Michaela graduated with a BA degree in Sociology from Federation University, and now also has part-completed a Master's degree in Policy and Politics at Deakin University.

Given her background it is not surprising that she has a strong interest in regional development issues.

### Needs

She is well aware that the Buninyong electorate has several areas with quite different characteristics and needs. But having lived in small country towns she recognises the need to preserve the quality of life in and the amenities of small villages such as Buninyong.

"Sensible management of growth should be one of the key concerns for the region and the electorate," she said.

"Buninyong is a beautiful little town - and it has a head-start in my family as my sixteen year old son thinks that the *Buninyong Bakery* has the best vegetarian sausage rolls he has ever had."

She said that she is becoming very much aware of many of the key issues of concern and interest to Buninyong residents and groups. These include township and district planning issues (including greenfields developments such as that at Mt Helen), heavy trucks on the Midland Highway and the future impact of the Western Link Road.

### Election

She was also made keenly aware that there would be heavy local lobbying in the coming months in the run up to the November State election for funding for local projects such as the Warrenheip Street streetscape development and improvement to local parks.

Asked what she did to relax away from work and politics, Michaela said that "as a single mum with two teenage sons there isn't a great deal of spare time." But she is a keen swimmer, and a CFA volunteer – perhaps not surprising as her father spent over forty years volunteering with the CFA.

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# Call for tougher penalties as 'KOALA TREES' AXED

The bulldozing of several large manna gum trees on a Midland Highway property near Ogilvie Lane recently prompted one resident to report the matter to Council and to contact *The News*. The tree-removal works on the property took place in mid-January.

A Council planning officer inspected the site and the damage done. Council's Director, Infrastructure and Planning **Terry Demeo** has advised *The News* that "the investigation is ongoing, with the City of Ballarat's Planning Enforcement Team yet to determine an outcome." We await that with interest.

While the desire of landowners to build a home to provide the most attractive views or to set a house back from noisy traffic can be understood, there often is a serious conflict between such priorities and the preservation of the character of the township and local areas.

Usually some form of balance and compromise can be found but this should precede the pushing over of mature trees, loading them onto trucks for dumping.

Tree preservation, particularly on the ridge lines overlooking the village is essential to township character.

## Overlays

Like much of the Buninyong area, the block in question is covered both by a City of Ballarat Koala overlay and a Vegetation Protection overlay. These impose strict conditions on any removal of native

vegetation and, in particular, any relevant to koala movement or food. The Council's policy stresses the "vital role that the native vegetation plays...particularly where Manna Gum and Messmate Stringybark tree species are present."

Council policy further states that "building works may be approved only if the works cannot be located elsewhere on site to avoid or minimise the need for removal of native vegetation within areas of koala habitat."

While that sounds impressive, the relatively minor Council penalties imposed for such transgressions in the past do little to discourage a builder/developer from knocking trees over and then pleading ignorance, accident or error.

## Penalties

It is now time that South Ward Councillors (who have responsibility for large tracts of native vegetation in the Mount Clear, Mount Helen and Buninyong areas) get together with senior Council officers such as Terry Demeo, to review local planning provisions to greatly increase the penalties for such breaches.

If State legislation makes it difficult for substantial monetary penalties to be handed out, tough planning approval conditions are clearly within the powers of Council.

Presently it's far too easy for developers or builders to charge ahead with destruction of mature trees and then to say "Oops....I'm sorry!!"



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

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entertainers and activities were involved in the program. In accepting the award, President of the Buninyong Festival Committee **Lisa Cressey** said that the award recognised the work of the current committee “as well as all of the previous committees that founded and have shaped this wonderful community festival since 1975.”

**Thanks**

She thanked all of the community groups, the sponsors, church groups, talented local entertainers, the Buninyong & District Community Bank and the general community.

Zealand Internet Awards event, and more recently the *Buninyong Community News* scooped the pool with four awards at the Community Newspapers of Victoria’s annual conference held at Traralgon.

Although not entered for any award the 1 July 2017 commemorative march to mark to reopening of the Buninyong Avenue of Honour, and involving over 600 marchers, bands, service personnel, the RAAF and 35 community groups also received wide acclaim.

# Council award to festival

The City of Ballarat 2018 Australia Day Award for the Community Event-of-the-Year went to the new look Buninyong Festival.

This well-deserved award follows the very popular festivities held in Desoza Park and in the Town Hall precinct in late October 2017. A crowd estimated at some 5000 people attended.

Over ninety craft stalls, sixteen food vendors, a wide array of displays,

“This award is a fantastic recognition of the commitment that the community has shown to the Festival and is a strong endorsement for the festival to continue into the future,” she said.

The winner of this award in 2017 was the Brown Hill Community Festival which involved fifteen local not-for-profit, sporting and activity groups.

**Trifecta**

The City of Ballarat’s *Community Event of the Year* award to the Buninyong Festival capped off a brace of recent accolades for Buninyong community projects and activities.

In late 2016, The Buninyong Community website was announced as the winner of the top award at the Australia and New



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# Village link to South Pacific



**For Frank Sanders, 46, it's been an interesting journey from growing up on a farm at Creswick to becoming a central player in revolutionising some basic farming industries in the South Pacific.**

Frank, the brother of Buninyong Supermarket's **Alison Rickard**, spent a week here around Christmas before heading to Queensland with his wife and three young children. Then it will be back to Fiji and Vanuatu.

