

# HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE



Edition 122 – December 2024

Produced by: Harcourt Progress Association Inc

Online: [harcourtprogress.org.au/news](http://harcourtprogress.org.au/news) or [harcourt.vic.au/news](http://harcourt.vic.au/news)

 **HPA**  
**Christmas Carols  
in the Park**

Harcourt Adventure Playground  
Sunday 15 December  
4-7 PM

Visit from Santa  
Craft table for children  
Sausages from 4:30  
Cold Drinks \$2.00  
BYO picnic

Thompson's Foundry Band  
with carols from 5:30

Crowning of the 2025  
Applefest Royalty



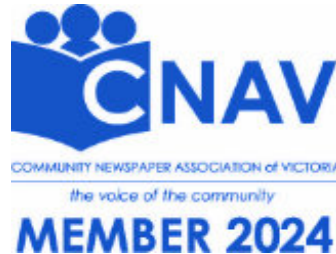
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issue of The Core online.

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## DEADLINES & PUBLICATION DATES

We aim to publish online by the 6th of the month. The deadline for submissions is the 24th of the month prior. Advertisers and community groups will be sent reminder emails. There is no edition in January.



## Level Heading

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## COMMUNITY DIARY

**Sunday 8 December:** 1.30 pm Heritage Centre, Recent Gifts and Their Stories. Bring a plate to share.

**Sunday 8 December:** Tours at Woop Woop (see page 24)

**Saturday 14 December:** 7 pm Harcourt Cricket Club Christmas Party, Leisure Centre Harcourt.

**Sunday 15 December:** Christmas Party and Carols – Stanley Park North Playground.

**Saturday 28 December:** Gather Harcourt Summer.

**Wednesday 15 January:** Summer Carpet Bowls recommences.

**Wednesday 5 February:** 10 am – 2 pm Harcourt Community House re-opens.

**Harcourt Celebrates:** Save the dates on page 12.

**Carpet Bowls:** 7.30 pm Wednesdays, Leisure Centre, Bingham Road, Harcourt.

**Harcourt Valley Community House:** Closed until February 5, then open each Wednesday from 10 am until 2 pm. Closed during school holidays.

**CFA:** Brigade meeting night is the third Monday of each month starting at 8.00 pm; Sunday morning equipment checks and maintenance runs starts at 9.00 am; siren is tested on the first Sunday of the month at 9.15 am. Contact: Captain Andrew Wilson for further details 0428 387 339. CFA is located at 56 High Street, Harcourt.

**CWA:** First Thursday of the month, 1.30 pm at Harcourt Leisure Centre, Bingham Road, Harcourt.

**Grace Church:** Tuesdays at 10.30 am – Morning tea and prayers; Sunday Service at 11.00 am; 30 Buckley Street, Harcourt. Tuesday evenings at 7.30 pm – Zoom Bible Study: A Christian discipleship course covering the basics of the faith. All welcome, you can commence at any time. Please contact the Pastor for a link: [pastor@gracecastlemaine.org.au](mailto:pastor@gracecastlemaine.org.au)

**Harcourt Bowls Club:** See page 18  
[www.harcourtbowlingclub.com.au](http://www.harcourtbowlingclub.com.au)

**Harcourt Lions Club:** Third Thursday of the month at the Victorian Miniature Railway, Harmony Way at 6.30 pm. Gathering for dinner (something to share) followed at 7.30 pm by general planning and discussion.

**Heritage Centre:** Every Wednesday at the ANA Hall from 9.00 am–3.00 pm or by appointment: 0400 916 527.

**Pony Club:** Second Sunday of the month. Contact Peggy Mills, 0419 902 400. The Pony Club is located next to the swimming pool.

**Uniting Church:** Sundays at 9.00 am in the Uniting Church, Buckley Street, Harcourt. The service is followed by morning tea. All welcome. Donations of food and other household needs for St Vinnies can be left at the Church door on Sunday mornings 9.00–10.00 am or contact Jan on 5474 2226, to arrange for collection.

**Walking Group:** Monday and Thursday at 9.30 am. Meet at the ANA Hall. The one hour leisurely walk is usually followed by morning tea, and new members are always welcome.

The Harcourt Progress Association Annual General Meeting for 2023/2024 was held on Thursday 7 November, and presented an annual report to the members featuring a snapshot of activities and achievements for the past fiscal year and the annual financials.

The board members elected for the following year (2024/2025) are John Baldock, Alison Curtis, Bronnie Dean, David Dean, Rena Geroe, Debbie Lawn, Di Lederman, Phil Musat and Jeanette Teague. As is our normal practice, the executive positions of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer are not elected at the AGM and are determined internally by the Board at our first meeting, which will occur on Tuesday 10 December.

The HPA's final activity for 2024 will be the Carols in the Park event at the Adventure Playground on Sunday 15 December (4 pm–7 pm) featuring the Thompsons Foundry Band, a craft table for the children, a free sausage sizzle, drinks for sale and, of course, a visit from you-know-who (Ho! Ho! Ho!). BYO chair or picnic rug. We hope to see you there.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the community of Harcourt for your support this year. In particular, your support for our 10c cans and bottles fundraiser to help cover the running costs of the Harcourt Valley Community House. There are now two bins in front of the Community House at 23 Station Street, Harcourt and it will be checked and emptied regularly over the summer break. We look forward to your continued support.

Finally, but most importantly, the HPA Board hopes you have a wonderful festive season with your family and friends and wishes everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year. See you in 2025.

Jeanette Teague  
(Interim) President Harcourt Progress Association Inc.



**You are invited to the  
Harcourt Heritage Centre  
For the Sunday Heritage Group  
Christmas Meeting  
1.30 pm Sunday 8th December  
At the ANA Hall  
7 High Street, Harcourt**

As usual, we have stories to tell, stories revealed in recent gifts from former Harcourt resident, Roger Miller, and from Ron and Graham James.

Please bring a plate of afternoon tea.

Plus, your ideas for activities for next year's program.

All welcome, No need to RSVP, just come along.

And yes, this a Sunday afternoon, not an evening function as in past years.

Remember, Sunday afternoon.

## From the Editor

Dear readers

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of our team and our contributors for their work this year and, of course, a big thank you to our readers.

Like many organisations in Harcourt everyone involved with *The Core* is a volunteer. The time and care which goes into putting *The Core* together, from sending out the first reminder email, to the delivery of hard copies, should never be underestimated.

Our advertisers and donors deserve special thanks, as without a flow of funds we would be unable to produce *The Core* for our community. We also thank the businesses in Harcourt that agree to display copies of *The Core* for collection by the community.

Within *The Core* team, we have developed strong and trusting friendships, shared our personal stories and importantly, we have learnt together about the world of community newspapers. *The Core* is a member of the Community Newspaper Association of Victoria (CNAV). Members attend an annual conference at which, for example, this year we discussed artificial intelligence and how to report a disaster. (Let's all hope we don't have to do the latter.)

*The Core* is kept on record in the National Library in Canberra and in the State Library of Victoria. This is a requirement of members of the CNAV and, indeed, all published newspapers. So, as the daily newsfeed flashes past and people endlessly scroll through Facebook etc, it is somewhat comforting to know that records are being kept in massive databases of newspapers and books produced within Australia. These records prove a vital source for historians and researchers.

We at *The Core* team relish reporting on local news. It is not always possible to cover all the good news which goes on in Harcourt. If you have a story or a photograph, please contact us on [news@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:news@harcourt.vic.au)

**From all of us at Harcourt News/The Core, we wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to the Harcourt community.**

Robyn Miller



*To all our readers,  
contributors and supporters,  
Merry Christmas  
and a  
Happy New Year from the team at  
The Core*

At our recent AGM, Community Bank Maldon & District was proud to reflect on another successful year of reinvesting in the local community, thanks to the unwavering support of its customers. Providing Bendigo Bank products and services, Community Bank Maldon & District offers a unique banking model that allows profits to be directed back into the local community to fund vital projects and initiatives that benefit everyone.

### A Model Built on Community Support

Branch Manager **Paul Simmons** emphasised the importance of this community-driven model:

‘At Community Bank Maldon & District, our success is only possible because of the trust and loyalty of our customers. Their decision to bank with us allows us to give back in meaningful ways that have a direct and lasting impact on our region. Whether it’s supporting local arts, funding youth programs, or helping to keep our communities safe, every transaction helps build a stronger Maldon and District.’

### Community Impact in the 2023/24 Financial Year

In the 2023/24 financial year, Community Bank Maldon & District proudly contributed to a wide range of community initiatives, including the following key areas of impact:

- ▶ **Arts, Culture & History:** \$11,820 invested to support local arts, cultural events, and heritage preservation projects that bring people together and celebrate our community’s rich history.
- ▶ **Community Safety:** \$19,300 dedicated to enhancing safety in the region, including funding for the **Driver**

# Annual Report for Maldon District Financial Services Ltd

**Training Program**, which provides young people with the skills and knowledge to drive safely.

- ▶ **Youth & Education:** \$8,000 contributed to educational programs that support the growth and development of young people, ensuring they have the tools they need to succeed.
- ▶ **Environment & Animal Welfare:** \$4,000 invested in initiatives that support environmental sustainability and animal welfare, fostering a healthier, greener community
- ▶ **Community Wellbeing:** \$45,489 provided to programs that improve the health and wellbeing of community members, ensuring access to services and resources that support mental and physical health.
- ▶ **Sport & Recreation:** \$13,025 given to local sports and recreation programs, providing opportunities for all ages to stay active, healthy, and engaged in community life.
- ▶ **Community & Organisation Capability Building:** \$6,272 contributed to strengthening local organisations, helping them build capacity to deliver services and support for their communities.

