

# Village shut down for hours, shop windows smashed in **ARMED HOSTAGE DRAMA**

**All roads leading into Buninyong were closed down by police for some five hours on 17 August following a major incident in which a firearm was used to threaten a young woman and at least two locals.**

The drama erupted in Learmonth Street about 1.30 am when, after hearing screams from the front of the Buninyong Bakehouse premises, a baker who went to investigate was confronted and allegedly threatened by a man wielding a rifle and assaulting a young woman.

CCTV cameras show the man allegedly continuing to assault the woman along the business strip of Warrenheip Street. Using the rifle, he smashed windows at *Maggie & Kates Café*, the Post Office

and the Bendigo Bank building before dragging the woman along the middle of Learmonth Street and crossing the road to the corner of Eyre Street.

## **Shot fired**

Shortly afterwards a nearby resident

**Brad Mahoney** was awakened by 'a loud bang' now believed to be a shot. After watching the couple on his security cameras and hearing the woman's screams for help, Mr Mahoney confronted the rifle-wielding man who threatened him.

While he was distracted by dropping the rifle, the accused released his hold on the woman who jumped over a 1.5m security fence and raced past four wildly barking blue heeler dogs, into the Mahoney house and hid in a bedroom. The man ran off in an easterly direction along Eyre Street.

Several 000 calls were made to police who responded with regular patrols, the heavily armed Critical Incident Response Team and the



*Above: Brad Mahoney and his dogs.*

*Left: Windows smashed along Warrenheip Street.*

Dog Squad. A base was set up at the Buninyong Newsagency. The Ballarat woman, aged 19, stayed in the house until police later arrived to assist. Mr Mahoney said the woman's clothing was "soaked" and she had two large raised bruises on her face and head.

## **Search**

After an extensive search, members of the Critical Incident Response Team together with the Dog Squad, located a male in the front yard of a residence in Geelong Road, Mount Helen. The 29 year old man reportedly sustained injuries resulting from a dog bite from a police dog during the arrest.

Later that morning teams of SES volunteers were involved in a search for evidence relating to the incident. The rifle butt and telescopic sight were later recovered from a drain near Jim Vagg's Garage.



# New life for the former Goose Coffee, bikes and bagels

In 2011 Cass and Trent Johnston opened their fledgling cycle business, *Trialsbikes*, in hard-to-find premises tucked away at the back of a row of shops on Warrenheip Street north, (best known for it having a laundromat and a fish shop). Little did they know then what their future in Buninyong would bring.

But eleven years later with a booming cycle business now known as *Dynamite Cycles*, they are about to embark on a brave new business venture by taking over the prominent former premises of the *Pig & Goose Food Store*, converting it into a new-look cycle shop combined with a coffee and pastry business.

The new business will be known as *Dynamite Cycles & Cafe*.

## Plans

"We plan to renovate the wooden outside deck for continued *al fresco* use for coffee drinkers – we will be featuring Seven Seeds coffee – and for snacks and light lunches of pastry options such as bagels, cakes, slices and gourmet pies and pasties. There will also be seating at benches inside looking out of the windows across the deck area to Warrenheip Street," Cass said.

She added that they have engaged a local pastry cook who will deliver the baked products fresh each day.

The double doors leading to the former main restaurant area will be closed and the area mainly used for street-front cycle



displays. The area along the Forest Street side will also be devoted to the cycle business.

Renovations at the store are now largely complete and an opening in mid-September is planned. When this takes

place their present pop-up shop at the Delacombe Town Centre will be closed, and the former shop further north on Warrenheip Street will be used as a workshop and storage facility with the rear section continuing as their fitness laboratory.

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# STOP PRESS: VCAT rejects Mount development BARRELS BID ROLLED

**After five days of hearings commencing in May, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) has refused the application by Clifftop at Hepburn Pty Ltd to construct five barrel shaped cabins and other infrastructure on the southern slopes of Mount Buninyong.**

In a 27 page determination delivered on 18 August VCAT found that “the siting, design and configuration of the proposed cabins amplifies the impacts to the point where the development fails to adequately protect and enhance the landscape values and open rural vistas.”

The Applicant had taken the matter directly to VCAT on the grounds that the City of Ballarat had not considered his proposal within the statutory sixty day period.

## No from Council

In its statement to VCAT the City of Ballarat said that “had it been in a position to do so”, it would have refused the application on six grounds relating to planning, zoning and it being an inappropriate development for the site.

Formal objectors who made written submissions and appeared before the Tribunal were neighbouring property owners **Andrew** and **Elizabeth Lorensene**, **Michael** and **Michele Pearson**, and **Peter Coburn** together with **Barry Fitzgerald** and community groups the BDCA, the Buninyong & District Historical Society and the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

VCAT agreed with the case put by these objectors that the proposal ran counter to the objectives of the planning scheme that requires developments to “protect and enhance the visual amenity of the valued rural landscape.”

## Amenity impact

Further, the objectors pointed to “unacceptable amenity impacts” and questioned whether the proposed development would be safe given the known bushfire risk in this area.

The Applicant had claimed that the sky-barrel cabins would provide a unique “luxury” tourist product aimed at attracting visitors to take advantage of the site’s “spectacular views.” VCAT stated that it gave “no great weight” to this assertion.

In summary VCAT found that it considered the proposal “is not an acceptable outcome, and that, when assessed against all relevant policies it does not, on balance, achieve a net community benefit.”

