

Australians at War

LONELY ANZAC SERVICE

Buninyong & District
Community
NEWS

Edition 471, JUNE 2020

The ANZAC Day ceremony in Buninyong this year was one far removed from those of recent times.

Instead of crowds of some 1500 people, veterans and relatives decked out with medals, uniformed army personnel, a guest speaker, a bugler, wreaths being laid by dozens of groups and schools, and culminating with a march through the town, there was but a sole Vietnam veteran in a blue beret paying tribute to the fallen.

Watched by just one colleague standing well back in the shadows, and a few community folk who had paused during their morning walk, Buninyong RSL President Ron Fleming was a lonely figure at this year's Anzac service.

Alone

He started by solemnly lowering the Australian flag to half mast, recited The Ode, played a recorded version of The Last Post and Reveille, and then raised the flag again to full mast. The ceremony on that cool, cloudy morning was brief but still poignant.

Mr Fleming said, "The Buninyong RSL was heartened by the community support to the *Driveway at Dawn Stand To*. Anzac Day allows us to honour the veterans, peacekeepers and ADF personnel for their service and sacrifice to our nation."

He said that a growing number of families have become aware of their military connections spanning the generations. "Anzac Day is now a time of reflection for many in our community...not just veterans."

Later, over several hours, some additional wreaths appeared at the base of the memorial, placed there by those for whom ANZAC day could not be forgotten even in the face of a community crisis, this time caused by a different enemy.



\$20,000 grant announced... Go for Cambrian Hill Avenue

Member for Buninyong **Michaela Settle** has announced that a project to restore and complete the Memorial Avenue of Honour at Cambrian Hill has been granted \$16,700 from Victoria's Restoring Community War Memorials Fund. Ms Settle said that she was delighted to pass on the good news to the small rural community.

The Cambrian Hill avenue was initially planted on the main Colac Road in 1917. After being neglected for many years and with mature trees being severely lopped to allow for power lines, the local community together with the Buninyong RSL replanted the avenue in 2016 along Glassons Road, which adjoins the Porter Plant site off the Colac Road.

The project

The funded project will involve placing a concrete plinth and bronze plaque adjacent to each of the 56 oak trees in the avenue, installation of seating at the site of the



After hearing news of the grant Cambrian Hill resident and historian **Les George**, project coordinator **Barry Fitzgerald**, and Buninyong RSL President **Ron Fleming** met at the memorial cairn to discuss the next steps in the project.

memorial cairn, new head-of-avenue and interpretative signage, and other works such as the erection of two flagpoles.

CEO of the Golden Plains Shire, **Eric Braslis**, already has committed to the supply and installation of seating and a flagpole at the memorial cairn area.

Ceremony

Background research for the plaques is well advanced and it is planned to have works completed in time for a dedication ceremony on the eve of Remembrance Day 2020.

Co-ordinator of the project team which prepared the submission for the grant, **Barry Fitzgerald**, said that the news of the funding was greeted with excitement by the Cambrian Hill representatives, long-term residents **Rocky Hazlett** and **Les George**.

He said, "The next few months will be busy as we move to get the concrete plinths prepared, and particularly in finalising details for the last few of the bronze plaques."

The plaques will follow the design of the 167 plaques now placed along Buninyong's restored World War I Avenue. In addition to the rising sun or other service emblem, there will be the person's service number, full name, home location, age, place of service or where the person was killed in action.


President of the Buninyong Sub-branch of the RSL, **Ron Fleming**, said that it was "very pleasing" that the submission for funding at Cambrian Hill had been successful. "I can now see a couple of working bees for our RSL members coming up out there," he said.



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BDCA President Gayle Adams (right) shows the media release about the funding to local shopkeeper Brandon May and to BDCA Treasurer Robert Elshaug. At left, Community Bank Manager Randall Dreger and Trevor Whitworth look pleased with the funding break-through.

Warrenheip Street upgrade BUSINESS STRIP PROJECT TO GET \$600,000 BOOST

Since 2015 the Community Association (BDCA) has been pressing State and local governments for funding for an upgrade of the Warrenheip Street business strip between Forest and Eyre Streets. Several concept plans had been prepared but no funding was allocated for the works.

The project was given a huge boost on 13 May with the announcement by Member for Buninyong **Michaela Settle** that State Government funding of \$300,000 for the Warrenheip Street project had been made through the Regional Infrastructure Fund.

Partnership

She said that the project is being delivered “in partnership with the City of Ballarat with the Council contributing \$300,000 to a total cost of \$600,000.”

“I am very pleased to see this upgrade to the business strip of Warrenheip Street. This strip is overdue for a revitalisation. Buninyong has a unique combination of historic charm and contemporary shops, cafes and markets. This upgrade will improve safety and access for

Buninyong’s residents, local businesses and visitors,” she said.

There were four key elements to the works initially proposed by the BDCA

- reconstruction of the footpath including extending paved areas for al fresco activity adjacent to food and drink premises
- levelling and reconstruction of nature strips incorporating extension of the street vines and additional tree planting
- reviewing car parking provisions, and particularly the relocation of the present large bus stop zone
- modernisation and upgrade of current amenities such as seating, signage, lighting and possible landscape features such as bluestone work now in place in Learmonth Street.