His involvement in South Pacific agriculture began in 2003 when he took on a community development post in coconut and cocoa farming areas in Papua New Guinea. There he met his future wife Sue, an occupational therapist who had moved to PNG from Ipswich in Queensland.

## Vanuatu

The couple stayed in PNG until 2007 when they were invited by a secondary school in Vanuatu to help develop courses in the processing of coconut and related products. They spent three years in that country which has a population of about 250,000 people.

Then, in 2014, came another invitation from a commercial company, *Kakonut Pacific*, to set up a coconut technology centre in the Solomon Islands (population 750,000).

The centre was established on a greenfields site and within a year or so was employing some 40 people and had an inclusive policy to assist disabled workers.

This centre supported a network of 900 farmers in the Solomon Islands.

It promoted organic farming and helped move the farmers from a subsistence existence to more organised agriculture. In particular it showed farmers how to process and value-add to their crops.

## Economic impact

Frank says that this value-adding, assisted by some international marketing, has increased village economies and income by up to seven times while preserving traditional village lifestyles.

Questioned as to whether this agricultural development was impacting on old growth forests as has been happening in Indonesia he said that little or no clearing was involved as the villagers relied on long established trees and native nut varieties.

## Markets

Currently Frank Sanders is involved in a project to find Australian and other markets for organic farming products from South Pacific families. These products include cocoa, coconut products, coffee and traditional Pacific nuts.

In the *Buninyong Foodworks* store several of the organically-certified products from the South Pacific countries can be found on the shelves (facing the deli section).

These include Cacao Nibs, Ngali nuts and virgin coconut oil from the Solomon Islands and Tanna coffee from Vanuatu.

Look them up and give them a try!

# streettalk

**CLAIMS ABOUT** the economic benefit of the cycling championships here were brought home sharply when within a space of about 200 metres, walkers along Learmonth Street west spotted parked cars with registration plates from the ACT, WA, SA, NSW, Qld and even the NT. Serious bike race fans!!

**ASTUTE ZAC** from *Chocalatto* usually does well out of the annual bike races. But he did extra well this year. Worked out that it took three or four minutes to make a hot coffee for the queues of punters. But pre-prepared iced coffee could be poured from a jug in a few seconds – proved very popular in the warm weather too!

**RED DOOR PIZZERIA** regulars are all now looking in their mailboxes for an invite to the coming nuptials of owner **Trevor** and partner **Odette**. No, the ceremony won't be taking place at the *Mercure* or at *Narmbool*, but in Verteuil near Bordeaux, France, at a villa owned by one of Trevor's generous friends. Then off to Italy to take some cooking classes and inspect the source of the Italian flour used in their pizzas here.

**SOME HEAVY ACTION** at Desoza Park last month. A 'domestic' dispute with some colourful yelling across the street between a couple, turned into a drug bust and dual arrest when the police who attended were threatened and had to physically restrain the uncooperative couple. Guy had been seen hanging about the toilet block there for some time.

**MOST LOCAL BUSINESSES** were hit hard by the power outages on 19 January. The much-touted \$8 million emergency *Powercor* battery down at Durham Lead apparently kicked in to help out several hundred homes for an hour or so but the central parts of Buninyong waited in vain for it to assist.

**THAT STOREFRONT SECTION** of the old library which has seen bookshops, teddy bears and kinesiology come and go in recent years has just started its latest reincarnation as an artists' studio with **Annie Ross** at the helm. Also a base for keyboard and guitar lessons from husband **Mark**.



Entrants in the Lions Public Speaking Competition: (L to R): Chelsea Oellering, Zoe Kierce, Meg Jones, Lucy Leviston, Tara Orchard, Ky Jans, Olivia Mees, Ella Lavery, Leila Haddah

## Lions' competition Emmaus pair do well

The Lions Club of Buninyong/Mt Helen hosted the *Annual Junior Public Speaking Competition* in late 2017 at the Buninyong Bowling Club. The program aims to give primary school-level students the chance to develop their ability to speak in public.

The competition is divided into two sections. Students in Grades 3/4 were asked to retell a fairy tale or nursery rhyme with their own twist, and the 5/6 level students were asked to become authors and write a book for students of their age.

### Three schools

All nine students in the competition spoke with confidence and demonstrated an excellent grasp of the skills of public speaking.

The program was well supported by district primary schools at Buninyong, Emmaus and Napoleons.

The three judges - **Randall Dreger**, **Wendy Baker** and **Barry Henry** - were impressed with the very high standards demonstrated by the speakers. The eventual winners were **Ky Jans** (Grades 3/4) and **Meg Jones** at the Grades 5/6 level. Both students attend Emmaus Catholic Primary School.

The Lions Club see this as an extremely valuable activity and is great precursor to the *Youth of the Year Program* which is aimed at senior secondary school students.

The Buninyong & District Community Bank sponsored the evening as part of their on-going support for community programs.