Principal objector Andrew Lorensene was “overwhelmed with relief” at the



decision. “I have put in many hundreds of hours and, along with some other locals, spent thousands of dollars fighting this. This determination gives me faith that the justice system will take account of concerns of community members and groups facing powerful developers and their teams of highly paid legal and other experts,” he said.



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# Mixed up and messy

**We know that when the (Victorian) Electoral Boundaries Commission sets out to review State electoral boundaries it must comply with legislated procedures and principles.**

And yes, we know a little about what they are required to do by the Act. Every five years (or after two elections) they must try to keep the number of voters in each electorate to plus or minus ten per cent of the average across the State – now some 48,600 voters.

But they are also required by the Act to take account if other social factors. And it's nonsensical when their concern about balancing numbers fails to reflect the many other social characteristics that happen to fall within the lines they have drawn with an eye to the numbers.

## Huge

The map (below) shows that there's about 115 km from east to west, and about 85km from north to south in the proposed new electorate. It now spans a huge area of the State from just east of Camperdown, to the southern part of the Midland Highway approaching Geelong, to past Daylesford in the north.

The small section at the top of the electorate contains Buninyong, Mount Helen and a few other bits left over after the Commission's carve up of Ballarat. Gone are electors in Ballarat East, Sebastopol, Eureka, Mount Pleasant and Canadian.

Over recent times the Buninyong MP **Michaela Settle**, (despite her missing the bus on one local issue), has done

well in obtaining funding for wide-ranging projects and activities in the present relatively-compressed and relatively-compatible electorate.

Under the proposed changes, such political visibility and accessibility in the Buninyong electorate may well be a thing of the past. The local member will be called upon to be seen at all kinds of functions and listen to electors' concerns across an electorate spanning some 10,000 square kilometres.

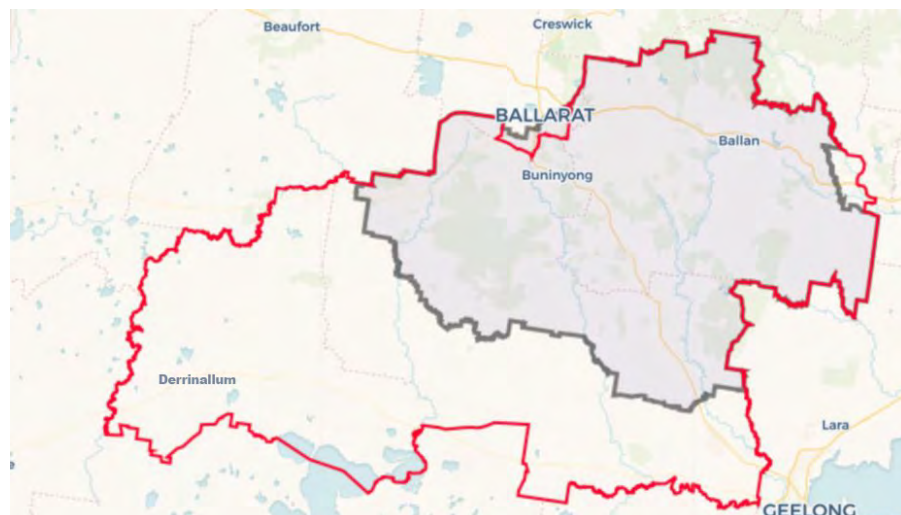
## Other matters

While the Act does focus on the '10 per cent' rule, it also requires the Commission to take account of matters such as "community or diversity of interests", "physical features of terrain", and "means of travel and communication". The Commission's report proudly says that its proposed new map has resulted in an electorate which is just 2.98 per cent lower than the State average. Well done!

The Act's rigidity in simply using a head count to lump together areas of the State which have no sense of togetherness or community of interest, needs to be challenged.

How the Commission could convince itself that the concerns and interests of constituents living at places like Bannockburn, Buninyong, Bacchus Marsh and Berrybank have any commonality of interest beggars belief. Ballarat, not Bacchus Marsh is our centre of interest!

Given the lines on the map below, maybe the seat of Buninyong should have been renamed the seat of Major Mitchell.



**HEAVY STUFF.** A directive received recently by the Cemetery Trust from the Department of Health, concerned the new ban on the release of balloons at any funeral because they are now deemed as "littering and illegal" – a breach carrying a \$991 fine. Fair enough! But thank goodness no fun police were watching at the 2020 burial of Collingwood FC tragic **Bill Innes** when dozens of black and white balloons were sent soaring.

**WHEN THEY WERE MARRIED** and had their wedding reception in *Sue's Den* (later the *Pig & Goose*) restaurant in 2012, **Cass** and **Trent Johnston** had lots of plans for their personal and business lives that lay ahead. But returning to the corner of Forest and Warrenheip Streets in 2021 now as the owners of the new cycle/cafe business certainly was not one of them. Exciting move!

## OVERDUE BUT WELCOME.

Council's fenced dog park project on the Union Jack Creek area to the east of the Geelong Road bridge, finally got under way two weeks ago with the appearance of a temporary toilet and some works on the entrance pathway to allow trucks from landscaping company *Groundworks* to access the site. This company also did the toddlers' playground works in Desoza Park a year or so back.

**LAL LAL RESIDENTS** and those of nearby districts are up in arms at the flood of heavy vehicles now taking the Clarendon - Lal Lal - Yendon - Navigators route to bypass the Midland Highway roadworks and speed restrictions. Most roads are narrow and unsuited to the huge trucks now using the route. The area near the Lal Lal school is of particular concern. We hear that some form of 'best route' advice has been coming from a Google site.