Investment

Soon after its establishment in 2018 the Buninyong Business Network has strongly joined with the BDCA in pushing for the project.

The project also has seen recent support from the Buninyong Community Bank

Board. Its investment of some \$350,000 in restoration of the community cottage in the centre of the precinct was regarded by Council as clear evidence of the growing importance of this strip.

City of Ballarat **Mayor Ben Taylor** “acknowledged the work of the Buninyong & District Community Association and Bendigo Bank in supporting this project.” He said that the project is expected to be completed by mid-2021 after community and business consultation.

Benefits

In a recent paper the City of Ballarat listed the project’s benefits as being “improved community amenity, increased pedestrian safety and accessibility, business stimulation and employment and increased visitor/tourist appeal.”

The Minister for Regional Development, **Jaclyn Symes**, said that the State Government saw it as important to continue investing in community facilities and create jobs.

South Ward **Cr Des Hudson** said that “Buninyong will look even more stunning after these works are completed.”

Busy doing nothing

Around 1949, crooner Bing Crosby recorded a very popular song which started with the lyrics “We’re busy doing nothing, working the whole day through.” Over recent months that nonsense song has come back to haunt many, certainly some at *The Buninyong News*.

Like most other aspects of life in Buninyong that have seen unbelievable changes, it’s been a huge challenge to continue to get this newspaper onto the streets, without cutting its usual twenty page size, or hopefully its quality and interest to locals.

No events

It’s tough for a community newspaper when there are no events happening or planned, no new businesses starting up, no personalities coming to town, no meetings of groups, and not even the staple news diet of little kids doing something interesting at school or in the park.

ANZAC Day is a day of special significance in ours as in many other communities. Normally, the ceremony attended by many hundreds, has featured on the front page of *The News*. This year, it is again a lead story – but a story of a very different ANZAC Day.

Just prior to going to press...at absolutely the last minute...two great pieces of news which resulted in some last minute changes to this edition. First came the grant of some \$17,000 for the Cambrian Hill Avenue of Honour project. This was followed by the announcement by

Michaela Settle that \$600,000 of State and local government funds has been allocated to Buninyong’s Warrenheip Street project (see page 3) – a battle that had been fought for some five years.

Another 1000 readers

Another change for the better that has been introduced with this month’s issue is that a full-colour, soft copy of *The News* is now being made directly available to members of many local clubs and groups through its being attached to their periodic newsletters or emails to members.

So members of groups such as the Buninyong golf and bowling clubs, the Botanic Gardens group, the Business Network, and parents of students at the Buninyong Primary School can now look forward to seeing each month’s edition of *The News* arriving directly on their computers or phones. Much easier, also, to send off to extended family or friends in more distant parts.

In addition to the 1200 hard copies which will continue to be available through the usual outlets in town and which are read by over 3000 readers, this simple move should bring each month’s copy of *The News* to another 600 or so homes in the wider district and take our monthly readership to over 4000 people. Good news for our valued advertisers too.

So, while it started off as another month spent being ‘busy doing nothing’, a few things finally began to happen and there should still be plenty of items of interest in this issue.



This publication is a community project of the Buninyong & District Community Association (BDCA) supported by the Buninyong Community Bank.

Published monthly

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Design: Sian Blohm

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All contributions (copy, letters, photographs or advertising) must be submitted **before the twelfth of each month to buninyongnews@gmail.com**. Enquiries to 5341 2844.

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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Printed by Baxter and Stubbs, Ballarat.

Available online in full colour at:
buninyong.vic.au/news/newsletters

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Development on Bowen Hill VINEYARD GONE

Over recent weeks there's been major earthworks happening on a large block on the corner of Cathcart and Scott Streets, Buninyong. Heavy equipment has changed the shape and look of the land as preparations are made for a house building project. One of the major changes was the clearing of several acres of vines, formerly the site of the Bowen Hill Vineyard.

Prior to its sale several years ago, the block, close to the centre of the Buninyong village, was last sold in 1972, and ten years later, the buyers **Patrick** and **Patricia Hope** planted a vineyard of chardonnay, reisling and pinot noir grapes on what had previously been a five acre cow paddock.

The vineyard was planted on Cathcart Street South, opposite the bushland reserve. They named it the *Bowen Hill Vineyard* after the small hillside on which it was located.

For many years at grape-picking time in April, the adjacent homestead was invariably the scene of many fun times as

locals who had helped the Hopes to pick the grape crop enjoyed the hospitality of the 'two Pats' who invariably produced plenty of the vintages from previous years.

Fun times

The last of these rollicking parties was in 2010 when Patrick's health began to deteriorate. He had been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease in 2006. They sold the property, including the vineyard in 2011 and moved to a home close to the shopping strip in Buninyong. Prior to being admitted to Nazareth House in 2016, Patrick was regularly seen around downtown Buninyong pushing his walking frame. He passed away in February 2017.

Wife Pat has since moved to a townhouse in Ballarat, but still returns to play golf at Buninyong usually on a Monday with friends. She said that the many years she and her husband spent at the Cathcart Street property was "a fantastic part of our lives."

