

Five-year-old Luke from the Buninyong school became world famous when he rubbed Prince Harry's beard

The two Buninyongs

Few if any local residents, the writer included, had any idea that Australia has another Buninyong. Or at least another K-6 school called the Buninyong Public School. It is located in NSW at Dubbo East, some 388km north-west of Sydney.

Some background research for possible local news stories on Facebook and in the Buninyong school newsletter for coming issues of *The News*, resulted in a mistaken hit on the very well-designed newsletter of the Buninyong Public School.

Confusion

Calls by *The News* to the respective Principals – **Bernie Conlan** here, and **Anne van Dartel** up in Dubbo – found that while neither had met directly or indirectly there had been some interaction between the schools, usually over accounts and other communication going to the wrong place. Last year an entire *Book Fair*, a major annual feature of the NSW school, was mistakenly sent to Victoria.

NSW's Buninyong Public School has an enrolment of 400 students, about 60 per cent of whom identify as being aboriginal.



There are 25 classroom teachers each with one support person, aboriginal educators, and allied health workers at the school. There is a daily 'walking bus' arranged to help get pupils to the school safely.

The Buninyong Public School hit the international headlines in 2018 during the visit by **Prince Harry** and wife **Meghan** to Dubbo, when one of its pupils, **Luke**, 5, who suffers from Downs Syndrome, asked the Prince if he could rub his beard.

The resulting photograph (above – *People.com*) taken at the Dubbo Airport went viral on international media.

The local primary school here, with a much larger student enrolment of 665 students, has a total of 62 teaching and support staff.

Principal Bernie Conlan was intrigued to learn more of the Buninyong school in NSW, and indicated that he would contact them with a view to establishing links – possibly some form of collaboration between students.

Luke with Buninyong School Principal Anne van Dartel





Left: In the early stages, each brick from the cottage's façade was removed, numbered and laid in order. Below: Award from the National Trust.

TRUST AWARD FOR COTTAGE PROJECT

The Buninyong Community House restoration project has been recognised by the Ballarat Branch of the National Trust for the preservation of the building's street-front façade.

The historic cottage which has been part of the Warrenheip Street landscape since the early 1900s was purchased by the Community Bank back in 2015 not long before the Scotsburn fires. It was then used as a fire-relief support base for several months.

Rebuild

The house underwent extensive renovations during 2020 when it was virtually rebuilt and extended to create the current Community House as seen today.

To maintain the historically significant façade, every brick facing Warrenheip Street was carefully and painstakingly removed by hand, numbered, cleaned and then re-mortared exactly as was. The work met current building regulations while preserving the historical aspect of the building.

Some of the original floorboards were also given new life being made by **Ron Delaland** into the lectern in the Conference Room.

Award

Together with Project Manager Ron Delaland, former Director and Board Chairman **Steve Falconer** and Community Bank Chair, **Ian Corcoran** attended a recent function hosted by the local branch of the National Trust to receive the award and recognition on behalf of the Community Bank Board.

"We are thrilled the Community House project has received this

acknowledgement and it certainly validates the decisions made by the Board to ensure that the street appeal of the building gave an appropriate nod to its historical value," he said.

Mr Corcoran added that "we thought it important that the house retained a 'community' feel about it. It's also fitting that a community organisation such as ours responds with sensitivity to issues such as heritage preservation. This way the story of 407 Warrenheip Street could continue."

Credit

The project was undertaken under the direction of architect **Wendy Jacobs**, builder **Chris Williams** and with much credit to the bricklayer **Riley Davitt**.

The Buninyong Historical Society understands the home originally belonged to renowned local baker and delivery man **Hedrick Jones** or *Paddy* as he was commonly known. He and his family called the cottage home from 1920 until the 1960s.

As the next phase of its history begins, the Community House will become a place for people to come together to collaborate, connect and create wonderful things for the future of our local area. The Community House will soon be able to be booked by community groups via an online web platform.



Littlies learn about ‘then and now’ Car club goes back to school



The “doctors’ car” – a 1911 Maxwell AV Tourer arrives in the school playground.

Buninyong Primary School’s teacher of Grades 1 and 2, Belinda Hargreaves, has taken a wonderful new approach to teaching her pupils about how the ‘good old days’ differed from today.

Dry old history books and pictures have been largely replaced with a range of pupil experiences that really bring home to the young pupils how life “then” was quite different to what they now know.



Belinda Hargreaves

Belinda has built in some hands-on innovative experience for her pupils. These have included a visit to Sovereign Hill to look at old work practices, transport, clothing and housing.

Then, in late May, she arranged with the Classic Car Club of Ballarat to bring to the school many really old motor cars and motor cycles.

Twenty old and classic vehicles were lined up on the school’s basketball courts for pupils to look at, sit in and talk about.

Oldest

The oldest car there was a 1910 Renault AX, of two cylinders, owned by **Rip Thege** of Magpie. Another to attract much interest from the children was the 1911 Maxwell AV Tourer. This car was driven from Cambrian Hill by **Peter Fitzgerald**. He said that this car was referred to as “the doctors’ car” as of the 10,000 that were produced, some 5000 were bought by doctors.

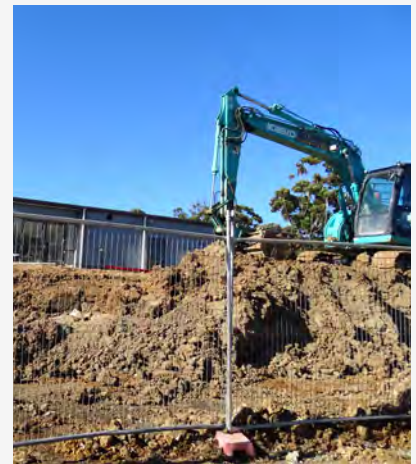
The children also loved looking at two old motorbikes owned by **Colin Sargeant**. He rode one of them, a 1925 Indian to the school display, and the other was a 1913 model.