**THERE'S A POSITIVE BUZZ** at the Buninyong Cricket Club this year. Season starts (probably) on 2 October, and play will return to the excellent turf wickets and outfield at their Forest Street home ground.

# Local businesses do well Two up for awards

Two Buninyong businesses have been named as Finalists in the 2021 Ballarat Chamber of Commerce *Business Excellence Awards*.

Dianne Ray's restaurant *The Shared Table* was one of three finalists in the Restaurants, Cafes and Pubs category along with *Carboni's Italian Kitchen* and *Schnitz Ballarat*. Emma Nester's *Buninyong Hair & Beauty Salon* was judged as one of three finalists in the New and Emerging Business category. The two other finalists were *1816* and *Vitrafy Life Sciences*.

Nineteen experienced judges from major businesses in Ballarat and other areas were used to review the total of 130 entries in the annual awards competition. The award winners will be announced at gala event to be held in September.

*Shared Table* owner-chef Dianne Ray said that making the finals in this very highly competitive category of the awards was "absolutely brilliant." She said that there is so much competition in the hospitality business that for her restaurant to be one of three finalists made her and her staff "proud and excited."

Emma Nester of the Warrenheip Street's *Buninyong Hair & Beauty Salon* which opened in July 2020 said that getting her business off the ground in the tough business conditions of the past eighteen months had been a major challenge. But she was thrilled to be seen as one of Ballarat's best "emerging" businesses".

"It recognises all our hard work, our commitment and resilience," she said.



At the Buninyong Hair & Beauty Salon an excited Emma Nester tells Taylah Madafferi news of the award.

Dianne Ray and assistant Peter working on *The Shared Table's* three course pre-prepared meals for home delivery or pick up during the COVID lockdown period of late-July.



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# Flo Goodwin turns 100

## A salute to a local legend

**There won't be too many readers of *The News* who have lived in Buninyong for the past 72 years. But there is one resident who has lived in her Eyre Street home for all of that time, and who is looking forward to celebrating her 100th birthday in just a few more days on 3 October.**

That resident is **Florence (Flo) Goodwin** who moved to Buninyong in 1959 with her late husband **Geoff** and built their home here.

### Nearby farm

She was born in 1921 on the large family farm in the district then known as Reid's Crossing, now in the Greenhill Road area between Mt Clear and Mt Helen. She clearly remembers having to herd cattle and sheep along the roads to take them to market at the saleyards where the present *Target* store is.

Flo's husband Geoff spent six years in the Army during the Second World War serving in the Middle East and in New Guinea. With that link to the services, Flo has been very

active in the work of Legacy and the War Widows group. Indeed up to about twelve months ago she was at every monthly meeting of Ballarat Legacy Laurel Club.

She attended almost every Anzac Day march in Buninyong for the past seventy years or so, also baking and cooking for the RSL's after-march get-togethers.

Flo has very strong connections with the local Pre-school. Along with **Beth Ritchie**, **Joan Taylor** and **Maree Crosbie**, she was involved in getting the pre-school established, built and opened in 1964. She was part of the group that had spent five years raising funds and then helped local men in getting the foundations laid for the pre-school.

Flo worked there for more than twenty years. She started off as a cleaner, and

later became an assistant teacher, and then a teacher at the school.

She recalls the daily routine at the pre-school. "Before the children arrived we set everything up for them – we made the clag and mixed the paints, organised the fruit and milk, and got ready for the early morning sing-a-long and reading," she said.

### Well known

Although her sight is now failing, Flo still retains a wonderful sense of humour. Flo can still be seen with her walking frame wandering along Buninyong streets, often pausing to be greeted by the many locals who well remember her from their kindergarten days.

Over many years she has been active in the local Anglican Church and in the Mothers' Union. She remains a keen gardener.

Flo is keenly looking forward to celebrating her one hundredth birthday in a few days' time with her eight grand-children, ten great grand-children, and her two children **Rosalie**, who now lives at Burrumbeet and **Phillip** from Delacombe.

Along with Buninyong, *The News* salutes this wonderful woman!



# Major mining moves

## Anxious times for Durham Lead residents

**There is growing concern among residents of the Durham Lead and Buninyong South areas about an application by a Western-Australia based mining company, Red Rock Australasia, to take out three mining exploration licences over Crown Land in the district.**

The company has applied to take out licences to explore 78 km<sup>2</sup> of land. One parcel is 5 km south of Buninyong in the Finns Road/Platts Road area (see map below). The other two parcels for which exploration approval is being sought are 4 km further south.

### Plans

The company has stated that “for the first two years, low impact field exploration is planned to include historical research, field mapping, aerial surveys, soil sampling and rock chipping with minimal impact on the environment.” Possible future “higher impact exploration” such as “exploration drilling” may be carried out.

Local opposition to the gold-mining exploration proposal is growing. One



expressed her concern in a Facebook post for the “future of our beautiful Crown Land reserve which is now used individually and by many groups, not to mention the wonderful and unique flora and fauna.”

Area locals have told *The News* that they were surprised to hear of the exploration plans and that they felt that some direct

community consultation or information sharing should have been made by the company which has gold mining operations also in Columbia and Kenya.

