



## Residents evacuated **BOMB THREAT**

**Some residents living in the southern end of Buninyong were evacuated from their homes on the night of 27 January after a man threatened to blow up himself and his house in a tightly-built neighbourhood.**

After the threat was made in a call to police at about 8.30pm, two police cars, four CFA units, ambulances and emergency lighting were despatched to the house.

Adjoining neighbours were told to evacuate by police. One family with small children, unable to return to their house by midnight, had to spend the night in a Ballarat hotel at their own expense.

Police called in a negotiator from Melbourne and the *Critical Incident Response Team* was also called to the scene. (Photo: *Victoria Police website*). The incident lasted more than four hours.

The man, aged in his 40s, who had made the bomb threat was taken by the police to the Ballarat Base Hospital for a mental health assessment. It is understood that he lives alone in the house. The nature of the explosive device has not been made public.

### **Car theft**

In an unfortunate twist to the incident, the car of one of the local CFA volunteers was stolen from near the Buninyong CFA station while the emergency was taking place. The car belonged to local travel agent **Ed Bradford** who, after moving to Buninyong, had joined the local CFA after previously having been a member of CFA brigades at Darley and Bacchus Marsh.

The thieves broke into the CFA station and found the keys to the Hyundai car in his clothing. The car was later found burnt out in Bacchus Marsh early the following day.

Three weeks later, four police units (below) attended another incident at the property following reports that a person carrying a chain saw had been wandering nearby streets for several hours.





Local CFA brigade members tackle the burning auto.

# Lorraine gets gong

**A Buninyong resident was awarded an Order of Australia medal in the 2021 Australia Day Honors List.**

She is **Lorraine Powell**, a Vice President of the Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens (FBBG). President of FBBG **Roger Permezel** said, "Lorraine has an extensive knowledge of our local gardens and of their history and development. She has contributed greatly to the Gardens' current master planning project, has a hands-on involvement with many of the village's household gardens, and is of great value to our annual Open Gardens program".

She has also been a long standing member of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens group. She authored a book about those gardens – *An Eden of Loveliness*.

Lorraine also is a volunteer with many other community groups including being a voluntary guide at the Art Gallery of Ballarat.



## Downtown drama Luxury car up in flames

**The centre of Buninyong was covered in acrid black smoke in late January when a compact Porsche vehicle travelling to Geelong burst into flames on Learmonth Street near the Uniting Church.**

The car had just passed through the business centre when the driver found the vehicle rapidly filling with smoke. He made a smart move by steering the car across the highway to a vacant allotment on the corner of Inglis Street. After the male

driver escaped from the car, flames were soon seen.

From their nearby station the local CFA was soon on the scene and, concerned about a possible explosion, used powerful hoses taking more than 30 minutes to extinguish the blaze. The explanation given by onlookers was that the car had been refilled with an incorrect fuel. The car was a total write-off.

A total of six CFA vehicles and other emergency vehicles attended.



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# Community Bank reports a boom year

## Grants reach \$1.16 million

**At the Annual General Meeting of Buninyong & District Financial Services – the Board of Directors of the Buninyong Community Bank – it was reported that despite the impact of the COVID crisis, record levels on all key indicators had been reached by the local bank in the 2019-2020 period.**

The AGM, the first to be held in the newly completed Community House which will be officially opened in the near future, was attended by company directors, bank staff and shareholders.

Chairman **Ian Corcoran** reported that the bank's business performance for the previous financial year was "outstanding."

### Records roll

Features referred to included

- Overall profit \$520,429 (in 2019 \$387,423)
- Community grants, donations \$268,160 (\$233,377)
- Total net assets \$768,808 (\$630,874)
- A dividend of 10.0 c per share (8.0c) to shareholders.

The year's record distribution of some \$268,000 to district groups, clubs, projects, youth and schools took the amount invested back into the local community to over \$1.16 million since the start of the bank in August 2010.

The number of projects funded in the past year was 79, an increase of 23 per cent.

### Great staff

Bank Manager **Randall Dreger** thanked the bank staff of nine for their "dedication, diligence and effectiveness", and reaffirmed the community bank's value of "putting the customer first and the results will look after themselves". A small growth was also noted in customer numbers which now totalled 3,724.

The Chairman presented ten-year certificates to three staff members who had been with the bank since its opening. These were **Narelle Tatt, Jenny Murphy and Leah Mullins**. Likewise, ten-year certificates were presented to three Directors – **Ron Delaland, Steve Falconer and Gary Trotter** – who had served on the Board since its establishment.



(Above) Bank Board Chairman Ian Corcoran (left) and Board Treasurer Richard McDowell look pleased as they report the results of a record year's trading to shareholders.

Three other members of the original Board of Directors which first met in 2008 – Foundation Chairman **John Emery, Russell Luckock and Barry Fitzgerald** – were in attendance at the meeting.

## Surprise for old Vets

**World War Two veterans Vic Bradley and Bill Cook have been recognised for their service to the nation.**

Federal Member for Ballarat **Catherine King** presented each with their *75th Anniversary of the End of WW2* medallion and certificate, during a

Ballarat Legacy lunch on 11 December. The presentations came as a surprise to both **Bill** and **Vic**.

More than one million Australian men and women fought during the WW2 campaigns. Currently there are 12,000 WW2 veterans still alive and eligible to receive the award.



Ballarat Legacy's President Jeremy Bannister with 98-year-old Bill Cook and 97-year-old Vic Bradley following the presentations.