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# From old Baths to new pool

In 1969 a group of residents formed a Committee to press the local and State Governments for a new pool for Buninyong

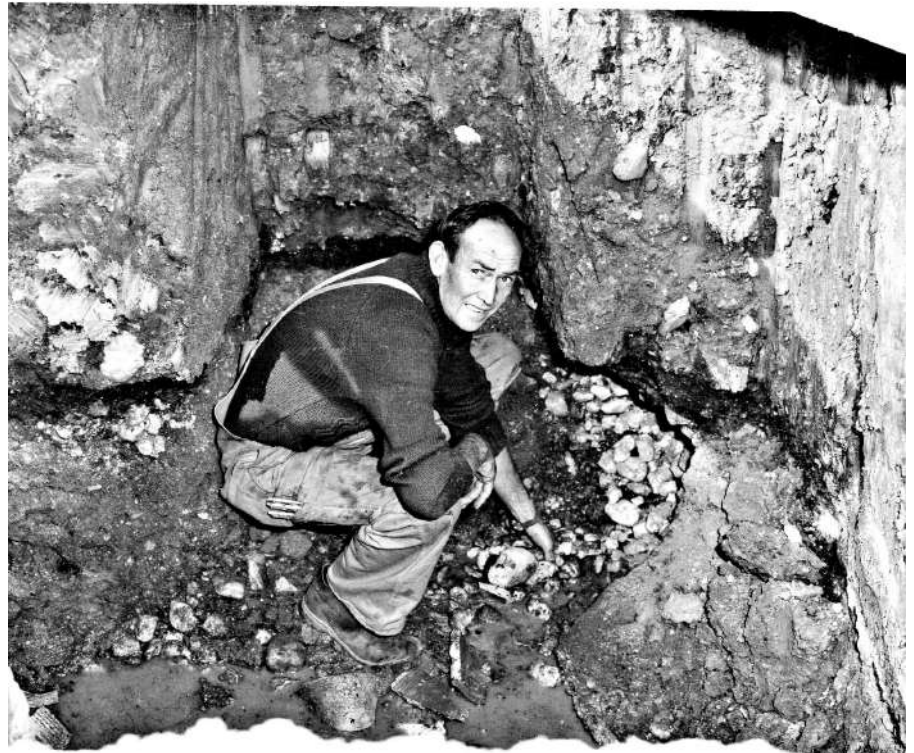
Led by Chairman **Graham Hannah**, Secretary **Arch Mackinnon** and Treasurer **Ian Smith**, other committee members including **Ronald Vagg**, **Wendy Furlong**, **Mavis Bath** and **Dawn Whykes** commenced a period of planning and fund-raising which was to span the next four years.

The Buninyong Shire Council provided a site in Forest Street which had previously been part of the Buninyong railway line.

## Funds

As will be seen in the 'recollection' notes of Arch Mackinnon on the following page, there were many activities to raise funds for the pool.

These included barbecues in the homes of many local residents, door knocking (though as Arch recalls these "often



*Graham Hannah also spent many hours working on the construction of the new pool.*

produced cents not dollars", selling cakes, collecting and selling bottles, pickling onions, and even the occasional game of 'illegal' bingo.

By 1973 some \$15,000 had been raised by the Committee and the State Government then made a grant of some \$60,000. Led by Graham Hannah many volunteers also assisted in the actual construction of the pool. By late 1974 it was completed and in December of

that year the pool was officially opened by State Minister for Development and Decentralisation, **Murray Byrne**.

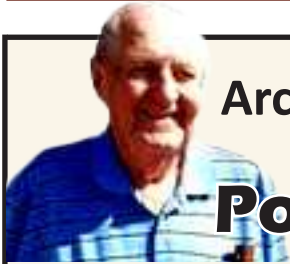
Mr Byrne said that "Buninyong is an example of what is good – the better way of life where people live, work and play together."

The pool was upgraded in 1992 by the addition of a solar heating system.

## BUNINYONG SWIM POOL OPENED



*Photograph of the pool opening (Ballarat Courier of 23 December 1974) showing Committee members and volunteers standing in the completed pool.*



**Arch remembers...**

**Pool built on cakes, bottles, snags and tears**

A public meeting to discuss the building of a Swimming Pool in Buninyong was held in mid-1969 and a Committee was elected to raise funds. Graham Hannah was elected Chairman, a role he continued in through both the fund-raising and construction phases.

Other long-serving office-bearers included Arch Mackinnon, Secretary and Ian Smith, Treasurer, with Peter Etchells as the Deputy-Chairman.

**Snowy day**

An early Committee activity was the first of many door knocks throughout Buninyong and district. But on the appointed Sunday it snowed, so the doorknockers had to tramp through snow to ask for a donation to build a swimming pool! Donations were usually in cents not dollars.

Probably the most popular fund-raisers were the barbecues, usually held on Saturday night in the back yards of families such as Hayes, Eason, Smith and Huggins. There was a special thrill about a barbecue at the Huggins as Bingo was played - quietly, of course, as the game was not then legal in Victoria.

The barbecues were cooked in cut-down rainwater tanks where 200 sausages and a whole sheep, neatly made into chops by John Whykes, were cooked. It was difficult to get into the back yards of some Committee members as they were filled with bottles collected to be sold to raise funds.