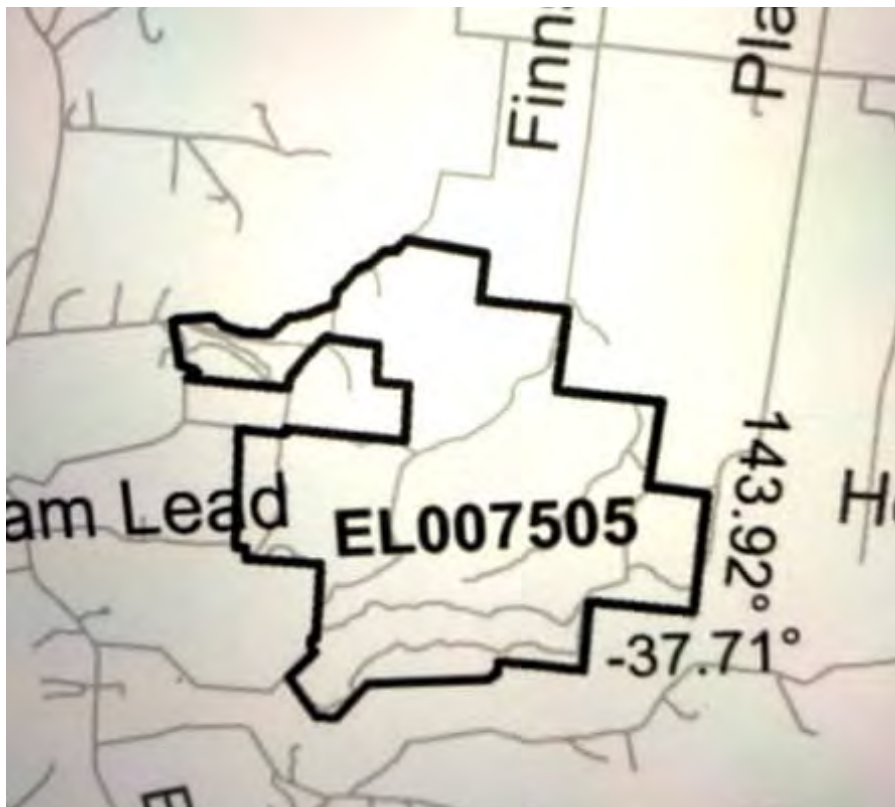
### History

Durham Lead was established after gold was discovered there in 1857. Soon after, a hotel building was transported there. Other businesses established were a store, post office, a butcher and a draper.

Two large mining companies – the Pioneer Goldmining Company and the Duke of Northumberland – and some twelve smaller ones, mined the area until the 1880s when seepage from the water table caused them to close or be scaled down.

Schools were established at nearby Garibaldi and at Green Hill (the name of a lead north east of Durham Lead). The two schools closed in the 1940s.

In the 1871 census there were 723 residents of Durham Lead. In addition to miners, farming families such as that of Richard and Amelia Vincent (pictured above) who arrived from Cornwall in 1855, and who had ten children, boosted the resident numbers. By 1961 the population had shrunk to 53, but surged to 400 in the 2011 census.



# Community House booking now online

The recently-completed Community House, a major project of the Community Bank Buninyong, has taken another step forward by developing a new online booking system for groups or individuals approved to use the 407 Warrenheip Street premises.

The new system will make it possible to check availability or to make a booking for either of the two meeting spaces at any time, and will make management of the premises much easier.

## Start

The first step is for groups to register details to become an “approved” user. This involves a once-off completion of a Group Application Form, and agreement to observe specific terms of use and house rules. The form is available on line at [www.communityhouse.com.au](http://www.communityhouse.com.au).

Once approved, groups are assigned a log-in for the booking platform. Where

previously bookings had to be made by going to the Buninyong Newsagency, now a visit to [www.communityhouse.com.au](http://www.communityhouse.com.au) via the designated log-in, will be all that is required. Bookings can be made up to six months in advance.

All existing bookings made manually through the Newsagency will be carried across from the hard-copy calendar to the on-line calendar.

## Keys

Keys to the house and the security system will still need to be collected before the meeting from the Newsagency and signed for.

Importantly, not-for-profit groups will still be able to use the Community House free of charge, as the facility has been provided



for community use by Community Bank Buninyong. Approved commercial groups may also be able to use the premises, but for a fee as detailed on the website.

Flyers providing information about the new booking system are available at the Community Bank Branch and at the Buninyong Newsagency.



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# Go for Eagle Hotel restoration Wait worth it

**On 5 June 2020, a PTV bus stalled at the village's roundabout and rolled backwards down Warrenheip Street, crashing into parked cars, crushing the street vines, and partly demolishing the veranda of the heritage-listed Eagle Hotel.**

Since then the wrecked façade of the old building, screened off with red mesh tape and with weeds and junk piling up, has been a blot on the village streetscape.

But recent advice from **Leah Clark** of Ballarat town planning firm *Inception Planning* has confirmed that after “tedious insurance claims” and other negotiations, planning approval finally has been gained for repairs to commence.

## Complex

The process was a complicated one. Before demolition and construction works could be formalised and planning approval sought, a *Heritage Impact Assessment* had to be prepared by architect and heritage consultant **Wendy Jacobs**.

This assessment included details of the heritage materials originally used in the building, and matters such as height, spacing, flooring, colours, gutter profiling and downpipes. The wrecked veranda had been constructed some years ago without regard to the heritage details of the building.

Ms Clark said that the approved minor demolition works “will see the removal of the four supporting posts, and the deck and the railing around the perimeter of the veranda. No demolition works are proposed to be undertaken to the building.”

The original design of the veranda can be seen in the blurry 1901 photograph (right) held by the local historical society. This design was the basis for the working drawings shown below.

Considered to be the oldest building in Buninyong, the *Eagle Hotel* was constructed between 1854 and 1856 by local saddler **Andrew Davies**. An hotel licence, with **John Handcock** as licensee, was issued in 1856.