Now the land has been cleared of the vines and much of the slope levelled out, the old cow paddock seems set to see yet another chapter.

streettalk

IN LAST month's *Street Talk* the idea of putting a soft toy in house front windows was mentioned. The local primary school was right on the ball with their 'find a teddy bear' competition to encourage kids to walk around the town looking for the bears. Others are using chalk to draw 'happy' pictures on the footpath.

NEW LOOK. *Street Talk* is sworn to secrecy over what's happening behind the newspaper-covered windows at the *Pig & Goose*. All will be seen in just a few days' time when **Clive** and **Wendy** unveil a totally different food business – "no menus, and what we've always wanted to do!" they said.

PUZZLING. A prominent member of the Bank Board recently was seen walking all the way around the golf course tossing a coin in the air. Questioned about this eccentric behaviour, **Richard McDowell** said he was 'playing golf' at a time when playing golf was banned. If the coin landed Heads, he walked up the fairway, when it landed Tails he walked through the rough. Still a bit of a worry!

OUR RONNIE sometimes cops some flak from locals about his petrol prices. But he's certainly been out in front over recent months during the virus crisis and the dramatic drop in the price of a barrel of oil. Way under a dollar for a long time now. The occasional dip into the low 80 cent range put him well ahead of Ballarat's main street discounters.



New page for the Preps' scrapbook

The students, staff and families enjoyed a positive first Term at the Scotsburn campus of the Buninyong Primary School. It was great to see the new Preps settling into school life with a smile on their faces and the Grade 6s taking on various roles of responsibility to ensure that things were running along smoothly at the school.

Along with that, the SC1, SC2 and SC3 classes all settled into the year nicely and certainly appeared to be enjoying their time at school.



Following the arrival of the Coronavirus problems, school life took on a whole new direction through April and much of May with the students approaching the new experience of *Remote Learning* with great resilience. Daily check-ins and conferences via various technological devices combined with daily learning plans for the students to follow was the norm for this period.

As always, special thanks go to the wonderful school community for their understanding and support during what has been a new learning experience for us all. We all now have our fingers crossed that by the time you are reading this everything will be much closer to getting back to 'normal'. All students, and especially the new Preps, are really looking forward to again be working and playing with all their friends back up at Scotsburn.

The nine new Preps smile for the camera.
 (Back row) – Hamish, James, Lachi and Zen.
 (Middle Row) – Brea, Arthur and Annie.
 (Front row) – Jazmin and Elsie.

Ernie Neale's Monthly RAINFALL REPORT

Last year 20 mm...
 this year 120 mm

The annual transition from Summer to Autumn is often a painful process, with any fall of rain sparking speculation on whether it's the Autumn break or not. In 2019 just 19.7 mm fell. This year has been difficult in many ways, but it has delivered one of the earliest and best breaks we've had in years.

In the first week of April 76.0 mm fell, followed up by 32.3 mm in the final week, bringing the total for the month to 123.2 mm. Along with mild conditions, this has reinforced the likelihood of 2020 being one of the most productive farming years western Victoria has ever enjoyed.

The first four months have already delivered 303.0 mm of rain, over 100 mm more than the long-term average of 199.3 mm. And to top it off, now that we are all being kept close to home, maybe the opportunity is there for all carers of the land to catch up on that niggling backlog of maintenance.

APRIL 2020			
Date	Rain	Date	Rain
2-3	22.0	20	5.3
4-6	54.0	26	15.0
8	2.0	28	0.3
12	7.6	29-30	17.0
Total		123.2 mm	
April 2019		19.7 mm	
Average		55.5 mm	

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Another doctor comes to town

Another medical practitioner recently joined local doctors Nick Kimpton, Anna Glue, Keith Ho, John Osborne-Rigby, Michael O’Sullivan and Kerry Archer at the Buninyong Medical Centre in Learmonth Street.

He is **Dr James Tan**, 38, a General Practitioner, who comes to the practice after experience in several states of Australia.

Holding degrees in Medicine and in Surgery from the University of Queensland (2009), a Masters in Surgical Education

(2015), and more recently a Fellow of the RACGP, Dr Tan worked in the field of emergency, paediatrics, orthopaedics and General Practice in areas as diverse as Alice Springs, Broken Hill and Ballarat. He then moved to Launceston where he was a GP Registrar at the Newstead Medical Centre and at West Tamar Health for two years before coming back to Ballarat in February of this year.

Home

James is now living in Ballarat with wife **Tiarne**, and small children **Liam**, 3, and **Lachlan**, 2.

He grew up in Penang, Malaysia, and had his sights set on becoming a doctor from an early age. He came to Australia in 2003 to undertake studies in Medicine. His parents still live in Malaysia but do spend some time each year in Perth, where James’ sister lives.

He said that he was really looking forward to establishing his practice in Buninyong as he was well aware of the closely-knit community and looked forward to becoming part of it.

“It’s always been a dream of mine to be able to take care of my local butcher, local grocer or the pensioner who lives across the street,” he said. He already has close links to Buninyong through his wife whose father is local restaurant owner **Trevor Whitworth** of *The Red Door Pizzeria*.