**Teary**

Another fund raising activity which moved those involved to tears was the pickling of onions for sale - bags of them. How we all wept as we talked, laughed and peeled our way through all

of those onions at Darrel and Wendy Hayes'. Some shrewd peelers wore their children's swimming goggles but even that didn't help a lot.

Gardiners had the local store at that time. Every Friday they offered any cake or biscuit which was left at the shop for sale at a bargain price to raise funds.

Maree Gardiner was a very persuasive sales-lady and this proved to be a good fund raiser.

Good days they were and happy days, with everyone working together. It comes as a shock to realise just how many years ago it all was. Well done Graham Hannah and well done everyone who barbecued, baked and bought, peeled and wept so that Buninyong might have its pool which opened in 1974.

*Arch Mackinnon, January 2018*

**The Gong,**

With the recent refurbishment works at the Buninyong Pool in Forest Street, Anne Beggs-Sunter, Secretary of the local Historical Society, has compiled this brief history of Buninyong's first swimming pool established in the Botanic Gardens around 1870.

The story of the old Baths in the Botanic Gardens goes back to the early 1860s. On 16 January 1861 the Buninyong Borough Council agreed that a sum not exceeding £40 could be spent on a 'bathing house' on the upper Botanical Gardens reserve. This pool was constructed as part of the town's water supply, but never was used for that purpose.

*ED: Arch Mackinnon, 85, recently visited Buninyong. He now resides in a retirement village in Berry (near Nowra) NSW. His wife Iris died two years ago.*

*(Below) Graham Hannah briefs some of the young doorknockers. Some of the girls in the front row were (L to R) Maxine Hannah 12, Lynda Hannah, 10, Glenda Thompson, and Joanne Mahoney. Taller girls at the rear were Kaye Mackinnon and Katrina Hocking.*



# Gardens and the old mine

So the Baths were established, and Council Minutes from March 1872 referred to filling the baths and opening them to the public. In September, Council received a letter from a **G Middleditch** asking Council to erect dressing sheds and a 'closet'. This happened the following month.

In 1876 a Baths Committee agreed on fees of six shillings for a family ticket for a season, three shillings for an individual, and tuppence for a single visit. It was part of the duties of the Curator of the Gardens to also superintend the baths. At this time private bathing facilities were minimal, hence the importance of the public baths.

## Spring fed

The Baths were fed by natural springs, but they had to be emptied periodically for cleaning. The refilling took two weeks. Later, with failing water supply, a pipe carried water from a spring near the Butter Factory. After this, the Baths were kept full with water from the Gong.

A correspondent to the *Buninyong Telegraph* on 6 October 1905 asked why girls were not being given free swimming lessons, as boys were, for the skill would be equally valuable to both sexes.

At the end of World War One, Shire Engineer **C. P Wilson** obtained a repatriation grant of £749 and organised a team of ex-servicemen to construct improved swimming baths, with pre-stressed concrete walls replacing the bluestone basin, and changing rooms being erected.

According to locals such as **Clem Eldridge** and **Charlie Coxall** this was a very early use of pre-stressed concrete.

## Swim teachers

**Marjorie Stewart** (nee Eldridge) recalled that **Samuel Fraser** was the caretaker of the gardens, and his wife 'taught' the children to swim for threepence. Children from the adjacent school came for swimming lessons. **Ann Lippiatt** recalled that swimming cost one penny and there was absolutely no mixed bathing.

**Gordon Hale** came to the Buninyong

State School in 1928. When he was four years old he learnt to swim under the tutelage of **Roy Kierl**, a fireman with the Victorian Railways who devoted himself to teaching children to swim after his own brother drowned.

Gordon made excellent progress, and represented Buninyong State School when they competed with great credit at the Ballarat Schools Swimming Carnival at the Eureka Pool.

## Condemned

During the 1930s, the baths were closed due to a high E-coli count. **Dr Longden**, medical officer, actually condemned the Baths. However by 1940 **Mrs Ogilvie** was the caretaker, and Council decreed free admission to all, although mixed bathing was still prohibited.

After World War Two, the baths became overgrown with weeds, but some of the migrant families, new to Buninyong and following a European custom, would frequent the old baths for the purpose of a weekly wash.

**Andy Naus**, who arrived from Holland with his family in 1954, told of cleaning out the weed infested and muddy baths with the help of some locals including members of the **Burke** family.

By the 1930s the old mining hole on the right hand side of the Buninyong-Scotchman's Lead Road – '*The Dredge*' – had become the centre of an unofficial swimming club for Buninyong.

## Diving

Although it did not have a diving tower like Creswick, at one point the bank of *The Dredge* was about the same height as the top level of that tower. A wooden platform floating on 44 gallon drums was located in the centre of the dredge.

It was seen to be a better place for serious swimming and diving than the pool in the Gardens but was considered to be dangerous because it was so deep.

## Final chapter

But there was still to be another chapter for the old baths. After a trip to England in 1992, **Derick Leather** had the idea of re-vamping the old baths, and following a visit to Sidmouth in Devon, he drew up a plan to make a sunken garden. This was pursued, and the baths were beautified as one of the last projects of the old Buninyong Shire Council.

This site has since become a popular location for weddings and even (pictured) as a setting for the 2017 production of *The Tempest*.