In February 1899, the building was gutted by fire, but was quickly rebuilt, with plans replicating the original building prepared by Ballarat architects *Clegg, Kell and Millar*. The hotel was delicensed in 1916.

## Death

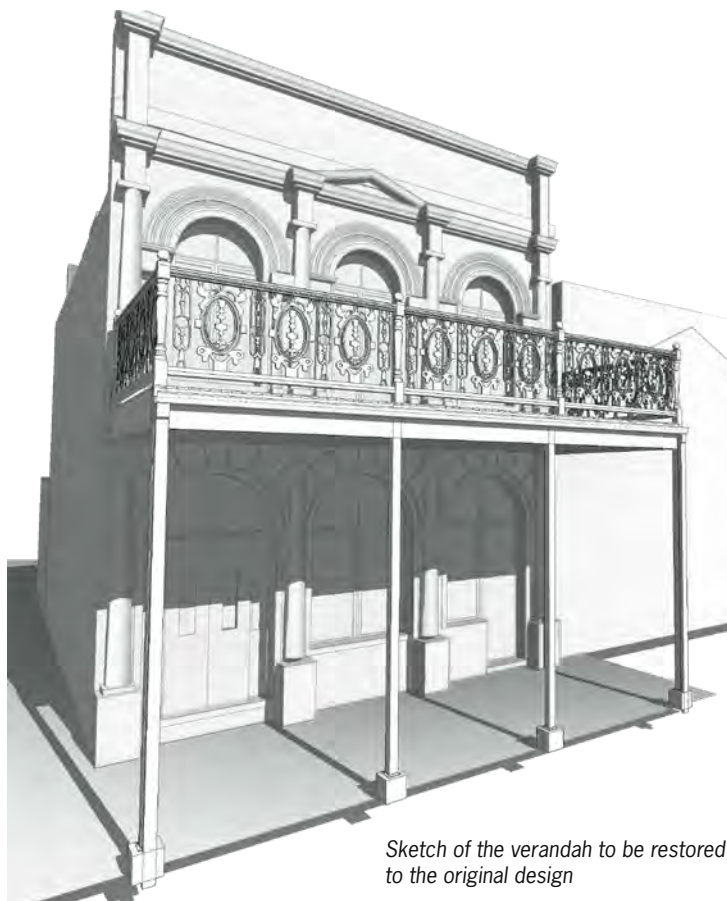
With eerie overtones of the recent pandemic crisis the following report appeared in *The Ballarat Star* on 26 May 1915.

*In Buninyong a fatal case of meningitis has been reported to Constable Olney, the sufferer being an infant four years old, daughter of Mrs John Hannah of the Eagle Hotel. The child took ill on Monday last and died at 7 o'clock on Wednesday evening. The premises have been isolated under the instructions of the medical officer Dr Longden.*

A few months earlier the child's father and hotel licensee **John Hannah** had died at the age of 40 years. After running a bootmaker's shop near the cemetery, John Hannah had taken over the *Eagle Hotel's* licence in 1912. He also had been captain of the Buninyong Football Club.

In 1929 the building was again partly damaged by a fire which totally destroyed the building to the north – where the service station now stands.

So, very soon, the exterior of the iconic village building will be fully restored. Hopefully, and when the street vines are also re-erected, the wait will have been worth it!



*Sketch of the verandah to be restored to the original design*



Shown working through some of the CFA's records previously held at the Old Court House are (left) Simon Dennis and Ron Gilchrist.

# CFA hunts for its missing records

**The Buninyong/Mt Helen CFA currently is documenting its archival records prior to the impending move of the brigade to the new station adjacent to the Golf Club. With nearly 150 years of service to the community, the Brigade records form an important part of the story of the people and events in Buninyong and district.**

While its fire-fighting work across many years has been outstanding, the same cannot be said for its work in filing away old records over some periods. With the current project in full swing, some gaps have been found.

Most of the early records were lost when the fire station was engulfed in flame

in 1898. The records from 1923 to the present are substantial. However, a mystery arises for the period 1899-1922 with very few records surfacing.

## Looking for help

Many people have passed through the Brigade since the 1870s. Perhaps you or a family member were an active member of the Brigade or its Auxiliary. Over time members have sometimes taken records home to complete work tasks, and may have become lost to the Brigade. Possibly some may know of the existence of such records and their whereabouts. Such material may include Minute books, correspondence, memorabilia, or photographs.

If you can help, please contact **Ron Gilchrist** (0436 470 697).

## Ernie Neale's Monthly RAINFALL REPORT

# July was wet ...and wet

**It all depends on your point of view. For those who enjoy a bit of variety in their lives then, weatherwise, July would have been a dull affair. But for those who prefer things steady and routine, then July's weather would have been right for them.**

It rained on and off throughout the month, cycling through a few dry days followed by a downpour or two then a few showery days. Each event delivered around 25mm and contributed to a final total of 78.3mm. Everything else was regular, temperatures and winds were as expected and there were no gales, floods or snow.

There was one bonus though. July's above-average rainfall helped sustain the year's already high cumulative total. We have now received 485.8mm so far this year, nearly 20 per cent over the recent average of 414.2mm. The subsoil is wet and there's mud on top, and that's a good nuisance to have on the farm this time of the year.