Mud gone, CFA home open soon

While the major construction work on the new CFA fire station building adjacent to the Golf Club was completed many weeks ago, external plumbing, landscaping and electrical works have been hampered for several weeks by the muddy conditions around three sides of the building.

CFA Media has advised that completion of construction is currently forecast for mid-July 2021, pending weather problems. In mid-June inclement weather currently was impacting preparation and placement of external concrete paving.

The station is planned to be operational by the end of August 2021.



In early June contractors were still battling large piles of muddy clay on the west side of the building.

New hours for Lions books

The ‘world famous’ Lions secondhand bookshop in its new expanded set up at Warrenheip Street is now open Wed 11-4, Thu 1-4, Fri 12-5 and between 10am and 3.00pm at weekends

Since 2017 the community's done its bit, now **No more excuses**

In its November 2020 edition, *The News* included an investigative double page spread headed *Four Year Shambles* and which tracked the saga of Council's efforts to produce a township plan for Buninyong.

That editorial piece followed many examples of where *The News* had reported positively on town planning activities by Council, the BDCA, the Community Bank and other groups, encouraged community involvement, and posted updates.

After several self-funded community initiatives in mid-2017, peak action from Council came around September and October 2018, with a packed out public meeting and a community survey.

But like those well-paid planning consultants who appeared briefly in December 2018, promises from Council officers and councillors have since come and gone.

Halt

The brakes were slammed on in mid-2019 when Council pulled the pin on completing Buninyong's Township Plan because it decided to undertake a series of other exercises – a *Neighbourhood Character Study*, a *Compact City Housing Plan* (whatever that is), and a *Living Corridors Protection* review.

There was to be "community consultation" on these in "early 2020". After a couple of glossy drafts appeared, again all came to a halt when Council went into caretaker mode for several weeks around the October 2020 Council elections.

So here we are... into a fifth year since the April 2017 Council announcement that a Township Plan was on the way... and still nothing! Many views and ideas given to Council during 2017 and 2018 must surely be stale or dated by now.

It is noted that the good folk out at Miners' Rest, likewise, are not happy with our burghers on Town Plan matters.

Piecemeal

For Buninyong, this is becoming more serious by the day. Various projects are being started, touted, or talked about in the absence of any up-to-date statutory planning document for the village. For example at present there are

- two streetscape projects about to start
- a possible retirement village is being discussed
- the future of the Botanic Gardens and the Gong is under review
- the former CFA site and buildings will soon be up for grabs
- landscape protection of Mt Buninyong is on the table
- the massive Royal Park project is moving along at a pace in blissful isolation

Despite all indicating in pre-election forums that they were seriously concerned at the inordinate delay in getting the Township Plan to see the light of day, our South Ward Councillors have been silent since they again started to 'represent' us.

Hopefully, they will report to the community on planning for Buninyong before the next election!

& district
Buninyong
COMMUNITY NEWS

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Jenny McCracken (front right) with children and grand-children helping out at the working bee.

Neil's track gets a boost

In perfect Autumn weather, a successful tree planting day, organised by members of the Buninyong & District Community Association (BDCA), was held recently along the walking trail bordering the Union Jack Creek between Barkly Street and the bridge at the Geelong Road.

This section of the walking trail is to be named **Neil's Walk** in commemoration of **Neil McCracken** who was instrumental in the construction of many connected walking trails around Buninyong. Neil was also passionate about local flora and fauna.

Volunteers

Over 40 people attended, including Neil's widow **Jenny** and twelve members of the McCracken family (some having travelled from NSW). More than 350 indigenous trees, shrubs and ground covers were planted during the morning working bee. More trees and low-storey

plants will be added in the near future to complete the planting scheme.

Signage acknowledging Neil's work will also be placed along the walk. Funding for the signage has been provided by the local Community Bank.

Groups help

The project involved many community groups. While the project is an initiative of the BDCA, it has been generously supported by the City of Ballarat which supplied plants, guards, stakes and weed mats, the Leigh Catchment Group with a loan of tools, the Bendigo Bank Buninyong allocating funding for signage, and the Great Dividing Trail Association which assisted with planning and planting.

BDCA extends sincere gratitude to those who attended and who indicated an interest in being involved in future planting days. Once completed, the Walk will be officially opened later this year.

– Liz Hayward

streettalk

AFTER THE SOLD sticker went up on the big yellow sign outside of the Community Bank last month, staff had so many people asking what was going to happen to the bank that they had to put a large notice up on the door advising all that it was business as usual for them, and that the bank wasn't going anywhere. Hopefully the front cover story on last month's News put the record straight.

JASON CROSBIE from Scotchmans Lead mushroom farm *The Mushroom Connection* (*The News*, February 2021) got real splash in *The Age* of 22 May. A large photo in the news section, and a run in the included Daylesford-Macedon Life supplement where he was described as "Josh (sic) Crosbie our local mushroom farmer."

THOSE NEW STEEL safety barriers on the Geelong Road may stop the occasional car bumping into the odd tree, but RRV should now take a good look at the greatly-increased danger of a resident of the lodge atop the hill being bowled over as they trudge home on the narrowed verge between the barriers and the speeding traffic.

IT'S PROBABLY NOT NEWS

that some municipal authorities have strange policies. When doing research for the cover story – *Two Buninyongs* – contact was made with the Dubbo Regional Council. After having to give full name AND full residential address to the receptionist, we were later advised that a Steve would call back... but no "we cannot release his second name"! And Steve didn't call.



Master plan for Gardens and Gong Have your say

Over the past twelve months, Council officers have been working with a Stakeholder Advisory Group consisting of local community and members of the Friends of the Buninyong Botanical Gardens, to begin the initial stages of work for a master plan for the Buninyong Botanic Gardens and the Gong.