# Streetscape project HAVE YOUR SAY

The February edition of *The News* carried a four page City of Ballarat supplement of concept plans and information about streetscape upgrade works about to happen along Warrenheip and Learmonth Streets in downtown Buninyong.

There was also an editorial/opinion piece titled *Bus Stop Blues* which detailed the strong concern held by the Buninyong & District Community Association (BDCA) and many residents and business owners that the retention of the little-used bus stop in that location in the middle of the business strip would compromise the possibilities and potential of the upgrade works.

A large area of nature strip and roadway is taken up by the bus stop's huge strip of concrete and roadway restriction. In the new project, this area could be used for planting, al fresco areas, seating or other features.

In its supplement, Council advised that larger versions of the concept plans included in *The News* would be on display in shop windows and at the Community Bank. Take the chance to look at them carefully and form your own opinions on this major project designed to improve an important part of the village.

## Your feedback

There was also an invitation to readers to give feedback on the overall concept plans or any parts of them via Council's *mySay* page.

This page can be accessed by simply Googling City of Ballarat *mySay*. That

will bring up a page with the *Buninyong Streetscape Improvement* project clearly evident. The simple steps then are to

- enter your email address and a password
- look for the SURVEY tab
- then hit *Complete Survey*, and express your views about the overall concept or any part of it.

The opportunity to express your views through the *mySay* survey page is one that will be available there for a limited time, probably until 5 March. Work on Stage 1, the Warrenheip business strip between Forest and Eyre Streets, is expected to start before the middle of 2021

## Five years

The BDCA has been lobbying for improvement to this part of the village for more than five years, and now with funding for the project secured, the Community Association calls on all residents to have their say.

The Community Association has argued strongly for years about removing this bus stop. It's little used and is not needed as Warrenheip Street as there are others just 150 m to the north and to the south of the one in question.

Feedback to the BDCA indicates that most agree. But whether you do or you do not, please take this rare chance to have your say on the project.

– Gayle Adams, BDCA President

Buninyong & district  
COMMUNITY NEWS

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**Editor:** Barry Fitzgerald

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**Advertising:** Gayle Adams

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

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

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

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# Double water storage from earthworks at golf club

**It was dusty at times for neighbours and club members during the eight weeks or so that the Buninyong Golf Club has had two teams of earth-moving contractors at work on the major dam project in the north-west corner of the course.**

Fortunately, for the majority of this time, prevailing winds have been from the north, blowing most of the dust back onto the course itself. Also several good falls of rain during the construction period has kept the soul moist and dust to a minimum.

One team using two large excavators and two huge dump trucks has been excavating an extensive new dam adjacent to the former sixteenth tee. The excess soil from the site have been moved to the unused area of the course near the corner of Macs Road and the Midland Highway.

There it is being spread and covered with top soil by another contractor to form a new landscaped area which may include an additional golf hole or practice area replanted areas.

The deep new 20 megalitre dam will double the water storage held on the course and was expected to have been completed in mid-February prior to the Club's annual tournament.

### Cost

The estimated cost of the dam project is \$140,000 with an additional expenditure of \$20,000 being allocated for the development of new tees and associated irrigation and landscaping.

During the project works, the short second hole was out of play and adjustments were made to the length of the third and sixteenth holes.

In the meantime Club President **Ron Delaland** is continuing negotiations with a health-related company interested in leasing out the total area of the top floor of the golf clubhouse. At the same time new costings for the refurbishment of the ground floor area are being undertaken.

A report on the major earthworks project and the final proposal concerning the clubhouse restoration is expected to be put to members in a few weeks' time.

## streettalk

**NEAR MISS.** A collective gasp came from *al fresco* coffee drinkers at the Pig & Goose one recent Sunday morning when a youth wheeling his bicycle pressed the pedestrian crossing button, got the green, and headed off across. A small white car travelling south zoomed through the red light, missing the kid by a just a metre or so.

**DUMB TIMING.** It's been a battle to get the Council street-sweepers out here. To Council's credit one is now visible occasionally. But could someone tell the drivers on what days rubbish bins are out front of township properties. One recent Wednesday we watched the bloke enjoy his drive up and back mostly along the middle of a dead-end street, happily driving past the many rubbish bins – and cleaning about 30 per cent of the gutters.

**DISTRESS CALL.** One resident called *The News* in a state of shock after looking at the Council's supplement about the Warrenheip Street project in the February edition. Over the image of the Old Library in the Warrenheip Street concept plan was the single word *Demolish*. A huge sigh of relief followed the advice that the word had somehow slipped down from a legend just above, and that the old library would still be there long after the works on the street were finished.

**UNPRINTABLE.** Most of the words that first come to mind to describe those morons who dump rubbish of all varieties in and outside of charity bins sadly would not make it past the *News* censor. Now these uncaring idiots have found the local Lions Op Shop which recently has been swamped with useless and dirty rubbish and junk. Helping out in the shop is one thing for volunteers – having to remove those piles of rubbish is another.

# Danny the farmer... a tennis champ too

Les George, long-term Secretary (from 1970 to 2006) of the Buninyong & District Tennis Association (BDTA), has written to *The News* saying, "It was great to read the article regarding Danny Spruce in the December 2020 edition".

However, Les pointed out, "There is a lot more to Danny than farming. Playing and administering tennis has been a huge part of his life."

