

Council's South Ward election

Eight in race

The field of candidates for the South Ward jumped from six to eight within a few hours of nominations closing on 22 September. While some text in this edition could be changed to reflect this, all pre-print design work had been completed at that time.

In addition to the six nominees shown below, an independent candidate, Rachel Muir, and a member of the Australia First party Susan Jakobi, have now nominated.

These two candidates join the three retiring Councillors – Des Hudson, an endorsed Labor Party candidate, independent Jim Rinaldi, and Ben Taylor – and three others. Bridget Aitchison is the second endorsed Labor Party candidate, Tracey Hargreaves is standing as an independent, and Jackson Snep is a Greens candidate.

The election date is 24 October. All voting this year will be conducted by postal ballot. Postal voting packs will be mailed to enrolled voters in the 6-8 October period.

From the close of nominations on 22 September, Council has been in 'caretaker' mode.



Big trees fall to chain saw

RRV's wire-rope project starts

Reports in *The News* (September 2019 and March 2020) gave details of the \$25 million Regional Roads Victoria (RRV) project to install wire-rope safety barriers along a ten kilometre stretch of the Midland Highway from Clarendon to near the junction of the highway with the Mount Buninyong Road.

In the initial RRV plans there was to be removal of substantial numbers of old growth eucalypt trees lining the highway, particularly on the western side.

Lobbying by local community and environmental groups, meetings, and drive-along tours of the affected sections

of the highway with RRV staff, led to some modifications to original plans, resulting in many trees being saved and other concessions such as the gathering of seeds and timber from significant trees.

Dan Frost (*Seedling Victoria*) said that he had already managed to get "a small amount of seed" and that it was "good to be able to preserve the genes of some of these huge trees".

But with the arrival of heavy equipment in mid-August many large trees have already fallen to the chain saw along the first stage of the project from Clarendon to near the Christian College's *Back Creek* farm

The impact on roadside trees will increase significantly as the project heads north towards major stands of large eucalypt trees on the Buninyong side of Platts Rd (near the Scotsburn School campus). At the outset of the project it was estimated that at between 300 to 600 roadside trees would be removed including some 114 large manna gums.

The project will not be completed until mid-2021.



CASH for dog park approved

Buninyong was a winner when on 26 July the Environment Minister Lily D'Ambrosio announced a State Government grant of \$2.5 million to fund seventeen dog parks across the State.

The local off-lead dog park to be sited at the James Reserve was amongst ten across regional Victoria to receive funding. Others funded were at Yarragon, Portland, Kilmore, Belmont, Shepparton, Mildura, Swan Hill and Warracknabeal.

The Council will work with the State Government to finalise the tender process and costings for the park which has a budget of some \$40,000.

Planning for the James Reserve dog park is already well advanced, and Mayor **Ben Taylor** said that the news of the grant would enable works to start in the very near future. "The Minister's announcement followed a strong Council submission to get funding for Buninyong's James Reserve dog park," he said.

Local dog-lover **Liz Hayward** who led the lobbying effort over several years said that the news was "fantastic".

Jackson Snep
for Ballarat Council
South Ward

Get in contact:
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I'm standing for:

- Local jobs and a strong economy
- Climate action
- Transparency and integrity



Authorised by S. McColl, 1/45 William St, Melbourne, VIC, 3000

Don Ogilvie dies at 95 Village loses a legend

Over the past twenty or thirty years there was an old bloke, usually with a tweed cap on his head, who was a fixture down at the Old Library, happily sharing his knowledge and love of Buninyong with anyone who stopped by.

He was **Don Ogilvie**, one of the very few able to claim to have been literally born and bred in Buninyong. He was born in September 1924 in the curator's cottage in the Buninyong Botanic Gardens.

Sadly, at the age of 95, Don passed away in late August and is now buried at the Buninyong cemetery.

Father

Don's story is closely linked to the story of his father, **John Ogilvie**, another icon of the village, born here in 1870.

After growing up on his father's small farm on the Midland Highway hill, John got a job on the gardening staff at Flemington Racecourse where tending the famous roses was amongst his duties.



Don on his trike in the Buninyong Botanic Gardens c1928.



In 2015 Don Ogilvie shown chatting about the old days in Buninyong with Jean Walker, whose husband Mervyn came from Buninyong.

Then in 1893, gold was discovered in Kalgoorlie and John headed west, returning to Buninyong in 1901 as a "wealthy gentleman".

He invested in mining ventures in Buninyong and Durham Lead, and had an interest in the local chaff mill. He was a local Councillor for nine years (Mayor between 1910-11), was a Justice of the Peace, and Deputy Coroner (being a great friend of **Dr Longden**).

He was prominent in all civic, social and sporting activities, and married local girl **Mary Watkins** in 1905.

Curator

But his fortunes turned, and by 1916, his employment seemed to be that of the Council's Dog Registrar and Thistle Inspector. Finally, in 1924, he accepted the position as Curator of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens.

Now back to the old bloke at the Old Library – Don Ogilvie. Francis Donald Ogilvie was the youngest of the seven children of John and Mary, born at the humble curator's cottage in the Gardens.

Don's early years coincided with Australia's spiral into the Great Depression. It is thought that the cash-strapped Council stopped paying wages to its curator for a period but allowed the family to continue to live in the cottage. The Gardens fell into disrepair.