### Looking to the Future

As we look ahead, we remain committed to continuing our positive impact on the local community. We encourage all residents and businesses to consider how their banking decisions can contribute to positive change and local development.

**For more information about Community Bank Maldon & District head to their website: [www.maldoncb.com.au](http://www.maldoncb.com.au) or pop into their Maldon or Dunolly branch to chat to a customer service officer.**



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# Remembrance Day

## A story of extreme valour – Teddy Sheean



sank beneath him. He shot down two planes, and crewmates recalled seeing tracer rising from beneath the surface as Sheean was dragged under the water, firing until the end. He died on 1 December 1942 aged just 18. Only 49 of the 149 men on board survived the attack and subsequent ordeal on rafts and in life boats. It is stated in the records that the men who survived owed their lives to Teddy. (Taken from the Australian War Memorial records)

How could it be that a young hero like Teddy was not awarded his VC for 80 years? Max explained that at the time of WWII, the Australian Navy was under the command of the British. Teddy was mentioned in

Dispatches at the time,

At the service on Remembrance Day held in Harcourt on 11 November, Max Coxhead (a friend of Andrew Henderson who organises this annual event) participated in the ceremony. I couldn't help notice that among other medals, he was wearing a Victoria Cross. I discovered that Max was wearing a replica Victoria Cross awarded to Teddy Sheean, a young naval hero of WWII who was awarded the VC 80 years after his death. Max is Teddy's great uncle, and Max's working life was as a civilian in the Defence Science Technology Organisation developing assets for use on submarines.

Teddy, an Ordinary Seaman was on the HMAS *Armidale* (a corvette) in the Arafura Sea when it was hit by two Japanese torpedoes. The boat began to sink fast. The crew abandoned ship as it was strafed by Japanese planes. Teddy was wounded twice in the leg. He displayed great courage when he strapped himself to his machine gun and began to engage the attacking aircraft even as the ship

but it took an investigation at the Commonwealth level to insist that Teddy be awarded a VC for his actions. Brendan Nelson and the then prime minister, Scott Morrison



Max's replicas of Teddy's medals including the Victoria Cross and with the Oak Leaf for Mentioned in Dispatches.



made the recommendation and Queen Elizabeth II agreed in August 2020. To this day, Teddy is the only Australian seaman who has been awarded the VC.

In Teddy's memory, a submarine – *Sheean* was launched in Adelaide, South Australia by Mrs Ivy Hayes (Teddy's sister) on 1 May 1999 and commissioned in Fremantle, Western Australia on 23 February 2001 at the Royal Australian Navy Fleet Base West. Family members of Teddy Sheean, including Max, were present at both events.

Teddy's name is listed amongst those Lost at Sea at the Plymouth Naval Memorial in Devon, United Kingdom. There is also a special memorial to Teddy at Latrobe, Tasmania.

**Information and photo obtained from the Australian War Memorial online records ([www.awm.gov.au](http://www.awm.gov.au)). Other information was sourced via the Australian Government Navy website and the Plymouth Naval Memorial website.**

Robyn Miller

## Harcourt Carpet Bowls Association Inc. Summer Carpet Bowls

The Summer Carpet Bowls competition is underway with a small number of participants enjoying a fun game of carpet bowls at the Harcourt District Leisure Centre, Bingham's Road Harcourt on Wednesday evenings at 7.15 pm. Come along if you would like to join in for an evening's fun.

We will break for Christmas on 11 December 2024 with a supper and Kris Kringle, and recommence playing on 15 January 2025 until 26 March 2025.

The start of the winter competition will be advised in the April edition of *The Core* and advertising around Harcourt.

So, if you would like to join in and play carpet bowls at any time, contact John on 5474 2226 or Loretta on 5474 2453 for more information.

**Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year 2025 to all.**



Gather Harcourt Summer, or, as we're calling it, **Jazz in James**, is just around the corner on December 28.

**Jazz in James** is shaping up to be quite the celebration between Christmas and New Year, with an exciting line-up including:

- ▶ Pip Avent's Mouldy Jazz (photo)
- ▶ Medieval swordplay (including tents and full-on action!)
- ▶ Sock knitting machine demonstration
- ▶ Children's activities
- ▶ Markets
- ▶ Food vans
- ▶ Drink vendors



It promises to be a fantastic day, so bring your picnic rug, relax, enjoy a bite to eat and a sip to drink.

I can't wait to see you there!

# Home Care Packages

At Dhelkaya Health Home Care Packages, we offer comprehensive support to residents of Mount Alexander Shire who are 65 and older, or 50 and older for Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander community members. We guide you through every step of your Home Care Package journey, including navigating government websites, completing assessments, securing and managing your package, and coordinating services. Our goal is to provide you with a variety of services to help you remain comfortably and safely in your home.

Get local support to help you live better at home.

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[www.dhelkayahealth.org.au/home-care-packages/](http://www.dhelkayahealth.org.au/home-care-packages/)

For more information call Susan Andrews, Home Care Packages Coordinator  
Phone: 5479 1000 or Email: [hcp@castlemainehealth.org.au](mailto:hcp@castlemainehealth.org.au)



# YOUTH OF THE YEAR AND COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR FOR 2025

The Harcourt District Lions Club has decided not to hold the Australia Day Breakfast, but we feel it is still important to recognise the achievements of our youth and the contributions made by members of the many clubs and organisations in and around Harcourt. These community members give of their time and energy and work tirelessly to make our community better with no expectation of reward.

Please take a little time to fill out the form nominating someone you feel deserves recognition for their efforts

within your club or organisation so the community can hear of their efforts OR the achievements of one of our youth, so they will be encouraged to continue in their chosen field.

The awards will be presented at the 2025 Harcourt Applefest celebrations on Saturday 8 March 2025 (Labour Day Weekend).

Members of the community are invited to join us at the main stage to see these awards presented and congratulate them.

Please submit nomination forms by no later than Thursday 13 February 2025 to

Harcourt District Lions Club, Post Office Box 100, Harcourt, 3453



## HARCOURT DISTRICT LIONS CLUB INC. NOMINATION FORM

The Harcourt District Lions Club is calling for Nominations for YOUTH OF THE YEAR or COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR FOR 2025.

Details of eligible persons are listed below.

### COMMUNITY MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD.

Nominations are open to residents of Harcourt Valley and district who have lived in the community for the last two years OR non-residents who have made a significant contribution to the Harcourt District in general.

### YOUTH OF THE YEAR.

Youth of the Year nominations are restricted to residents under 25 years of age. The award is for outstanding achievement in the last 12 months. It can be for academic, sporting or community service.

Reasons for nominating: (attach extra sheet if needed):

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Community Member of the Year

Youth of the Year

Nominated Person: .....

Residential Address: .....

Phone/Mobile:.....

Person making Nomination: .....

Address: .....

Phone/Mobile: .....

Email: .....

Signature:.....

Seconder of Nomination: .....

Signature:.....

Return this nomination form by 13 February 2025 to:  
Harcourt District Lions Club Inc.  
PO Box 100 HARCOURT 3453.



## Councillor Comment

Hi all,

Congratulations to our four new councillors and our four returning councillors. Also, a big shout out to Cr Annear and Cr Heydon, our new mayor and deputy mayor.

At council we are currently doing a detailed councillor Induction process. New and returning councillors are attending. We can all learn new things and it is a great opportunity to get to know our new councillors.

One of the things I appreciate about council is the diversity of opinion and background of the elected council members. This helps us to have robust debate on issues and then come up with really good decisions.

We had a leadership session last week, led by Malcolm Lazenby. Malcolm is an experienced consultant and has played a key role in the success of numerous councils.

Last weekend Jo and I attended Gather Harcourt. It was a great call by organisers to hold the event at the Harcourt Leisure Centre. Despite the wet conditions, the event was well attended and everyone had a good time. Our sporting facilities are in great



Mount Alexander Shire Councillors (left to right) - Bill Maltby, Rosalie Hastwell, Tony Cordy, Matt Driscoll, Toby Heydon, Phillip Walker, Lucas Maddock, Rosie Annear.

condition at the moment and a credit to all concerned.

The wet weather has given our CFA volunteers a little bit of relief from very dry conditions. Take the opportunity to clean up that long grass and rubbish in preparation for a long summer ahead.

Council will have a break over Christmas through January, but feel free to reach out if there are any pressing issues. I will be around all summer.

In closing, I take this opportunity to wish you a happy and safe festive season and a wonderful 2025.

Best regards to all, Tony  
AG Cordy



## HARCOURT DISTRICT LIONS CLUB

Firstly, a reminder to put forward a member of your club in recognition of their efforts in the work they do for the betterment of your club or, maybe a young person who has achieved a special award in their chosen field and deserves special recognition in the Youth of the Year or Community Member of the Year nomination form, which is in this edition of *The Core*. The award is to be presented at the 2025 Applefest.

The Harcourt and District Lions Club once again provided a BBQ for those who attended the recent Tractor Pull at the Muckleford Engine Club site. On this day we put up our new banners inviting those interested to come join a



worthwhile club.

By the time you read this, we will have been at the Harcourt Gather Christmas with our sausages, egg and bacon rolls, hamburgers and drinks. Hopefully, it will be a great day. [It was]

If you missed it then you will have a chance to get with it at the next Gather on 28 December 2024 when the Lions Club will again feed the hungry, and attendees can have an early celebration for the New Year 2025.

