

Buninyong & District Community **NEWS**

Edition 486, OCTOBER 2021

New backroads route brings

TRUCK TERROR

Since the start of the major roadworks on the Midland Highway south of Buninyong some twelve months ago, the residents of Lal Lal have found that the stretch of narrow road from the highway at Clarendon through the village and onto the roads through Yendon and Navigators has become a busy 'trucker' by-pass route for increasing numbers of heavy vehicles.



Trucks travelling from Geelong to the Ballarat Western Employment Zone or Western Highway areas are now using the Clarendon-Lal Lal road which passes the Lal Lal Primary School and other areas where locals gather such as near the old hotel and railway station.

School

This is particularly so near the school which is just at the start of the Lal Lal 60kph zone and which sees some large trucks travelling in excess of this speed. Buninyong police now plan to monitor the situation.

School Principal **Siobhan Gosney** said, "The whole school community is very concerned about this dangerous situation.

Children are not able to walk or cycle to school safely. It is just too dangerous as the trucks pass so close to the path." The photo (left) shows how close trucks come to children walking to school.

Then it is on through other small communities such as Yendon and Navigators and possibly Warrenheip. On some days the trucks start passing through these townships during the night and as early as 4.00am.

This development has come about because of the speed limits and delays caused by the Midland Highway works. Although these are now largely completed, speed limits to as low as 60kph (and to 40kph at times) continue to apply because final sealing of the road surface cannot be completed until hotter weather, still some months away.

(Left) Trucks pass close to children on the narrow road verge opposite the Lal Lal school

Roller door crime leads to Car theft and wreck

Over recent years *The News* has carried warnings from local police about drive-by or walk-by thieves, directed to people who leave their garage doors up or unlocked.

Reference has been made to 'the 'growing trend of offenders gaining access to houses at night'; 'a recent burst of crime', and 'we are not as safe as we might think'. Such advice doesn't always sink in.

But for one local family that all changed a few weeks ago when they were awoken at 6.30 am by a phone call from police reporting that their wrecked and written-off car had been found in Ballarat East (see picture).

Prepared

Footage from CCTV cameras on nearby houses showed that the thieves had accessed the property by a neighbouring back gate at about 2.15am. They wore miners-type lights on their heads, gloves and had bags to carry any valuable items found. They had come with intent and were prepared.

Until the call, the family was not even aware that the car was missing. Now, they have joined the growing group of residents who no longer feel as safe and secure, who have had to give a statement

to police, who have to visit the wreckers and see their trashed car and belongings, and who now check several times that all the doors are locked.

Police have advised that this was another case where thieves were using stolen, lost or bought remote garage door controls which reportedly would open a high proportion of garage doors.

Sgt Joel Dash of the Buninyong police said that drive-by or walk-by 'trial runs' were made to see if a door would respond to a remote-control, and then thieves marked that property for a later night raid.

One solution to such intrusions is to turn off the internal power source for the remote garage door once all the family is home for the night or if the home is to be vacant for an extended period.

Despite their caution in wearing gloves at the property, one of the thieves was injured when the car crashed, with blood left on the steering wheel. Police advised



that after DNA analysis this would be used in the investigation and permanently recorded in the police data base.

Hat warning

Locals should also be aware of another ploy by would-be thieves.

They earmark a property which seems very quiet and place a 'witches hat' on the driveway or at an entrance gate.

If the hat has not been moved after a day or so, the house is listed for a later visit by the thieves.



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New dog park open but Views are mixed

With the new 'off-lead' dog park set in a quiet bushland corner of James Reserve now having been open for several weeks the views amongst those who have used it are mixed.

The Buninyong Dog Park had been lobbied for extensively for years by various groups. *The News* (May 2017) editorial, *Barkingly simple solution to dog exercise problem* pointed out that in 2017 there were 1,624 dogs registered in Buninyong tipping some \$50,000 annually into the Council coffers.

Decision

Following community consultation in 2020 the City of Ballarat made the decision to locate the dog park in the James Reserve. This site was chosen because it was accessible from the town centre, its being suited to people with mobility needs, and that there was already some infrastructure in place such as car parking.

Lengthy local consultation seemed to result in limitations on what could be achieved, including the need for minimal ground disturbance, no concrete to permanently embed structures, minimal disturbance to surrounding residents, and no water laid on (which dashed the idea of the proposed water fountain) or more seating which would involve too

much ground/ environmental disturbance.

Some current users say these are 'cop out' excuses for not having delivered some of the promised features which from the outset included the key provision of a water source, and some form of shelter for the humans using the facility.

Comment

For most however it is an exciting and much-needed development.

Positive comments on *Facebook* and direct reactions have included – "wow... my dog had a great time running with other dogs"; or "a good start; our dog is having a good time with new friends"; "exciting"; "a great little set up"; "a great setting".

But there are also other comments that the Buninyong dog park compares poorly



to others in the city and that it is difficult to see where the stated expenditure of some \$30,000 has gone. Much work, it seems, went into the pathway from the car park.

The less positive *Facebook* comments included – "this is a cheap and nasty project"; "they should have used stronger netting"; "smaller dogs can go straight through the holes and small gaps under the fence and big gate"; "the is fence too low, big dogs can jump over it"; "compared to this, the dog park in Sebastopol is brilliant !!".

When *The News* visited recently, while the users there said it was welcomed, they also pointed to the lack of a rubbish bin and also a need for a bin in which to dispose of dog droppings.

Anyway, take your dog(s) for a trial fun run... and let your Councillors know what your views are on the new dog park.