# Family can now join young Josh in Sydney



Local Lions club members David Page (left) and Simon Jess (right) hand a cheque to the Coates family (L to R) Nicole, Ella, Brett and Josh.

Over recent years the Buninyong Mt Helen Lions Club raised substantial funds to assist the Shorter family of Mount Clear whose three young sons suffer from a debilitating muscular dystrophy disease.

Now they have swung into action again to assist the family of a three year old boy, **Josh Coates** who suffers from an undiagnosed syndrome disorder which prevents him from walking without help, has severely curtailed language development, and has left him with very low muscle tone.

Currently he is receiving physio, speech and occupational therapy treatments in Melbourne and Ballarat. Fortunately most costs are covered by the new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

## US tests

Despite some thirty months of testing, a diagnosis has yet to be finalised for Josh, and a blood test is soon to be sent to the US, at considerable cost, in the hope of establishing a diagnosis.

The family's hopes have been raised by Josh's securing a place at the *Neurological and Physical Abilitation*

(NAPA) Centre in Sydney where he will be receiving three hours of cutting-edge therapies and treatments each day across a three week period.

Now world-renowned, the NAPA was established in 2008 in Los Angeles and for years Australian families travelled there at great cost to access treatment. With the recent opening of the centre in Sydney, families travel from all over Australia, New Zealand and Asia to access its services

While the NDIS will cover most of Josh's costs for this treatment, the family's costs across the period will be considerable.

## Family costs

Travel and accommodation costs in Sydney for Josh's parents, **Nicole** and **Brett Coates**, their two year old daughter and a three month old baby will severely impact on a family budget already stretched. Enter the local Lions Club.

They have raised some \$4000 to assist the family with these costs. In addition the Club has sourced a \$600 grant to buy a *Dash* Walking Frame to replace the present loan one used by Josh.

The *Dash* frame has many features such as pelvic and forearm supports and special wheels.

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AUTHORISED BY CATHERINE KING, 5 LYDIARD ST NTH BALLARAT 3350

# Happy to be back

On 1 February, 91 new prep students started school at Buninyong Primary, 87 at the Buninyong Campus and four at the Scotsburn Campus.

They have settled in very well and are providing loads of enjoyment for their Grade 6 buddies.

The school has also welcomed a number of new families, many of which have

moved into the district and will be enjoying all that our community has to offer.

Parents with a child at kindergarten will already be thinking about schools for 2019 and are welcome to attend Open Mornings at both campuses on February 26 and 27 between 9am and 1pm.

(Below) Fun in the playground - Elaina Robson with her grade 6 buddy, Chelsea Jew



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160 years after Sir Henry's march to Cornish Street

# Grant to restore old court house

It was just over 160 years ago, on 22 January 1858, when the second Governor of the Colony of Victoria, Sir Henry Barkly, on his way back to Melbourne from a visit to the goldfields, took breakfast at the old Buninyong Inn.

He then proceeded on foot at the head of a procession of townspeople to Cornish Street, where he laid the foundation stone of Buninyong's new Court House.

## Complex

Constructed of locally quarried sandstone, the building was completed by the middle of the year, and served as Magistrate's and Licensing Court.

Along with the Police Station and residence, and a wooden lock-up capable of holding forty prisoners, it was located in the Police Reserve.

When the new Buninyong Town Hall was built in 1886, it included a new court-house, and with the construction of a new Police Station the following year, the Police

Reserve in Cornish Street, came under the control of the Buninyong Council.

The Council demolished the old lock-up and sold off the timber. The old Police Residence was leased out. But they seemed unsure what to do with the former Court house. For several years it was used as rehearsal room for the Buninyong Brass Band.

## Butter and depot

In 1892 the *Buninyong Butter Factory* was formed, and leased the old court house. They constructed brick extensions, and operated there until 1909, when they moved to new premises closer to the railway station.

Council then started demolishing much of the brick extension, and re-used the bricks to build a kitchen and supper room at the rear of the Town Hall (now the toilet block and storage rooms).

They left the sandstone building, and the "large room" which they saw as "a very suitable place to hold a picnic."



*Sir Henry Barkly*

However, by 1920 the buildings were being used as the Council Depot.

In 1990 Council relocated the Depot, and the buildings came under the custodianship of the Buninyong Historical Society which completed the first restoration of the buildings in 1995.

However, with no power or water connected, it has only since been suitable for storage.