The BDTA has a history of long-serving Secretaries and Presidents. **Bill Eldridge** was Secretary from 1937 to 1967. **Perc Pepper** was President from 1934 to 1964. Danny Spruce filled the role of President from 1968 to 1998. In Danny's first year as President there were 38 senior and eight junior teams. By 1989 it had grown to 67 senior, 72 junior and 44 midweek teams.

He was also President of the Ballarat Country Tennis Association from 1985 for many years.

In 1994 **Peter Griffiths** wrote *A Tribute to Danny Spruce*. The following are extracts from that article.

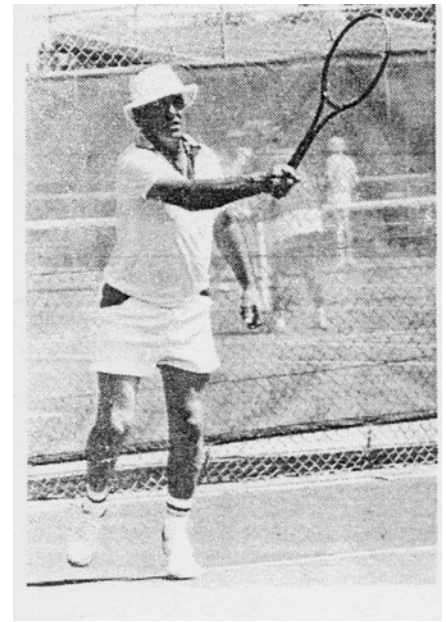
Danny was involved in the formation of the Navigators Tennis Club which was admitted to the BDTA in 1955 and played every season for Navigators until he retired in 1993.

## Painted cows

In 1961 he was a member of the Navigators A grade Premiership side, but it was a long time until his next premiership in A2 in 1987. This was the year of the infamous "painted cows" episode. Anticipating long celebrations on grand final night, Danny painted numbers on his cows so that brother **Ron** would know the order in which they were to enter the dairy on the following morning.

The incident received wide coverage when it was later leaked to the media.

In 1988 Danny again was in a winning A2 premiership side and in 1993, captained Navigators A3 to victory – his third premiership in six years. Not a bad effort for a player who told *The Courier* in 1990 that "Sometimes when I get up on a Sunday morning and my legs are aching, I think to myself that it might be time to take up bowls".



The rapid expansion of the Association in the 1970s saw the need for more courts and Danny was instrumental in gaining Council approval to build six courts on former railway land in Buninyong. He was again at the forefront in 1977 organising the transport of an ex-army hut to the site to be used as clubrooms.

**'As a player...  
Danny put far  
more back into  
the sport he  
loves than he  
ever took out.'**

Danny first played Country Week in 1956, and in 1958 represented Buninyong A Grade for the first time. Then followed 17 successive A Grade appearances until 1975 which included eight premierships and four runners up.

He played in every Country Week from 1956 until 1993. In 1961, 1963 and 1965 he was selected in the All-Star Country Week representative side

As a player and administrator, Danny put far more back into the sport he loves than he ever took out of it. He was an excellent sportsman and administrator, has a great sense of humour, and is respected by everyone. In 1983 he was made a Life Member of the Association.



Navigators A3 Premiers 1993  
Debbie Mannix, Craig Spruce, Danny Spruce, Marg Shillito,  
Wayne Ward, Anne Spruce

# Father and son...the Ballarat FOOTBALL MAKERS

With the AFL football season now about to start, News reporter Russell Luckock met up with a Buninyong man with interesting past links to football and footballs. This bloke loves a chat...and can do most things under the sun, including building his own houses.

From the age of fourteen, **Graham Coulter**, 87, started off by making footballs by hand with his father **Hugh** in Howitt Street, Ballarat.

His father had worked at the *Olsen Clothing* factory, and decided that footballs and basketballs should be easy to make as he had the required pattern templates. All that was needed was leather, twisted string, a strong grip and much grit.

Money was scarce in the 1940s and 1950s, so to fund the purchase of leather to get ready for the winter football season, Graham's summertime job was repairing the celluloid 'windows' mounted in the canvas hoods of the cars of yesteryear.



Article in *The Courier* of yesteryear showing the 'Coulter Special' footballs being made in Howitt St by Graham and his father.



The leather which came from *Greenhalgh's Tannery* in Haddon, was tanned before being put through a thicknesser machine to ensure an even thickness. Then it was stretched to ensure the resultant football would not go out of shape.

Sewing twine was twisted together from a ball of hemp, rubbed with beeswax to preserve it and used to pull the four leather panels together. Raven oil and shellac were then used to brand each *HC Coulter* football.

A sales approach to *G.J. Coles* stores resulted in an order for 2,000 footballs – creating a supply problem for Graham and his dad, as just six could be made by hand each day!

### Scarce rubber

During and after WWII, rubber for bladders became so scarce that some of the smaller footballs had to be stuffed with flex. The available rubber was saved for the full-sized

Graham and his wife Val on the wooden 'horse' with the foot-operated clamp that enabled him to sew the four panels of the football together.

*Match II* footballs as then being used in the Ballarat and Wimmera leagues.

The list of other jobs Graham has done is extensive – such as delivering milk for the *Modern Dairy* company (where he often ducked across the closed Forrest Street railway gates on his bike to quickly deliver to the other side of the tracks before the train came!).

### On the go

Other jobs included delivering bread, working in abattoirs (where there was always the risk of being sacked any day of the week), butchering, framing houses and being in the army for national service. Graham seemed to always be on the go!