– Cassandra Carland

Above: Ray and Barbara enjoyed their time at the new dog park... but not as much as Scruffy, Dora and Bluey

Left: Happy dog, happy people



Unclear future of former CFA site

Leaders must act

With the final rush to finish off the new CFA site adjacent to the golf club, and to get equipment, relics and records ready for the move further down Learmonth Street, there seems to be a strange silence about what is going to happen to the old site.

It is likely that the present outdated and unattractive structures near the Town Hall sit on Crown land. A few years back there was a move by some local groups to turn the site into some form of secondhand store or Op Shop. Doubtless, play groups and dance groups and groups for the very young or the very old might show some interest.

Years ago, the prospect of the SES being based there was talked about.

Prime site

This property is sitting on one of central Buninyong's prime sites – adjacent as it is to the garden setting of the Uniting church, to the trees of the Avenue of Honour and with a substantial sloping block of land of some 1200m².

It would be a disaster if a half-baked decision was taken after lobbying by a single-interest group or party. It would be an even greater disaster if some Melbourne-based bureaucrat decided that the property should be put on the market.

The question must be asked if local groups such as the Community Association, the Business Network or the Friends of the



Botanic Gardens have considered the future of this site and have adopted any policy, position or ideas on its future.

Question

The major question to be addressed by such groups and by residents is whether the buildings should remain or be pulled down to create some form of parkland or open space or for some other use.

Scarily, the periodic rumour of a move by a major fast food chain to obtain a footprint in Buninyong has again hit the local airwaves. It's even more scary that the big corporate bucks that would certainly come from that direction for the highly visible and accessible site

might prove attractive to cash-strapped government bodies. Heaven forbid!

The impact of a drive-through or similar business on present parking for Town Hall users and nearby shops must also be taken account of.

This seems to be a classic example of where strong proactive civic leadership must be shown by our State and local political representatives, in liaison with the community and with local interest groups.

It calls for an urgent community forum to be arranged by the likes of **Michaela Settle MP** and/or **Cr Ben Taylor** to consider this issue. Or has some decision already been made that we are yet to hear about?

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A pet's end of life It's a tough time

Pets are an important part of the lives of many people. Not only do pets become friends to share a home with, but there is plenty of evidence that they are good for owners' health and recreation.

But sometimes, because of a pet's old age or sickness, the difficult decision has to be made to euthanize a pet, or to use the preferred words of **Nikki Catley**, a pet-grief counsellor, 'put it to peace'.

Knowing that making this decision can be the most loving thing you do for your pet doesn't make it any easier. However, you do not have to make that decision alone. Apart from discussing the situation with the Vet, or with family and friends, there is also the option of talking to a dedicated professional pet counsellor.

Heavy loss

Nikki, a former Veterinary Nurse, has had more than 25 years in the animal care field, including fifteen years with her business *Paws for Talk*, an animal grief-counselling service. Nikki understands better than most that, for some people, losing an animal can be like losing a family member, or losing the last link to a deceased partner, or losing a close friend.

Here in Buninyong, the local Veterinary practice is so conscious of the effect of

the death of a pet, that it will even fund an initial phone consultation with Nikki for their clients.

While Vets **Rebecca Jennings** and **Aimee Knowles** and the nursing staff at the local veterinary clinic are deeply caring and understanding, they often find themselves busy with a full waiting room, and know that making such a pet's end-of-life decision is one not to be rushed.

Questions

A *quality of life assessment* can play an important part at such a time: Questions to be asked and considered include whether the pet can be kept comfortable and pain free, or whether ongoing medical intervention would be more stressful, not only for the pet but also the family.

After counselling, discussion about the various options, time to think, and keeping the welfare of the pet in mind, acceptance of any tough decision becomes just a little easier for the 'pet parents'.

Consultations with Nikki are private and non-judgemental with the focus on the welfare of the animal. Nikki can be contacted via pawsfortalk@outlook.com or ph.0418 534 058.

– Cassandra Carland

Local veterinary surgeon Dr Rebecca Jennings (right) shares a coffee with pet grief counsellor Nikki Catley at the Buninyong Clinic.



POLICE BEAT

THE GARIBALDI HALL was broken into in August. Unknown offenders gained entry to the hall by destroying a padlocked door. The only item reported stolen was a *Heartstart*-branded Defibrillator which was stored in the entrance area. Investigators are frustrated as to why someone would steal a potentially life-saving piece of equipment from a Community Hall. If any members of the Grenville or Garibaldi community saw any suspicious cars or persons in the area, call Buninyong Police Station on 5341 3431.

A THEFT occurred at the new Buninyong CFA worksite in Learmonth Street in early August when a *New Holland E18B 1.7 tonne excavator* which had been left on site for several days, was stolen. A vehicle and trailer were presumably used for transport. The excavator is yellow in colour with black writing. Police would welcome any information that may assist with recovering the stolen excavator. An anonymous report can be made to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

AN AGGRAVATED BURGLARY was reported to Buninyong Police on the 18 August. (See story Page 2) The victims had parked their car in a closed garage in central Buninyong before entering the residence. Overnight, unknown offenders entered the garage via an open door and located keys to a vehicle. The stolen vehicle was later located by Police after it had been involved in a hit-run collision in Ballarat East. The incident is currently being investigated by the Ballarat CIU.

BUNINYONG POLICE are investigating the theft of a *Husqvarna 572XE chainsaw* which was unsecured on the tray of a Nissan utility parked in the driveway of an address in Forest Street. It was taken in the early hours of the morning of 26 August. CCTV has been provided by residents in Forest Street and investigations are ongoing. *This is a timely reminder to remove all valuable items from vehicles when they are unattended, especially when parked overnight.*

Nic and Jimmy

bring smiles to the Old Bluestone

The old adage ‘love at first sight’ certainly applied to young business couple, Nic and Jimmy, when they first looked at the *Old Bluestone Café* in Buninyong. They recently took over the Learmonth Street business from Marilyn Delfin and David Robey who had been there since April 2017.