We wish all those connected with the production of *The Core* a big thank you for the chance to connect with the community, and may you all have a very Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year in 2025.

**TO the Community in general MERRY CHRISTMAS and A HAPPY, HEALTHY NEW YEAR from the members of the HARCOURT DISTRICT LIONS CLUB INC.**

Loretta Rice



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# Harcourt CFA

## **Fire Safety Essentials: Prepare your property and leave early**

The fire safety community meeting was held in November with 18 adults attending. Unfortunately, the planned presenter was unavailable on the day. Thankfully, a last minute replacement was available for our meeting. The meeting was facilitated by Doreen Raven (see photo) and was a little shorter and more general in nature due to the short notification. The main thing is that all attendees took away something that they had learned on the night. Thank you to those that took the time to attend which assists us in being able to justify holding future meetings in the coming years.

## **Where has the year gone?**

It is hard to believe that we are now in December and we have experienced a few hot days in November, which reinforced that the Fire Danger Period (FDP) was introduced at the right time. While the introduction of the FDP relies on a lot of background information gathered from various sources, once again we have had some cooler days and significant rain events at the end of November.

**Regardless of the weather, once fire restrictions are introduced, they remain in force no matter how cold or wet it may be.**

Moving around the area it is pleasing to see that there has been a lot of good work done in cutting back and removing vegetation and mowing and slashing grass. One worrying concern is the low level of water in some of the dams around the district. Good water supply close to where a fire is burning reduces

the turnaround time from refilling and getting back to the fire. The further the distance for water can affect the success of an initial attack and requires more tankers to be called to ensure there is a continuous line of attack on the fire fight.

## **Turnout Statistics**

We had seven call outs in November, the same as in October. The difference being that the majority of these were in sets of two-days.

We had three callouts on the warm Saturday 15 November followed by another on the Sunday 16 in the evening. On that Sunday we were called to support the Castlemaine brigade to supply breathing apparatus to those tackling the suspicious fire at the old Eddy Street Campus of the secondary school. The activity the day before was a call out to a burn-off during the fire danger period at Fords Road. There was a second call to smoke in Craigie Street and then the third was when a responding brigade noticed smoke coming from one of the old burn piles of apple trees. It was this fire that required more resources, including a dozer to ensure that it was out properly.

Other turnouts for the month were to a report of a truck smoking while travelling north from Elphinstone on the Calder Freeway. The vehicle was intercepted by Harcourt Tanker One just north of the roundabout, where it was discovered that the truck was not actually on fire, but was being limped home with a mechanical fault, which resulted in black smoke being emitted from the exhaust pipe.

There was a call to support Chewton to a report of a house full of smoke. This turned out to be as a result of some seriously burnt toast and, lastly, to a car smoking as a result of an accident which also had no actual fire.



## **Fuel Reduction Burns**

There have been some successful fuel reduction burns conducted on the north-west interface to Castlemaine. Unfortunately, the wind change later in the day saw smoke fill the Harcourt Valley. This can be very concerning for people who suffer from breathing related medical issues. When this occurs, like any smoky environment, it is best to remain indoors and monitor the conditions accordingly.

Each year Forest Fire Management also conducts a burn so that a yearly fire investigation course can do some actual field investigations. This results in valuable training to ensure we have at our disposal a bank of fire investigators we can call on for any fire deemed to be suspicious.

**As we approach the end of the year, the officers and members of the brigade wish all residents a happy, safe and fire free Christmas and New Year and thank you for your support in 2024 and into the future.**

*Tyrone Rice  
Brigade Community Safety Coordinator*





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## Weather & Water

### Welcome Rain!

Last month I wrote about the dry outlook only to have the weather bureau 'change its tune' for December when on 23 November it predicted a wet December, caused by the swing in the major climate drivers to a wet phase. This doesn't necessarily mean cooler temperatures. November heat records were broken in south-east Australia before the arrival of the recent rain. See the reference below if you want to read more.

November began in a similar manner to October: warm (a number of 30 degree days) and dry with only limited rainfall – 5 mm fell over 22 days which set many gardeners' nerves on edge. It was difficult to keep the water up to plants and woe betide if you missed a day. Any plants not well mulched suffered instant drying out. Then the humidity began to gather and we experienced 6 days of rain in 8 days. This pattern has not been seen to date this year. Another major difference in the rainfall was the quantity which fell in that short time. We received 73 mm in total for the month, with 68 mm falling between 23 and 30 November.

The rain brought one pleasant surprise: the feijoa tree burst into bloom almost overnight. There had been a few flowers during the dry days of the month, but after the big fall of 34 mm on 26 November, the tree was fully covered in colour.



### Reservoir Levels as at 17 November 2024

All reservoir levels are down slightly from the October readings.

Upper Coliban:	83%	
Lauriston:	79.9%	"
Malmsbury	33.1%	"
Barkers Creek	38.7%	"

Data sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology.

### Wet weather prediction from the Bureau of Meteorology

<https://ab.co/4f0vC1U> (This abbreviated link will take you to the Bureau's website.)

# PLUMBER

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# Harcourt Walking Group

Meet others in our community,  
get to know the local area,  
and greatly reduce your risk  
of chronic illness

**Monday & Thursdays at 9.30 am**  
**Meet at Harcourt ANA Hall & Museum**

A one hour walk followed by  
a cuppa and a chat



# Harcourt Valley Primary School

## 2024 Victorian Junior Landcare and Biodiversity Grant

In the school newsletter of November 8, acting principal, Ash Harvey, announced the exciting news that Harcourt Valley Primary School is one of 103 childcare centres, schools, Scouts and Girl Guides groups, and youth groups to receive a 2024 Victorian Junior Landcare and Biodiversity Grant funded by the State Government.

He said, 'We are using our \$4448.80 grant for our Enhancing Biodiversity Awareness in Harcourt: A School/Community Initiative project.'

'Our project aims to enhance the understanding of biodiversity in Harcourt among students and the wider community through hands-on educational activities. Utilising 'Ulumbarra', our school's bush regeneration area, we plan to conduct a series of sessions led by local biodiversity experts and a Harcourt indigenous group who specialise in local flora and fauna.'

## From the Principal's Desk

The school has had a busy schedule this term. Some of the events are:

### Book Fair

Thank you to Mr Walter for organising this year's Book Fair. I'd also like to extend my thanks to the staff members who helped run the fair each day. It was fantastic to see so many families and students getting involved and purchasing books. It's always great to see our school community so enthusiastic about reading, and we hope the Book Fair inspired some new reading habits!

### P-2 Kickball – 8 November

Congratulations to our Prep to Year 2 students who participated in the Kickball event on 8 November. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces and plenty of team spirit. Our students showed great sportsmanship and demonstrated the school values through the day. Thank you to the staff and volunteers who helped organise and supervise this event – your support made the day run smoothly.



As the saying goes, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade. Students making lemonade. Images are from newsletters on the school website.

A special mention also goes to our Grade 3-6 students, who did a fantastic job leading the younger groups during the Kickball event. They really showed what it means to be great role models – they were responsible, supportive, and excellent ambassadors for our school. It's so encouraging to see the leadership skills these students are developing, and we're proud of how they took on this responsibility.

### Remembrance Day Ceremony

On Monday 11 November, our School Captains led a short ceremony at the school, with the *Last Post* played by Mrs Simpson's father, Glen.

### Be Brave Program with the Bendigo Braves – 12 and 19 November

This program is designed to promote sportsmanship, leadership, and provide an insight into the mindset of elite athletes. After the classroom session, students participated in an on-court clinic, where they applied what they learned. The presenters included representatives from the Bendigo Braves, headlined by the head coach of the NBL1 Men's program. This was a great opportunity for our students to learn from elite athletes and gain valuable skills around sportsmanship and leadership.

### Harcourt Gather Stall

On Saturday 30 November we sold home-made lemon cordial and toffee apples!!

## Coming Events:

### Colour Run

We are excited to announce that our Colour Run will take place on Friday 6 December from 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm. Students can expect to be showered in vibrant colours! Students will receive a free sausage and drink at lunchtime on the day. Additionally, an ice cream truck will be available for students and families to purchase ice creams from 2:30 pm onwards. We look forward to a fun and colourful celebration, and families are most welcome to attend the event.

### Student Reports – Semester 2, 2024

Teachers are currently working hard on the Semester 2 student reports, which will be released on Friday 13 December.

### Monday 16 December Grade 6 Graduation – Afternoon Tea and Dinner

As our Grade 6 students prepare to graduate, we are looking forward to the Grade 6 Graduation Ceremony and Graduation Dinner, which will be held on Monday 16 December.

At the graduation, prizes for students are given by CWA and *The Core* amongst others. *The Core* works with the school to encourage students at Year 6 level with their writing, and presents a book prize and certificates at the graduation.

- ▶ **Tuesday 17 December:** Grade 6 Big Day Out
- ▶ **Wednesday 18 December:** Harcourt's got Talent
- ▶ **Thursday 19 December:** End-of-Year Excursion to Cinemas
- ▶ **Friday 20 December:** Last day Term 4: 1:30 pm Finish

Ash Harvey  
Acting Principal



# Harcourt Celebrates



**December 28:** Gather Harcourt Summer – a Twilight Holiday Market and Jazz in the Park. The well-known jazz band, Pip Avent's Mouldy Jazz, has been booked for this party night. Bring picnic blankets, chairs and enjoy local produce and music.