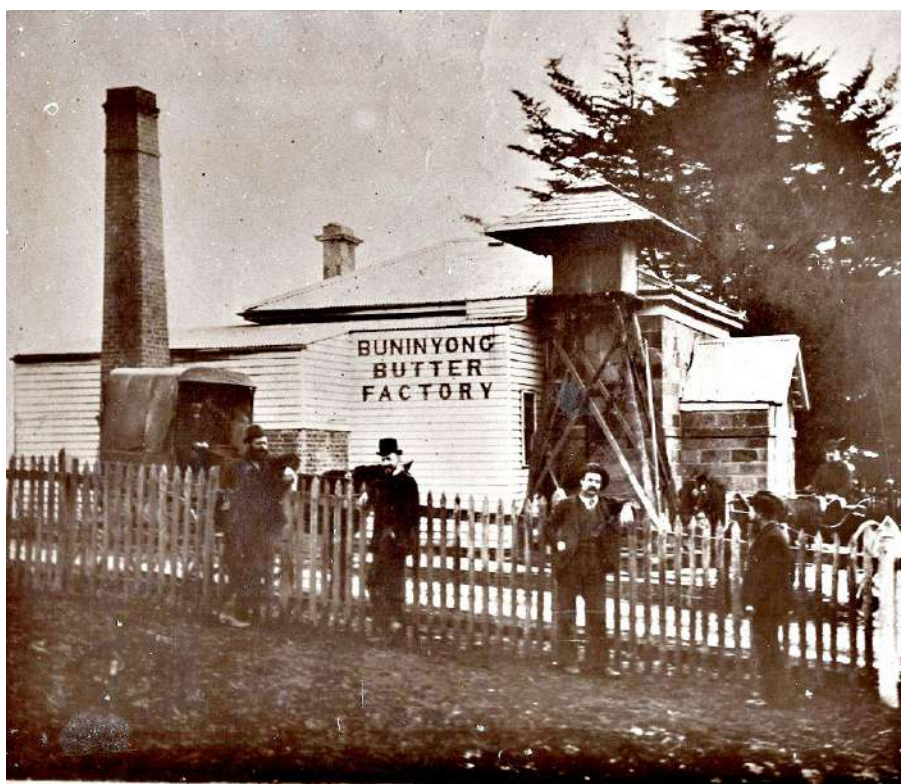
## Grant

Once again the buildings are in need of work. There is a problem with drainage causing deterioration of the sandstone, and the roof needs repairs.

Last year a committee was formed to get this under way, and to look at ways to make it suitable for a more active use by the Buninyong community.

In November 2017 the buildings were opened for public inspection for the first time in many years, and generated considerable interest.

The Historical Society is excited and grateful that the Australian Government has just confirmed a grant that will allow it to proceed with the most urgent work on the building, which should be completed by the middle of the year.





## Death of two local identities

In late January Buninyong lost two of its oldest and respected residents with the deaths of **Russell Hocking** of Warrenheip Street and **Marguerite (Rita) Brown** of Learmonth Street.

Russell died on 18 January at Gandarra aged 86 years. He was a returned serviceman who spent six years in Vietnam (1965-1971) as a member of the Royal Australian Regiment. He was a Life Member of the local RSL branch and the Bowling Club. A graveside service to farewell him was held at the Buninyong Cemetery on 25 January.

Rita Brown, 92, passed away on 24 January. She was the mother of three boys, Don, Martin and Randall. Following a graveside committal service she was buried at the Buninyong Cemetery on 30 January.

## March is Red Cross Month

The annual Red Cross Appeal will be held during March. Local Red Cross stalwart **Helen Stephens** said that volunteers will have a table outside of the Newsagency each Saturday in March between 8.00am and noon.

## Vandals wreck big street tree

One of the healthy six year old plane trees at the front entrance to the *Foodworks* car park in Learmonth Street was recently cut down and removed by Council workers.

This followed the breaking of a main lead branch of the tree caused by vandals swinging on it. The Council arborist said that the tree's growth would be seriously affected and that another tree would be planted.

Another tree in the same car park had also been damaged. The Council workers also did some lopping and shaping work on the other trees in the car park during their visit.



The pile of leaves and branches (right) is all that remained after being removed by Council workers



In January, while we received a very respectable total of 35.6mm (close to the average) most of it landed in a cluster in the final few days of the month. Prior to that there had been seven weeks of stolidly drying conditions spiked with shots of high heat.

The harsh conditions certainly made our blueberry harvest the trickiest in a decade.

After weeks of this testing weather, January closed in a flurry of contrast that contained something for everyone. Monday 29<sup>th</sup> presented with a minimum of 24°, top of 34°, high humidity and 95% chance of up to 25mm of rain. Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> reminded us of the amazing fluidity of our weather, with temperatures diving after the cool change, ranging from only 12° to 19°. A shot of tropical followed by a dash of temperate, all in a matter of hours, what a finish to what a month!

JAN 2018			
Date	Rain	Date	Rain
13-14	8.1	15	0.4
27	14.8	30	12.3
<b>Total</b>		<b>35.6mm</b>	
JAN 2017		33.1mm	

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First round to Mt Helen locals

# Council's 'No' to plans for large project

Despite taking up some 83 pages of the City of Ballarat Council Agenda, the recommendation of council planning officers to grant a planning permit for 2 Eddy Avenue Mt Helen was rejected by a unanimous vote of Councillors at its meeting of 31 January.

The developers, Monsien Holdings, had planned to put ten dwellings and seventeen car parks on the prominent 950m2 site at the corner intersection of Eddy Avenue and Geelong Road.

A lobby group of local residents led by Kevin Zibell had been formed to fight the proposal which they considered to be quite out of character with the Mt Helen environment.

### Objectors

Council received 54 formal objections to the plan and six residents spoke at the Council meeting.

Contrary to the recommendation by Council officers that a Planning Permit be granted subject to conditions, the motion to issue a *Notice of Refusal* for the development was carried on the motion of

South Ward Councillor **Jim Rinaldi** and seconded by **Cr Des Hudson**.