About 10.00pm one night a month or two back, Nic spotted online that the Buninyong hospitality business was for sale. Both in their PJs they jumped in their car, drove from their home in Sebastopol, shone the car lights on the front of the iconic local café, and immediately ‘fell in love with it’.

While that may not be the classic approach to the purchase of a new business, the bubbly and friendly couple certainly have the personalities that will ensure all locals and visitors looking for a coffee, breakfast, lunch or a takeaway snack, of a warm welcome at *The Bluestone*.

Rough start

Their first two days after taking over in mid-September was anything but smooth. The problems ranged from a broken fire hydrant, to having no water (when the technician was trying to install their brand new coffee machine), to a power outage (when the Health Inspector from the City of Ballarat arrived). Then, of course, on the second day after opening, the latest week-long COVID lockdown hit Ballarat.

But they are already really excited at the positive feedback they have already had from some of Buninyong’s long-standing



coffee groups that their new local brand of coffee passed with flying colours.

Nic and Jimmy moved to Ballarat from Melbourne in 2020. He is a house painter by trade, and she operated an online sales business involving home/interior decoration and also clothing.

“Given our backgrounds and skills we bought the oldest and most run-down home we could find,” Nic said, “but you should see it now!” Interestingly both enjoy fishing as a means of relaxation.

Present plans are to open *The Old Bluestone Café* between 8.00am and 3.00pm from Wednesdays to Sundays.



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Advertising: Gayle Adams

Reporters: Cassandra Carland, Ray Sullivan, Russell Luckock, Rita Russell

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Member of the Community Newspapers Association of Victoria

Catherine KING MP

Federal Member for Ballarat

03 5338 8123

Catherine.King.MP@aph.gov.au

CatherineKingMP

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Sally's signs break into big league

The News (August 2016) reported on a local woman who was starting up a small business based on designing, producing and installing temporary signage to mark the graves of recent burials in cemeteries.

At that time, **Sally Kennedy** was working through the many challenges faced by start-up businesses.

Making direct and indirect contact with funeral directors, contacting cemeteries in several States, trying to get a foot in the door of the larger cemeteries such as the big five cemeteries in Victoria (at Fawkner, Springvale, Bendigo, Geelong and Ballarat), Sally was then expending lots of time and effort, without much response.

She was trying to break into a traditional industry which usually made no provision for signage on graves for the period between a burial and later placement of a permanent plaque. She was proposing an inexpensive interim alternative.



Now, after some seven years of really hard work, Sally and her company *Dearly* is certainly hitting some big targets with her wide range of memorial plot signage, cemetery marker signage, outdoor urns for cremated remains, and a suite of both temporary and permanent specialty products for mausoleums.

A recent breakthrough was to obtain the contract for Reserved markers within two newly-constructed large mausoleums in Melbourne. The first was a 1650 capacity mausoleum at Fawkner Memorial Park, and also for a new addition to the Keilor Mausoleum for 588 markers. (A mausoleum is a large above-ground concrete structure with niches within which coffins are sealed).

Her 'affordable and replaceable' signs are of powder-coated aluminium in a full colour and design range. Intricate engraving is possible with no limits for text or images. They are manufactured in partnership with Ballarat companies.

National

Sally's work and products are now being taken on by cemeteries across Australia. She distributes to contracted cemeteries daily, providing interim memorials as part of the burial package. She gets them there with a five day turn around, usually in time for the funeral. She delivers as far away as Broome, and as close as the Ballarat Cemetery.



She also has voluntary roles at two local cemeteries being Chair of the Creswick General Cemetery since 2018, and also is now a member of the Community Advisory Committee at the Ballarat Cemetery.

Space

But despite that, Sally says that she has no trouble distancing herself from the 'death' industry in her spare time.

For example, she is Vice President of the Ballarat Pony Club Committee, and a Community Member of Committee for Ballarat.

Added to her work on her ten acre country property at Mt Doran, Sally has a horse-crazy thirteen year old daughter (and her two ponies which often need to be ferried around the district), a Year 11 St Patricks College 17 year old who is footy mad and has his own work commitments, and another son, a 19 year old apprentice electrician.

So for at least some of the week, memorials to the deceased are easily forgotten.

No virus in the west end

About ten residents of the western end of Palmerston and Eyre Streets have taken colourful steps to ensure that the lockdown time has a little more fun, and that the COVID virus is kept at bay from their locality.

They have made stuffed figures of all shapes and sizes and put them on display in front gardens and roadside reserves.

One, a portly figure dressed in hi-vis gear and holding a stop sign, stands on the roadside at the far western end of Palmerston Street and has caused motorists to come to a halt before they realise what they have stopped for (see picture below).

Other figures shown here are a hula dancer in front of the **Hatfield** home in Palmerston Street (being checked out by **Bob Roper**), and a colourful smiley-face.



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Barrels banned by VCAT Local voices win the day

Over the years, *The News'* editorial column has expressed strong opinions on many local issues. But it has taken on a 'crusader' role on just three matters. The score board now stands at one win, one loss, with one still undecided.

The loss was on the long campaign to relocate the lengthy bus stop away from the business strip in Warrenheip Street. Still in the 'undecided' category is the battle to get Council to come up with a decent *Township Plan* for Buninyong.

But the win came recently when VCAT refused the application by a major developer to construct five massive barrel-shaped structures on the southern slopes of Mount Buninyong.

Factors

The win was attributable to the case put and presented by many local forces – nearby residents led by **Andrew Lorensene**, community membership-based groups such as the BDCA led by Secretary **Kevin Zibell**, and the local Historical Society with **Anne Beggs-Sunter** as its spokesperson.