Direct consultation will start with an Open House launch on 15 July from 3.00pm to 7.00pm in the Buninyong Town Hall. Council officers and consultants *Urban Initiatives* will become involved with four weeks of community engagement to gather community input

Value

The consultation focus will be on gaining an understanding of what locals value about the Gardens and the Gong, how the spaces are currently being used, and what experiences would be enjoyed by locals in the future.

This information will be used to create a vision, landscaping outcomes for the Gong dam wall, and a draft master plan.

There are several ways to get involved including

- dropping in to the Open House between 3.00pm and 7.00pm at the Buninyong Town Hall on 15 July
- completing an online survey at Council's MySay page from 16 July 2021

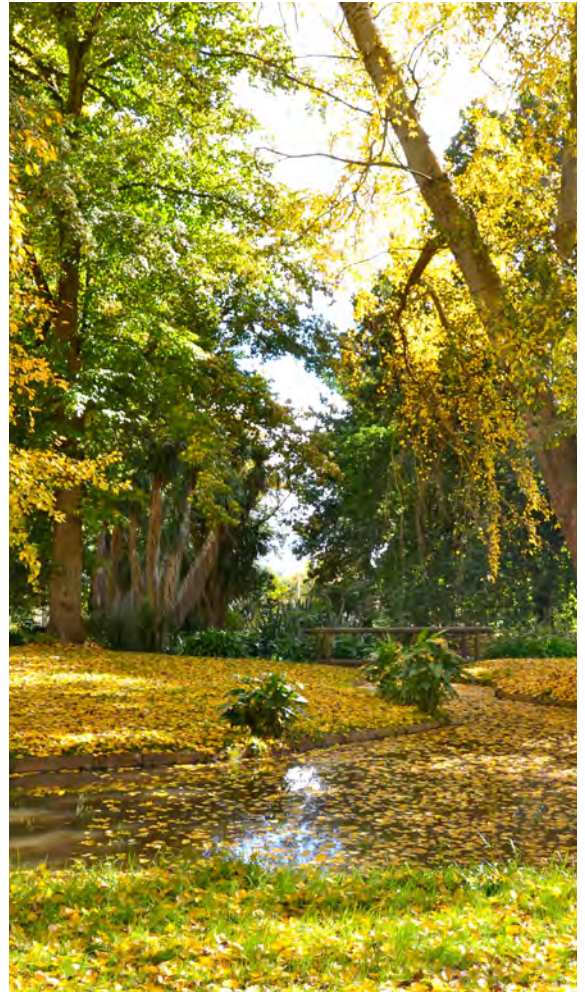
- emailing the project team directly on citydesign@ballarat.vic.gov.au
- providing feedback at the later engagement events.

The questions asked at the Open House will be the same as those in the survey.

Hard copies of the survey will be available for four weeks at the Buninyong Newsagency, Buninyong Community Bank and Buninyong Food Works from 16 July.

Following the engagement process, officers will compile the results of the engagement and post them to MySay Ballarat to be read along with information about the next stages of engagement on the *Draft Master Plan*.

FOOTNOTE: The City of Ballarat sincerely apologises to those residents who came along to the Buninyong Town Hall on Thursday 17 June between 3.00 and 7.00pm, unaware that the Buninyong Botanical Gardens Masterplan – Open House drop-in session had been cancelled due to COVID restrictions. It was an unfortunate oversight by City officers.



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Change at PRD Stu's the new face

Phil Crosbie, one of Buninyong's long-standing and recognisable faces in real estate, has recently sold his Warrenheip Street business which trades under the PRD banner.

Phil said that after sixteen years in real estate work, the last several years operating alone, he felt that it was time to step back for a while from the six day per week commitment and "take a bit of a breather."

In the short term he plans to assist son **Jason** to develop his highly-successful local business, *The Mushroom Connection*, located on Nolans Road at Scotchmans Lead. He will also assist in the PRD business handover for a few months.

"Buninyong has a growing reputation across the State as a highly desirable place to live."

The new owner is **Stu Brien**, 53, who comes with a background in business sales, real estate and management, and also with considerable sales experience.

Married with two sons aged 17 and 20 years, Stu lives in Ballarat. He said that he was "really looking forward to getting to know Buninyong and district, and establishing close links with Buninyong residents and with the

local business community."

"An early step will be to become involved in community life in various ways," he said.

"This will include joining local groups such as the Business Network and the Community Association." He said that the business would also continue its advertising involvement with *The News*.

"Real estate sales in Buninyong have continued to boom over recent years and presently show no sign of slowing down. Buninyong has a growing reputation across the State as a highly desirable place to live," he said.

Cyclist

After meeting his Ballarat-born wife **Yasna** in Melbourne, they moved their young family here fifteen years ago. Away from work Stu is a "passionate" cyclist and is President of the Eureka Cycling Club.

Asked about what changes he would make to the business, Stu said that he would work to maintain the level of quality service established by Phil Crosbie. But one early change would be to incorporate his existing business sales company (*Brien's Business Sales*) into the firm.

Joining him at the Warrenheip Street office will be a full-time Admin Support person, **Fiona Hart**. He plans to later engage additional sales staff.



Phil Crosbie (left) wishes the new owner of the local real estate company Stu Brien well at the business handover in early June.

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Barb steps down as Lions' President

Club hands out \$33,000 over last year

After two years in the role, Barb Voigt has stepped down as President of the Buninyong Mt Helen Lions Club.

The challenges of 2020 and 2021 did not stand in the way of her keeping the members active and involved. One of Barb's crowning achievements has been her involvement in setting up the *Lions Litter Op Shop*.

Charity

This little enterprise along with the now "famous" bookshop has enabled the club to generate the funds that the club has distributed to local charities and organisations. Over the last twelve months the local Lions Club has distributed more than \$33,000.