JULY 2021			
Date	Rain	Date	Rain
2-6	24.7	25	10.7
12-18	32.4	27	0.7
19	0.3	29	2.1
22	7.0	30	0.4
Total		78.3mm	
Average		69.3mm	

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# POLICE BEAT

**TWO BURGLARIES** were reported to Buninyong Police on 15 July. Both Mt Helen residents returned to their respective home units to each find a smashed window in their residence. Both victims reported that their units had been rifled through with no known items taken at the time. Ballarat Crime Scene services attended and processed both units. The Ballarat CIU has taken primacy of the Investigation and enquiries are currently being undertaken.

**A THEFT** occurred on the Buninyong-Mt Mercer Road Durham Lead Road on 30 July. An unknown offender has attended the front gate outside the property overnight and stolen the victim's Council rubbish bins. Enquiries are being undertaken to see if CCTV is available in the area.

**POLICE ATTEMPTED** to intercept a Ford Station Wagon in Main Road Ballarat and later in Sommerville Street Buninyong on the evening of 20 June. The male driver failed to pull over when directed on both occasions. The vehicle was later linked to several deceptions involving a business in Warrenheip Street Buninyong. On 19 July, a 40-year-old Buninyong man was arrested. His Ford station wagon was impounded, and he was later charged with several driving and criminal offences. He fronted the Ballarat Magistrates Court the following day and was remanded to re-appear in late August.

**THERE HAS BEEN A SPIKE** of trailer thefts in early August. Areas affected include Mount Helen and Buninyong. Several trailers were targeted by opportunistic thieves who have accessed trailers either parked in carports, on front nature strips or the street. One stolen trailer was spotted by an eagle-eyed community member stashed in bushes on the nature strip of Moss Avenue on 3 August. The trailer was re-united with its grateful owner. Trailers are an easy target, especially when they are not properly secured. Ensure your trailer is secured to a fixed object and has either a hitch lock or wheel lock fitted. Refrain from storing your trailer at the front of your property or on the street where possible.



UFS Pharmacists Sarah Barnes (left) and Catherine John place the COVID job signage outside of the Learmonth Street shop.

## Job now for all

**Buninyong and district residents over the age of 18 years can now receive their COVID vaccination right here in the centre of the village.**

Pharmacists at the local UFS Pharmacy are approved to administer the AstraZeneca vaccine. A private room is used, and seating for the post-vaccination 'recovery' period is in place.

Appointments are available on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10.00am and 4.00pm. Bookings are essential. These can be made in-store, by phone (5341 2121), or online at [ufs.com.au/vaccine](https://ufs.com.au/vaccine).

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# A strong foundation set by Steiner's Prep program

**Early childhood education and care have been generally acknowledged as being vitally important for parents and carers as well as for the children. At Ballarat Steiner School Kindergarten and Playgroup this has been acknowledged with the Foundation (prep) Year being part of the total Early Childhood Program alongside the playgroup and kindergarten.**

The Steiner School Prep program provides a myriad of learning experiences that engage and support the children throughout each day.

The children are surrounded with natural materials and soft colours in gentle, nurturing spaces and special care is taken to create a play environment that is beautiful, unhurried and secure.

## Balance

There is rhythm and balance in daily and weekly plans, and through the teacher's guidance, a healthy interchange takes place between active pursuits such as circle games and outside play to more receptive, quiet activities such

as drawing, painting and listening to stories.

Children can experience both the pleasure of solitary play and the rewards of being part of the group as part of the program at the school.

The children learn through imitation of the adults who are busy working around them and through doing. Daily activities in the program involve bread making, cutting fruit, baking, sewing, finger knitting, painting, drawing, modelling, gardening, nature walks, setting the table and serving food.

## Hands on

Through these real-life tasks the children are experiencing hands on Mathematics, Science and English skills. Each prep day has a strong rhythm which incorporates a balance of teacher-led activities such as story time, puppet plays, counting rhymes and morning circle, which involve re-enacting fairy tales or seasonal themes through song, movement, gesture and verse, and child-led periods of self-directed play both indoors and outdoors.

Digging, building, caring for animals, water-play and climbing help to develop balance, healthy vitality, fluidity and strength of movement, sensory and social skills which enable the children to embody strength and a strong connection with the environment, necessary for commencing more formal and academic learning that takes place in class one and beyond.

For questions in regard to the prep, or any other program at Ballarat Steiner School and Playgroup, please visit the website at [www.ballaratsteinerschool.com.au](http://www.ballaratsteinerschool.com.au) or phone 5341 8188.

## New hours for Lion books

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

# Catherine KING MP Federal Member for Ballarat

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

# A Master Plan for Botanic Gardens Progress toward a draft

Despite the very gloomy weather over thirty people attended the community Open House drop-in session at the Buninyong Town Hall on 15 July 2021 to provide their feedback on the Buninyong Botanic Gardens Master Plan. Many attendees stayed to discuss a particular area of interest for them with some of the several Council officers present.

The hall was laid out with six tables each staffed by officers from the City of Ballarat and consultants *Urban Initiatives*. The six focus areas of the master plan included the gong wall; waterway and aquatic health; access and circulation; interpretation, stories and education; trees, vegetation and collections and amenity.

### Consensus

Face-to-face conversations were varied and included strong appreciation for the character of the gardens, support for increased tree planting, preservation of the garden's history, increasing the provision of habitat around the Gong, and highlighting the connection to the area's indigenous history.

However, there was a clear consensus that any additions should be in keeping with the current aesthetic – with the Botanic gardens being formal with botanic collections, and the Gong being more natural with habitat for native flora and fauna. Attendees favoured outcomes that were simple, robust and respectful of the garden's history.