The City of Ballarat took heed of the 57 written objections they received, and strongly opposed the Application. And even the venerable Royal Historical Society popped up briefly.

And we'd like to think that *The News* played its small part. Firstly back in September 2020 by breaking the news of what was happening. Then, across the twelve months or so that this was a live local issue, by keeping readers informed of the changing details of the application and of the various twists and turns of the litigation. (See the graphics opposite).

A formal objection was lodged by the Editor acting in a personal capacity, and an appearance made before VCAT.

The determination (P1818/2020) by two senior VCAT members was a win for the 'little' people of Buninyong. Many put their time, energy, expertise and passion (along with not inconsiderable funds by some) into taking on a huge project from a high-profile developer along with his very confident and articulate barrister and other experts.

“Buninyong locals put time, energy, expertise and passion into winning this fight”

Buninyong residents both of the present and future generations should be grateful to them.

However the final paragraphs of the determination, while finding that “the proposed built form is unacceptable,” do open the door somewhat for possible further developments. Of concern was the finding that the VCAT members were “satisfied that the scale of the use was largely acceptable” and that “tourist accommodation on the site is unlikely to be a source of significant disturbance to peace of neighbours.”

Ban the barrels

A few weeks ago there was a flurry of media releases about a proposal to build a collection of barrel shaped buildings on the slopes of Mount Buninyong in Warrenheip St 2 Road.

Location
Council of the township data do not show the location of the proposed site. The location and the length of the proposed site are on the slopes of our local nature.

If there was to be a development on the site, it would be a major one. The proposed site is a large one. It is a large one. It is a large one.

There are four big reasons to try number five.

1. A major development.
2. A major development.
3. A major development.
4. A major development.
5. A major development.

September 2020

Buninyong & District Community NEWS

Barrels battle heads to VCAT

It is understood the reason given for the decision was that the Council had responded to the application with a decision to refuse the application.

Another meeting, attended by 25 local residents together with planning and legal representatives had on 2 January 2021.

February 2021

LOCAL NEWS

Council boots barrels

Now VCAT hearings soon

In a major boost for the case put and presented by many local forces – nearby residents led by **Andrew Lorensene**, community membership-based groups such as the BDCA led by Secretary **Kevin Zibell**, and the local Historical Society with **Anne Beggs-Sunter** as its spokesperson.

March 2021

LOCAL NEWS

No agreement but barrel build starts

Despite there being no agreement on the proposed development, the developer has started to build the barrels.

Local schools now go solar

The Buninyong Progressive Dinner is a great way to support the local community.

April 2021

Buninyong & District Community NEWS

Planned for the Mount Barrels shock

Building of the proposed barrel shaped structures on the slopes of Mount Buninyong is set to start in the next few weeks.

September 2020

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Jaida shows how it's done!

School-Kinder teamwork in key research Play leads the way

For many years it has been known that children's play enhances their development in a range of areas. It enhances language, social skills, emotional regulation, and forms the basis for mathematical and scientific concepts.

Education comes in many forms. However through play-based opportunities children can utilise their imagination, be independent, communicate with others and enhance their social skills as they learn more about their world.

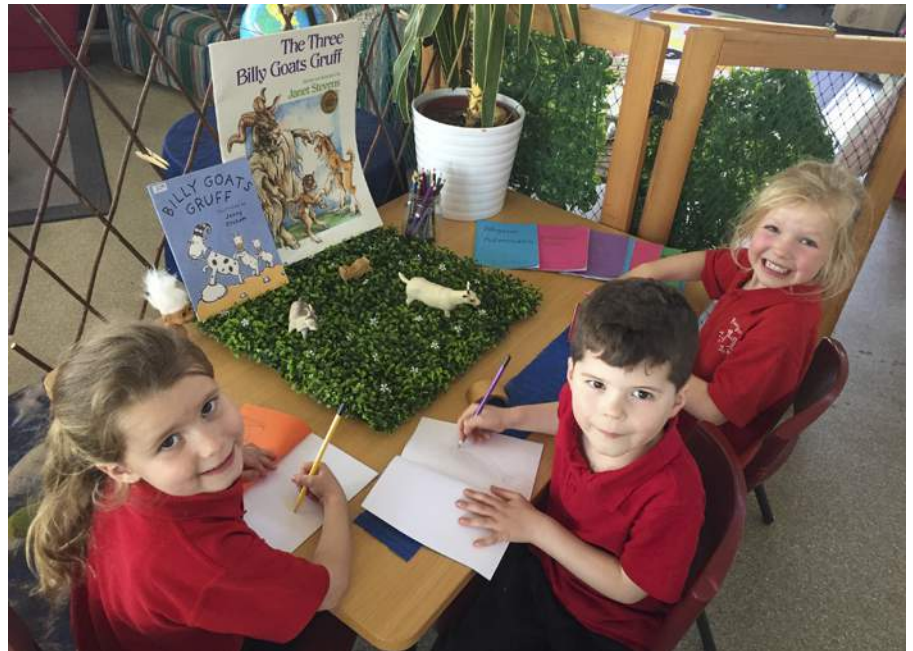
Sometimes lost

Play forms the basis of kindergarten programs at the Buninyong Pre-School. However, unfortunately it is often lost when children take their next big step into their educational journey-arriving at school.

However, Buninyong Primary School has incorporated elements of play for their foundation year students. Already some dramatic improvements are being seen in the correlation of play and children's literacy development.

This new direction has seen collaboration between the educators from Buninyong Pre-school – **Louise Jackman** and **Jessica Barfoot** – and the foundation teachers at Buninyong Primary School – **Sandra Davie, Paula Dekok, Bec Wood** and **Lauren Riordin**. This 'team' is working to further explore a continuity of educational approaches across the early childhood and early school settings.