Patients

As a General Practitioner he has experience and interest in all areas of health, stemming from his wide experience in the eleven years since he graduated. He will be working three days each week (Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday) at the Buninyong practice, and is now accepting new patients.

Away from medicine, Dr Tan says that he spends as much time as possible with his wife and young family. But in addition, he enjoys running to keep fit.

The Buninyong Medical Centre is affiliated with the Ballarat Medical Centre in Drummond Street. Dr Tan said that while he will greatly enjoy working in a practice in a small community, from a professional point of view he looks forward to the weekly ‘peer review’ sessions with his ten colleagues as it “helps to ensure that we all provide the highest possible standards of care.”



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BUSINESS NETWORK**
“Bringing Business to Buninyong”

Our aim is to bring together local businesses to help develop initiatives that strengthen our community.

A membership based organisation run by volunteers who are passionate about living and working in Buninyong.

Advocating shopping locally and supporting local business wherever possible, attracting more visitors and investment to our village.

If you would like more information on our members, membership benefits, initiatives and how you can be involved please get in touch.

www.facebook.com/buninyongbusinessnetwork | buninyongbusinessnetwork@gmail.com

How the working lives of many in this community have changed **A VERY DIFFERENT YEAR**



PHIL CROSBIE

THE ESTATE AGENT

The day-to-day routine of running a busy real estate business has certainly changed during the COVID-19 shutdown. Phil Crosbie's office door is closed. But properties have been selling quickly – just the same as pre-lockdown. Nine sales in the past five weeks had him smiling.

His days are still busy, but just in a different way. For example, there's no need for him to be clean shaven and in the office first thing. Much is now done from the comfort of home – (it's nice by the fire at the moment!)

Inspections are all done by prearranged appointments, and agents are only allowed a maximum of two clients in a property at any one time. "Vendors have all been really understanding of the changed circumstances, and very happy with the results that we have been achieving," Phil said

"It's been a great opportunity for me to spend some time at home, with the list of jobs actually getting smaller for a change! A leisurely walk each morning around beautiful Scotchmans Lead with my wife and our new dog has been really appreciated. The only down side to the whole virus thing was not being able to visit our daughter and new granddaughter," he said.



BRIAN & MAREE HARRISON

THE FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Funeral directors, Brian and Maree Harrison found themselves working all through the crisis period. Behind the scenes little had changed, other than an even more stringent hygiene regime.

Funerals continued to take place, but with strict limitations on group sizes, they bore little resemblance to funerals of pre-virus crisis times.

Brian said that "Sadness is always part of a funeral, but before COVID-19 there was also laughter, hugs, stories and togetherness. Funerals now are far more sombre and sadder affairs. No longer can families draw on the support and comfort of extended family and friends. The human touch and interaction is vital at times of grief, and now it's largely missing."

"The inability to farewell someone in the way they deserve is simply awful and compounds the grief. Hopefully, memorial services down the track may assist families and friends with the grieving process," he said.

At home, like many, **Brian and Maree** are overdosing on *Netflix* and working through the book pile. "We miss our kids and our beautiful new grandson. We can't wait to resume Friday night drinks and meals with friends. Hopefully when this is over, we will have a more engaged, caring and appreciative community," Maree said.



SHAUN O'LOUGHLIN

THE COACH

It's often said that a week is a long time in football. But for a football coach having to sit out several months waiting for the competition to start it can seem an eternity.

A successful recruiting campaign over the summer had Buninyong's senior coach **Shaun O'Loughlin** and his team approaching season 2020 with excitement. "We had pre-season commencing in mid-November with a large number of enthusiastic players preparing well for the upcoming season. But within weeks of the boys returning in early February, their season had been turned on its head," he said.

Shaun has managed the squad and put them through their paces via the team's Facebook group page

As well as his football coaching tasks, he also teaches at the Buninyong Primary School (Scotsburn Campus). Presently his teaching is via remote learning from his home in Buninyong.

For Shaun, juggling football coaching commitments, his teaching role, and looking after children **Sam** and **Sophie**, together with supporting his wife **Kate** who teaches at Napoleons Primary School, has kept him on his toes.

He has his fingers crossed the football team can start the season soon.

THE PHARMACIST

At first there was great fear and anxiety in the community surrounding the crisis and UFS Pharmacy Manager Katherine John found herself providing a lot of reassurance that the pharmacy would remain open and that medication supplies would continue to be available.

Indeed, the pharmacy did remain open. But, over the weeks and now months, it underwent quite a few changes.

“Early on, we moved to a controlled-entry model to protect both staff and customers, and we had parts of the store closed off. This increased the amount of time it took to serve each person as we had to get the shop items for them.

Over recent weeks the number of prescriptions we are processing has been even greater than at Christmas which is normally our busiest time of year. As the weeks have rolled into months we have been able to reopen most of the store and are adapting to our new ‘normal’ way of going about our business,” Katherine said.

She added that “We are still very busy with prescriptions, but it’s great to see customers back browsing instore. Throughout it all, the Buninyong community has been incredibly kind to me and my staff team of whom I am extremely proud. The way they have coped during the past several months has been great.”

Katherine said that all at the UFS Pharmacy are very grateful to the community for their support and understanding during this difficult time.