Don's youth

His boyhood years were spent in the pursuits of most local boys of that time – rabbiting, ferreting, fishing in the Gong, bird-nesting, and finding lost golf balls at the local course. Later he became active in tennis, cricket and football, playing some senior games with Buninyong.

After his father's death in 1939, he and his mother moved to a house in Forest Street. He lived there with his mother until her death in 1951.

When he left school, Don was apprenticed to **Albert Crosbie**, the bootmaker with a shop 'on the bridge' in Ballarat. He then worked at Wain's Shoe Store.

Later, he was employed at the School of Mines, Ballarat (SMB), and moved to Mt Helen when Ballarat CAE was established there in 1976. He remained in the role of Assistant Purchasing Officer there until his retirement in 1986.

He married **Joan Burns**, a school teacher, in 1957. The couple has two sons.

Memories

When *The News* interviewed Don in 2015, his memories of Buninyong were acute – the trees, the box hedges and the cottage plants in the Gardens, the swimming baths filled with spring water but topped up with Gong water (often with small eels and fish), the possums that ran rampant in and around the cottage, his father cutting the grass in the gardens with a scythe, the local personalities that he and his family knew over the years.

In 1986, the Buninyong Council honoured the Ogilvie family by planting a commemorative *bunya bunya* tree in the Botanic Gardens. Ogilvie Lane which runs along the ridge of Mt Innes also is named after the family.

The old bloke with a cloth cap can no longer be found on the wooden bench in the Old Library, but memories of him will be there for many years to come.

Action or promises

For years many ratepayers saw the staff and Councillors of the City of Ballarat to be in a comfort zone. Safe, well-paid, long-term administrative jobs, and Council spots that often rolled over from election to election.

That certainly has changed over recent times with reports from the likes of the ombudsman and forensic accountants suggesting all has not been well at Sturt Street and at the Phoenix building around the corner. Throw the tough administrative warrior **Janet Dore** into the mix as interim CEO and 'sleepy hollow' has suddenly become more like Mt Vesuvius.

It's a sure bet that there was a collective sigh of relief when, a few days ago, Council reached a month of being in 'caretaker mode' until after the election date of 24 October.

With eight candidates seeking election for the South Ward, down from the record field of twelve at the 2016 elections (see image right), it's enlightening to see what the three Councillors elected back then – **Des Hudson, Jim Rinaldi** and **Ben Taylor** – told *The News* (December 2016) following their success.

Des Hudson said that he wanted Buninyong to be recognised "as a growing community, with a unique village feel" and that he "supported progress while preserving this natural character". Hopefully that stance will soon be in evidence when the matter of that bunch of barrels on Buninyong's major natural feature hits the Council table.

Jim Rinaldi was more focussed on "making a stand" on matters such as "financial control and accountability" and getting "value for every dollar spent".

Ben Taylor said he would bring "new energy and vision", would "make senior officers accountable" and make sure "Council lives within its means". Certainly, many senior officers recently have headed off for other pastures, but whether Cr Taylor or the interim CEO rather than external forces were the major contributors is not immediately clear to ratepayers.

Lined up against these three incumbents are five quite dramatically different candidates.

Bridget Aitchison is an experienced senior manager. **Jackson Snep**, a Greens candidate, wants climate action. **Tracey Hargreaves** says Council needs to have someone willing to listen to locals and speak on their issues. Add to that mix the multi-cultural and indigenous concerns of **Rachel Muir**, and the populist views of **Susan Jakobi** on matters as diverse as fast trains and gun laws, and voters in the South Ward have some interesting choices to make.

Maybe more will be learned in the BDCA Zoom session on 8 October at 7.00pm. Register and tune in.



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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.

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

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From rocks to redwood

Snowy loves his slabs of timber

Down an unmade bush road on the lower slopes of Mount Buninyong is a unique yard packed with large slabs of timber of many kinds. These have been gathered and worked on by a unique character in Lawrence 'Snowy' Crimeen.

'Snowy' Crimeen is an enthusiast about slabs of raw wood. "It's the colours, the grain and the smell of a fine piece of wood from a majestic tree that may have fallen after succumbing to its many decades," he said, reflecting his passion for rare timbers.

While wood might now be his hobby, Snowy has retired from an active life with *Mid-West Earth Movers* which he ran for 35 years in partnership with **Terry Guy**.

North and west

After his early life at Castlemaine, Snowy headed north for a stint as a 'roo shooter around Wilcannia on the Darling River. Then it was off west to the goldfields of Western Australia where he worked underground for the Western Mining company, especially in the *Silver Lake Mine*.

However, his father was a hard-rock miner at Welshman's Reef outside Maldon and wanted Snowy back to help with the *Charlie's Hope* gold mine. But the gold price, having been fixed at \$32 per ounce plus the government's \$8 for many years, suddenly rose dramatically in 1979/1980. That resulted in exploration for gold initially moving slowly but

then intensifying throughout the late eighties and early nineties.

So father and son went into the shaft-sinking business for the gold miners. At first it was around Blackwood and Ballarat, but then they moved further afield to Jamieson to their antimony mine. Shafts were generally 1.2 by 1.5 metres and sunk vertically into the ground.

Progress often was slow through the hard rock with 26-28 holes having to be drilled for each dynamite blast that would sink the mineshaft down another 1.2m each time.