All six educators currently are involved in an action research project in conjunction with **Anthony Semann** at the *Bastow*



(L to R): Ellie, Arlo and Abby hard at work at the Pre-School writing and illustrating their first books

Institute of Early Learning. He is an inspirational leader and researcher within the early childhood profession, and the local educators are privileged to have been selected to work with him.

During the project the two services are providing children with varied opportunities for exploring familiar story books with play props, exploring a variety of play provocations, sharing their writing with others, and gaining cues from visuals such as props/images to create their own stories.

The children become excited as they work towards writing their own masterpieces and looking towards the prospect of starting their own library from which other children can borrow their books – an idea that is being implemented both at kindergarten and school.

Help request

This is a new venture for all the educators, with all kindergarten staff working collaboratively to develop new resources such as felt puppets, and sourcing small figurines and other open-ended materials such as a curved block that could be utilised in various ways such as it being a bridge with a piece of blue material as a river. The options are endless.

The Pre-School would love to hear from any residents with items that could be used to help the teams develop further storybooks, or who have a way with a needle and thread. And we look forward to

hearing more from our budding authors as this adventure progresses.

– Louise Jackman

Police thanks

On 17 August 2021, many Buninyong residents woke to the news of an alleged firearms incident having occurred in the town overnight. I want to thank the residents and business owners who were directly affected. You have all been of great assistance to the Buninyong Police and subsequent investigators.

To the witnesses and victims of property damage, thank you for coming forward and assisting the Investigation. Your willingness to assist with information, CCTV evidence and statements has been extremely helpful.

I wish to stress that this incident, whilst confronting and serious in nature, was an isolated one which had no links to Buninyong itself other than being the location where it unfortunately occurred.

The positive message I would like to be taken out of this incident was that the strength and resilience of the Buninyong community was the defining feature.

– **Sergeant Joel Dash, Officer in Charge**

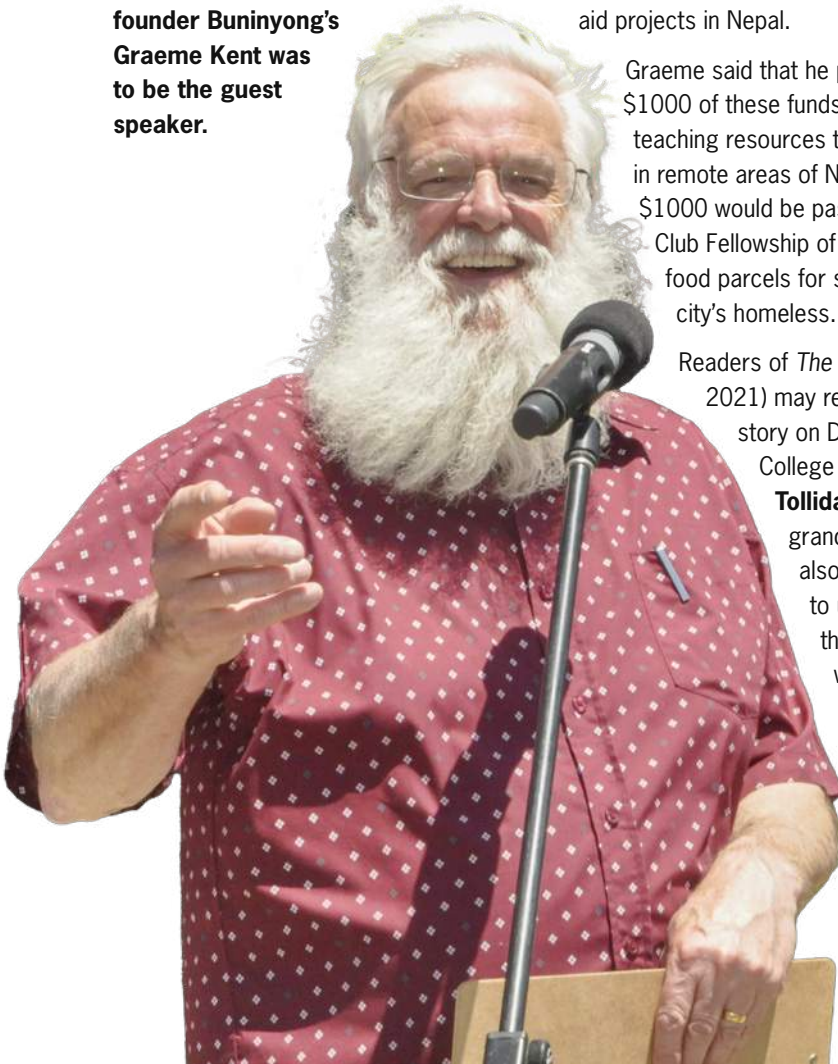
Lions Club \$2000 donation Gift boosts aid project in Nepal

Yet another event cancelled because of COVID restrictions was the Lions Club September Dinner at which Aussie Aid Abroad (AAA) founder Buninyong's Graeme Kent was to be the guest speaker.

To his great surprise, however, Lions' Past President **Barbara Voigt**, caught up with him recently and presented him with a donation of \$2000 to be used for various aid projects in Nepal.

Graeme said that he planned to use \$1000 of these funds to provide basic teaching resources to two schools in remote areas of Nepal. The other \$1000 would be passed to the Lions Club Fellowship of Kathmandu for food parcels for some 200 of the city's homeless.

Readers of *The News* (August 2021) may recall a recent story on Damascus College student **Maya Tolliday**, Graeme's grand-daughter, who also is planning to use some of the funds she was awarded in a recent Fellowship win to assist a project on gender equality issues with Nepalese youth.