**March 8:** Applefest – all the fun of the Festival. Volunteers are needed to help run this long established event. Please get in touch if you can volunteer your time either on the day or in the lead up to March 8. Everyone is welcome!



**March 29:** Gather Music & Food – the ABBA Tribute Band SOS will be performing in James Park. Food and beverages will be available so you can picnic while dancing, dressing up and singing the night away. Family Fun for everyone!

## Volunteers Please!

All these events are run by volunteers – however, we need more. If you would like to be involved with the events team in any way, please contact Ruth Hay on 0433 633 093.

## Vendor Contacts

Any vendors who are interested in attending, please email: [market.gatherharcourtvic@gmail.com](mailto:market.gatherharcourtvic@gmail.com) or [harcourtapplefest.market.vic@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtapplefest.market.vic@gmail.com)

## Cool off over Summer at one of Council's Outdoor Pools

Council's outdoor pool season kicks off in Castlemaine, Harcourt, Maldon and Newstead from Saturday 7 December until Monday 10 March.

**The pools are managed and operated by YMCA Victoria, and to celebrate the commencement of the season, inflatable fun and BBQ's will be held over the first two weekends:**

- ▶ Harcourt Pool: Sunday 15 December (3.00 pm - 5.00 pm)
- ▶ Castlemaine Pool: Saturday 7 December (3.00 pm - 5.00 pm)
- ▶ Maldon Pool: Sunday 8 December (3.00 pm - 5.00 pm)
- ▶ Newstead Pool: Saturday 14 December (3.00 pm - 5.00 pm)

Collectively, the four pools will host more than twenty events over summer, including barbecues, inflatable fun, live music and free entry on Australia Day.

Other pool activities will include aqua aerobics, junior lifeguard program, lap swimming and aqua playgroup.

The VicSwim program which focuses on swimming and water safety for children from four years of age will return to all four pools in January, with bookings now open through the VicSwim website.

Another program on offer will be the Lap it Up Club, which encourages swimmers to document their swimming achievements, with prizes given at the end of the season for most laps recorded at each pool.

In February, young women between

the ages of 12 and 18 will have the opportunity to pick up one of ten free pool passes as part of the This Girl Can campaign.

Bookings can also be made for lane hire and birthday parties, and the YMCA continues to offer free access to their Virtual Y online health and wellbeing resource website.

Council follows the Victorian Government's Watch around Water requirements. These requirements are compulsory for public pools and govern the number of children that adults are able to supervise: one adult can supervise two children under five years of age, or four children aged five to nine years.

Opening hours at Council's outdoor pools are guided by our weather policy. Pools will not open if the forecast temperature for the day is lower than 23°C. This is based on the temperature forecast for Castlemaine on the Bureau of Meteorology website at 6.00 pm the previous day.

If the temperature is over 32°C at 6.00 pm, pools may stay open until 8.00 pm. Information on additional hours and closures will be placed on the Mount Alexander Pools Facebook page at [www.facebook.com.au/mountalexanderpools](http://www.facebook.com.au/mountalexanderpools).

**For more information, including opening times, entry fees, activities and events visit [www.mountalexanderpools.com.au](http://www.mountalexanderpools.com.au).**



Left to right: Taylor McKnight, Castlemaine's Team Leader; Cameron Anderson, Senior Coordinator; Luke Anderson, Harcourt's Team Leader.

# Harcourt Valley Community House News

## Survey

Thank you to everyone who submitted a survey (published in the November Core) to let us know your interests in courses and/or volunteering at the HVCH. We will be analysing your responses over the summer break and be back with a new and exciting program of activities for 2025.

If you haven't completed the survey yet, it will never be too late, and we welcome your opinion and suggestions! Please send it in via this link or request a copy by email to [communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au](mailto:communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au) or use the QR code .



## Term Programs ended on Nov. 28th

By the time you read this month's Core, we will have had our last Community House open day for 2024 (each Thursday 10 am–2 pm) on Thursday 28 November. There hasn't been a strong take-up of activities since October, which prompted the survey, so we can get more of an idea of what YOU want to happen at YOUR Community House. As we get closer to Christmas, we know everyone is very busy, including our volunteers, so we are taking a break in December. We will not be open on Thursday 5, 12 or 19 December. Thank you for your understanding.

## Returning on Wednesdays in 2025

We are going to make a change in 2025 and be open on Wednesdays during the school terms from 10 am–2 pm. First day back will be Wednesday 5 Feb. Watch for news of our program in the February Core and on our Facebook page.

## Voluntary Community House Manager

Jeanette Teague has been appointed as the Voluntary Community House Manager. Jeanette has 30 years experience working in the Neighbourhood House sector (in Gippsland) and upon retiring/returning to Harcourt, she was drawn to the exciting prospect of helping to

establish a Community House for Harcourt at the old Railway Station. Jeanette would love to have a chat with anyone who is interested in being involved with HVCH, either as a volunteer, a tutor or a participant in classes or activities. Give her a ring on 4417 8742, 0438 579 987 or email her on [communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au](mailto:communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au)

## Situations Vacant – Volunteers Still Needed

As we prepare to have a fresh new program early in 2025, we would love to have more volunteers join us. Make your New Year's Resolution to get involved with your community. The benefits are enormous, mostly for yourself!

- ▶ Make new friends.
- ▶ Learn new skills.
- ▶ Have ownership and be a part of creating something great, a Community House in your town!

We need people to be prepared to...

- ▶ Be a part of the Operational Team (decide what, when and how something happens at the HVCH).
- ▶ Be a part of the special projects team/s; creating a community garden, regularly providing community lunches and/or running a food pantry (food relief for anyone



## Fundraising: Container Deposit Scheme

We have begun collecting bottles and cans with the 10c logo for refund which the Community House will exchange as part of the Container Deposit Scheme.

If you have a very large number of eligible bottles/cans, we have a volunteer who can pick them up, just email us on: [communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au](mailto:communityhouse@harcourtprogress.org.au)

needing a helping hand to make ends meet in these difficult times).

- ▶ Are you willing to get a first aid qualification and take turns being on site (during programs and activities)? Thanks to a little bit of funding we have received, we will pay for your qualification. In return, you would be rostered to be onsite while various programs and activities are being conducted. Please let Jeanette know this ASAP and we will look for the first opportunity we can find in 2025 to get first aid qualified volunteers in place.

## Cans & Bottles Fundraiser

The Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) fundraiser will continue throughout the Summer. There are now two bins in place to take your cans and bottles at the HVCH in Station St, Harcourt. A big thanks is extended to local business owners, Annette from The Harcourt Produce and General Store and Bonnie and Remy from the Coolstore Cafe who are donating their eligible cans, bottles and plastics to HVCH. Thank you, your support means everything to us!

Thank you to everyone else who has been dropping off their bottles and cans.

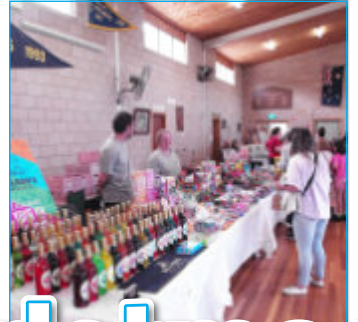
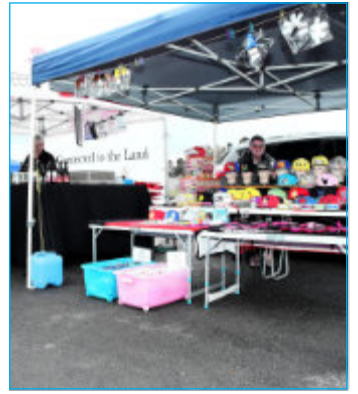
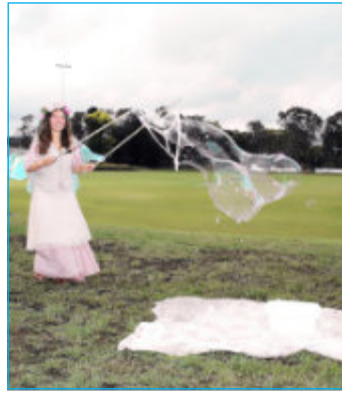
**We would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Safe and Prosperous New Year! See you in 2025!**

Cheers, Jeanette and the Harcourt Valley Community House Standing Committee.

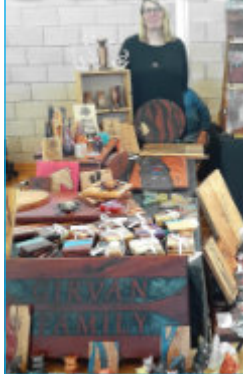
Linda Newton



New Holland Honeyeater



# Gather Harcourt Christmas



Photos supplied by Lou Citroën and Robyn Miller.

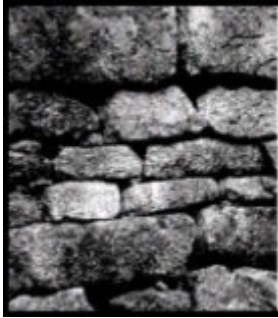
## Hello to our Faraday neighbours!

As Editor of *The Core* I receive a copy of *The Faraday Farrago* as it is published. I have attended some events that Faraday runs for its residents. I asked the editor (Bev Dunn) if we could pass on some of their news, particularly as the final edition of the year was a very informative

summary of their meetings and activities. This is a severely edited version of the newsletter.