Mate

These days, Snowy is fortunate to work in with another local, **Tony Coxall**, the *Tree Fella*, who often brings him the salvaged trunks of trees that have had to be cut up and removed, such as parts of the huge cypress tree recently removed from the Buninyong schoolgrounds.



For now though, Snowy's passion for great timber keeps him occupied, knowing that his carefully air-dried slabs will be transformed by other enthusiasts into beautifully polished tables and benchtops. His favourite trees thus 'live' again.

– Russell Luckock

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Looking at one of the stone markers, Charles Zhang was able to translate the engraved classical Chinese characters on it. This is the grave of Ah Han Jian, who died on Guangxue Dynasty Fifth (27 February 1879) and who came from Meige Village, Xinhui District, Jiangmen City, Guangdong Province, China.

Chinese on the goldfields Project to mark early settlers

The old section of the Buninyong Cemetery has areas designated for various religious denominations. In a corner located adjacent to the Cemetery's North Terrace, there is also a little-known small Chinese section.

There are 43 plots in the section, and cemetery records show that 21 known and two unknown persons are buried there. Only three small stone grave markers with carved Chinese writing remain.

From Robe

During the Buninyong gold rushes in the 1850s, a sizeable number of immigrants most from Southern China, came to the local goldfields. Many of them had walked from the South Australian seaport of Robe – a distance of some 450km.

Most of the burials in the Chinese section were of gold miners, but some were those who worked in the township growing food for the miners, or on local pastoral properties.

Recently, Chairman of the Buninyong Cemetery Trust **Barry Fitzgerald** met with the President of the China-Australia Cultural Society (Ballarat) **Charles Zhang** to discuss what works might be done to improve the Chinese section.

Various options being considered include reproducing more grave markers, planting, researching those buried there, and installing interpretative signage adjacent to the section to detail some of the history of those buried and of the Chinese on the Buninyong goldfields. Having experience with similar projects in other cemeteries, Mr Zhang has offered to assist.

Charles Zhang was easily able to translate the old stone markers saying that there was some important information on them, even relating to homeland areas of China from where the person migrated.

Media

In 2009 Charles received national media attention when he retraced the steps of the thousands of early Chinese settlers by walking, with his 17 year old son, from Robe in the South-east of South Australia to Ballarat – a journey of 438km through Penola, Coleraine, Casterton, Dunkeld, Ararat and on to Ballarat. It took fourteen days.

A qualified engineer, Charles came to Australia as an international student in 1989 from near Shanghai and moved to Ballarat in 1998. Since then his work has largely been in the wine and vineyard industries.

Charles has been involved in promoting Chinese history and culture in Ballarat and elsewhere through community activities such as the celebration of Chinese New Year at Sovereign Hill and the Begonia Festival Parade. A volunteer with other agencies such as *Voice FM*, he was named Ballarat's *Citizen of the Year* in 2015.



Des Hudson OAM

YOUR LABOR CANDIDATE FOR
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- SOUTH WARD

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[Des Hudson 4 South Ward](https://www.facebook.com/DesHudson4SouthWard)



Albert Ah Chan DCM – top soldier and baker

One of the village's best known characters for some thirty years in the mid-1900s was local baker Albert Ah Chan who, with partner 'Paddy' Jones, ran the bakery in a tin shed on the corner of Warrenheip and Forest Streets where the BP service station now stands.

Albert Victor Ah Chan was born on 11 August 1895 in Ballarat to **Elizabeth** (nee **Holderhead**) and **Henry Ah Chan**. He had five brothers and three sisters, most of whom died young. His grandfather **James Ah Chan** was born in Hebei Province in northern China.

When World War One broke out in 1914, young Albert, a 19-year-old labourer, enlisted with the 8th Battalion on 17 August 1914. He was one of the first to embark for Europe in October 1914. He served at Gallipoli initially as a private, but was soon promoted to be a Lance Corporal, then a Sergeant.

He served throughout the war in France and Belgium, being wounded several times and was awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM). While he was fighting overseas his mother died in Ballarat and, soon after his return in 1919, his father died. He continued living in York Street, with his sister **Annie Clarice**, and learned his trade as a baker.

Bakery here

In 1927 he moved to Buninyong and formed a partnership with **Hedrick 'Paddy' Jones**, who had bought the bakery operated by **Ralph Parsons** in Warrenheip Street.

According to recently-deceased Buninyong legend **Don Ogilvie**, Albert was a chain smoker, and would be smoking while he stirred the dough, with the ash from Albert's cigarette sometimes falling into the dough.

But he made excellent bread, which Paddy Jones delivered at night to surrounding homes. Albert boarded with Miss **Kit O'Kane** who lived up the hill



Sgt Albert Ah Chan DCM.

in Learmonth St. He never married, but was reportedly fond of Kit.

RSL

In 1946 a local sub-branch of the Returned Servicemen's League (RSL) was formed in Buninyong and Albert Ah Chan was elected as its first Secretary. In view of the *White Australia* policy and associated prejudices of the time, Buninyong demonstrated true multi-cultural spirit in enthusiastically choosing a Secretary with a proud Chinese ancestry.

Albert stood (unsuccessfully) for the Shire Council in 1946. He was also a keen member of the Buninyong Bowling Club. He was still baking bread in the 1960s. But he succumbed to lung cancer, and died on 21 July 1965 at the Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital at the age of 69. He was buried at the Ballarat New Cemetery.