KATHERINE JOHN

THE RESTAURATEUR

The early months of this year saw Trevor Whitworth, owner of *The Red Door Pizzeria*, fearful about the future of his business and his personal financial security.

“In a small town like ours it was devastating to have to close the restaurant, and eventually our take-away service as well. But we thought that was the best option at the time,” he said.

“Last year we would have been looking forward to a well-earned break over Easter and gearing up for a cosy winter where locals would gather near the fire in the warm restaurant and enjoy a sip of mulled wine.

“Instead, we had to find ways to stay connected to our loyal customers and also utilise materials and skills that we had on hand. Making new fresh pasta was our first choice.

“It has been a steep learning curve, but we are like some other local innovative businesses which have found alternative ways to survive, keep busy, and keep in touch with their valued customers,” he said.

Trevor and wife **Odette** recently have again opened their pizza and pasta take-away service on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights between 5.00pm and 8.30pm.

They are now are spending a couple of days each week making pasta which they sell on-line and from *Foodworks*.

Through their on-line shop they are planning to develop a broader range of retail items for sale in the future.



TREVOR WHITWORTH

THE PRINCIPAL

During the school shut-down period, Buninyong Primary School Principal Bernie Conlan has remained on-site full time. But he said that things were “eerily quiet here at school with just a skeleton staff and children of essential workers on site.”

There are just a few classes, but he enjoys popping down a few times regularly to see how they’re going and help where needed.

“For the moment, my way of checking in on everyone else is through a weekly schedule of video conferences with individual teachers and teams. Staff and School Council meetings are all conducted via video conference, which is a whole new experience for all of us. Our interaction with parents is now largely via email and over the phone, rather than face-to-face,” Bernie said.

Term 2 is normally busy with school tours for those with a prep to start in the following year, but these have all been put on hold for the moment.

Normally, at break times, he heads outside to join the throng of students and help where it’s needed but the playgrounds are now largely empty.

Bernie said that “weekly assemblies in the gym have become a Friday afternoon online broadcast, which has actually been a lot of fun and helps keep the school community connected. Whilst the teachers are doing a fabulous job video-conferencing with students, we’re all looking forward to getting back to ‘real’ school soon.”



BERNIE CONLAN

In 2012 The News reviewed some planned BDCA projects... now...

Check the scoreboard

It's perhaps difficult for residents to be always aware of what has been achieved in the village over recent years through the work of groups such as the Community Association (BDCA).

So at this time when local news stories are thin on the ground, a look back at the May 2012 edition of *The News*, one of the last few to be produced in its 'old' format, provided a stark reminder of some significant civic improvement wins in the time since then.

Seven projects

The article referred to seven Council-related projects then being pushed hard by the community group – now the BDCA. The score on those projects is now clear for all to see around Buninyong.

Following are some extracts/quotes from that article together with a comment from BDCA President **Gayle Adams** on each of the seven items.

1. Traffic Impact Study. *"The Association continues to be seriously concerned at the impact on Buninyong of the Western Link Road which will funnel traffic onto the Midland Highway at Cambrian Hill. It has proposed eight terms of reference for the study proposed by VicRoads and the Council.*

The Association also wrote to VicRoads, Geoff Howard MP, and to Council following the recent truck incident at the roundabout."

Comment: The BDCA lobbying succeeded in getting that Traffic Impact Study undertaken and published in early 2013. While the authorities chose not include the key matter of the Western Link Road traffic impact, other traffic improvements such as lights at the school crossing, reduced speed limits, and the Warrenheip Street pedestrian lights and safety 'refuges' came as a result. The Western Link road matter continues to be raised by the BDCA.

2. Township Signage. *"The Association plans to approach Council with proposals for improved entrance signage, precinct signage and revised finger-post signage which clearly identify significant places of interest."*

Comment: Government grants were

obtained by the Association to have the four impressive, landmark stone entrance signs erected in 2014 at each entrance to the village. In the following year, ten heritage-style burgundy and cream finger-post signs were erected pointing to places of interest. More recently new informative signage has been erected at the site of the old railway station, at the old burial ground, and at the site of the discovery of gold along Hiscock Gully Road.

3. Plaques for Historical Buildings. *"A submission for Council funding to enable descriptive plaques to be attached to many historical buildings in the village has been jointly submitted by the Progress Association and the Historical Society."*

Comment: With funding from the Community Bank, the first stage of the project was completed in 2013, with a further series of blue plaques, bringing the total to 42, recently erected a few months ago around the village.

4. Disabled Access to the Town Hall. *"Although a ramp to provide for disabled access has been provided to the western side of the hall, attention is needed to reduce adjacent shrubbery and to improve lighting."*



(Left) One of the four stone entrance signs. (Above) The first blue plaque was put up in 2014 outside Whykes' butcher shop, now Espresso Depot.

Comment: Council did indeed respond quickly to this request.

5. Vines for the Shopping Strips.

After initial BDCA lobbying of the Council's Deputy CEO (Eric Braslis, now CEO of Golden Plains Shire) "discussions have commenced with senior Council administrative, landscape and gardens staff on the installation of ornamental grapevines (on steel posts and stainless steel wires) along sections of the town's shopping strip."