Bev provided me with this summary about the association: 'The Faraday Community Association was first formed in 2009 with the broad aim to enhance opportunities for social interaction, to document and celebrate the history and

diversity of the district and to develop a strong sense of local community. *The Faraday Farrago* newsletter is published four times each year and was first published in 2009. According to the 2021 census, the Faraday community had a population of 194. This has increased with a number of new dwellings being built since 2021.'



# The Faraday Farrago

## NEWSLETTER OF THE FARADAY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.

*The Faraday Community Association acknowledges the Dja Dja Wurrung people as the traditional owners of this land and pay our respects to their leaders and elders past, present and emerging.*

## The Year That Was

**2024** in Faraday has been a busy year for the Faraday Community Association and its supporters. On a community note, the Committee and community volunteers have made good progress clearing the silver birches away from The Drops area at Dunstans Flat to help preserve the remaining granite block walls. We are also investigating the possibility of erecting historical signage at The Drops to provide the history to visitors of Dunstans Flat. As well, Dunstans Flat now has a new flagpole.

We had a small win with the erection of one Kangaroo warning sign along the Faraday-Sutton Grange Road just near the vineyards. The hope is that this may urge some of the speedsters to slow down and stop the carnage. There are some parts of this road that are known to locals as the 'Kangaroo Highway'.

On the topic of roads, the Committee has also been communicating with the relevant authorities about the condition, safety issues and maintenance of Joseph Young Drive from one end of Leanganook (Mount Alexander) to the other. The road is regularly busy with sightseers, caravans, 4WDs, motorcycles and cyclists. The growing number of potholes and the condition of the road shoulders pose a real danger to all who use the road.

A WhatsApp site was developed purely for emergency communication purposes during the threat of, or actual fire. Development of a new domain site for the Association is



also underway to allow for easier communication for the Community. Watch this space.

On a social note, we ended 2023 with a well-attended Christmas celebration at Dunstans Flat and started 2024 with our Australia Day celebration.

The Winter Solstice was celebrated with a huge bonfire on a perfectly chilly but clear moonlit night. A BBQ was enjoyed by those wanting to cook dinner, and the bonfire was enjoyed by all to keep warm.

Two community walks were undertaken during the year. The first was Hill Walk at the start of winter. The initial climb up the steep slopes of the southern side of Leanganook was slightly challenging, but everyone made it and took time to catch their breath before exploring flatter ground. Local Matt McClelland led them to ancient rock walls built at the top of Leanganook. One can only imagine the effort required back then using possibly only horsepower – no earth moving equipment back then. Other highlights were Wedge Rock

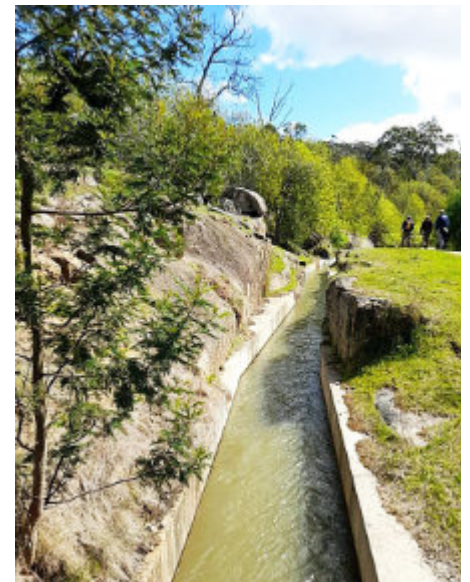
and of course the incredible views. It was described by the participants as a 'very nice ramble'.

Following the publication of *The Coliban Main Channel – A Walking Guide*, a book by Stephen Charman, it was decided our spring walk should follow the guide from Faraday-Sutton Grange Road to Byrnes Lane. This was around 7 kilometres of relatively flat terrain on a mostly well-maintained track.

It was such a pleasant way to spend a few hours that a decision has been made to follow another section of the channel on a walk in 2025.

The Faraday community will conclude their year with a Christmas Celebration on Sunday December 8.

**Please direct correspondence to PO Box 257 Chewton 3451 or to our email address: [faradayfarrago@yahoo.com.au](mailto:faradayfarrago@yahoo.com.au). Check out our Facebook page called Faraday Community.**



# Colour me in



@sarah.matsuda



@sarah.matsuda.artist

[www.sarahmatsuda.com](http://www.sarahmatsuda.com)



# All about Phascogales

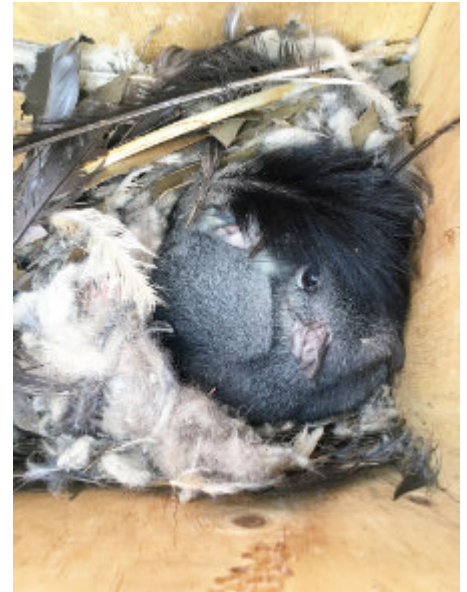
Harcourt Valley Landcare members were delighted to be at Harcourt Gather Christmas. Our focus for the day (and for the past couple of years) has been the environmental health of our valley. Having achieved changes to the planning scheme for future developments, the group has got down to the nitty gritty, looking at a small, but important animal which makes Harcourt its home.

Our special event for market day was a story reading session by David Holmes who delivers storytime on Wednesdays at the Castlemaine Library. David was reading from *Snuggled Away* by Cate Storey, which is a rhyming story book that explores the habits of Australia's nocturnal animals. One animal featured in Cate's book is the phascogale. Sarah Matsuda, who illustrated the book, has kindly shared the drawing opposite for young people to colour in.

The brush tailed phascogale lives around and in Harcourt on the valley

floor and on the mount. They depend on hollows in trees for nesting and are carnivorous. Sometimes they will nest in the roof of a house. They eat mice, birds, cockroaches and other insects and small reptiles. It is classified as a vulnerable species (threatened with extinction unless the circumstances that are threatening its survival and reproduction improve). Phascogales forage for food on the ground in leaf litter between trees. Males have a short life span (11 or 12 months); females live for 3 years. Mount Alexander and the Harcourt Valley have proved to be a haven for the phascogale; retaining our large trees and areas of undisturbed bush is important for the survival of this species.

One way to help the phascogale survive is to read up on the phascogale's habits to understand their behaviours and to purchase a nesting box – especially if you live close to a bushy area.



*Phascogale occupying a nesting box.  
Photo: Dr Jess Lawton*

*This event was funded by a 2023 Landcare Victoria grant program.*





# Harcourt Bowling Club

## The 2024 season is well under way

### **Pennant**

Harcourt Midweek Pennant Divisions 2, 4 and 6 and Weekend Pennant sides Divisions 2, 4 and 7BLUE and 7GOLD have settled into the new season well; all teams are in strong positions on their respective ladders. This bodes well for the second half of the season when they return from the Christmas break.

### **Green Closed**

The Harcourt green will be closed during December and the early part of January to undergo much needed repair work. All pennant teams will play their home games at other designated clubs (clubs to be confirmed).

### **Girls on the Green**

The final of the Harcourt Girls on the Green was played out on 27 November. Results were not available when going to print. The women who attended the weekly sessions said they enjoyed getting together over a relaxed game of bowls.

The girls have enjoyed using the bowls sets thanks to Mount Alexander Shire Council Grant for Everyone's a Bowler.

### **Ladies' Annual Triples Tournament**

The Annual Harcourt Ladies' Triples tournament sponsored by Property Plus was held on Thursday afternoon 21 November in somewhat warm conditions. Ten teams of competitors from across the division played three games of eight ends after the usual Ditch to Ditch. Fifteen donated raffle prizes were on offer, as well as the generous sponsored prize money.

Winners of the Ditch to Ditch were



*The fifteen raffle prizes.*

Joan Bath, Woodbury (skips); Jill Harding, Campbells Creek (Thirds) and Marlene Kelly, Bendigo (Seconds).

Tournament winners were the Golden Square team of Jenni Holborn, Kristin Skinner and Lorraine Rowley. Runners-up were the Eaglehawk team of Pam Hughes, Kaye Rowe and Jan Robertson.

In third place was the Bendigo 2 team of Sue Lawson, Lorraine Trahair



*Tracey, Jemma and Jo.*

and Sharon Koch.

The day ended with a sumptuous afternoon tea that Harcourt is renowned for.

## **Coming Up**

### **Christmas Celebrations**

Harcourt Bowling Club Christmas celebrations will take on a slightly new look this year. On Sunday 8 December from midday, members and their family and guests are invited to join in for a lamb spit roast with vegies and salad and the usual delicious dessert.

There will be music by renowned country and light rock band AVALANCHE with a guest appearance from our own Joe Candy.

### **Friday Socials**

Although the green will be closed, the clubrooms and bar will be open on Wednesday evenings and on Friday evenings for the Members' draw (at 6.30 pm) followed by the raffles offering good prizes.

**Merry Christmas wishes to all our members and supporters from the Harcourt Bowling Club.**



*Winners: Kristin, Lorraine and Jo.*



*Runners-up Pam, Kaye and Jan*





# Chatting with Harcourt CWA

Hello there, everyone

As I sit here thinking of what to share with you all this month, I must admit I am enjoying the sound of the lovely rain on the roof. My garden is smiling and the tomatoes and basil are growing like crazy.