So the next time there's a game of backyard football with the kids or grandkids – just think of those relatives of sixty or seventy years ago who probably would have been sticking their boot into a *Coulter Special Match II*, made by the ever-resourceful hands of Graham and his father right here in Ballarat.

– Russell Luckock



Studying maps and plans of the streetscape project are Michaela Settle MP, centre and (L to R) Katrine Taylor, Simon Coghlan, Gayle Adams and Ian Corcoran.

# Looking to settle bus stop problem

**Hopes of getting the best result from the Warrenheip Street upgrade project have been buoyed by local MP Michaela Settle's agreement to take up the bus stop removal problem with the Minister for Transport, Ben Carroll.**

Ms Settle met with representatives of four key community groups at her office recently to be briefed on the project and the restrictive impact on it resulting from the refusal of Public Transport Victoria (PTV) to remove the bus stop near the Pig & Goose restaurant.

## Key players

The meeting with Michaela Settle was convened by the President of the BDCA **Gayle Adams**, and was attended by Buninyong Business Network President **Simon Coghlan**, together with BBN's **Katrine Taylor**, Community Bank Chairman **Ian Corcoran**, and editor of *The News* and long-term lobbyist for the bus stop removal, **Barry Fitzgerald**.

The battle with PTV to have the bus stop removed from the business strip between Forest and Eyre Streets has been in process since 2015. Since then recurring concerns have been raised about safety issues, the economic development impact on business and tourism, the extensive intrusion of the bus stop area on what is planned to be a greatly improved community amenity, and of the restrictive effect on parking in the vicinity.


## Details

Attendees at the meeting provided details of such issues and concerns and provided Ms Settle with details of the history of the efforts to remove the bus stop.

She was told of the move by the Community Bank to provide seed funding for the project resulting in flow-on funding from Council and from RDV.

Details of the low usage data for the stop also were tabled.

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It was pointed out to Ms Settle that use of the stop at Eyre Street just 150m away was an obvious low cost solution. She agreed to take up the matter with the Minister when State Parliament resumed sitting in mid-February.

In the February edition of *The News* the City of Ballarat included a detailed supplement concerning plans for the strip. Concept plans clearly show the impact on the development. Residents are invited to express their opinions on Council's *mySay* page (see Opinion this issue).



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# Council boots barrels

## Now VCAT hearings soon

In a major boost for the many residents and groups opposing the erection of six 'sky barrels' on the southern slopes of Mount Buninyong, at a Special Planning meeting held on 10 February, the Council of the City of Ballarat voted unanimously to refuse the application.

Council's Planning Team had recommended that the application be refused on six major grounds. They reported that the Application was inconsistent with three key clauses of the *Planning Policy Framework* which seek

- to ensure development "respects the valued areas of rural character"
- to protect Mount Buninyong "from unsuitable design that will significantly impact landscape values and key view lines"
- to avoid inappropriate development by maintaining the rural landscape.

It also failed to meet a key objective of the Rural Living Zone that seeks to "protect the landscape values of the area".

Other concerns were that the application failed to provide sufficient information concerning effluent management and protection of "human life" from bushfire danger.

### Three speak

Three verbal presentations were made to Council by local residents. Secretary of the BDCA, **Kevin Zibell**, summarised the extensive technical and planning concerns that the Association had identified in its



fifteen-page written objection. He stressed the fact that the Mount Buninyong area was considered to be "a significant landscape icon of Western Victoria".

### Concerns

**Ian Dodds** spoke on behalf of himself and wife **Judy** in stressing the serious concern held by the overwhelming majority of the community about the barrels application.

Editor of the *Buninyong News* **Barry Fitzgerald** told Council that there was a "clear groundswell of community anger, cynicism and disbelief" about the barrels proposal. He pointed to the dangers from fires on the Mount and said that "Council should not expose itself to potentially 'fatal' litigation".

He invited the Councillors to consider what their response might be if an application was received to erect a 16m high building shaped like a big black swan (with five smaller swans alongside) somewhere near the shores of Lake Wendouree.

As reported in the February edition of *The News*, the barrels' applicant had taken the matter directly to VCAT citing Council's lack of a response within the statutory period (which spanned the stand-down period associated with the elections).

The next stage will be a compulsory 'Conciliation' conference slated for 2 March, and if agreement cannot be reached there, four days of formal hearings have been set for mid-May. Council will now join with the many objectors in opposing the Application before VCAT.

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AUTHORISED BY CATHERINE KING, 5 LYDIARD ST NTH BALLARAT 3350

# The Buninyong Hotel

## Grand hotel now gone

**There's a blue plaque on those old sandstone walls on the southern side of Learmonth Street 100 metres or so west of the RSL Hall. It notes that the sandstone is all that is left of 'Mother Jamieson's' grand Buninyong Hotel.**

While Selleck's Hotel, later renamed the *Crown Hotel* after the gold mine immediately behind it, is still very much in business today, on the opposite side of the street was the village's other grand hotel, the *Buninyong Hotel*, which was first licensed in 1843 to **John Vietch**.

### Jamiesons

Vietch sold the licence to **Margaret ('Mother') Jamieson** and her son Neil in 1847 to concentrate on his other businesses in town – the role of postmaster and running the Buninyong Store.

But before he sold out, Vietch found himself in the middle of a major murder case in which one of his staff, **Edward Martin**, died after a fight at his *Buninyong Hotel*. An Irishman, **Jeremiah Connell**, was found guilty in the Geelong Circuit Court, and was hanged in Melbourne in January 1847.