Ernie Neale's Monthly RAINFALL REPORT

BOM outlook pretty good

This year's winter petered away by mid-August. The majority of August's 64.7mm had fallen by then and temperatures never fell below zero. While winter's total of 238.6mm rainfall was greater than the long-term average, August's rainfall was less than average, and September opened with unseasonably warm temperatures. By all indicators, spring seemed to be off to a worryingly early, warm, and dry start. It was time to consult the latest BOM three monthly rain outlook.

While being wary of the sometimes-nebulous vagaries of these outlooks, I was pleased to find that this one offered some substance. It gave a better than even chance of us receiving more than median rainfall in both October and in November. If that happens, then spring this year may prove to be as reliable as both autumn and winter were and that we might yet make it to summer with good levels of ground moisture in reserve.

AUGUST 2021			
Date	Rain	Date	Rain
1	21.8	12-19	13.0
4	7.1	20-26	12.4
7-8	7.9	30	2.5
Total		64.7mm	
Average		75.0mm	



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The reporter with the cheapest of them all – a supermarket ebike for \$1000 with 28" wheels, 250w rear-hub motor and 7.5Ah, 270Wh battery. It works well until hills become steep. Then it's either pedal harder – or walk and push it uphill!

Electric bike boom

Many choices to be made

Cycling is becoming ever more popular both for recreational exercise and for purposed trips to work or shopping. This is now complemented by the range of electric-assisted bicycles on the market.

There are many decisions to be made when contemplating the purchase of an electric bicycle.

Firstly, is there a need an electric bicycle versus a traditional pedal-powered bike? For flattish topography there may not be a need for one, as they are much more

expensive, significantly heavier and not easily bought secondhand – unlike a conventional bicycle.

Tougher

However, if hills and dales or mountains are likely to be tackled, the range of electric bicycles is now wide and becoming more capable and cheaper each year, especially with the exponential advances in battery technology.

So, to ride the hills there are a number of items to think about in making a choice – Mountain Bike, Racing, Urban or Cruiser;

man's bike with crossbar or 'step-through'; size of wheel – 24 inch, 26, 28; and the seated position.

Of course, hill-climbing depends on the steepness of the slope, and the number of hills to surmount on each intended ride. Also, rider weight and the weight of any shopping must be taken into account before an eBike is selected. And if hills are on the agenda, choose disc not rim brakes as these won't stop you after a few serious downhill descents.

The motor

Then there's the motor which can be located in either the front or rear hub of the wheels or in the middle where the pedal crank is. Which to choose? Rear hub motors are by far the most common now and cheapest. They work well in many cases except when riding on very steep hills.

Front motor hubs may have a traction problem on slippery slopes. Mid-mount motors are more complex and more expensive at present but have a distinct advantage in that the motor works through the gears – a great help for steep hill climbs.

Batteries are often built into the frame now, and are rated. So choose one that will last for your favourite climbs and distance. For advice and assistance head to *Dynamite Cycles* in Buninyong, or to one of Ballarat's cycle shops.

Above all, it's a whole new adventure to get out and about especially as the hills, like Buninyong's King of the Mountain, will be less daunting as you ride up, up, up and away!

– Russell Luckock



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A weekend of creative escape Town will buzz with top artists

Community events in Buninyong have been severely impacted by pandemic restrictions during 2021. Among the casualties have been the Film Festival, the Winter Market, and the Crack the Crater Run.

But a group of Buninyong women – **Annie Ross, Trudi Nicholson and Lisa Cressey** – are determined to revive the events scene in a few weeks' time with an event titled *ARTpreneurs*. The group is a sub-Committee of Buninyong Events Inc.

Fifteen

The group has arranged for fifteen local artists to give creative workshops in a range of interesting locations over the weekend of 16-17 October. Not only will there be some great opportunities for

enrolees to get into a range of creative activities but it is also hoped to give a boost to artists and crafts persons hit hard by the pandemic.

Venues include the Community House, the Red Door Pizzeria, the Town Hall, the historic home Netherby, and the RSL and Uniting Church halls.

Lisa Cressey said that there will be varying workshops for beginners to experienced artists, and will cover creative work ranging from from paper sculpture, embroidery, mosaics, charcoal painting, water colour painting to working with air-dried clay.

Talent

For example more experienced artists are expected to look keenly at the workshops by **John Lam**, one of Ballarat and Victoria's best watercolourists who will be offering six-hour workshops on both days at *Da Capo Music School* in Warrenheip Street. Amongst the many other skilled workshop leaders will be local crafter **Sonia Sutcliffe** who will be delivering multiple workshops each running for a couple of hours.

The weekend is not targeted at young children, but teenagers certainly will find something of interest

The website at buninyongpreneurs.com has a huge amount of information about the timetable, each of the artists and their works, class details, venues and costs.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

More on the buses

My 'bus' issue is about school bus overcrowding and poor student compliance with masks and fare paying. I don't really care about the bus stop location either way, although I think it's good near the traffic lights.

One option may be to remove that stop north of Eyre Street for more parking. A few students get off there, but it would still only be three blocks between stops. Compared to removing the Forest St stop, this would be closer to the bank and not much different for the post office, but mostly road-aware adults would be the ones crossing the road there.

Secondly, I am concerned that people are expressing reluctance to walk an extra 50 metres. I work in a falls clinic, and am always suggesting people find ways – such as parking further away – to add exercise into their day.

In the columns of *The News* nobody has been able to answer the question of when it is there are no available parks in the Eyre to Forest Street block. I pass at varied and often peak times, and have always seen one or two free spots. Perhaps people don't like parallel parking. Angle parking in the upgrade will be better.

You do a great job with the community newspaper!

– **Rosalie**

ED: the bus stop issue is now closed. We only ran this letter because of the final sentence!!