The year is winding down for many people as the Xmas Silly Season approaches, but at Harcourt CWA it is still 'All Go!'



Treasurer: Alison Curtis

Despite losing our beloved colleague Lyn Rule, and some health setbacks faced by some of our members and their families, this year has been another busy year for us. Under the guidance of President Robyn McConville, Secretary Helen Hand and Treasurer Alison Curtis, and ably assisted by all our members, everyone has banded together, looked out for each other, and we have still managed to have a good year. Many thousands of dollars have been raised and lots of fun has been had along the way.

In November, we held our Annual General Meeting and at that AGM



President Robyn McConville presenting to one of the local causes we support – the Castlemaine Food Pantry at Castlemaine Community House.



Members Joy Robertson, Marie Twyford and Jill Reynolds – fine tuning our 2025 activities and syllabus.

Robyn, Helen and Alison were re-elected for 2025, and other members were appointed to other roles.

The Syllabus Day for planning next year's program has already taken place, with lots of fantastic speakers, fun activities, and a standout Annual Association Day event in the works. Keep an eye out for more details as they come!



President Robyn McConville and Secretary Helen Hand enjoy a chat over afternoon tea.

With one year coming to an end, we are already looking forward to the next; to leave memories of events at our branch in the pages of our Minute Book for future members to read, just like The Core does each month for the community of Harcourt.

A significant highlight this month has been our Allocation of Funds meeting, which took place recently. After all of our fundraising and fun events, we looked at how much money we had raised. All the members suggested, discussed and then decided upon the organisations, groups and causes that would receive our donations.

Most of these recipients are in our local area and we are proud to be able to connect with our community in this way, making life just a little easier for people finding it tough, especially the women and children and families in our town and shire.

Yes, 2025 looks like being another great year for Harcourt CWA.

If you'd like to be a part of this inclusive, friendly and happy bunch of women, give Secretary Helen a call on 0448 510 996.

**Season's Greetings and Happy New Year to you all!**

Beverley Orgill – On behalf of Harcourt CWA

## New TAFE course to be offered at The Mill in Castlemaine

In a first for the region, enrolments are now open for Bendigo TAFE's Certificate II in Construction Pathways (CPC20220), specifically set up for female, gender diverse and non-binary people. Scheduled to start in February 2025 at The Mill, the course will be predominantly taught by trainers who are also female and gender diverse, providing learners

with a safe and inclusive environment to gain skills in construction.

This may open doors to apprenticeships and careers in construction. One of the least gender diverse industries in Australia, with women making up just 14% of workers in civil construction and 2% for onsite roles.

Enrolment for the Certificate II in Construction Pathways is now open with Free TAFE available to eligible learners.

More information can be found on the TAFE website: [www.bendigotafe.edu.au/courses/department/trades-and-industrial/certificate-ii-in-construction-pathways-17139](http://www.bendigotafe.edu.au/courses/department/trades-and-industrial/certificate-ii-in-construction-pathways-17139)



# Harcourt Uniting Church

As Christmas approaches, people often greet us with: 'What are you doing for Christmas?' 'Have you done your Christmas shopping?' and we see children writing long lists for Santa.

In the Christian Church, Christmas is a very special time when we celebrate the birth of Jesus. The four weeks leading up to Christmas Day are known as Advent, or 'the coming', when we hear the story in the bible of the anticipated arrival of Jesus as a baby born in Bethlehem.

An Advent wreath with five candles will be the centrepiece of many church services in this time. Each week a candle is lit representing Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. The centre candle is lit on Christmas Day – the Christ candle – along with the four other candles.

It's so easy to be caught up in the rush of Christmas preparations that we tend to forget that it's a time of sharing this hope, peace, joy and love with our families, friends and those struggling to provide for their families. At Harcourt Uniting Church, we donate groceries each week to St Vinnies Castlemaine. Leading up to Christmas we make sure that donated food has a Christmas theme. Some members have also donated money towards vouchers for families finding Christmas a difficult time financially. This will allow them the dignity to be able to buy food at this special time of year.

Our extension at the rear of our church now has a roof and walls,

so we're looking forward to enjoying a modern kitchen/meeting area complete with 'an inside toilet!' In 2025 we plan to invite the Harcourt community to celebrate our official opening. Apparently, when the Church was opened 159 years ago, it was reported that they needed several sittings of food on the day. Well, we mightn't have that many, but we will certainly be celebrating.

Happy Christmas, and may you and your families find Hope, Peace, Joy and most importantly Love as you celebrate Christmas.

**A small boy was in the Christmas play and had just one line to say: 'Behold I bring you good tidings.' He asked his mother what 'tidings' meant and she replied 'news'.**



**On the night of the play the boy was stage struck and forgot his line. Finally he yelled out: 'Hey, I've got great news for you!'**

**A small child climbed onto Santa's knee and Santa asked: 'What would you like for Christmas?' The child stared at him for a moment in disbelief, and then said: 'Didn't you get my email?'**

I know I've used these two anecdotes before, but I have a special love of children's comments.

*Jan Jenkin*

*Photos: Congregation members, Mark (the youngest member) and Alma Chaplin (the oldest member), light the candles on the Advent wreath at the service on December 1.*

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Labor



# Harcourt Heritage Centre

## A New Collection Now Displayed at our Museum.



Harcourt Vista - Douglas dairy - by Ian Foster.

The display in Harcourt Heritage Centre has been transformed once again! It demonstrates yet another thriving Harcourt industry of yesteryear. There were several industries that created valley-wide prosperity for the European settlers in the century 1853 to 1953. Fruit-growing tops the list, but there were also quarrying, the railway, egg production, the cement tile factory, forestry and dairying. Almost the only one of these industries to survive has been fruit-growing, with a minor amount of granite extraction. Fruit-growing has always been a high-profile business. Dairying was once so common that it was only occasionally mentioned in the *Mount Alexander Mail*, so it is important to conserve relics from that first century of agriculture.

Harcourt Heritage Centre's collection of dairy mementoes started quite modestly with a photograph of the shorthorn cattle of Douglas's dairy. This is a rare photo. The cows are standing quietly, chewing their cud, waiting their turn to be milked. A watercolour of Douglas's dairy in Craigie Street, neatly bookends the collection!

Donated dairy relics were few – a churn, some butter pats, bits of a separator, but a recent gift has expanded the collection so that it becomes a meaningful reminder of the extent to which dairying underpinned the cash economy of the valley.

Most of Harcourt's early settlers kept a milk cow, and several families conducted dairying on a large scale. Although most Harcourt landholdings were between twenty and thirty acres, water allocation was such that only fourteen or fifteen acres could be planted in orchard. Having a few milking cows for milk and cream production was a common secondary source of income for many. The largish herds of Charles Thacker, John Mitchell, Bryan McMahon and John Kimber were among the few which gained a mention in the *Mount Alexander Mail* before 1900.

We can still see the layout of the twelve cow bails in the McMahon dairy at Granite

necks. Cows were milked twice daily in the cow bails.

Many folk remember hand milking. You had to have a good grip on the bucket between your knees. The near-side hind-leg was leg-roped. One man claims to have held the tail of his father's cows between his teeth. More commonly, the tail was wound around a nail on the off-side of the bail. Fred Ellery set up a rabbit trap on the rail as a handy way to stop the cow's tail from flicking him in the face.

A hand-turned milk separator was an essential piece of equipment. Alfa-Laval was the most common brand of separator. There were considerable forces involved when the separator was operating at optimum speed. There was quite a bit of resistance when you first started to turn the handle, and it was important to keep up the right number of revolutions. Separating the cream from the milk was not a long process, but the tedious stage was in washing the tinware afterwards – the bowl and all the cones, maybe twenty-four of them, had to be taken apart and thoroughly washed in hot water.



Whole milk was only sold locally. The milkman took his can from door to door and ladled out a billy full at each house, each day.

Making the cream into butter was a time-consuming, nerve-wracking process. The person turning the handle never quite knew when the butter would 'come'. It is

this butter-producing aspect of the industry that is demonstrated in the most recent gifts to Harcourt Heritage. While tidying up the James family farm, Ron and Graham James have donated several large pieces of butter-making equipment. Ron and Graham's great-great aunts, the Misses Sarah and Mary Blair, made butter on a commercial scale using a separator, a 'concussion churn', a butter worker and some butter moulds. The items now proudly shown in our museum are well-preserved and, in the case of the 'concussion churn', quite rare. The items are surprisingly large, pointing to the commercial nature of the Blair dairy.

To make saleable butter it was essential that the butter be washed in clean cold water, or it would not keep. After squeezing out the water (using the butter-worker) the butter was salted and either made up into brick shapes for immediate sale or stored in an earthenware crock to be kept in the cellar indefinitely.

Later, of course, Harcourt dairies enlarged their herds, milked their cows in a concrete cowshed (made in prefabricated panels by Harcourt's Walter Gartside), invested in a milking machine and refrigerated vats and either sold whole milk to Friswell's, Symons or Sandhurst Dairies, or collected the cream in cream cans for twice weekly pickup by the Newstead Butter Factory's old Bedford truck.

Dairies that were operating in Harcourt in the middle of last century included those of the Douglas Brothers, Charlie Grant, John Hague, Tom Hogarth, the Howarth family, the Iskovs, Malcolm Robertson, Ken Robins, Alan Salathiel and Jack Trevenen.