Based on an article by Anne Beggs-Sunter in The Buninyong & District Historical Society Newsletter, October 2019.

WOW! It's worth taking a walk along the Union Street behind the bank and the Post Office to have a look at the back end of the re-built community cottage. Quite striking outdoor design there involving seating, paving and steel sculpture fence/screen put together by local landscape designer **Paal Grant**. Opening date for the cottage is still on hold.

SOME ACTION at last on the Warrenheip Street improvement project. Council's **David Turley** convened a 'virtual' meeting of a small community advisory group a few weeks ago. The east side of the block between Forest and Eyre Streets seems set to see some works action early in 2021. Also good signs for businesses along there with an extra eight parking spots planned to replace the 'world's longest' bus stop!

OUR RONNIE reported that he tried twice to back out of his usual parking spot at the BP servo recently to narrowly miss being hit by a car heading off in a hurry from a nearby petrol pump. Later found out it was a 'drive-off' – one of three on that day.

HEAR REPORTS that, after spotting the September edition of *The News* on the stand inside the Newsagency's front door, a visitor recently made some quite confronting comments to staff about the lead *Barrels Shock* story being on display there for all to see. The annoyed visitor left muttering about Buninyong's "small town syndrome!"

ABOUT TEN MONTHS ago *Street Talk* reported that a Sushi shop (operated by the folk from the Sushi/Noodle shop in Mair Street) would likely open adjacent to the Post Office. Now the small sign on the door and the furniture inside suggests that it's getting much closer.

BIG CHANGES. Before candidates could nominate for Council in any Victorian electorate this year they had to complete a training course. This was to "build confidence for both candidates and communities". It covered "vital" information such as conflict of interest, a code of conduct, and available support. Length of the course – "about one hour!!". With that intensive training behind them, what have we got to worry about!! And do we get to see their scores?

Life-saving Aussie ventilator Local bank's big role

Ballarat and Buninyong have been put on the map during the COVID-19 pandemic with the news that local mining and renewables technology manufacturer Gekko Systems has received approval from the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) for their innovative GeVentor ventilator to go into production.

The life-saving equipment, now expected to be available within a few weeks, was developed locally by the Gekko team in collaboration with the Ballarat medical and research community.

With backing coming from the Committee for Ballarat, Ballarat Health Services and the broader community, Buninyong & District Community Bank quickly offered significant financial backing by committing \$60,000 to the project.

Buninyong Community Bank Director (Community Investment) **Steve Falconer** said, "When the Committee for Ballarat put out the call for funding to support Gekko's GeVentor development project, we did not hesitate to join 'team Ballarat' with a game-changing investment."

Committee for Ballarat CEO and Buninyong resident **Michael Poulton** said, "The local Community Bank's investment in the project was critical to its ultimate success and in gaining additional funding from the Victorian Government."

First

This is the first Australian-designed ventilator to receive TGA approval. With support at the Commonwealth and State



levels, the Victorian State Government has now committed to purchase 170 units from Gekko System's newly formed med-tech start up *Gekko Medical Manufacturing*.

Future

The GeVentor will be used to help treat COVID-19 patients in hospitals and as critical care equipment supporting regional and rural health services. It is anticipated the locally driven GeVentor project may lead to the future development of other impactful medical technologies in the Ballarat region.

Gekko Systems Chair **Elizabeth Lewis-Gray** said, "Without the Buninyong Community Bank's pledging their support early and driving the project forward in the conceptual phase we would never be where we are now."

Ernie Neale's Monthly RAINFALL REPORT

A wintry August

Winter came late this year, all in a rush during August. After a relatively dry June and July, August opened in a flourish of cold, wet and even snowy days. It then rained on and off for the rest of the month, achieving a total of 93.1mm.

This was well over the average of 75.9mm and accentuated the emerging pattern of August becoming our wettest month instead of September. Sadly however it still wasn't enough to make up for the dry start to winter. We scored only 185.3mm across this winter, well below the average of 212mm.

August's impressive rainfall may hopefully be the precursor of more to come, with BOM's outlook currently giving an almost 70 per cent chance of greater than median rainfall from September to December. After such an *august* month, may the four *ember* months that follow deliver the goods.

AUGUST 2020			
Date	Rain	Date	Rain
3-6	9.9	20-25	48.5
11-14	11.7	27	3.6
17-18	10.4	31	2.4
Total		93.1mm	
Average		75.9mm	

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Walking, running or cycling Courtesy calls

In these times of social distancing, avid walkers Deborah and Ron Gilchrist have made a plea to people out exercising in Buninyong to have a code of courtesy and cooperation especially on shared pathways. They offer seven basic rules.

1. All should stay to the left side, as required when driving. If walking side by side, one person needs to drop behind when there are people coming towards you.
2. Cyclists should ring a bell or call out to ensure walkers know of their approach. Recently two cyclists on mountain bikes were almost on top of us before we realised they were passing - no bell, and because the wind was blowing into our faces we did not hear them.
3. When passing others, do so on the right-hand side. A few days ago the cyclists travelling downhill had not seen two dogs and owners in front of us, so we moved quickly to the right to avoid an accident.
4. Persons travelling at a faster speed should slow down before overtaking. This means cyclists and runners do not presume to have right of way. Pedestrians of all ages walk at different paces.
5. Where people make an effort to help your passage, a greeting of thanks should be offered. A 'thank you', a smile, or a thumbs up does wonders.