In 1848 the *Buninyong Hotel* hosted a stay by **Governor LaTrobe** during a

visit to the district. He described it as “*very comfortable, painted, papered and cleaned*”.

### In the road

In 1850 a survey was made of the township and a section of Mother Jamieson's hotel was found to be encroaching on the middle of Learmonth Street. The pre-gold rush building was required to be moved. But, it was still there in 1855 despite efforts by the Central Roads Board to have it moved.

In 1853 Mrs Jamieson had decided to build an impressive, two-storied building of 28 rooms constructed of sandstone quarried from the local *Stone Gully Quarry*. The cost was 20,000 pounds – a huge sum in those days. But Mrs Jamieson died in 1854. Her son Neil attributed her death to the expense and worry of building the grand hotel.

In 1854 the Government formally licensed hotels on the goldfields and the *Buninyong Hotel*, together with the *Crown Hotel* opposite, then finished up with a duopoly of the local, legal hotel business.

The licensing of local hotels was not without its own stories of corruption. For example, in 1853 **John D'Ewes**, a police magistrate and chief of the Licensing

Branch, spent some time at the hotel and adjacent cottage where he was well entertained by Margaret whom he described as “*an extraordinary specimen of a Scotch landlady*”.

D'Ewes was later implicated in the Bentley affair in Ballarat, a spark for the Eureka rebellion. **Governor Hotham** sacked him in 1854 for corruption in the matter of hotel licensing!

### Demolition

After his mother's death, Neil Jamieson carried on the conduct of the *Buninyong Hotel* until the mid-1860s, when the sandstone building was demolished, and he built a new wooden building (photo) on the land now occupied by RSL Park. The sandstone wall on which today's blue plaque is attached was built from the stone of the demolished hotel.

A succession of licensees followed until the hotel was delicensed in 1933 and demolished soon after.

*The Melbourne Argus* (17 March 1934) reported that, while wrecking the old hotel, “*Messrs N and E Delaland found a shilling dated 1817, a half-crown piece of 1842... and that the parlour walls had been soundproofed by the use of sawdust*”.





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**Buninyong**



# Eason cottage Tumbledown...but full of local history

**If you have ever walked in the vicinity of Easons Road on the hill behind the Buninyong golf course you surely will have noticed the very small timber cottage standing forlornly in a nearby field.**

It is almost impossible to believe that this tiny, now-ruined dwelling once housed a family of eleven – nine children and their parents. It was bought by the **Eason** family in the 1940s when they moved up there from a cottage in Warrenheip Street.

## Early settlers

They are one of the oldest families to have descendants still living in Buninyong, having moved into the area in 1855.

**Gordon Eason**, the sixth child of **Ernest Percival Eason** (known as **Percy**) and **Alice Hilda Platt**, remembers his childhood well and what would now seem to us as very harsh times.

Gordon remarked that “it was normal for us- we didn’t know any different”. There

were three small bedrooms, one for the five boys, one for the four girls and one for the parents. At first the children slept top-to-tail or between each other in one double bed in each room until there were too many of them, when a second double bed was bought. No sheets – just grey blankets!

Apart from the bedrooms, there was only a kitchen with seating around the table – no comfy easy chairs! Cooking was done on the top of a wood fired stove or in the oven and water was heated in a four gallon square drum situated on the edge of the stove. Bacon was cured and hung from the ceiling.

## Kindling troubles

Initially there was no electricity and lamps, lanterns and candles lit the house. Percy lit the fire every morning and if Gordon hadn’t brought in the kindling, there was trouble! No such luxuries as a bathroom, and of course the toilet was outside. There was

no sink, everyone washed once a week in a tin dish. The last one to wash got the dirtiest water. This dish was also used to wash the dishes!

Clothes were changed once a week, new clothes a rarity and most of the children relied on hand-me-downs! The washing was done by hand using scrubbing boards and, in the winter, dried inside on a clothes rack.

Percy owned a lot of land in and around Buninyong, and the land surrounding the cottage was mainly orchard. But Percy also had pigs, chickens, ducks, geese and a few sheep and cows for milking. Meals consisted of chicken and bacon and, as Gordon was a keen shooter, there was always rabbit.

## Tripe and liver

A *Coolgardie* safe kept the food cold. Percy used to have the chops, and the children had the leftovers. There was also tripe and liver from the nearby Whykes’ old slaughterhouse and, as Gordon remembered, ‘If you didn’t eat it, you went hungry’.

Whilst these times may now seem far in the distant past, there will still be some residents within the Buninyong community who remember life as Gordon has described it. Maybe this brings back some memories.

– Rita Russell

## Painting the fence

**The fence and gates at the northern end of the Buninyong Cemetery were given fresh life with a new coat of paint by a team of six inmates and a prison officer from Langi Kal Kal recently.**

Shown discussing the works with cemetery Maintenance man **Graeme Penhall** is Prison Officer **Jonathon Young**.



# Saving their loved places

**Just before Christmas, students of Lal Lal Primary School undertook a project which explored the district of Lal Lal and the places and spaces that the students love to live near.**

The project was completed in conjunction with CFA and DELWP as part of the *Community Based Bushfire Management (CBBM)* project being facilitated by the CFA's **Bridget Clarke** as part of the *Safer Together Program*.

"We wanted to get a picture of the area and its local assets from the community's perspective," said Ms Clarke, "and who better than the district's young people to give us some great feedback on that."