Club members and volunteers often are asked "where does the money go?" Some recent beneficiaries include

- School Awards for Deserving Students \$1350
- 3BA Christmas Appeal \$2500
- Salvo Café 102 \$1750
- Ballarat Cancer Centre \$2000,
- Napoleons PS \$1000
- Magpie PS \$1500
- Mt. Clear PS \$1000
- Emaeus PS \$500
- Ballarat Uni Help Program \$500
- Buninyong Little Athletics \$2333,
- Jack Lonsdale Lodge \$250
- Need for Feed \$2000
- United Care Meals Program \$5750 (see photo above).



The Club also acknowledges the tremendous support received from one of the advertisers in *The News* – **Daniel** from *DJB Plumbing*. Daniel supplied his labour to fit the split system at the Lions Bookshop.



Ironbark attacks RSL Hall

Although Buninyong was spared the worst of the severe weather event of 10 May, there were reports of minor damage from fallen trees around the district.

In the centre of the village a huge branch from an ironbark tree was blown over causing minor damage to the RSL Hall. The memorial artillery piece, although, struck by branches was not damaged.

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Heroic anti-aircraft regiment Local families remember

Members of four local families were amongst the sixty attendees at the annual luncheon of the Australian 2/3rd Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment recently held at the RACV Club in Melbourne.

Whilst almost all of those who served in the Regiment in WW2 in the Middle East and Papua New Guinea from 1940 have passed on, one 100 year old veteran was present at the luncheon. But the Regiment still lives on in the memories of their descendants who have not forgotten their sacrifice.

Rommel

The descendants represented fathers and uncles who served in the Regiment in Syria and Palestine before being “well chased across North Africa by the German General Rommel” and his *Afrika Korps* in what the Australian troops light-heartedly called the *Benghazi Handicap*. The Regiment’s task was to protect the troops from enemy air attack.



Some of the Regiment’s gunners did not come home. **Jane Luckcock’s** uncle **Max Whiteside** from Ballarat died of wounds sustained while defending Maleme airfield in the disastrous Crete campaign and is buried in Athens.

The Australian 7th Division, including this Regiment, was subsequently recalled back home to face the Japanese threat.

Simon Coghlan and his father **James** brought along a collection of memorabilia posted home by his grandfather **Oswald** while serving with the Regiment on the battlefields of the Middle East.

Griff Weatherly, remembered his late grandmother **Rosemary** who

grew up at Carngham, saying her husband, also named **Griff**, had passed within a few miles of their home in the Regiment’s train after returning from two years in the Middle East war. But the troops were not allowed any leave before being sent to the Atherton Tableland for jungle training and then to PNG’s Milne Bay to fight against the Japanese army.

Stayed here

Some members of the 2/3rd changed to the newly formed 2/4th LAA which stayed on in North Africa to provide air cover for the Australian 9th Division that was in the decisive battle of El Alamein that finally defeated Rommel’s Army and contributed to the surrender of Hitler’s Nazi Germany years later.

Whence the surviving troops, their job done, could all come home to their families.

Stories abound at such events of the hardships and loss of life. But also of the good times and especially the Australian camaraderie that developed amongst the troops.

– Russell Luckcock

Scotsburn resident **Simon Coghlan** (right), with his father **James**, shows the memorabilia posted home by his grandfather, **Oswald**.

The parcel, wrapped in an old army shirt, was posted to his wife-to-be, **Margery Blackman**, care of the local doctor in Ballarat. It contained a Nazi colour patch, an Alexandria Racing Club ticket, and tickets to other shows that entertained the troops – as well as pieces of shrapnel that were rather common out in the desert at that time!



Covid, aged care, retirement village project... ageing is a hot local topic. Osteopath Dr Megan May discusses some issues

Cutting the risks of ageing



weakness and less mobility, both of which may increase your risk of falls and fractures.

According to *Exercise and Sport Science Australia*, and the *National Physical Activity Guidelines*, it is recommended older adults exercise for at least 30 minutes per day. They suggest being active in as many ways as possible, whether playing a sport such as cycling, golf or bowls, completing household chores such as gardening or cleaning, or undertaking a daily exercise program.

Research suggests that those with balance and strength deficits, or lack of confidence when walking should undertake specific balance and strength training to help reduce the risk of falls.

– Megan May,
Director & Osteopath,
Eureka Osteo & OASIS Pilates

With ageing, there may be noticeable changes to the body including poor eyesight, weaker muscles, stiffer joints and feeling unsteady on your feet. The natural ageing process usually results in older adults (above 65 years) having to face an increased risk of injury, joint pain and, above all, having a fall.

Falls are the leading cause of injury-related death and hospitalisation for this age group, which can result in disability, activity restriction, loss of confidence and ongoing fear of falling.

The good news

All of these can reduce the quality of life and independence. The good news is that exercise can help to prevent falls, maintain muscle mass and improve bone health.

Falls Prevention: There is now extensive evidence to demonstrate that many falls are preventable, with exercise playing a crucial role.

Research evidence has identified that programs which include exercises that

challenge balance are more effective in preventing falls than those which do not challenge balance. It is important for exercise to be progressively challenging, ongoing and of sufficient dose to maximise its benefits in reducing falls.

Bones

Strong Bones: Older adults are at highest risk of osteoporosis, with nearly 75 per cent of hip, spine and wrist fractures occurring in people aged 65 years old or over. For women early prevention is especially important as bone loss occurs rapidly after menopause, at around the age of 50, when the protective effect of oestrogen is lost.

Evidence indicates that bone responds positively to impact activities and high intensity progressive resistance training. In addition to regular weight-bearing physical activity, older adults should choose exercises which help improve balance and muscle strength.

Maintain muscle mass: As people age there is a faster loss of both bone and muscle mass. Less muscle means greater

Classes at OASIS

OASIS Pilates, 509 Warrenheip St, Buninyong, offers a variety of classes for all ages and abilities.

Clinical Exercise Class: Perfect for anyone new to exercise or who has an injury or health condition that requires an individualised program. Private Health Rebates apply.

Studio Pilates Class: A great in-between option if you would like your own program to work on personalised goals but don't require it to be with a health professional. Initial assessment required.