With high-visibility vest on Deborah Gilchrist sets off for some local cycling.

6. Mature cyclists should use cycle lanes where provided or the road and not travel on the footpaths intended for pedestrians. Adult cyclists in training formation often speed along the footpath outside our central village home.
7. All cyclists should wear reflective clothing. Too many cyclists are not visible during the day and night. The most common clothing worn is black. A reflective vest increases visibility particularly in shaded areas.

– Deborah and Ron Gilchrist

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Buninyong



Three will be winners

Profiles of six of the eight candidates standing for election in the South Ward are shown below.

The two last-minute nominees were **Rachel Muir** and **Susan Jakobi**. Rachel told *The News* she was standing “to add some new blood to the Council, and to provide an indigenous and multi-cultural voice there, especially on land conservation and age and disability issues”.

While not formally representing the Australia First Party, Susan Jakobi is a declared member. She represented the party in the seat of Lalor at the 2019 Federal election.

The Buninyong Community Association has invited all eight candidates to appear on their pre-election Zoom session scheduled for Thursday, 8 October at 7.00pm. To register send your name and email address to buninyongnews@gmail.com.



BRIDGET AITCHISON
Something different



Trust in our City Council is at an all-time low. The community is calling for transparency and to be truly heard. It's time for a fresh perspective that respects our heritage and who we are.

Council needs to understand that we are changing and be willing to embrace the past while looking firmly to the future. It's time for a Council that listens and cares.

I bring a wealth of skills in both senior executive management and education and will focus on delivering better services for ratepayers.

Currently Campus Dean at ACU Ballarat, I am also a mother, grandmother, educator, kayaker, beginner-golfer, and owned by two dachshunds.

Widowed young, I raised two daughters while studying and working to support them. I am willing to bring that same determination and resilience to the Council table, to better represent the South Ward. It's time for something different.

TRACEY HARGREAVES
Listen and advocate



I am a small business owner in Ballarat with a strong work ethic and deep connection to the South Ward. I've lived in Delacombe for a large part of my life and settled here as it's a brilliant place to raise my family.

I started *Absolute Yoga & Pilates* in the CBD eleven years ago, and it employs 100 per cent local people while having a positive impact on the community.

My leadership has seen the business through many challenges such as losing everything in a fire in 2014, to the most recent and equally devastating COVID-19.

I never give up and I never lose track of a vision for better.

I'm running for Council because there is much more work to be done from the inside out and I'd love to listen and advocate for locals on local issues.

DES HUDSON
More to do



It has been my absolute pleasure to be one of your Council representatives for the South Ward for the past eighteen years. In that time, I have gained valuable experience and championed many projects for the benefit of our community.

Issues facing the Buninyong community in the immediate future include finalising the *Buninyong Township Plan*, and delivering other key projects such as consideration of all aspects of a Buninyong bypass (including impacts for local businesses), enhancing the village feel of Buninyong for residents and visitors, and further remediation works around the Gong and associated planning for the Botanic Gardens.

I am also excited to look forward to the finish of the soccer facility at Royal Park, a project which will deliver another excellent sporting facility for the local community. I am excited and energized to do more.

JIM RINALDI

No place for politics



I am an independent, self-funded candidate. I have never been a member of any political party. Indeed, I believe there is no place for politics in Local Government.

In Council, the next four years will require strong and decisive leadership. Having run my own businesses for over 27 years, I know that I have the experience and common sense to help reboot the local economy.

I have assisted in achieving the Desoza Park play space, the off-lead dog park, Royal Park development, and helping to oversee the Botanical Gardens Master Plan project which has been out to consultation

I will continue to be a voice for all advocating for safety and town beautification and protecting Buninyong's village feel including respectful development in rural living zones that enhances and maintains this.

The Eastern link between the Midland and Western highways is currently being reviewed.

JACKSON SNEP

Community passion



I'm Jackson Snep, a second-generation winemaker in the family business, *Welshmans Reef Vineyard*. I'm passionate about sustainability, the local economy and community.

South Ward needs a strong progressive voice to fight for our communities, businesses and environment. As a councillor for the South Ward I will advocate for climate action, protecting and expanding green spaces, supporting local businesses and jobs, and ensuring good governance and integrity in Council.

Our city can have a green and sustainable recovery from the COVID-19 economic downturn.

Buninyong is a fantastic, growing community with a friendly village atmosphere. You deserve representatives who can work with locals to ensure progress is made, while preserving the unique character and charm that makes it such a great place to live, work and visit. Together we can create a future that is fairer, cleaner and smarter for all.

BEN TAYLOR

Experience needed



I am standing again because Council needs an experienced representative as it searches for a new CEO, and who understands the planning controls specific to Buninyong. As a local resident, I believe Buninyong needs to be protected.

As we come out of COVID-19 restrictions it is important that Council supports business and invests in local projects.

It has been a privilege to work with the Buninyong community to see the continued investment in Buninyong, from a new playground in Desoza Park, the sealed car park off Forest Street, the Royal Park development, grant money secured for the Warrenheip Street streetscape improvement, a new Dog Park and starting the masterplan for the Buninyong Botanic Gardens to provide direction for the Gong wall and old pool issues.

I am committed to representing Buninyong and South Ward with integrity, honesty and common sense.