Comment: The first stage of this project along Learmonth Street, was completed in 2014, and a second stage along part of Warrenheip Street in the following year. Buninyong's 'street vines' are now an integral feature of the image and 'feel' of the central village. BDCA lobbying on streetscape improvements to the northern end of the Warrenheip Street business strip has just resulted in a major grant.



Enjoying a recent walk and a takeaway coffee near the colourful street vines are (left) Grace Todd and Molly Grech. (Below) Local resident Gordie McLeod shows daughter Annabel one set of the heritage information signs.

6. Library Services. In March 2013 the City of Ballarat released a draft *Library Strategy*. Seriously concerned about the ongoing provision of library services to Buninyong, the Progress Association called for more direct consultation on the plan, and highlighted "(i) access issues, (ii) the

few references in the plan to mobile library services, (iii) the few references to Buninyong in the plan, and (iv) possibilities for a static library service in Buninyong."

Comment: After being under serious threat of discontinuation, the mobile service to Buninyong has continued since at various locations. The imminent completion of the community cottage is likely to see the service returned to the village centre in the near future.

Comment: Despite detailed sketch plans being drawn up by the Association in 2012, Council initially agreed only to some basic resurfacing of the muddy area to enable limited car parking. In 2019, after more approaches from the BDCA, the entire area was given a sealed asphalt surface. Further lobbying resulted in line marking being done in 2020. Part of the BDCA's original design for the carpark included trees and shrubs; discussions with Council on this are continuing.



7. Council Land for Parking. With ground works then being undertaken around the new supermarket, "the Association prepared a proposal put to Council to develop the Council-owned vacant block facing Forest Street as a car park. Discussions with Council included surface finishes, shade and screen tree planting and access issues."

So next time you walk around the village remember that without the work of groups like the Community Association there would likely be no street vines, school crossing lights, a library service, car parking behind the newsagency, stone entrance signs to the village, bluestone walls, or blue plaques on historic buildings.

Indeed, the major Town Hall precinct streetscape works were completed after the BDCA lobbied Council to change and upgrade their initial proposal to spend \$100,000 just to fill in a few pot holes in the car park in front of the Town Hall to a \$650,000 project which revitalised much of the central Learmonth Street strip.

Virtual choir from home

CHOIR BEATS BLUES

The COVID-19 lockdown has spawned some brilliant initiatives to beat the blues when having to stay home in isolation. One such is the *Virtual Soul Choir*, the work of Buninyong residents George and Geoff Williams who are encouraging all and sundry to sign up for some virtual singing at home – in a massed choir. The husband and wife duo took their inspiration from *Australia's Couch Choir*.

George said she and Geoff were keen to get people together in the only way possible – using their devices – and to sing their heart out in a manner that gives joy and connection during the current health crisis with its social lockdown and distancing regulations. They hope that the *Virtual Soul Choir* will connect people from all around the world.

Sing to lift

Different songs will be selected over time and the first chosen is *Ray of Sunshine* due to its melodic power to uplift hearts,



warm souls, and bring rhythm and life to each day, the couple said. They are encouraging anyone to register at www.virtualsoulchoir.com. Specific songs will be selected each session with the aim of lifting peoples' mood during the lockdown – as participative singing can do.

Keen choristers, Geoff, originally from London, and George moved to Buninyong some five years ago via Daylesford where he still runs the *Soul Choir*. George is the conductor/leader of the Buninyong Community Choir which was initiated by **Christine Rossiter** and started in October 2018.

The local choir's rehearsals will again be held at the Buninyong Community Reserve building (football, cricket, netball Reserve) on Wednesdays during school

terms between 12 noon and 1.15pm once restrictions are lifted. More information is available at www.singbuninyong.com.au or by ringing George on 0434 525 595.

– Russell Luckock

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Bargains, books, breathing and...bringing in the wood

The Lions Op Shop is officially one year old. Celebrations are on hold, but as soon as the Government all-clear is given it will be party time. It's been a fun year, lots of new friendships, lots of recycling and resources being distributed where they are needed.

You can still browse and buy from the op shop via the Buninyong Lions Op Shop site on Facebook. It's all there thanks to **Christina Gollan**. It's even got a contactless pickup arrangement.

Books and books

The Lions' world-famous bookshop is also being proactive. The Little Library is out front there 24/7 – a great fun thing for the younger ones. **Ross** is topping up the books on the book shop's veranda – another contactless transaction is there via an honesty box.

Spare a thought for the volunteers who work at the both shops. For them it's social, purposeful and gives them

community engagement. We all look forward to their return.

As the club moves along with the current restrictions it has had to innovate and the first Zoom meeting was held on 4 May. All members were able to update their situations, tell how they are coping and even organise a working bee (of course, strictly adhering to the rules).

A report from the *Lions District Newsletter* gives another insight into the commitment of the wider Lions community. Northern Health, based in Epping, was in urgent need of high flow oxygen machines. They cost \$2800 each. As mentioned a couple of months ago the local club's donations to the Australian Lions Foundation (ALF) helps in such projects. Well the ALF came up with \$10,000 and then a few more clubs chipped in and Northern Health were able to buy eight of these machines.