The Newstead Butter Factory ceased trading in 1975, effectively ending Harcourt's era of cream production. By 1985, over-production in the European Economic Community had so depressed prices for dairy products that the closure of dairies was inevitable. Douglas's were the last to milk cows on a commercial scale in Harcourt, ceasing in 1986.

In the most recent series of articles in the *Core*, it has been possible to utilise old minute books and seemingly dry-as-dust account books to delve into the past of the Harcourt valley. Now, thanks to the James brothers' most welcome donation of old farm equipment, some newly gifted, century-old artefacts in the Harcourt Heritage Centre help us to better appreciate the enterprise and vigour of those who strove to make a living in Harcourt in the first half of the last century.

# KATIE FINLAY'S FRUIT GROWING TIPS

Hi everyone

It's such a joy to be at the start of a new fruit season, eating home-grown cherries, berries, strawberries, loquats, mulberries, apricots, and the first peaches. Enjoying bountiful summer fruit is a great reminder of why it's a good idea to plant a diversity of fruit trees in your garden. In a good year, you get a wonderful diversity of fruit and, in a bad year (which seem to happen often), you still get something!

We'd like to give a huge thank you to our amazing Fruit Crew volunteers at the Orchard Keepers orchard. Their hard work, enthusiasm and dedication make it possible for us to bring fresh, local and delicious organic fruit to our community every week at the Castlemaine Farmers Market every Wednesday afternoon at the Camp Reserve from 2.00 pm to 5.00 pm. We couldn't do it without them – their support helps us to keep one of Harcourt's oldest family orchards alive and thriving.

This is only the second year we've run the Fruit Crew program, so we were chuffed that 30 people signed up again (including lots of returning 'vollyies' from last year). Volunteers get daily fruit-growing lessons and plenty of fruit in exchange for their hard work and enthusiasm. But honestly, the main benefit for all of us is the wonderful sense of community, chats (and cake). It's a small program but very full of heart and joy.

We'd also like to thank *The Core* for giving us the chance to have a chat with you all each month. We love talking about fruit trees and helping people feel more confident with them. Our aim is to make abundant, home-grown organic fruit a reality for all, so it's been a delight to help many more people with their fruit trees this year.

Meanwhile, one of the things we're hearing a lot about this season is curly leaves and spotty fruit on fruit trees. Aphids are out and about, Pear and Cherry Slug has already made an appearance, and there's a fair sprinkling of Black Spot on the apples. Because there's no *Core* edition in January, we're loading you up with lots of tips this month.

**1. Curly leaves.** If you're noticing curly leaves on your trees, have a look inside the leaves to see whether you can spot the black aphids. They are

the main culprit for curly leaves on fruit trees (except for peaches and nectarines, when it's often caused by a fungal disease called Leaf Curl). If there are aphids on your trees, see if you can also spot any ants. The ants protect the aphids, and even move them from place to place. The first step to getting rid of aphids is to exclude the ants from the tree if possible. A sticky barrier around the trunk will often do the trick.

- 2. Slugs.** Keep an eye on your cherry and pear trees for the dreaded Pear and Cherry slugs. It's easy to spot them on the leaves, because they leave calling cards of bare patches on the leaves they've eaten. Luckily, they don't damage the fruit, but they can give the trees a hard time by eating all the leaves. As soon as you notice any on your trees, squash them by folding the leaf over (but don't pull the leaves off). It's quite easy to get rid of them on a small tree as long as you squash them every few days. On a bigger tree, you might need to dust the tree with wood ash a few times to help beat the slugs. As a last resort, you can use Eco-Neem to spray them.
- 3. Spotty fruit.** Another thing you may be noticing on your trees is various

kinds of spots on your fruit. There's lots of freckle on the apricots this year, a bit of brown rot is showing up in the stone fruit, and lots of apples and pears have black spot. If your fruit is spotty, don't panic, there's still something you can do to stop things getting worse. Though the main danger period for infection has passed, your fruit trees are still vulnerable to disease spreading at this time of year if it rains. Visit them regularly so you notice any problems that appear and aim to keep a 'cover spray' of wettable sulphur on your trees before any forecast rain.

- 4. Feed your trees.** Did you know that all these pests and diseases are more attracted to unhealthy trees? No matter what problem your fruit tree is experiencing, the first and best solution is always to work on creating healthy soil. Adding really good, home-made compost or worm castings is a great thing to do at the start of summer – or any time!
- 5. Fruit Fly.** You should definitely have at least one fruit fly monitoring trap out in your garden by now. The best type at this time of year is one that attracts male fruit flies e.g. the Biotrap. It contains a male pheromone that is specific to



Queensland Fruit Flies, so there's a better chance that anything you catch in the trap will be a QFF. You can buy new traps, or re-use last year's traps and just buy new inserts and lures for them (you can buy them from Mount Alexander Timber and Hardware in Campbells Creek). You can also make your own traps, but they're not nearly as good. The bait tends to go off really quickly and needs replacing, and also attracts lots of different types of insects, which makes it much harder to know for sure whether you've actually caught a fruit fly, as they can be tricky to identify. If you do think you've caught a QFF, try to get a positive ID. Try visiting Council's fruit fly page: [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/My-Property/Pets-and-animals/Wildlife-and-pests/Pests/Fruit-fly](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/My-Property/Pets-and-animals/Wildlife-and-pests/Pests/Fruit-fly) and if you need a fruit fly refresher, download a free Fruit Fly Resource Pack from our website: [growgreatfruit.com/product-category/free-stuff](http://growgreatfruit.com/product-category/free-stuff)

**6. Netting.** If you're planning to net your fruit trees, then the sooner the better as this will also help prevent fruit fly. As soon as you've finished fruit thinning the nets can go on. Surprisingly, white bird nets can help provide some protection against fruit fly, even if the holes are big enough to let flies through. However, this is not foolproof so, if you can afford it, use nets with holes small enough to keep out the fruit flies.

Fruit fly is a whole-of-community issue, so everyone can help to prevent it. If you've got fruit trees you can't look after, it's best to remove them. The most important thing we can all do (and luckily also the easiest) is don't bring fruit to Harcourt from other areas, particularly places like Bendigo or Maldon where fruit fly is more established. If you can't stop well-meaning friends from bringing you fruit or vegies from their garden, check it carefully, and if there's ANY doubt about whether it might have larvae in it, don't dispose of scraps or whole fruit that you don't eat in the compost or the rubbish. It's really important to make sure any larvae have been killed before the fruit is disposed of. Putting it in a black garbage bag in the sun for a few days will do the trick.

So many pests and diseases to watch out for at this time of year!

Happy holiday season everyone; and we hope you'll be enjoying some delicious, organic, home-grown fruit for Christmas.

**Hugh and Katie Finlay are certified organic orchardists and offer Grow Great Fruit organic home fruit growing courses. They're also founding members of the Harcourt Organic Farming Co-op. Head to [growgreatfruit.com](http://growgreatfruit.com) to sign up for their free Weekly Fruit Tips newsletter and register for one of their free online workshops.**

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# Grace Church

*This is a statement of belief by Grace Church.*

Jesus had an encounter with a rather rich young man. It played out like this ....

a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good – except God alone. You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honour your father and mother.'"

At this point the young man lies; the bible teaches that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. The young man declares

"Teacher ... all these I have kept since I was a boy." Jesus looked at him and **loved him**. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go and sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

This young man's problem was not that he was rich; his problem was that his riches were more important to him than God was. That is why Jesus asked him to give away his wealth and follow Jesus, becoming one of his disciples.

Let me ask you what is the most important thing to you in life? Money? Possessions? Wealth? Family? Health? All of these pale into insignificance when compared with the joy of knowing Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Saviour, and having the full assurance of eternal life. This is treasure indeed, true wealth, far superior to gold, platinum and diamonds.

God is not opposed to you prospering, and his perfect will for you is good health. Indeed, your prosperity should be the vehicle God uses to bless others who are in need. God is however opposed to you making materialism and wealth your God.

*Ps Roger Thurecht*

## Grace Church

**Service: 11.00am Sunday**  
**All Welcome**

**Pastors: Roger & Glenise Thurecht**  
**0422 605 897**  
[gracecastlemaine.org.au](http://gracecastlemaine.org.au)

**30 Buckley Street, Harcourt**

# Fair dinkum fun at Woop Woop



Woop Woop owner Judy Gleeson and tour guide 'Shazza' aka Sally Guildford enjoying one of the many games on offer.

Have you ever been to Woop Woop? Well now's your chance! The weird, wonderful and wacky sculpture garden which celebrates all things Aussie is back in action!

Located in Harcourt, the sculpture garden and tearooms are all 'bout 'aving a laugh using clever Aussie idioms and colloquialisms to entertain and delight.

Woop Woop was recently purchased by Judy Gleeson, a Canberran and long-time adult educator, who saw the property for sale online and said, 'Hell yeah!'

Judy has spent months lovingly restoring the large assortment of over 100 colourful sculptures depicting Aussie' sayings and slang. 'There's botanic gardens as well, with plaques that tell you where a lot of the plants are from,' Judy said. 'There's also some funny things, like the metal "social climber", the "botanicalsnobulatis". It's such a play on words and I love language. It's crazy and fun and I can

have people over for board games and music any time I want!'

Set on eight-acres of bushland, Woop Woop was the brainchild of Andy and Melva Graham, who first opened the unique sculpture garden and tea rooms in 2000. Sadly, Andy recently passed

away and Melva, who has retired to Castlemaine, put the much-loved property on the market.

Maintaining the property will be a gigantic task, Judy will be supported by her daughter Amanda who works in land management and is looking forward to looking after the large collection of native plants.