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Cambrian Hill Avenue works Shire's 'great help'

The Cambrian Hill Memorial Avenue project has received further assistance from the Golden Plains Shire with the recent installation of two outdoor seats and the presentation of an Australian flag and the key to the newly-installed flagpole at the memorial cairn on Glassons Road.

Shire Engineer **David Greig** presented these at a recent on-site meeting with local historian **Les George** (shown above) and project co-ordinator **Barry Fitzgerald** who said that the Shire's cooperation on this project has been "brilliant".

The Shire has also added top soil and spread grass seed around the area and has moved signage across the road at the head of the Avenue.

The Shire has also graded and added surface material to Glassons Road in the

hope that the planned November Avenue re-opening ceremony could proceed.

Two additional English oak trees have been donated and planted in the Avenue by arborist and RSL supporter **Tony Coxall** in memory of the two additional servicemen discovered in the recent research. This brings the avenue to a total of 56 trees.

Buninyong RSL President **Ron Fleming** said that the construction of the plinths and plaques was well advanced and he hoped these could be put in place in late October. On site interpretative signage is also close to completion.

Subject to COVID-19 restrictions the planned date for the re-opening of the Avenue is set for 24 November, the date of the opening of the 1917 Avenue.

Above: Golden Plains Shire Engineer David Greig shown presenting a flag and flagpole key to Les George.

BEN TAYLOR

VOTE 1

BALLARAT COUNCIL NEEDS TO GET BACK TO BASICS.



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The bottle hunter



Ben showing a glass jam jar (c1900) made for Kerrs of Buninyong.

When word got out that some old bottles had been found in the mud as the Buninyong Bank community cottage was being demolished late in 2019, it sparked the interest of a retired wheat farmer from the Wimmera who had moved to Mount Helen from Dimboola several years earlier. The ex-farmer is an avid collector and hunter of antique bottles.

The News will call the ex-farmer **Ben**, now aged 60. He caught the antique bottle collection bug from his father who started gathering the old treasures back in 1970, after he turned up an old bottle when ploughing a wheat field on the family farm.

Young start

Then, still a pupil at the local Woraigworm rural school, Ben said that any time he was looking for his father, he knew where to find him – in the shed out back where he kept his bottles. “If I wanted to talk to Dad, I just had to become interested in his bottles,” he said.

When his father died in 2008, Ben said that he culled the collection from many thousands of bottles down to about 900 or so. “Dad was interested in quantity not quality,” Ben said.

The oldest bottle in his collection was made in England in 1780. But it is a Ballarat bottle made in the mid-1800s by local soft drink company *Jensen & Huston*, a company that closed down in 1870, which he regards as his most exciting find. It’s worth several thousand dollars.

Small towns

Also amongst his collection of old Ballarat beer bottles is one dated 1895 made by local brewers *Coghlan & Tulloch*. **James Coghlan** was one of the founders of the *Phoenix* and then the *Ballarat Brewing Company*.

Mention a small town anywhere from Nhill to Eaglehawk to Warrenheip, and it’s likely that Ben will be able to point to a bottle that was used by a local soft drink or beer company. There’s a story to be told about most of them, such as the stone ginger beer bottle made in Sydney in 1849 for a convict turned free-settler, with the man’s initials clearly stamped into the stone.

He is interested to hear from anyone in the Buninyong district who has old bottles or stone jars that they might want to learn more about, and have photographed and recorded for historical purposes, have valued, or sell. His phone number is 0429 339 167.

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Killer ivy threat to Mount

In the July edition of *The News* (p 13), a letter writer, Janine of Buninyong, wrote about the threat created by the spread of ivy to trees and vegetation on Mt Buninyong and along the Union Jack Creek.

The News has advised City of Ballarat's Coordinator of Parks & Gardens **Daryl Wallis** of the matter and asked him to investigate the extent of the problem. He has a great record in responding to requests for help from Buninyong.

Avenue ivy

A recent example of where Council action helped to eliminate spreading ivy was in 2017 as part of the restoration of Buninyong's Avenue of Honour where huge patches were removed from around and on trunks of old avenue trees on the sloping land on the north side of Learmonth Street in the vicinity of Winter Street.

The spread of ivy on the mountain has become a serious environmental problem.



Ivy is harmful to trees for many reasons. Not the least is that they each are competing for the same water supply. Further, ivy invasion both weakens a tree and crowds tree branches reducing sunlight access to leaves. Another major problem is the spreading of the seeds of the ivy plant by birds.

As seen in his photo above, *News*' reporter **Russell Luckock** spotted a particularly bad area on Mount Buninyong where it can be seen that ivy is running rampant at ground level and up trunks of many trees.

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Saw mill township on the Mount

The hectic 1850s

During the 1850s most of the milled timber for mining and construction purposes in Victoria, came from Tasmania. But with the gold rush and the expanding demand for timber, prices rose to ridiculous levels.

This led to the Victorian Government agreeing to allow a timber company to mill timber from the Mount Buninyong Forest for a trial period. A steam sawmill was constructed for this purpose in 1854 and was named the *Trial Saw Mills Company*.

Big mill

The mill itself was a substantial timber building of two stories, 100 ft long by 45 ft wide. The lower portion was occupied by the driving gear and offices. The upper portion contained the table and tramways for sawing operations. Upwards of 75,000 feet of sawn timber was produced over six days per week of ten working hours per day.