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Gardens into QR

The Buninyong Botanic Gardens now have entered the QR age with the completion of an exciting project by the City of Ballarat.

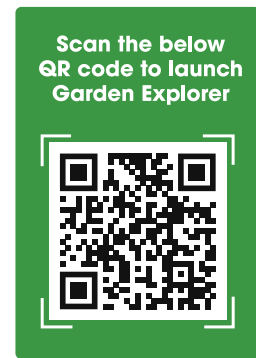
A click on the QR code right will produce aerial views of the gardens, maps, details of trees and plants, some history and photographs.

Of particular interest are the self-guided historical, seasonal, plant collection and educational tours. These include tours with the quirky titles of *Tremendous Stories*, *Rare and Threatened Trees*, and *Step Back in Time*.

The QR code will also be located at sites around the Gardens to enhance the experience for visitors or the community.

Locals will find this *Garden Explorer* QR experience much more interesting than clicking on out the front of a supermarket.

Further enquiries to 5320 5500.



Streetscape update

Advice from the City of Ballarat is that design work for the streetscape upgrade works along Warrenheip Street (Forest to Eyre Streets) and the corner of Warrenheip and Learmonth Streets has been finalised.

Feedback from the community engagement in February 2021 as well as ongoing input from the project's *Stakeholder Advisory Group* was used to finalise the draft plans and ready them for putting out to tender and construction.

The tender process has begun and is expected to be finalised by the end of 2021 with construction to commence after the school holidays in early 2022 – depending on contractor availability and COVID restrictions.

Updates on the project's construction timelines will continue to be found on Council's *MySay* page and in the *The News*. Email citydesign@ballarat.vic.gov.au for more information.

Golf's ups and downs

All golfers know that golf is a game of many 'downs' mixed in with a few highs or 'ups'.

Through the COVID lockdowns the Buninyong Golf Club has had to wear the pain of very little income from competitions or from green fee players.

But one of the recent 'ups' at the course has been the switching on of the fountain/aerator located in the middle of the huge new water storage on the course. Visible from the Midland Highway the fountain is switched on between noon and 2.00pm and between 4.00pm and 6.00pm each day.

AED at Town Hall

On several occasions *The News* has reported on the public access AED (defibrillator) located inside the Newsagency during the fourteen or more hours the premises are open each day.

Another AED device is now located inside the Buninyong Town Hall. While the Town Hall is not open all of the time, the device will be readily accessible for any users of the facility such as the Senior Citizens Club.

Town Hall Christmas pop up shop back

The Buninyong Town Hall Pop-Up Shop now in its sixth year will again be operating in December.

The Pop-Up Shop highlights regionally based artists who offer a unique shopping experience of handmade Christmas gifts, together with many more items. It also promotes Buninyong's village character to visiting shoppers.

Items for sale will include puddings, shortbread, jam, and honey. paintings and pastel images, ceramics, plants, Christmas trees and even reindeers.

The shop will be open every day between Friday 3 December and Friday 10 December between 10am and 4pm. There will be late night shopping until 8.00pm on each Friday night.

This event raises funds for the Buninyong Town Hall to support its annual operating costs. It's of particular importance this year with many hall bookings cancelled due to COVID restrictions.



Lots of memories will go with old clubrooms

Royal Park demolition close

It's nearly time to say goodbye to the old Club Rooms at Royal Park (formerly known as the Royal Highland Ground) and then the 'old footy ground'. The City of Ballarat is preparing to demolish the old building.

The building has a place in the memories of many in the community and has seen many transformations since its beginnings in 1857. It was the home for football and cricket players from 1930 to 2006.

Saved

In 2008, after a prolonged battle against threats of housing development, the management of Royal Park was handed over to a local community group, *Friends of Royal Park/Buninyong Sustainability*. The group established native plantings, the community garden and welcomed the Buninyong Soccer redevelopment. In 2021 it was handed over to the City of Ballarat for management.

This facility will be missed by the *Friends of Royal Park/Buninyong Sustainability* committee, the *Buninyong Smart Building and Living Expo*, the *Leigh Catchment Group*, *Ballarat Permaculture Guild*, pilates, yoga and dance groups, and by countless happy families who hired the hall and decorated it for their family get-togethers, birthdays, and Christmas celebrations.

Unfortunately, the old hall at Royal Park, 1101 Warrenheip Street, Buninyong has been deemed unsafe by the City of Ballarat and too costly to maintain.

Buninyong Sustainability believes it is too good to end up as waste and deserves a new incarnation.

They have been calling for expressions of interest in the removal and relocation of the building as a whole, or to sell off its best assets. The large, light-filled hall includes beautiful 1920s (est.) heritage windows on the north wall, a single 1920s (estimated) double hung window of the same vintage on the South end, and four

double hung windows with casement window top. This should be finalised by the end of September.

Please email info@buninyongsustainability.org.au or Facebook message @ *buninyongsustainability* for more information.

One find from the clean-up so far has been a sign from the Royal Highland Ground – dated before 1996 judging by the phone number – and is a great example of repurposing (see photo).

Jill Clarke and Andrea Mason with the old "Royal Highlands Ground" sign found at Royal Park Buninyong



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Drones, maps and accurate records

Getting high at the Cemetery

The telecasts of the recent Olympic Games in Tokyo showed how useful high-flying drones can be. During the Olympics they were used for graphic aerial footage of everything from above-stadium shots, to over-water views of surfing and sailing, to even holding the giant Games logo aloft.

Now, to facilitate individual and public searches and research, and to comply with records preservation legislation, the Trust of the historic Buninyong Cemetery is also about to enter the 'drone-age' by engaging a company to undertake a detailed mapping and digital-recording exercise of all the plots in the cemetery based on the use of high-resolution imaging.