The four grounds of refusal included that *"the intensity, scale, bulk and built form of the development does not respond to the existing spatial and visual characteristics of its location"* and also that *"the proposal is inconsistent of the General Residential Zone which aims to encourage development which respects the neighbourhood character of the area"*

It is not presently known if an appeal against Council's decision will be lodged at VCAT.



Standing opposite the site at the corner of Boak and Eddy Avenues are local residents (L-R) Martin Russell, Kevin Zibell and Kevin Flynn. They are among many Mt Helen residents who opposed the proposal for the ten unit, three level development proposal.

### Over-the-top unit proposal Battle of Boak Avenue

## COMING EVENTS

**Monday 26/Tuesday 27 February.** *Open Mornings*, Buninyong Primary School, 9.00-1.00

**Saturday 17 March.** *Railways Day*. Lal Lal Hall. 10.00-2.00

**Saturday 24 March.** *Buninyong Village Market (Twilight)*. 4.00-8.00. Town Hall precinct.

**Saturday 24 March.** Elaine Cricket Club. *Opening of Clubrooms* (noon). *Presentations* 12.30. Lunch, Dinner, Breakfast (Sunday). BYO drinks, tent, swag, bathers, towel. Jumping castle, water slide, jukebox.

**Saturday 31 March.** *Children's Annual Easter Egg Hunt*. Botanic Gardens. 9.30am



**Sunday 1 April.** *Communion Service*. Scotsburn Union Church, 10.00. Speaker Tom Buscombe. Heather 5341 7609.

**Sunday 29 April.** *Open Day*. Steiner School and Kindergarten. Moss Ave, Mt Helen. 5341 8188



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## Charities helped by fruit sales

The sale of 2600kg of Goulburn Valley apricots and nectarines in January will fund the charity projects of Sturt Buninyong Masonic Committee during 2018.

The fruit transported in bulk from Ardmona was repackaged by a team of twenty Freemasons and supporters. Interest in the sales continues to grow as people realise

the importance of fruit as part of their diet.

Shown above are Masonic Committee President **Ken Jenkin** and Secretary **Alan Glasson** working with South Sudanese helpers **Roun** and **Yual Reath**.

This was the second year that South Sudanese community members have assisted with the fruit packing.

## CAMPUS BOOMING

Changes continue to happen at that happy, compact primary school campus at Scotsburn. Recent improvements, with **Damien Shackell** and **Sarah Palmer** leading the way, have included:

- inside and outside painting of the old school building with the floors being sanded and polished
- a Ga Ga pit being constructed and installed by the Men's Shed
- upgrade of the student toilets

Campus co-ordinator **Shaun O'Loughlin** said that "with the ties to our larger campus at Buninyong, Scotsburn students really do have the best of both worlds."

He has invited interested parents to contact him on 5341 3496 to have a look around the Scotsburn campus.



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**We are looking forward to meeting members of the local community and assisting with their care health needs.**



Local cycling fans, the Bedgood brothers David, Ian and Neil, were part of the crowd. They were delighted that Buninyong featured in another major cycling event.

# Top cyclists back in town

Just one month after the National Road Cycling championships, world class cyclists were back in Buninyong for the finish of the second stage of the Jayco Herald Sun Tour. The stage started in Warnambool and tracked 198.6km through the Western District to Buninyong where riders tackled the iconic Mt Buninyong mountain climb and finish up the main street.

## Support

Loud cheering and bell ringing from the enthusiastic spectators welcomed local boys Liam and Nick White who were first and third through the roundabout with the main bunch right on their heels.

The town was awash with red as hundreds of Buninyong Primary School students joined cycling fans from across the country who lined Warrenheip Street to cheer on the cyclists in the home straight.

The students were helped by Cycling Australia commentator David McKenzie who warmed them up prior to the finish. Loud cheering contests and a Buninyong-style Mexican Wave prepared the kids to give the riders a fitting welcome into Buninyong.

Race director, John Trevorrow had predicted an exciting finish to the stage. The riders did their bit, producing a grandstand sprint finish to the cheers of the crowd.

Ray Sullivan

## Ray Sullivan's SPORTS NEWS

### Bowls finals close

Buninyong lawn bowlers have battled hard throughout the season and have a number of divisions in the running for finals appearances. The weekend Division 1 and 3 sides and the midweek Division 1 and 4 are in the top four in their competitions. Men's and Ladies club championships have been completed. **Brian Wilcock** put on a great exhibition of draw bowling to defeat **Mick Storey** for the men's title. **Barbara Voigt** won her fourth Ladies Championship.

### Cricketers near top

Buninyong CC are in second place in the Second Grade competition and look assured of playing in another finals series. Best performers for the season so far (mid February) are batsmen, **Michael Flynn** with 356 runs with a top score of 105 and **Scott Boadle** with 333 runs with a top score of 88. **Daniel Kitchen** leads the bowlers with 17 wickets. The Third Grade side are just hanging on to fourth place.

### Medal all tied up

The Buninyong Golf Club's current Monthly Medal finished in a three-way tie. **Brian Barrell, Ian Lee and Trevor McCann** all scored 69 nett and will play off in March. **Rita Lightfoot** won the Ladies medal with 74 nett.