Within the mill yard were barns for the storage of twelve months supply of fodder, cart sheds, blacksmiths, wheelwrights and carpenters shops, veterinary premises, forge, and offices for clerks and engineer. The mill employed about 50 men.

Water

A well of sixty feet in depth was sunk, resulting in a permanent supply of pure water. Immediately surrounding it were a number of neat huts and cottages, and several small gardens for the use of the workmen and their families. A dairy, piggery, general store and tavern also were set up in the vicinity of the mill.

The mill and surroundings formed almost a complete township. At the schoolhouse,



under the Denominational Board, some 16 to 20 scholars from the employees' families attended daily. On Sundays, Divine Service was conducted by the clergymen of Buninyong, the congregation averaging 40 to 50 persons.

About twenty horses and forty-eight bullocks were constantly employed with an additional number kept in reserve. Hauling immense-logs of timber, the animals had to be withdrawn after short intervals of work. The horses were used on the tramway and the bullocks in the forest.

‘The horses were used on the tramway and the bullocks in the forest’

The saw mill also ran a station of 1300 acres near Mt Egerton. There, all the hay, grain, fodder and bread stuffs were grown for the establishment. The bullocks and horses were sent down there from time to time to recover.

Tramway

Needing available timber within a reasonable distance of the mill site, the proprietors constructed a tramway through the forest in a north-westerly direction along the road to Green Hill. With the exception of casting of wheels and axles, all the material for building the tram tracks, timber carriages,

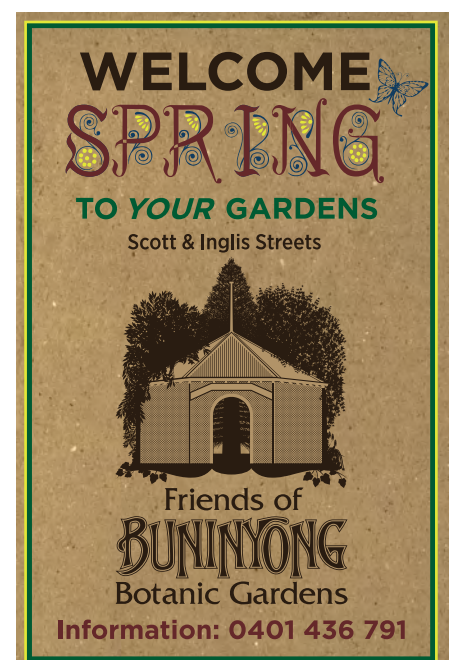
A tramway ran through the forest using timber rails and a horses pulling a truckload of timber.

carts, and wagons were fashioned on the premises by resident mechanics.

In dry seasons the difficulty of moving logs to the mill or timber to market, over undulating country and the moist tracks in the dense forest was very great and, in winter, next to impossible.

At least 150 persons directly and indirectly derived their support from the operations of the *Trial Saw Mills*. It closed around 1863 and the site was sold in 1866 leaving the east side of the Mount cleared and exposed.

This is an edited version of articles from the Ballarat newspaper, The Miner and Weekly Star (February 1857 and January 1859).



Lions keep active Books, vouchers and flood relief

Like the rest of their fellow citizens, members of the Buninyong-Mt Helen Lions Club have been doing their thing under very different circumstances over recent months. Working bees have been curtailed not just by COVID-19, but also by the winter weather.

But, despite operating under the tight regulations, there has still been plenty of assistance and activity happening in this and the wider community.

Meeting by Zoom and by email, members were able to put together a commitment to support five local schools, and the first of these donations was made to Emmaus Catholic Primary school.

Vouchers

John Nunn, Club Treasurer and Misty Duncan, the Emmaus School Counsellor are pictured as John hands over a cheque, the first from a total pool of \$5000. At the discretion of the school, five school families will benefit by way of vouchers which may be used for items such as uniforms, clothing or medication.

In the past, the Lions club has assisted at Emmaus' annual Father's Day Breakfast, but that may have to be a vision for 2021.

As if COVID-19 wasn't enough, the Japanese island of Kyushu was inundated by floodwaters in early July causing a humanitarian crisis. Once again Lions Clubs International has stepped up to

assist the three million people, a quarter of the population, who were evacuated.

Books on sale

The Lions Bookshop, Warrenheip Street (opposite the Post Office) continues to provide a contactless service to the community by leaving books suitable for a variety of age groups on the front verandah. An honesty box is nearby and donations are appreciated.

Books being donated to the shop may be left inside the glass door at the rear of the building. The glass door should be closed when leaving. For enquiries regarding any large delivery of books please contact **Cathy** 0419 895 651.

There is an ongoing need for more bookshelves, as the shop is expanding. If you know of anyone wishing to donate bookshelves. Please contact **David** on 0418 543 772.



The Little Library attached to the Bookshop's front fence is constantly being topped up. Feel free to borrow, return or keep books from this area only.

Lions Club members look forward to bringing more good news soon about activities and assistance in the local community.

– David Searle

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Salute to vets

The 521 Australians killed during the Vietnam War 1962-1975 were remembered at Buninyong RSL Park on 18 August.

In a short, solemn and solo service conducted by RSL President **Ron Fleming**, highlighted some of the significant battles involving Australian forces. Long Tan, Operation Coburg, Operation Ballarat, Ap My An, Suoi Chau Pha, Coral-Balmoral, Hat Dich, Binh Ba and Nui Le. The Vietnam War was Australia's longest 20th century military engagement involving almost 60,000 service personnel and included fourteen from the Buninyong Shire.