Reformer Pilates (Including Over 55's class): Great for anyone injury free who wants to exercise in a group (max 8 ppl).

Check the website for current timetable or call 5333 2232.

Sinclair of Scotsburn lives on at Fyansford

History, wines and fine food

In its March 2020 edition, *The News* featured a story on well-known Scotsburn identity David Sinclair, under the heading *Laird of the Manor*. It noted that his Wiggins Lane property had several acres of plantings of chardonnay and pinot noir grapes.

The tending and harvesting of the grapes was being carried out under an agreement with Geelong winemaker **Scott Ireland**. Sadly, David Sinclair succumbed to Parkinson's Disease in December 2020.

Local interest

When we made a recent booking for lunch at the *Provenance Winery* at Fyansford, little did we know that not only would we enjoy an outstanding meal, but that Buninyong and Scotsburn would feature heavily in between-course chats with the owner and front of house staff at the winery.

It turned out that not only has been this winery been harvesting the grapes from Sinclair's property on Wiggins Lane, Scotsburn for over twenty years, but in 2010 they purchased a nearby property and planted another 1.5 hectares of vines. The Scotsburn chardonnay grapes went into the 2019 *Provenance Ballarat Chardonnay* which recently was awarded top-level 95 points by wine guru **James Halliday**. The 2018 label received 96 points.

Established in 1997, the *Provenance Winery* is now located on the banks of the Moorabool River in a huge old bluestone building which was part of the old Fyansford Paper Mill.

The beautifully-restored, cavernous main building with its ten metre cathedral ceilings houses a classy spacious restaurant, oak barrels of wine lining the walls, with adjacent tasting and function rooms and kitchen.

Restored

Owners and winemakers Scott Ireland and **Sam Vogel** took a long-term lease of the property in 2016 and set about restoring the large 1870s bluestone building which, from the outside, resembles chateaux to be found in many European wine regions. The restoration has received accolades from the National Trust.



Shown in the spacious, barrel-lined restaurant is affable front-of-house staffer Max Payne.

A short drive from a turn off adjacent to the Fyansford Hotel takes you past a terrace of six bluestone workers' cottage (one of which recently sold for more than one million dollars) before reaching the old mill area, now a bustling arts precinct.

Oh, and the food. Celebrating a special occasion we opted for the four course *Chef's Selection*. Top class! Take a look at ratings by others on the likes of *TripAdvisor* and it's clear that others strongly agree.



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POLICE BEAT

A BUNINYONG YOUTH was left shaken recently when he was on the receiving end of verbal abuse before being assaulted after getting off a bus at the intersection of Warrenheip and Simpson Streets Buninyong. The alleged offender was last seen walking off on Warrenheip Street. The alleged offender and victim were not known to each other and Buninyong Police are currently investigating the incident.

A DISTINCTIVE WATER PUMP was stolen from a business in Scotchman's Lead Road Buninyong overnight on 13 May 2021. The Yanmar brand pump was unbolted from its frame and taken away

by unknown offenders. If any members of the community saw a suspicious car or person on Scotchman's Lead Road overnight on the above date, they can provide information to the Buninyong Police Station or via Crime Stoppers.

FINNS ROAD SCOTSBURN saw a Scottish Highland heifer shot overnight on 21 May 2021. A resident of Finns Road reportedly heard a gunshot at approximately 1 am. The heifer was pregnant at the time and sadly had to be put down the following morning. Investigations are continuing with Buninyong Police having secured CCTV footage. Discharging a firearm from a road onto private property constitutes a serious offence and will not be tolerated. Any reports of illegal shooting in rural areas can be reported via 000 for Police attendance.

A SEARCH WARRANT was recently executed in Durham Lead by Buninyong Police with Officers locating cannabis. Police also located and seized an unregistered firearm. As a result, a 60-year-

old male was arrested and subsequently charged with a number of drug and firearms offences and was bailed to appear at the Ballarat Magistrates Court at a later date.

IF ANY MEMBER of the community has any information that could assist Police in solving these or any other crime, please call Crime Stoppers anonymously on 1800 333 000. *"If you know something, say something"*.

WAS GOOD TO SEE popular police officer **Sgt Peter Anderson** looking fit and healthy again after recovering from a double lung transplant operation a while back. Peter was looking sharp in full police dress uniform at a recent burial of a police colleague at the Buninyong Cemetery. He says he is likely to be assigned to 'desk-duties' over coming months.

In the meantime, **Sgt Joel Dash** is back in charge of the local station, returning here after a stint at the Ballarat HQ .

– Editor

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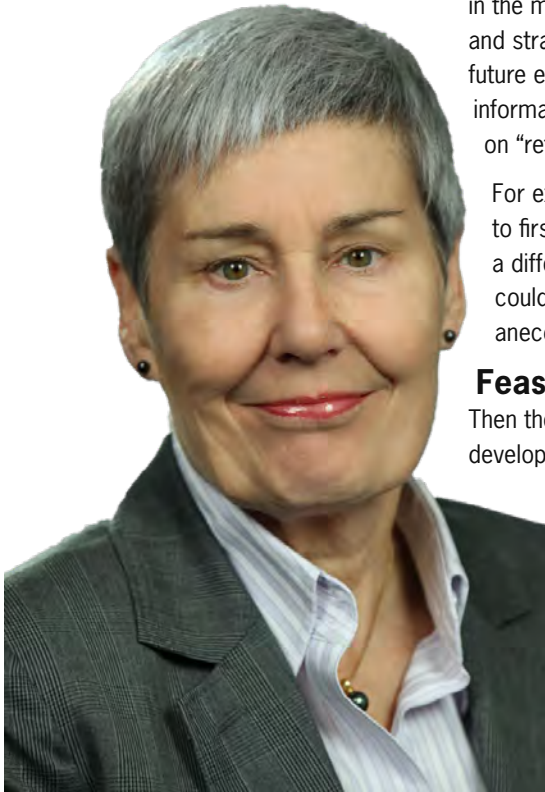
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The retirement living proposal has Some hurdles to jump



When Vin Fay turned up at my place to ask me what I thought about his retirement housing idea at the old soccer ground, my initial response was not wildly enthusiastic.