Recently, the Club got a call out to help a Lal Lal resident, **Morris**. He is a stroke

survivor and needed help with bringing in a much needed winter wood supply. So a group of Lions went out and cut, split and stacked 9 cubic metres.

If you would like to join or know more about contributing within the Lions Club, call **David Page** 0418 543 772.

– David Searle



(L to R) Cathy Maguire, Charlie Maguire, Gary White and Morris with a winter's supply of firewood.

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Golden time for garden group

President of the Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens Group (FOBBG) Roger Permezel has taken the chance to comment on some of the many garden projects and garden highlights that have been seen in Buninyong recently.

He said, "It is certainly heartening to see how this season of transition recently unfolded around us. The trees of Buninyong looked truly autumnal this year with glorious colours – tones of yellow, orange, red, purple, brown and even some enduring patches of green.

Take a wander through the Botanic Gardens and see for yourself. It is pleasing to observe how many Buninyong residents really value the Gardens now for exercise and appreciate the inspirational botanic environment."

Cone attack

A new temporary out-of-bounds area near the main gate to the Gardens has been



set-up by Council around a relatively young 35 year old Bunya pine (large evergreen conifer, *Araucaria bidwillii*) that recently launched a seed cone earthwards (see photo showing size of cone compared to a football). Council will be taking further action to monitor and mitigate potential risk threatened by future cone drops.

Recently, there has been some whisper of progress on The Gong, masterplan and the Walled Garden projects which for a time seemed as if Council had consigned to their post-coronavirus agenda. Hopefully more on this next month!

Volunteers

Around the Old Police Station, FOBBG volunteers continue to tend the nursery plants, although opportunities for sales are next-to-none as the village markets and other retailing events have all been cancelled.

The front garden that is being created at the Old Police Station is taking

shape and is soon to have some more plantings including herbs, strawberries and rhubarb...all staples of the traditional Buninyong kitchen plot.

Also, the Buninyong Men's Shed has flower boxes ready to install under the windows at the Old Police Station.

Mark Jones continues to nurture the shrubs at the Town Hall forecourt, recently with enthusiastic assistance from the Buninyong Childcare Centre kids and **Maria Grigg**, a new FOBBG member. They have re-planted the flower tubs with pansies and bulbs for a springtime display of daffodils. Maria is looking forward to further opportunities of sharing her play-centre know-how in the garden with the children.

Plans are under way to organise a *Harmony Day* celebration event at the Buninyong Botanic Gardens during *Cultural Diversity Week* in March next year.



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Winner published in July edition of the News	Winner published in August edition of the News	Winner published in September edition of the News



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Search on for soldiers' relatives

Part of the Cambrian Hill memorial avenue project (see page 2) will be the compilation of a commemorative booklet, and a re-dedication ceremony which is planned for 10 November 2020, on the eve of Remembrance Day.

Buninyong RSL President **Ron Fleming** said that the project team hopes to be able to trace relatives of some of the 56 servicemen and invite them to the ceremony. He asks for anyone knowing of relatives of the following district families whose forebears formerly lived in the Cambrian Hill, Magpie, Cobblers, Cherry Tree or nearby districts to contact him.

World War I – Appleton, Atkinson, Cody, Combs, Coulson, Douglas, Earles, Glasson, Griffiths, Harris, Harry, Hawkins, Hives, Jenkins, Janssen, Kernick, Larmour, Logie, Mitchell, O'Loughlin, Powell, Richards, Roche, Rowlands, Singleton, Smith, Stephens, Stevens, Sutcliffe, Veale, Wright.

World War II – Atkinson, Bandy, Cooney, David, Lacy, Medwell, Pullen, Satchell, Williams, Wills.

Mr Fleming can be contacted at 03 53413225 or rj_ljfeming@bigpond.com.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

More trees go on lower Mount

Firstly thank you for your wonderful Buninyong community newspaper. We look forward to reading every edition and hearing all that is going on in Buninyong and the surrounding area.

I write to raise my concerns about destruction of native vegetation on a property on the Midland Highway, just east of Buninyong. For years I have regularly walked along Ogilvie Lane which runs along the property's back boundary.

Wildlife corner

There is a lovely pocket of gums and vegetation on the southern corner of the property which adjoins the walking track. Often I would see small wrens, thornbills and echidnas in the bushes, kangaroos under the trees and sometimes wedge-tailed eagles would land in the uppermost branches.

However, sadly all this has changed since the new owners purchased the property and have been gradually destroying this lovely pocket of native vegetation. The areas of undergrowth previously providing shelter for wildlife have been cleared, and I've become particularly concerned over the past few weeks to see several trees cut down by the owners and used as firewood.

At least ten trees have now been deliberately cut down and it seems the owner is using the opportunity while

everyone is in lock-down to further clear the area. Livestock has also been free to graze amongst the trees, with no attempt made to protect or fence off the vegetation.

Protected

This is particularly concerning given that the property is subject to *Vegetation Protection and Environmental Significance* overlays (as well as being an area of Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sensitivity) with the Schedule to the overlay identifying it as a significant area of koala habitat.

I am hoping that *The News* can help urgently raise community awareness of what is going on before further trees and vegetation are destroyed.