Currently eleven Vietnam veterans are members at Buninyong RSL.

Cemetery fees

There are basically three burial options at the Buninyong Cemetery – to be buried in the Lawn Section, in one of the denominational sections, or have cremated ashes interred in a Rose (Ash) Garden bed. Selection and pre-purchase of a plot in any of these areas is referred to as buying a Right of Interment (Rol).

As of 1 July 2020 Rol costs for each were:

- Lawn Section \$1040
- Denominational \$815
- Rose/ash Garden \$520

Payment must be made in full at the time of reservation/purchase of Right of Interment. A maximum of three plots may be purchased.

These costs are extremely competitive when compared to costs at Melbourne or Ballarat

cemeteries. For example, a lawn grave plot at the Fawcner Cemetery costs a minimum of \$3815, and at Ballarat at least \$2000.

In addition, a Burial Administration/Interment Fee of \$530 is charged by the Cemetery at time of a burial or interment. These costs are additional to the fees of Funeral Directors which also include grave digging costs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A champion

The Buninyong and District Historical Society pays tribute to our foundation member, Beth Ritchie, who died recently.

Beth was a champion of our history and heritage since 1972, when she first mounted a campaign to save the old police station and Warden's Court in the Buninyong Gardens.

She was also a foundation member of the Gardens Restoration Group in the early 1970s, and, of course, in 1982 one of the founding members of the Buninyong and District Historical Society. She carefully collected historical material relating to Buninyong, and most importantly, has been a strong advocate for protecting our natural and built heritage.

Her legacy can be found all around Buninyong, but particularly in the Gardens, the old Miners' Court and old Police station, and in the beauty of Mount Buninyong. And she planted the *Stewart's Seedling* apple tree beside the Old Library in 1991.

Anne Beggs-Sunter

Secretary

Buninyong and District Historical Society

Hero or Fool

While I am a fan of the *Shakespeare in the Gardens* and of the actor, who sometimes plays the fool in these productions, I am angry that *The News* wrote him up as a local hero for inciting others to endanger our lives.

Rather than "thinking things out for himself", he has thought only of his own convenience. I hope he goes nowhere near the shops that I frequent. Everyone else is wearing masks and keeping physical distance, which reassures me that it's safe to go there.

I am furious that while the police fined a semi-homeless man with a mental health condition, they patted the tertiary-educated objector on the back and let him off with a warning.

Many of my friends have serious health conditions that make them particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 so I hope Premier Andrews pays no attention at all to selfish, foolish people who care nothing for people at risk.

The lone protester should be fined for not wearing a mask and fined even more for inciting others to break laws that are there for a very good reason.

Merle Hathaway

Buninyong



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Early talks on 'unsafe' bridge

Two years ago, without any community consultation, Council erected a new steel bridge across the Union Jack Creek in Desoza Park opposite Cathcart Street (*The News*, August 2018). Many residents were annoyed and concerned that while it was sturdy and safe, it was not in keeping with the local setting there.

With stark, shiny steel railings and a patterned steel base it was soon dubbed the cattle race bridge. Strong lobbying by the Community Association (BDCA) and intervention by South Ward councillor **Ben Taylor** eventually resulted in work being undertaken to modify the appearance of the bridge. This involved covering steel-pipe railings with timber-look railings, placing waffle like plastic matting over the slippery steel base, with planting proposed for the bridge surrounds.

Red mesh

In recent weeks, locals have noticed red plastic mesh hanging from the existing bridge creek spanning the creek at Winter Street. Council has deemed that the bridge has safety problems.

But on this occasion, with a new bridge slated for construction there, Parks & Gardens Coordinator **Daryl Wallis** has contacted BDCA President **Gayle Adams** in advance to discuss its appearance.

After these preliminary discussions it is hoped that the bridge will be of similar appearance to the modified bridge further to the east to avoid another standard 'all-steel' look bridge as was initially proposed by Council. There was also discussion about the need for planting at both bridges.

Top: The steel 'cattle race' bridge originally built at Cathcart Street.

Centre: The Cathcart Street bridge after modifications.

Lower: Wendy from Mount Helen, out on her morning walk, is shown crossing the bridge soon to be replaced at Winter Street.





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To learn more of Sarah’s story go to
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Herald Sun comes to town

Very recently Australia's major news organisation, News Corp, appointed a resident *Herald Sun* reporter to the Ballarat area to compile its daily local digital newspaper under the masthead of the *Ballarat News*.

A journalism graduate from Melbourne's Monash University, **Tess Ikonomou** had spent the past two years as the Courts and defence reporter for the *Townsville Bulletin*. She also has worked with the ABC's Asia Pacific Newsroom.

After recent contact with the *Buninyong News* concerning a story of 'damage' at the Buninyong Cemetery, Tess said that while she knew a little of the general area she had never been to Buninyong. The local *News*' Editor **Barry Fitzgerald** offered to host a visit here, and give her a brief tour and some background on the village.

Given her interest in crime reporting, a stop off was made at the Buninyong police station where she met local officers **Sgt Peter Anderson** and **Senior Constable Sean Almeida** to exchange contact details and establish a professional link.



Pictured above: At the Buninyong police station Tess Ikonomou meets S/C Sean Almeida.



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