The idea of communal living brings back memories of hippies and the messy environmental communes of the seventies! Call me simple minded but I'm a bit sceptical about the ability of people to be supportive when they are thrown together in one place.

My parents went into a retirement village in Melbourne and then had very different experiences in their final years. I'm in denial about getting older and considering options.

Makes sense

But Vin does have a point!

We have to eventually downsize and we want to stay in our lovely village environment. But our options are limited due to conventional development patterns.

The good news is that the land in question is currently zoned *Residential*, but it is

in the middle of the sporting precinct and strategic plans might be in place for future expansions. This and a lot of other information is needed before any progress on "retirement living" plans can be made.

For example, any developer needs to first know about the demand for a different type of housing – so we could do a survey rather than rely on anecdotal interest.

Feasibility

Then there is the feasibility of any development based on costs, time and profit levels. The more specialised the housing the less likely it is that developers will see profit opportunities and our expanding western suburbs demonstrate the easiest way.

However, with enough community interest and expertise it may be possible to present an interesting

proposition to test out.

But the reality check here is getting the relevant skills round a table to play around with design concepts, get information from Council and prepare a business case to entice a developer, then get this through the approvals processes.

We are talking lots of time and substantial money unless we have a bunch of local architects, quantity surveyors, builders, engineers, planners and others to navigate an unusual path. I'm positive, but am afraid it would be difficult to get it to fly.

– Janet Dore

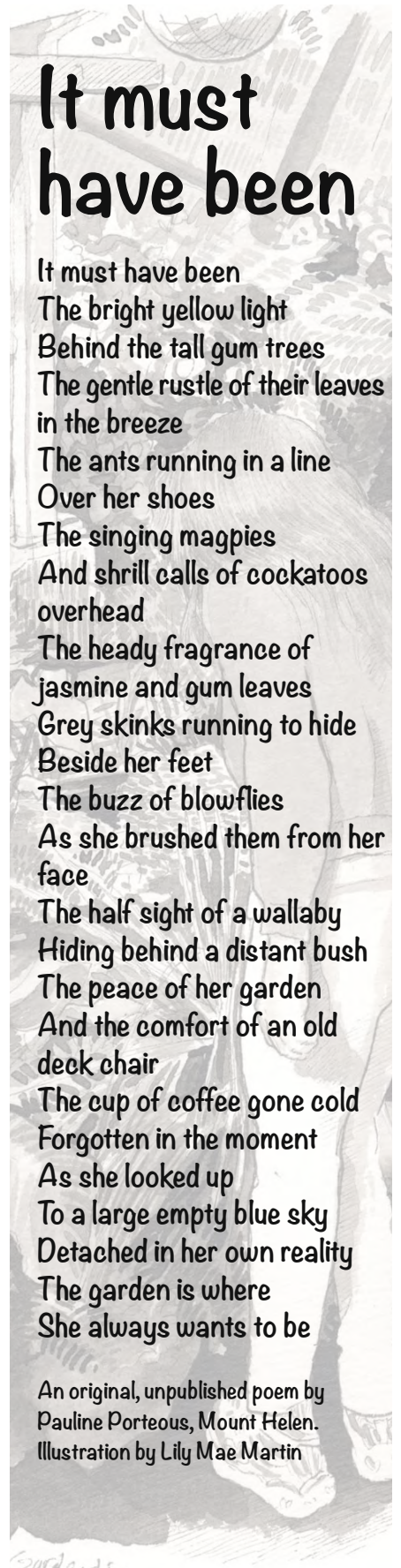
Survey

A survey to establish the level of interest in the project has been designed. It is now on line at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WLYRQDP> and will be distributed through various clubs. Hard copies will also be available through the clubs and at usual village outlets.

It must have been

It must have been
 The bright yellow light
 Behind the tall gum trees
 The gentle rustle of their leaves
 in the breeze
 The ants running in a line
 Over her shoes
 The singing magpies
 And shrill calls of cockatoos
 overhead
 The heady fragrance of
 jasmine and gum leaves
 Grey skinks running to hide
 Beside her feet
 The buzz of blowflies
 As she brushed them from her
 face
 The half sight of a wallaby
 Hiding behind a distant bush
 The peace of her garden
 And the comfort of an old
 deck chair
 The cup of coffee gone cold
 Forgotten in the moment
 As she looked up
 To a large empty blue sky
 Detached in her own reality
 The garden is where
 She always wants to be

An original, unpublished poem by
 Pauline Porteous, Mount Helen.
 Illustration by Lily Mae Martin



Warm welcome from the Welsh choir

The Victoria Welsh Choir has performed across Australia at venues ranging from the Sydney Opera House and the Docklands Stadium (before 50,000 people), to the Wendouree Performing Arts Centre, and also in two churches in the Buninyong village.

In 2019, the choir performed at several venues in South Australia, including Kadina and Kapunda, old copper mining towns with strong Welsh connections.

While there is a strong emphasis on famous songs from the old Welsh mining areas – such as *Men of Harlech* and the *Bells of*



Aberdovey – the choir’s repertoire also includes stirring songs such as *Do You Hear the People Sing* from contemporary musicals such as *Les Miserables*, and the famous *Battle Hymn of the Republic*.

Regional sections of the choir are again rehearsing with future concerts in mind as Covid problems are reduced. The full choir has about 40 members.

Now there is a chance for local men to join the choir, or at least come along to

chat about it, as practice sessions for those from the Ballarat area are being held each two weeks at the church hall at Sts Peter and Paul in Buninyong. The next two practices will be held on Monday 12 July and 26 July commencing at 6.00pm.