## Loved places

Delivered online during lockdown, the brief to students was to take a photo or draw a picture of a local place that they love and explain why it's important to them.

"They became very engaged in the project and it delivered some great results," said Principal **Siobhan Gosney**.

Popular amongst the local listings was the Lal Lal Falls, the water tower, the primary school, train station, and the pub.

*CFA Community Based Bushfire Management Project Officer Bridget Clarke with Charlie, Matilda and Becky with their prize winning entries in the Special Places in Lal Lal Project – Grades Prep-3.*



Other mentions included forests, country roads and scenic lookouts.

In conjunction with Moorabool Shire and DELWP, the CFA currently is surveying local residents to gather further evidence of the community's awareness of community planning to reduce the risk of bushfire and the loss of local treasures.

## Selected

"The *Community Based Bushfire Management* project is one that encourages residents to plan for and provide local, innovative solutions to reduce local fire risks at a strategic level," Ms Clarke said.

"Lal Lal is one of 21 communities in the State that has been selected to strategically address fire risk locally. This is more than managing an individual's block, it is about getting together as a community to think of things that can be prioritised and done to empower and prepare the town in case of bushfire."

Bridget Clarke (0436 330 700) is happy to respond to questions about the CBBM or the survey.



*Local mums **Melanie Bainbridge** (left) and **Chloe Morganti** watch as daughters **Ariane**, 4, and **Quin**, 5, enjoy their time amongst the blueberries.*

# Mums, kids, blueberries

**One of Buninyong's most popular spots in the post-Christmas period was at the Blueberry Farm on the western slopes of Mount Buninyong.**

Established in 1982 by **Helen** and **Bruce Muir**, the blueberry farm covers some four acres of the rich volcanic soil and was one of the first in Victoria. It was taken over by **Ernie Neale** in 2009.

Now growing six varieties of blueberries, the farm is in an ideal location as the blueberry fruit require some 750 'chill' hours during winter for best development of the fruit.

On the day in late January when *The News* visited there were over fifty cars parked along the gravel road adjacent to the Midland Highway and an estimated 80 people, including many small children, were in the afternoon 'pick your own' group of visitors. Another large group had been previously scheduled into a morning session.

Ernie Neale's Monthly  
**RAINFALL REPORT**

**Year's start -  
a gentle roar**

The amazing summer we have just experienced puts a different spin on the old maxim "we don't know what we've got until it's gone". Gone this summer was the annual battle against hot and dry conditions and the subliminal threat of fire. In its stead we have enjoyed a summer that was lush, smoke-free and safe.

The rainfall figures speak for themselves. Average rainfall for January is 44.5mm. About that much fell on 29 January alone. By the end of the month we had received 104.4mm, more than twice the monthly average. In conjunction with temperatures rarely above 30°, it was aptly described as one of the wettest and mildest January's in a lifetime.

BOM's forecasts of a distinct *La Nina* event were spot on, and with a 65 per cent chance of greater than median rainfall being indicated for March to May, more can be expected. Weather-wise, 2021 has certainly arrived gently, but with a roar.

JANUARY 2021			
Date	Rain	Date	Rain
3-7	31.7	26-27	11.9
15-18	8.2	29-30	52.8
Total		104.4 mm	
Average		44.5 mm	



Gardens neighbour Mark Jones (left) with Corrie Olsen (guitar) and members of the U3A Celtic Band in the QV Rotunda.

# GARDENS ALIVE WITH THE SOUNDS OF MUSIC

Each Monday during Summer, local residents and visitors to the Buninyong Botanic Gardens have enjoyed the music floating around the heritage-listed grounds as the University of the Third Age (U3A) Celtic Band practised in the Queen Victoria Rotunda.

Mark Jones from the Friends of Buninyong Botanic Gardens committee told *The News* that the Gardens are becoming increasingly popular for creative pursuits including art displays, theatre, music and choral performances.

### Band start

Back in 2009, Corrie Olsen and a small group of music-loving friends got together as a band to play music drawn from the Celtic tradition purely for their own enjoyment.

Fast-forward a decade or so and the band, now the U3A Celtic Band, has some 25 talented amateur, aspiring and professional musicians, looking and sounding more comprehensively like an orchestra, with three CD recordings

and performing up to twenty concerts around Ballarat each year.

The evolution of the band has meant that, rather than a strict emphasis on the Celtic genre, more diverse pieces are now performed featuring a range of instruments including recorders, flute, clarinets, brass wind, accordions, concertinas, ukuleles, banjos, guitars, violin, cello, double bass, harp and percussion.

### Great alternative

Corrie Olsen the band's director, conductor and musical arranger, told *The News* that the Buninyong Gardens rotunda was a delightful out-of-doors coronavirus alternative to the band's usual rehearsal site at the Ballarat North Community Centre.

"We have really appreciated the ambience and inspiration of the beautiful Gardens environment that enabled the band to continue with rehearsals during the warmer months. We'll be back to Buninyong in the future," she said.



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## Rash of car crime here

Police have reported a large number of car-related crime in central Buninyong recently. Unlocked cars are being targeted with thieves looking for any items of value in them, and also looking for spare car or house keys.

A specialist team of detectives from Ballarat is investigating and are appealing for anyone with CCTV material that might assist (such as that of cars being driven past slowly or in a suspicious manner, or persons looking into garages). CCTV material from around mid-February would be of interest.