Judy has also sought assistance from a variety of workers through the HelpX cultural exchange program.

HelpX exchange worker Isabelle, who arrived from France two weeks ago to help out on the property, told the *Mail* that she has learnt a lot of Aussie slang in her short time there. True blue ocker tour guide 'Shazza', aka Sally Guildford, will guide visitors through the garden and help them play the games, including gumbboot throwing, bush billiards, and horse shoe throwing into an old 'dunny'.

The trio certainly tested their metal for Woop Woop's first opening in November, as a busload of 50 visitors was deposited on the doorstep as part of a mystery tour. The venue offers tours of the sculptures and games, poetry experiences, bush band jams, Aussie slang experiences and arts and

craft activities. It's perfect for private events, for social or sports clubs, birthday parties for young and old, tour groups and afternoon picnics with live music.

Take a tour of Woop Woop on Sunday December 8. Tour one starts at 10 am and tour two starts at 2 pm. Bring your sense of humour, friends, singing voices, camera, walking shoes and a hat for a zany, interactive event with a laugh around every corner!

Visit [www.facebook.com/events/2050606908725295](https://www.facebook.com/events/2050606908725295) for more information and to book. Woop Woop Sculpture Garden is located at 171 Blackjack Road, Harcourt. For more information contact Judy Gleeson via email at [gleeson.judy@gmail.com](mailto:gleeson.judy@gmail.com).

Jade Jungworth

Thank you to the Castlemaine Mail for sharing this article with The Core. The article first appeared in the Castlemaine Mail of Friday November 22, 2024.

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## Castlemaine Bus Lines

### Harcourt Services Monday to Friday

	am	pm	pm
Market St/Harmony Way (Harcourt)	8:55	12:10	2:25
Coolstore Road/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:56	12:11	2:26
Coolstore Road/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:57	12:12	2:27
Blackjack Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	9:03	12:18	2:33
Halford St/Barker St (Castlemaine)	9:05	12:20	2:35

### From Castlemaine to Harcourt Monday to Friday

Castlemaine RSL/Mostyn St (Castlemaine)	8:45	12:00	2:15
Wimble St/Barker St (Castlemaine)	8:48	12:03	2:18
Blackjack Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:53	12:08	2:23
Coolstore Rd/Midland Hwy (Harcourt)	8:54	12:09	2:24
Market St/Harmony Way (Harcourt)	8:55	12:10	2:25



## SUDOKU

Difficulty: Moderate

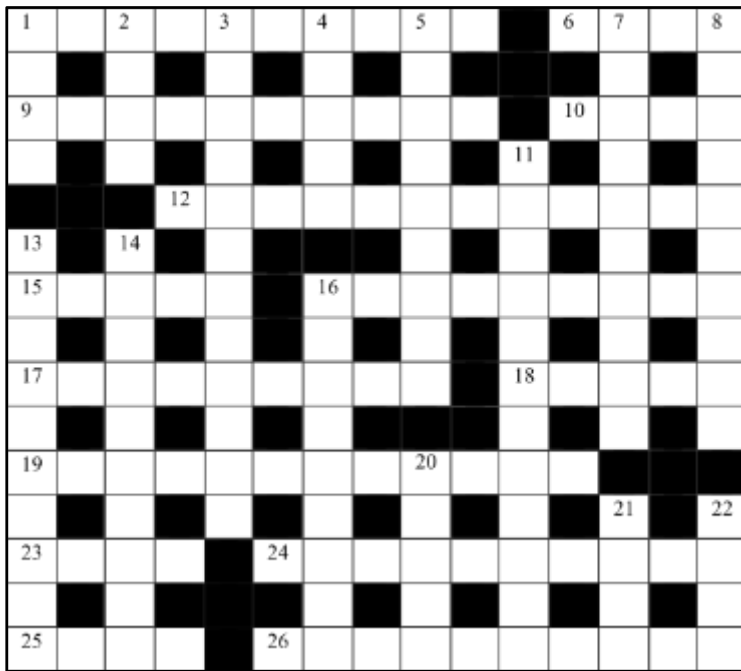
Fill the grid so every row, column and 3x3 frame contains every number from 1 to 9.

### October Solution

8	7	1	2	6	9	3	4	5
2	5	6	7	3	4	8	9	1
3	4	9	5	1	8	7	2	6
5	9	8	3	4	7	1	6	2
1	3	2	8	5	6	4	7	9
7	6	4	1	9	2	5	3	8
4	2	7	6	8	5	9	1	3
9	1	5	4	2	3	6	8	7
6	8	3	9	7	1	2	5	4

			6			8		
			1	2		3	9	
9				5			6	
					7			6
							4	
4				3		2		
		7	2					5
					3	4		
6		8					1	

# December 2024 Xword © McW '15



**Down:**

1. Said to be parts of a platform. (4)
2. May be put on either L or R... (4)
3. Job cards lead all the way up... (6,6)
4. Tell how a vegetable is insinuated into a text. (5)
5. Bubbly retired top worker? (9)
7. Sounds like small fry still available in some big libraries. (10)
8. Are satiny figs meeting all requirements? (10)
11. Soft touch on the Scots' back dam for salami etc. (12)
13. Quiet occupation of top office. (10)
14. Needs to be switched on to think? (5,5)
16. Elgar's one & two at the Proms? (9)
20. It was not child's play to put one of these on your Wild West rifle... (5)
21. Metal junction to darken windows? (4)
22. Leaving might get the crease out, but it'll often return to this... (4)

**Across:**

1. Hit rider? (4,6)
6. Endless smash, unknown at first, is just the thing for Noel. (4)
9. Rice scattered throughout, with no sound, is improper. (10)
10. This cat's fewmets, at least partly. (4)
12. If you're going to be like that, I'd prefer you to adopt a sober posture. (12)
15. Type of idiocy to be had away from the city...[and 15 & 16 depends on drought breaking.] (5)
16. Power of six can do. (9)
17. Spray in the general direction of political marketing. (9)
18. Grey, and acting like a chook... (5)
19. Railway navvies' two foremen? (12)
23. Pond version of Brahms and his fellow muso? (4)
24. Raiding the fort is Simon's way of being very loud. (10)
25. Where Jake the Peg *should* have been kept! (4)
26. A 19 sort of surname? (10)

# November 2024 Xword Solution © McW May '15



**Down:**

1. Common [**Co-**] fast food repeats a lot...
2. Let ace race—let him elect a race and watch him speed off!
3. Shut blue robe oddly to find precinct out of town.
4. Readymix urban wildernesses... [**Well?**]
5. The car loses, but after the race loss they can regroup and play this game.
6. They breed on computer desks... [**Well?**]
7. Sounds like ET with a guide dog... [**Well?**]
13. Citing a bad case of stage-fright, and in order to forestall the 'indict-a-bag' brigade, he is relinquishing the top spot.
15. Fashionable [**In-**] saint? Fashionable court? Innate pattern of behaviour!
16. Rover gift of Chinese government to British cops? [**Well?**]
19. Cage in New York supplies motive force in a roundabout way.
20. Muddled bird from Ypres has nothing for starters.
22. What the Mafia is under? [**Well?**]

**Across:**

8. Fairy in unique temporal conjunction? [**Well?**]
9. Secrete the hippo in Pythagoras for Native Americans? [**The squaw on the hippopotamus hide...**]
10. One French [**un...**] floor covering edition for bare boards.
11. Can a slab seem to put it all together?
12. Man of Steel before Howard? [**Well?**]
14. Failing to grasp the right felon? [**Well?**]
17. A backside aft. [**Well?**]
18. Aweigh! [**Well?**]
21. Correct neither obtuse nor acute. [**Well?**]
23. Key in sort.
24. So clean even CC wouldn't fail to recover during this.

# Council news

## Meet your new Councillors

We're pleased to announce your new Councillors for Mount Alexander Shire Council.

We're looking forward to working with them and our community over the next term.

Your Councillors are:

**Barkers Creek Ward** - Rosie Annear (returning)  
**Calder Ward** - Tony Cordy (returning)  
**Campbells Creek Ward** - Bill Maltby (returning)  
**Coliban Ward** - Phillip Walker  
**Forest Creek Ward** - Toby Heydon  
**Loddon River Ward** - Matt Driscoll (returning)  
**Moonlight Creek Ward** - Lucas Maddock  
**Tarrengower Ward** - Rosalie Hastwell

Find out more about your Councillors at [mountalexander.vic.gov.au](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au).

## You're invited to Christmas lunch

Community Christmas Lunch is a free celebration open to all residents. It's the perfect way to come together and enjoy the season's festivities in a friendly environment.

**When:** Wednesday 25 December, 12.30pm

**Where:** Castlemaine Town Hall

**Cost:** Free - call 5472 4842 to book your place

Find out more at [cch.org.au](http://cch.org.au).

## Make a splash this summer!

Outdoor pools in Castlemaine, Harcourt, Maldon and Newstead are open from Saturday 7 December until Monday 10 March.

Find out more at [mountalexanderpools.com.au](http://mountalexanderpools.com.au).

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Let us know by sending the person's details to:  
[news@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:news@harcourt.vic.au)



*Gather* Harcourt

# Jazz in James

## Harcourt's End of Year Party

- ★ Pip Avent's Mouldy Jazz
- Medieval Swordplay ★  
(including tents and full-on action!)
- ★ Children's Activities
- Food Vans ★
- ★ Drink Vendors
- Market Stalls ★

**December 28th 4-8pm**  
**James Park, Harcourt**