There were discussions regarding existing botanic collections and what new collections may be an appropriate addition to the gardens. Many who attended had questions regarding the landscape outcome for the Gong wall and there was a diversity of discussion that included a



boardwalk with viewing areas, specimen plantings or a naturalised setting.

While the sentiment of support for the process was positive on the night, some expressed concern that the draft master plan may recommend major changes to the gardens, changing its look or functions.

### Other feedback

In addition to the Open House, Council will use community feedback provided through a hard copy and an on-line survey. The deadline for survey responses has been extended to 7 September to allow for more people to have their say. The survey takes less than ten minutes to complete.

Feedback received at the Open House along with survey results will be used to progress the design for the Draft Master plan.

Once a draft of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens Master Plan has been completed, Council will hold another Community Open House to discuss the document. That feedback on the actual draft will be used to revise the Master Plan before it is finalised later this calendar year.

More information can be found at <https://mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au/buninyong-botanic-gardens-masterplan> or additional comment can be emailed to [citydesign@ballarat.vic.gov.au](mailto:citydesign@ballarat.vic.gov.au).

– Alison Breach, City of Ballarat

Local residents were able to meet with Council staff and consultants at any of six tables each having a focus on a particular aspect of interest to future planning for the Gardens/Gong areas.

## BUNINYONG NEWSAGENCY



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# She called *The News* her village 'lifeline'

## Betty gave her life to family, church, seniors

When a new edition of *The News* hit the streets each month and was distributed to key points around the village, there was always just one private home to which a small bundle of copies was delivered. It was to a Learmonth Street address a little way up the hill from the supermarket.

It was the home of **Betty Bunting**, a lovely woman who was always warm in her praise for those who had a part to play in resurrecting *The News* in 2015. She called it her 'lifeline to the village'. Betty had a 'standing order' for eight or ten copies each month to pass on to her friends at the

Uniting Church or amongst members of the Senior Citizens Club.

Born in Brunswick in May 1928, Betty was a child of the Depression years and of the times when many children were afflicted by the polio epidemics. She graduated from the Preston Girls' High School, and was employed as a stenographer and then as a payroll clerk. In 1946 she met her future husband **Tom** at a Highland Society Debutante Ball.



Betty Bunting looked forward each month to receiving her delivery of copies of *The News*.

Betty moved to Buninyong some 28 years ago following the death of her husband. She moved here to be near her three daughters, two of whom live in Buninyong with the other at Daisy Hill near Maryborough.

In Buninyong she became heavily involved in the Presbyterian/Uniting Church across the road from her home, and with the local Senior Citizens' group of which she was made a Life Member in 2018.

### Angel

Friend **Merle Hathaway** recalled that when working in Horsham she sometimes had calls in the early hours advising that her mother had again gone to hospital.

"By the time I'd driven to Ballarat, Betty had already organised supplies – clothing, walking stick and the like. It was a huge relief to know that a guardian angel was close at hand in Buninyong," she said.

Betty passed away at the age of 93 years on 24 July. The funeral service held to celebrate her life was particularly poignant.

**Rev. Paul Sanders** told friends and family at the Uniting Church that Betty had planned every aspect of the service, from the readings to the Highland music at the end. The service was live-streamed and can be watched at [cbnfv.com.au/bunting](http://cbnfv.com.au/bunting).

Betty was buried at the Fawcner Cemetery to be with her husband Tom.



After their marriage in 1948, Betty moved with her husband to the Bunting family farm at Craigieburn where she became adept at milking cows and building haystacks (always in a dress). Her three daughters were born while they were living on the farm, and where Betty was heavily involved in activities of the local Presbyterian Church and the Girl Guides movement.

### Moves

In 1959 the farm was sold and she and Tom moved to Preston where she swapped farm work to working for *Tim the Toyman* and later at *Target*, Reservoir.

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\*Source REA 1/1/19-30/6/21



# Our Mountain

*I was once fiery, throwing out scoria rocks, witnessed by the Keyjeet balug clan and later by the invasion of the white man on their land. I have a distinctive a-symmetrical shape which is why the traditional owners named me Bun- a Yung – big hill like a knee. Encouraging white man to fulfil his dreams'*

I was a great landmark in the early days, people coming in their bullock wagons and drays

I was blessed with assets, good soil, native vegetation and many springs, People wondering what to bring.

I threw out basalt rocks. White men made dry stone walls to divide the land, To say where we stand.

I become invisible in fog, when covered in snow, What a show.

I turn orange at times at sunset, leaving one transfixed, at its best

I now stand dormant protectively over an ancient inland village with parts that have encroached on my lower slopes.

I am now protected by its people, to remain a natural wonder.

**Druscilla Parker  
Buninyong**

*Painting – David Alexander*

## Lions learn about Nepal

**Like other community groups the Buninyong Mt Helen Lions Club's activities have been severely curtailed during ongoing Covid restrictions.**

But they are hoping to get back to their meeting circuit in a few weeks' time on Monday 20 September with a Dinner meeting at the Barkly Motor Inn. Cost is \$30.

As it is expected that the dinner event may fall amongst AFL football finals, members and guests are invited to dress up in football colours.

Guest speaker at the dinner will be **Graeme Kent** of Aussie Action Abroad who will talk about his aid program to Nepal, that small country wedged between north-eastern India and China in the Himalayas.

For the record, Nepal's national colour is crimson red, with a touch of blue and white. RVSP [malcom@bmmi.com](mailto:malcom@bmmi.com).

Despite the restrictions Lions continue their great community work on a variety of fronts.

A recent example was to provide fencing help to an 82 year old Buninyong woman living alones whose garden was being eaten out by rabbits.