Call Snr Constable **Sean Almeida** of Buninyong police (5341 3431).

## Join the CCMA vision

The Corangamite Catchment Management Authority (CCMA) is inviting local community members to help renew its *Regional Catchment Strategy* (RCS). The renewal of this document will define a long-term vision for land, water and biodiversity management within this Region.

**John Riddiford** CEO of the CCMA said, "This strategy will be important for developing projects that protect and enhance both regional and community environmental assets such as our rivers and creeks, our biodiversity and supporting sustainable agriculture".

Community members are invited to participate in the planning process. For further information, or to express interest in the renewal process, call **Olivia Brandimarti** on 0429 805 825.



A recent photo of Rocky Hazlett (right) with son Paul and grandson Mitchell.

## The Hill has lost its Rock

Well-known Cambrian Hill resident **Robert (Rocky) Hazlett** died on 6 February 2021, aged 77 years.

Rocky's death came just a few weeks after the 15 December 2020 opening of the Cambrian Hill Avenue of Honour project which he had instigated earlier that year. The completion of this avenue was dear to him, and, despite his serious illness, he was able to be present at the ceremony and the following social event at the local hall.

Along with many others from that area, Rocky was also a familiar face at the Thursday night dinners held at the Buninyong Golf Club where the table of ten or twelve mainly from the Cambrian Hill/ Napoleons area, and known as the River Rats, was a regular fixture.

After a career on the railways as an ironworker, for many years he was a well-known staff member at the SMB where he taught blacksmithing.

His funeral service, badly impacted by the lock-down, was held at the historic old Black Lead church on the Colac Road in Cambrian Hill, now part of the local historical society. He was buried at the Buninyong Cemetery on 15 February

Rocky is survived by his wife **Mary**, and sons **Paul** and **Clinton**. A daughter, **Alannah**, was deceased.

## Paradise in the gardens

Buninyong's Botanic Gardens will be part of a Begonia Festival celebration of some of the city's best open spaces along the Floral Frame Trail during the popular annual festival.

**Tas Wansbrough**, an award-winning Fine Arts graduate from Fed Uni, will be dressing a giant pink frame entitled *Paradise* with stunning crafted white blooms to be on display in the Gardens 6-28 March.

Friends of Buninyong Botanic Gardens encourages locals to visit the Gardens during this period, get familiar with some the district's most magnificent trees and linger longer with a picnic lunch.

Audio stories of gardens of the Ballarat region and the begonia heritage will be accessible to visitors via a QR code available during the event.



Tas Wansbrough will bring her creative talents to Buninyong during March.

# Guides group into recess

**After a move from the RSL Hall to the Masonic hall in early 2020 the local Girl Guides group has now been placed in recess after being active for more than 26 years.**

For much of that period, a key leader in the group was Buninyong's **Chris Kerr** who retired some two years ago handing over the care of the group to younger Guide Leaders **Tanya Burrows** and **Melinda Stewart**.

Chris said that over the years she derived great satisfaction from "seeing girls' confidence grow as they achieve new skills and develop new friendships."

Guides Region Manager for the Central Highlands, **Louisa Watts**, said that it was hoped that if more women came forward interested in becoming trained as Girl Guide leaders the group could be re-started.

"Tanya and Mel have agreed to continue to assist in various ways, but changed circumstances have made it difficult for them to go on with the current arrangements," she said.

## Program

Girl Guides are usually aged between five and seventeen years. They enjoy a program of activities that can involve the girls 'finding their place in the world', leadership skills, service to their community, outdoor and camping experiences, and learning a wide range of life skills such as cooking, crafts, and environmental and sustainability activities.

The impact of the COVID virus was severe on the Buninyong group with face to face activities almost impossible for

much of the last twelve months. This led to a drop in active members of the group.

Tanya Burrows said that the remaining eight girls in the Buninyong group will join nearby Guides' groups in the interim.

In a final cruel irony, a farewell dinner for the local Leaders and the Guides was planned for 17 February, but it too was called off because of the five day lock down.

Buninyong Guide leaders Melinda Stewart, Chris Kerr and Tanya Burrows.



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# Our bits and books help needy overseas

Lions Club news this month highlights the return of the Book Shop and Op Shop to the delight of both shoppers and volunteers. These two mighty institutions of the Buninyong retail landscape fill a vital role and are a valuable source of fund raising.

Opening hours at the Book Shop are Wednesdays from 11.00am to 4.00pm, on Fridays from noon to 5.00pm and then on Saturdays and Sundays from 10.00am until 3.00pm.

The Op Shop is open on Thursdays and Fridays from 10.00am until 4.00pm, and on Saturdays between 10.00 and 2.00pm. Op shop donations can be dropped off during its opening hours.

Some of the funds raised by these two little ventures is passed on to the Lions Club International Foundation (LCIF). A simple

example of their use of funds can be seen in the work of **Dr Francis Onen Sebabi**, a Ugandan GP and member of Gulu Metropolitan Lions Club.

He knew of the desperate need for specialist eye care in his country so decided to apply for a LCIF Sight First grant to help him qualify as an ophthalmologist.

This was a dream of Dr Sebabi – to take clinical specialization in eye care to the people who were needing it most. His work in curative and preventative eye health services covers Uganda, Southern Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.



A small purchase or donation in our Buninyong village shops can become part of the help given by Lions to someone like Dr Sebabi.

– David Searle

(Above) Dr Francis Sebabi shown with a grateful patient in Uganda after an eye operation.