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In the late 1800s

# Lal Lal was the place to be seen

The social life of Lal Lal was at its heights in the late 1800s when the railways took picnickers, punters and party-goers for a day out at the Lal Lal Falls and the adjacent racecourse. Up to 30,000 people were attracted to the *Flemington of the Country* races after the branch line to the race-track was completed in 1886.

A recently published book now records this history. "It was like Moomba and horse-racing rolled into one," said co-author **Mark Cauchi**. "All of humanity was there – picnickers with their hampers, side-show alley spruikers, politicians kissing babies – everyone determined to have a good time on their day out," he said.

Before the branch line was built, patrons came by rail to Lal Lal station from



Historian Mark Cauchi and Railway enthusiast Michael Guiney at the Lal Lal station which once catered for twenty trains per day.

Geelong, Melbourne and Ballarat in all manner of railway carriages including those who had to stand for the trip in freight cars and cattle trucks (see picture).

Back then, some did not bother to walk the two miles to the racecourse but remained in Lal Lal where the pubs did a roaring trade. Estimates of these pre-branch line crowds still amounted to around 20,000 people in the early 1880s.

## Decline

However, it wasn't to last. The racing club committee 'took their success and well-deserved reputation for granted' and the advent of alternative local attractions such as the Burrumbeet races and the Buninyong Botanic Gardens, which were also well-served with railway lines, soon meant that the Lal Lal

station was reduced from up to 20 trains on a good day down to one train. By 1938 the event was losing money and mired by politics.

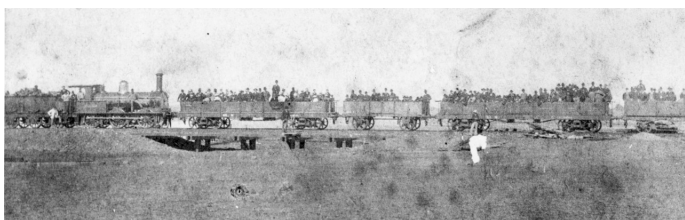
## Book

The book, *Picnic at the Falls – A History of the Lal Lal Racecourse and its Railway*, was recently launched at the Buninyong Historical Society's museum by local historian **Dr Anne Beggs Sunter** and is now available by contacting the authors **Mark Cauchi** (0417 157 339) and **Michael Guiney** (0408 034 118) or at [lal.lal.races@gmail.com](mailto:lal.lal.races@gmail.com) or by writing to PO Box 90, Mooroolbark 3138.

There will be an extensive railway day held at Lal Lal Hall on Saturday 17 March from 10am to 2pm.

This is a joint event between the Geelong & South Western Railway Heritage Society and the Buninyong Historical Society.

*Russell Luckock*



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# New wooden statue TRIBUTE TO PIONEERS

**A new carved wooden statue standing high on a huge tree stump the corner of the Mt Mercer and Webbs Hill Roads is a tribute to two of Buninyong's earliest settlers – Samuel and Anne Coxall.**

Still both in their teens (Samuel was 19 years and Anne 16 years) the couple had come by ship from England arriving at Portland, Victoria in 1855. During the journey of 107 days Anne gave birth to a daughter, Agnes, who died a week later, such were the poor conditions on the ship.

## Long trek

With all of their worldly goods piled into a wheelbarrow Samuel and Anne travelled by foot from Portland to Melbourne and then on to Buninyong where Samuel worked for **Francis Moss** at *Mossmount Gardens*.

Later he purchased 12 acres of land with a dairy herd and a homestead for 400 pounds, and also set up one of the village's first market gardens. The homestead is still standing on the north-west corner of Somerville and Winter streets.

**Arthur**, one of the three sons of Samuel and Anne, served on the Buninyong Shire Council for eighteen years, being Mayor on three occasions.

Local identity **Noel Coxall** said that when a huge 130 year old cypress tree planted



by Samuel Coxall had to be felled late last year because of nearby power lines, he decided to have a statue of his ancestors carved from the tree-trunk which was 1.5 metres in diameter.

Noel said that he was lucky to find **Brendan Kroon**, one of Australia's finest woodcarvers (using a chainsaw) to undertake the project.

## World class

Kroon recently took fourth place in a world championship of chainsaw woodcarvers. The amazingly detailed statue of the couple with their wheelbarrow and bible now can be seen on the Coxall property just west of the Buninyong township.

That Bible is now in safekeeping with Noel and **Pam**. Their children are now the seventh generation of the Coxall family to live in Buninyong

Pictured above are four of the seven sons of **Roy and Muriel Coxall**. At left is **Neville**, 76, one of four sons who moved to Western Australia to open up large tracts of land in the Esperance/Albany area. Next is **Doug**, 86, another of the family to move to WA.

Third from left is **Les Coxall** aged 88 who, in the 1950s established the garage now operated by **Jim Vagg** in downtown Buninyong.

On the right is **Stan**, 90, who built and operated the garage at the corner of Warrenheip and Somerville Streets before also heading off to farm in WA..

For these early settlers of Buninyong a family birthday in February was the first time they had seen one another for thirty years.



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