Of course when permitted, the Op Shop and the 'world's greatest little bookshop', both on Warrenheip Street, are open raising funds for charity.



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## Yet another bus stop

Locals operating or thinking about starting a business received some timely assistance when a Business Bus was parked near the Town Hall for six hours in early August.

The bus, one of two operated by Business Victoria, was staffed by financial counsellor **Caius Ryan** a Ballarat-based member of the Rural Financial Counselling Service Victoria team.

Appointments of 45 minutes together with useful Planning & Starting Your Business manuals were available to those who stopped by.

The visit of the mobile service available to both metropolitan and rural areas, arranged by the Buninyong Business Network, has been operating for some twelve years.



Caius Ryan (left) with bus driver Gary Nash.

## Dumper pinged

The July edition *The News* carried a letter about heaps of building rubbish that had been dumped behind houses at Lal Lal.

After a delay caused by the finding of asbestos in the waste, DEWLP has now had the rubbish removed and, it is understood, have located and commenced proceedings against the dumper.



Lodge members Ken Jenkin, Alan Glasson, Doug Williams and Post-Doctoral researcher Sharon Olsen discuss items to be stored in the new refrigerator.

## Give the house a name

The search is on to find a name for the Community Bank's new community meeting facility at 407 Warrenheip Street.

The old restored cottage certainly has had a long and varied history, but the Bank Board is now asking the public to suggest a catchy name that can be used rather than the current reference to it as the Community House.

Hop onto the website ([communityhouse.com.au](http://communityhouse.com.au)) and enter the competition to give the Community House its "forever" name.

No prizes, but lots of glory and bragging rights (and probably a story in *The News*) plus the chance to unveil the plaque to be affixed to the front wall and get some free coffee and scones at the unveiling ceremony.

## Masons are a cool lot

While meetings and other forms of large group activity have curtailed the activities of local Freemasons during the COVID crisis, they have certainly continued their very active community support work over recent months.

For example, the Sturt Buninyong Lodge has been a long time supporter of the *Fiona Elsey Cancer Institute*. Recently the No23 Masonic Social Committee provided \$1500 to purchase a constant temperature freezer for the storage of critical research samples and also a refrigerator to handle general items supporting research projects.

The Cancer Research Institute led by **Professor George Kannourakis** is making a world class contribution to cancer research

Local freemasons have distributed more than \$60,000 to district community projects since 1999.

## Call for help at the Op Shop

The Lions Club Op Shop which started in premises at the corner of Warrenheip Street and Barkly Street some three years ago has been a huge success. It has raised many tens of thousands of dollars for the various charities supported by the Club.

The Club is now desperate for more local helpers to join their roster of friendly volunteers, especially on Fridays. Their present roster of ten helpers is spread across the Op Shop's opening hours of 10.00am to 4.00pm on Thursdays and Fridays, and from 10.00am to 2.00pm on Saturdays.

Drop in to the shop, or call Club Secretary **Malcom Freeman** on 0415 352 664.

# Our young athletes and The coach of a star Olympian

It is a rare day when no-one ambles, walks, jogs or cycles past our back garden. But, twice a week there is a change. That's when the runners appear. Groups of twenty or more young athletes under the guidance of a fit-looking coach pass by.



The coach **Rod Griffin**, who has lived in Buninyong for the last twenty years, is a Life Member of Athletics Victoria and club

coach of the Eureka Athletics Club. Rod also used to be a runner but, due to injury, had to give it up.

## National coach

Involved in athletics for about 50 years Rod was the Australian National Juniors Coach for five years and has coached or managed about twelve different Australian teams including two Australian University Cross Country teams, an Australian World Cross Country Team and Australian World Junior Cross Country Teams.

Rod also coaches local runner **Stewart McSweyn** (pictured below) who finished a very creditable seventh in the final of the 1500 metres event at the recent Tokyo Olympics in a time that would have won the event at past Olympics. He ran the fastest time in the world for a mile in 2020.

Rod said that “he has been lucky” to have coached about 200 Victorian title holders over the past twenty years. The young



Rod Griffin

athletes running past our back fence are all aspiring distance runners, and Rod is currently training a group of some 25. He prefers that they start their serious running at about the age of 11 or 12. They have two or three sessions a week with Rod, and then other sessions which they do on their own.

Apart from running around Buninyong they also run around Lake Wendouree during winter and then move to Llanberris Reserve in the summer.

Rod says that the condition of the path through Desoza Park and the surrounds makes it “beautiful to train on.” He gives credit to the Ballarat Council which has been really helpful and marked the relevant distances around the track. Amazingly, up to twelve Olympians have trained on it.


## Covid impact

Obviously, the Covid virus has had a dramatic negative effect on training. Firstly, Rod only was allowed to continue the training ‘one on one’. Then the rules were relaxed for a while (when we caught up with the group), and then the lockdown was extended for another week.


Given that the runners are trying to get ready for the National Championships this uncertainty “just kills them” as Rod puts it. Athletes can't just stop. It affects their fitness too much. Like all of us, they hope that one day soon, life will get back to normal.

– Cassandra Carland





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[communityhouse.com.au](http://communityhouse.com.au)



### Buninyong Community House

The Community House is a new purpose-built facility for groups to meet, create, train, learn, discuss, debate and collaborate.

Bookings are essential via the online booking system. To find out whether your local club, group or organisation might be eligible to use the House visit our website.

[communityhouse.com.au](http://communityhouse.com.au)

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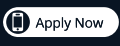
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