Lorraine, Buninyong

(name and address supplied)

Council has confirmed that no permits had been issued to the owner of the property. Council Compliance Officers attended the property to carry out an inspection on 22 April and identified many breaches of the Environmental Significance and Vegetation Protection Overlays over the property. These included heaped mounds of trees and logs that had been cut down, burnt trees, stumps, and logs and other evidence of removal of native vegetation.

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Ernie cracks 50

Since very early in the history of the new-look *Buninyong News*, the paper's reliable rain guru, Ernie Neale, of the Buninyong Blueberry Farm, has been faithfully recording and reporting on local rainfall every month.

He now has racked up a total of fifty rainfall reports across the period 2015-2020.

Flowers from old Francis

Francis Moss started an Australian horticultural dynasty with the establishment of Mossmont (1853) at Buninyong. The nursery attracted wide acclaim in the Ballarat district.

Moss also was credited with supplying many of the original plants in the Buninyong Botanic Gardens (1861) and also contributed to propagation of the *Stewart's Seedling* famously also known as the 'Ballarat Apple' and featured in many local gardens.

(Below): Francis Moss who is represented in a timber sculpture at the entry to Mossmont was found clutching a bunch of Buninyong Bronze blooms on Mothers' Day.



Eyre Street bridge fix...almost

After two stories in *The News* about the serious safety issue at that pedestrian bridge in Eyre Street, just 100 metres or so from Warrenheip Street, Council has finally gotten around to doing repair work on it. Now the bridge is very solid, with higher railings and safer...but it's oh, so ugly!

Looks like a clone of the 'cattle-race' one that was erected in in Desoza Park last year, and which, after local lobbying, was greatly improved with the installation of solid railings.

Since this picture was taken, Council has moved to replace the plastic tape with steel mesh.

David will be missed



During recent weeks the Durham Lead district lost another well-known and respected member when tennis-loving David Ebbs passed away on 17 April aged 54. He had suffered a stroke in January 2019.

David was active in community affairs through groups such as the Hardies Hill Fire Brigade, and the Buninyong and also the district tennis associations.

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Young sports talent **LOCKED DOWN BUT READY FOR ACTION**

Like many others in the community in these virus-crisis times, three of the brightest young local sporting stars have had to change their training, competition and home and school life to comply with the conditions imposed by the Victorian government.

Recently, *The News* sports reporter, **Ray Sullivan**, had a 'virtual chat' with three of Buninyong's most promising athletes – champion young golfer **Amy Leeson**, 20, up-and-coming tennis star **James O'Sullivan**, 16, and highly promising young distance runner **Georgina Mees**, aged 15.

News: What training have you been able to do?

Distance runner, Georgina is following an eight-week individual programme set by coach, **Bernard Blood**. Georgina says lockdown has given her the opportunity to focus all her attention on training hard and she is lucky that she is able to run about six times a week.

Young tennis star James considers himself fortunate to be able to hit up on his home court with his elder brother **Matt** who is home from university. James recently was appointed as an assistant coach at WestVic Academy of Sport's tennis program. This has involved developing tennis skills and footwork practices and home training programmes for young tennis players.

With the closure of all Victorian golf courses and facilities Amy has been unable to play or practise. Instead she has concentrated on fitness activities. As well as working on her short game in the backyard Amy has resurrected an old exercise bike and is working out with weights and TheraBands to maintain her core strength.

News: What events have you missed out on due to the lockdown?

James said that there were events cancelled across the Easter period including three Australian ranking tournaments and the Junior International Tennis Federation events to be held in Melbourne. He was really disappointed to be unable to represent Victoria in the 18 and Under Pizzey Cup that were to be held in Perth in early May.

Amy missed out on the Metropolitan Pennant competition in Melbourne where she is a member of Southern Golf Club's strong Division 1 Pennant Team. She was also due to play district pennant for her home club, Buninyong. This



Above: Amy is concentrating on improving her fitness during the no-golf period using Therabands.

Below: James O'Sullivan shows his style on the home court.

Georgina Mees (far right) tackles the track around Lake Wendouree prior to the lockdown. Photo by Neville Down.



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Young sports talent (cont)

would have been her first opportunity to play in that local competition as she has always had classes on Mondays in the past. This was also cancelled.

Having been in good form prior to events being shut down in March, Amy was building up to take part in the Australian Junior Championships in Sydney where she was to compete in the 2000m steeplechase.

News: What about your studies?

On-line learning is working for Ballarat Grammar student, James. He believes that as he is not travelling to Melbourne every week to play tennis is also helping him do better with his schoolwork.

Georgina, also from Ballarat Grammar, is really enjoying the freedom and flexibility of on-line learning.

Amy's degree studies in Occupational Therapy at ACU in Melbourne are also being taken on-line. She is not missing the daily train commute to Melbourne at all.

News: What positives can you take out of the lockdown?

Having more time to concentrate on assignments and study has meant Amy is not too stressed at being 'locked-down'. Spending time with the family on weekends and taking more of an interest in fitness are also plusses for her.

Some positives for James have included being able to complete school work, having time to play the guitar, cooking meals and being able to recover from minor injuries. He has also enjoyed playing footy, cricket, tennis and table tennis with his brother.



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