## VILLAGE MARKET RETURNS

Buninyong Community Events has advised that with the relaxing of COVID restrictions, three 'seasonal' village markets are back on the planning schedule for the coming year together with other important events such as the Film Festival, the Art Prize and Exhibition and the Buninyong Festival.

The first of these will be the Buninyong Village Autumn Market which is set for Saturday 27 March (see advertisement on p 4). Fifty stall sites were booked very quickly.

Other markets scheduled for later in the year will be the Winter Market on 31 July, the weekend-long *Springtime in Buninyong* across three days in late October, and the Christmas Market on 11 December.

Major events on the schedule include

- the Buninyong Film Festival in September

- Buninyong Art Prize and Exhibition on 29-31 October
- the Buninyong Festival also set for 31 October
- the Crack the Crater Mt Buninyong Run Challenge also on 31 October.

The Autumn Village Market will be located at and in the Buninyong Town Hall from 3.00pm to 7.00pm on Saturday 27 March and will feature arts, crafts, food and music. More information can be found at: [facebook.com/buninyongvillagemarket](https://www.facebook.com/buninyongvillagemarket). Information on all events is on: [www.bceinc.com.au](http://www.bceinc.com.au).

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Authorised by M Settle MP, 15 Main Road, Ballarat. Funded from Parliamentary Budget



# Crowds down but Great Super Sunday

Over two days in early February all eyes in the cycling world were on Buninyong and they would not have been disappointed in what they saw. Crowd numbers were down on previous years but this was to be expected. Fields were also smaller in the men's and women's elite races as some of the top riders from overseas were unable to attend because of quarantine problems.

Despite this, Super Sunday did not fail to deliver some amazing racing. Unusual summer weather patterns prevailed as the Women's elite race started in cold drizzly conditions that gradually cleared during the day. The sun finally shone for the last few laps of the men's elite race in what turned out to be one of the best finishes since the event came to the Buninyong circuit.

## Global

Television coverage of the event went world-wide for the first time. There was some great footage of the Buninyong village and the surrounding areas. It also was great to see and hear the students from

Buninyong Primary School singing the national anthem before the start of the Men's Championship race.

Former champion Ballarat cyclist, **Patrick Shaw** (pictured below), was the course race commentator for all of the events in Buninyong over the two days of racing. His expert knowledge of cycling and of the competitors on the course was one of the event highlights for this News reporter and for many others in the small crowd. (See panel right).

– Ray Sullivan



## From bike to a mike

One of Ballarat's former champion cyclists, Patrick Shaw anchored the course race commentaries over the weekend and proved once again his transition from "bike to mike" is now well and truly established.

Pat was tasked with keeping our local crowd informed as races unfolded throughout the weekend. He did this superbly. His running commentary on all races, his knowledge of every facet of the course, the riders and their tactics and his ability to keep going for hour after hour was amazing.

Those who were gathered around the finish line near the end of the Men's Elite race didn't need big screens. Pat's commentary and his enthusiasm painted a more exciting picture than any television screen.

The News caught up with Pat a few days after the event. He was very pleased with the four days of Ballarat/Buninyong cycling events and said his aim was to impart information about the races, the tactics, the individual competitors, and the challenges of the events in the hope that the spectators would learn more about the sport and will come back next year.

Pat, 35, is a former *Herald-Sun Tour*, *Tour Down Under* and international competitor.

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# Champs claim the medals

The winner of the 2021 Elite Women's Championship at the event held in Buninyong on 7 February was Sarah Roy, 34 (pictured right).

She was part of a six rider breakaway on the first lap of the nine lap race, and rode alone for the final two laps winning by over one minute from **Grace Brown** with **Lauretta Hanson** in third place.

In the Men's Championship race, last year's winner **Cameron Meyer** (below) won with a late lunge to defeat **Kelland O'Brien**. Experienced international cyclist Meyer gave much credit for his win to his Bike Exchange team-mate and fellow international rider **Luke Durbridge** who had won the road race championship here in 2013, along with numerous wins in time trial events.



## Volunteers keep cycle stars going

While the star cyclists took centre stage at the National Road Cycling Championships, the event would not have been possible without the efforts of more than 100 community volunteers.

The News checked out volunteer headquarters in the Buninyong RSL Hall where **Brayden** from GTR Events was in charge. He was studying maps of the course and surrounding streets, making sure his team of volunteers was well supported.

### Complex work

**Tony**, from Rode RAGE (Ride Against Greenhouse Emissions) was working with Brayden, arranging car pick-ups, lunch breaks, time schedules and making sure that there were no gaps. Tony was responsible for his group of volunteer students from Ballarat, Horsham, Mount Eliza and Drouin.

There were over 100 volunteers working in various roles over the four days of racing in Ballarat and Buninyong. Imagine standing on the corner of Yankee Flat Road and Gear Avenue at 6:00 am on Wednesday morning for the Time Trials after driving up from Geelong. Two mates, **Jim** and **Bob** did just that, and they were then back in downtown Buninyong again at the weekend supervising circuit crossings.

### Clare's cool

The Sebastopol Lions club was also well represented in the volunteer ranks. Friends **Clare** and **Edna** were directing foot traffic at the roundabout corner in Buninyong. This was their fifteenth year supporting this event. Clare's only complaint was the cold weather. "Got sunburnt last year, and am freezing this year," she said.

– Ray Sullivan

Volunteer Clare closely guarded the roundabout crossing.



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