Local resident **John White** is coordinating the Welsh Choir’s practice sessions in Buninyong and would love to hear from anyone interested on 0402 808 299 or by email on thewhites25@bigpond.com.

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Win to Shire and residents

Clifftop, the developer behind the controversial Barrels on Mt Buninyong proposal, has had a major recent setback when VCAT rejected another of its projects – a luxury ‘Glamping’ project which aimed to set up a collection of four yurts, three dome tents and four caravans on elevated bushland near Hepburn Springs. The proposal had been opposed by many local residents and the Shire of Hepburn.

The VCAT determination found that “the risk from bushfire has not been reduced to an acceptable level.” The Member said that she had not been persuaded “that the proposed use of in-ground bunkers as the shelter in-place solution is appropriate... in the absence of a building that can serve as a marshalling post, or an on-site manager.”

After four days of hearings in May, the ‘barrels case’ continues before VCAT with three more days of hearings set for 5, 6, and 7 July.

Getting rugged up

The Community Bank was a major sponsor for the prestigious TTT Horse Trials event recently held at the Smythesdale Equestrian Centre.

Bank Board Director **Andrea Mason** (pictured right) presented a horse rug to the winner of one of the Sections.

Setting dates is tough

With the present uncertainty about Covid rules and the like, several major events such as the Buninyong Festival have had to be cancelled for 2021. However Lisa Cressey has advised about others.

BUNINYONG FILM FESTIVAL

The dates for the Film Festival have moved to 27 & 28 August. The August edition of *The News* will carry full details of films being featured.

BUNINYONG VILLAGE MARKET

At the moment the next market happening will be held on Saturday 27 July. But new event rules have come into place and it may be that the entire market may have to be fenced. This possible event is still a work in progress.

ARTS PRIZE & EXHIBITION

Will not be run this year, but Lisa Cressey and others are hopeful of organising a full weekend of art workshops at smaller venues throughout Buninyong.

CRACK THE CRATER

At the moment this is happening on Sunday 31 October. **Laura Chibnall** has more information about that event.


Sanctuary signage thanks

Local residents are delighted with the Ballarat Council which has arranged for signage to be erected showing the boundaries of the Sanctuary Bushland Reserve, Mt Helen. A sign is to be installed at the intersection of Brodie Court and Zoe Drive, Mt Helen, showing the most southern point of the reserve.

Two more signs are to be erected. One will be on the corner of Chatham Ave and Fletcher Court, Mt Helen – at the north-west point of The Sanctuary Reserve – and another near the Sobey Street children’s playground.

They will be a welcome addition for both residents and visitors alike, informing the community of the significance and value of the flora and fauna in the Sanctuary Bushland Reserve.





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Students learn about Culture and more

Students from Buninyong Primary School recently were involved in a cultural immersion day and other experiences as part of the *Story of Buninyong* learning program for students in Grade Three and Four.

The cultural day had students working through four activities throughout the day. Those activities were

- a visit to *Saltbush Kitchen* to explore indigenous herbs and spices and to experience a sensory activity
- spending time with Birds of Prey educator, Martin Scuffins
- a walk to the Buninyong Scar Tree on Geelong Road to discuss the significance of this feature for our indigenous history
- a presentation from local resident and Buninyong PS parent, **Tim White** (pictured) who shared many Aboriginal artefacts with students, including an impressive collection of didgeridoos.

Important

The *Story of Buninyong* is one of the most important learning experiences offered at Buninyong PS. Students are provided with the opportunity to understand the creation stories of their local surroundings from the perspective of the traditional owners, the Wathaurung people.



In previous years, the program has been part of the Grade 4 learning experience. With the development of composite classes in 2021, this program is now offered to students in Years 3 and 4.

In later weeks, the students also took a walk to the summit of Mount Buninyong. During the walk a number of special guests spoke to the students about the cultural significance of the mountain and the areas surrounding it.

Another mount

In May, students travelled to Mt Elephant (at Derrinallum) to learn about the significance of the mountain to the local indigenous people and hear the story of the connection between Mt. Elephant and Buninyong.

Students learnt about how the mountain is now being looked after, and how nature and humans have impacted the environment.

Ernie Neale's Monthly RAINFALL REPORT

A wet May... a wetter June?

May was wet this year, starting with a substantial downpour in the first week, more in the middle of the month, then hardly a dry day after that.

The opening burst was 44mm on 5 May, ending a fortnight long dry spell. Four distinct rain events delivered 92mm in total. Not only did this exceed the 72.8mm average, but it also meant that our annual progressive total hit the 300mm mark almost a month earlier than usual.

The 196.6mm Autumn total was also greater than the recent average of 165mm. The transition from a mild Autumn to a wet Winter was perfectly seasonal. But now, Winter has certainly locked in. A 48 hour long southerly tempest has belted the state not even two weeks into June.

It seems that, after a fire free Summer, Winter is going to be the season this year that is already testing our emergency services.

MAY 2021			
Date	Rain	Date	Rain
3	1.1	16	11.0
5	44.0	19	6.5
9	0.3	21-22	0.4
12	12.9	28-28	15.8
Total		92.0mm	
Average		72.8mm	

Catherine KING MP Federal Member for Ballarat

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Authorised by Catherine King, Australian Labor Party, 5/9 Sydney Avenue Barton ACT.

HIGHER POWER POLES PUT IN

The first signs of action on the Warrenheip Street streetscape improvement project were seen over recent weeks as Powercor workers were busy putting in new timber power poles along the street from the Bank corner to near the old Eagle Hotel.

With the old poles still in place it could be seen that the new poles are about one metre higher. This will provide better clearance above the street trees that are central to the project.

The present motley collection of wires will be bundled together to also create fewer problems for tree growth and to improve the general look of the strip.



No rats...thanks to the Bank

The Community Bank was chuffed to receive a letter from Lal Lal Primary School student Benji Matthews thanking it for funding a new sports equipment shed and storage racks for the school's sports and games items.