A boost to assist funding the total projected \$9000 cost of the project has come from a grant from the Community Bank Buninyong's *Community Investment Project Fund*. Bank spokesperson **Samantha Elshaug** said that the Bank was "happy to support a project that will result in much easier access to cemetery records and information, and better enable family and other research to be carried out."

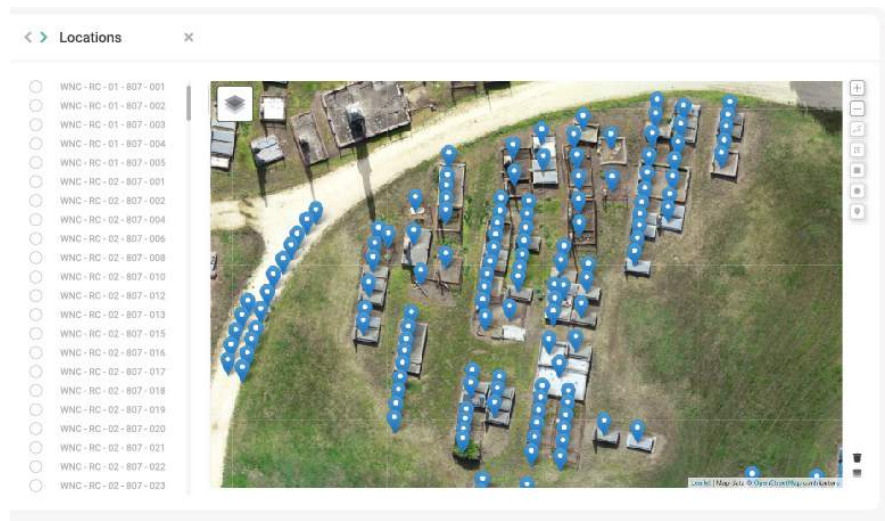
Clear map

While most of the Buninyong cemetery is laid out on rectangular grid lines, there are a few areas in the very old upper part of the Wesleyan section where graves were laid out in a less-ordered way many years ago.

However, it is hoped that all plots in the cemetery will be captured and be identifiable after being photographed by the 20 megapixel camera on the drone flying at a height of 40 metres. In addition, it will also be possible to show points of interest in the cemetery to provide the public with insights into its history and interesting local personalities.

The project will also involve linking this imagery to a new digitised records management system.

Presently, hard copies of cemetery records spanning more than 150 years are to be found in old ledgers, in boxes, in



Above: Aerial images taken from a drone Lower: A small sample of present cemetery records

a fireproof safe, and with members of the Cemetery Trust.

While there are computerised data bases of most burial records, this contains incomplete or duplicated entries, partly computerised or ones having been entered in varying formats and levels of accuracy over the years.

A huge amount of time is now being spent by a volunteer having to work through each of some 9000 records on the various data bases so that this information

can be usefully transferred to the company engaged to undertake the task of linking the records to the mapping exercise.

This company, *OpusXenta*, manages the records of the five large Class A Cemeteries in Victoria including the Ballarat Cemetery. The system will ensure compliance with new records-keeping legislation, and will greatly facilitate members of the public being able to search relevant elements of the records, and use the aerial maps to locate the resting place of relatives or persons of interest.



New turf wicket, top recruits

Big season for cricket

With an 'on again-off again' football season drawing to a close, Buninyong cricketers have dusted off their gear and are ready for what is hoped to be a close-to-normal cricket season.

This 2021-22 cricket season will be special for the Buninyong Cricket Club. After being admitted into the Ballarat Cricket Association's (BCA) 1st XI competition in 2018-19, Buninyong's 1st XI teams have been playing home games on the St Patrick's College turf wicket in Ballarat. But in the season ahead Buninyong will be back on home turf.

The old hard wicket was pulled up in January 2020 and a new turf wicket installed. Works have been completed and the new turf wicket is currently being prepared by the City of Ballarat in readiness for this season.

Excited

Buninyong Cricket Club president, **Neil Blanchard** said, "The Club couldn't be more excited about the start of a season and is keen to give credit those who have supported this project.

"Following a long fund-raising campaign by the club, we are excited to now have a turf wicket installed at our home ground."



He said that the Club acknowledged the support of the City of Ballarat, Ballarat Cricket Association and Buninyong Football Netball Club to realise the installation of the turf wicket.

Generous financial contributions came from club members, the Community Bank Buninyong, Cricket Victoria, the Victorian State Government, Cricket Australia, and the Federal Government.

The growth of the Buninyong Cricket Club over the last few years has been amazing. This year the Club will field five senior and 14 junior teams, making it one of the largest clubs in the Ballarat Cricket Association.

Top recruits

For this season the Club will welcome **Harrison 'Harry' Bond** to the senior coaching team, and **Dave Ellis** back as captain of the First XI. Previously playing in Warrnambool, Harrison, a top class wicket-keeper/batsman, joined the club in 2018, and David Ellis has come from Wendouree where he has been their 1st XI captain and played in a number of 1st XI premierships.



Led by Senior Coach **Liam Brady**, the Club's Senior

coaching program continues to invest in the development of senior and U17 junior players.

After finishing sixth, seventh and eighth in its three seasons in the BCA First XI competition, the Buninyong Cricket club is keen to consolidate and take on the challenge of all grade teams, especially the 1st and 2nd XI teams, making it into the finals.

Neil invites local cricket fans to come over to the Buninyong Oval on a Saturday to see how the senior cricketers perform on their new wicket. The season is set to start on 9 October.

Club website buninyong.vic.cricket.com.au, Facebook www.facebook.com/buninyongCC, email buninyongcc@gmail.com for more information.

– Ray Sullivan

Above: Harrison 'Harry' Bond in action behind the stumps.

Lower: the large turf wicket area under construction

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