Benji's letter said that "the shed can hold a lot more now, is very neat and tidy, and the rats are no longer eating all the sports equipment".

Seems like the Bank's Community Investment funding in this instance

has solved a couple of problems out at Lal Lal.

Benji is shown (below) in the new storage shed... and not a rat in sight!



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

On watch for rubbish dumper

On or about 1 May and then again in June someone dumped a large pile of building/renovation rubbish in bushland near private residences at Lal Lal.

We are very lucky to have access to so many beautiful forest areas around Buninyong and it's such a shame that a few thoughtless people come and destroy it. Reports have been made to police and to the Moorabool Council.

This is the third time recently this has happened. I appeal to anyone seeing a vehicle heading into the bush with a load of rubbish to make a note of the vehicle details especially its number plate.

**Lal Lal resident,
name and address supplied**

Readers have their say on **Bus stops & bikers**

The people and the bus stop

Contrary to the experience of Michaela Settle, whilst observing the use of parking spaces adjacent to the bus stop, I beg to differ.

I use the Post Office boxes at least four times a week (as well as walking my dog along Warrenheip St daily) and have regularly observed cars double parking outside the Post Office and *Maggie and Kate's*, while passengers post or collect mail or buy coffee. This has caused accidents and near-misses on a number of occasions.

In addition, we are not all in the position of being able to choose the time at which we park in the area. Rural residents with jobs in Ballarat logically want to collect their mail from PO boxes on their way to or from work. These are often peak times, as are school drop-off and pick-up times.



There is another bus stop on the Ballarat side of the current stop, less than a block away, as I'm sure Michaela is well aware.

If Michaela ignores the opinions of the majority of residents surveyed about the position of the bus stop, it does not give me much confidence in her ability to represent in parliament the wishes of those who elected her. She should reconsider her stance.

On another but related issue, there is no disabled parking along Warrenheip St. The nearest is in the *Foodworks* car park. When the area is redesigned, could provision be made for two disabled car parks, preferably outside the BP petrol station, where a shallower grade from the road to the footpath will allow a flatter ramp for wheelchair access.

**Janine,
Buninyong**

Anne likes the village idea

I read your interesting article about the Buninyong retirement village idea in *The News* (May 2021) and decided to send the attached information about a similar interesting complex.

I agree that the facility at Mt. Clear would be the last option I would ever consider.

I would be very interested in something that was built along the lines of the attached article with stand-alone small homes with some facility for outdoor space and personal garden beds, a community garden, and perhaps, an indoor I community space.

Please pass this information on to **Vin Fay**.

**Anne,
Buninyong**

Bikers on the Mount

Mt Buninyong scenic reserve is highly valued for its peaceful and beautiful natural environment. Its network of walking paths is used extensively by individuals, groups and families both during the week, at weekends and holidays in particular.

Being thrill seekers, mountain bikers look for challenging terrain. Unfortunately, one such site is Mt Buninyong, and in particular, the *Zig Zag* track. This is despite this track being clearly signed as not being for use for mountain biking.

Being a steep, narrow track that is designed for walkers, it is obvious that there is a problem if walkers and mountain bikers use the track at the same time, and there have been occasions when walkers on the track have had to avoid descending mountain bikers.

But hazard to walkers is not the only issue. Mountain bikers appear to be wearing other tracks around the *Zig Zag* track as they cut off corners, or seek steeper and more challenging terrain – not good visually or environmentally.

Dedicated courses are being, or have been, developed in other areas for mountain biking – for example at Creswick and the new Woookarung Regional Park at Mt Clear – and more venues may be needed as it becomes more popular.

But let us keep Mt Buninyong's walking trails for walkers.

**Resident (Name supplied)
Mt Buninyong**

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CLUB'S RUN OF FOUR TITLES

Buninyong Golf Club clearly has established itself as the district's premier golf club by winning a fourth consecutive **Ballarat & District Golf Men's Scratch Division** title. The talented Buninyong line-up was more than a match for their Mount Xavier opponents at Maryborough Golf Club on Sunday, 16 May.

After notching up a hat-trick of wins across the 2017-2019 period, the team was disappointed that the Covid cancellation denied them the chance to stretch their winning run to four successive titles in 2020. However, on a perfect day for golf at the Maryborough course in 2021, the Buninyong golfers made sure of their goal, blitzing their opposition to win 5.5 matches to 1.5 in the 36-hole final.

Hot form

The Mount Xavier team had no answer for the in-form Buninyong golfers. The **Tolliday** brothers, **Brett** (7/6) and **Phil** (5/4), **Mick Innes** 8/7 and **Dan Staples** (4/3) all had strong wins and basically sealed the deal for Buninyong. **Dan Irwin** battled all day to win one up on the 36th hole. Captain **Nick Haintz** squared his match and **Russell Stubbs** lost 3/2.



The Champion Buninyong team line up with their 2021 championship medals. (L to R) Brett Tolliday, Joel Smith, Russell Stubbs, Nick Haintz (Captain), Phil Tolliday, Daniel Stapleton, Don Irwin, Mick Innes.

Although he didn't feature in the final **Joel Smith** had contributed strongly throughout the lead-up matches. Joel was also part of the Buninyong Junior Team that won the junior pennant championship earlier in the year (*The News*, May 2021). It has been a really good pennant season for the club.

The team's personnel has changed over the four years with multiple club champions, **Chris** and **Travis Tatt** now missing. However, with the injection of new players Dan Irwin, Russell Stubbs and Joel Smith, the depth of golfing talent in the club is still strong.

Club Co-Captain, **Peter Kerwan**, said he is looking forward to next year when Buninyong gets the opportunity to equal Ballarat Golf Club's record run of five in a row across the 2002-2006 period.

– Ray Sullivan

ATM PULLED

In line with action by other major banks, Bendigo Bank HQ will pull out the ATM at Foodworks within the next few days.

Foodworks' Manager **Alan Nielson** said that many shoppers would miss it.



Enrolments
Welcome

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