

# HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE



Edition 124 – March 2025

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)

## School Leaders Inducted



**L**isa Chesters was present at the Harcourt Valley Primary School assembly on 20 February to congratulate the student leadership team for 2025. She said, 'It was a privilege to present the School Captains and leaders of Harcourt Valley Primary School with their 2025 leadership badges at the

assembly. Good luck for the year ahead!

Pictured are Ms Chesters with School Captains Merryn and Ada, and Vice Captains Chevelle, Bonnie and Asta.

Other School leaders are: Barker House Captains: Zoe & Charlotte; Lang House Captains: Mack & Remi; Mitchell House Captains: Olivia & Raf and the

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Team: Lucy, Charlie, Matilda & Harry and ECO Leaders: Jayla & Harry.



Use this QR code to read the full-colour issue of The Core online.

## CONTENTS

- Plan Harcourt – 3
- Grow Towards Zero – 4
- Roundabout Saga – 4
- Harcourt Lions Club – 5
- Councillor Comment – 5
- Message from VEC – 5
- Castlemaine Fringe Festival – 6
- Harcourt CFA – 8
- Harcourt Celebrates – 10
- Harcourt Valley Community House – 11
- Dhelkaya Health – 13
- Harcourt Carpet Bowls – 13
- Applefest Roundup – 14
- Applefest Art Show Awards – 15
- Symmetry Yoga – 15
- Harcourt Valley Landcare – 16
- Blumes Bakery is Open – 16
- HVPS – 17
- I Wear Two Hats – 17
- Harcourt Bowling Club – 18
- Harcourt Uniting Church – 19
- Applefest Cookery Results – 19
- Linda Newton Art – 19
- The Alchemy of Gold – 20
- Harcourt CWA – 20
- The Heritage Centre – 21
- Weather & Water – 22
- Growing Abundance – 22
- Gardening – 23
- Grace Church – 24
- Council News – 25
- Crossword – 26
- Sudoku – 27
- Repair Café – 27

## 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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Bernie Schultz

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**mainFM** is an award winning radio station based in Castlemaine, broadcasting music, community news, talks and specialist programs and events throughout a large area of Central Victoria, serving our community.

With over 100 local volunteer presenters with a passion for radio, our programs are varied and diverse with over 70 shows across the program grid, transmitting 24 hours a day and streaming online via [mainfm.net](http://mainfm.net)

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main  
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LISTEN LOCAL

## COMMUNITY DIARY

**Thursday March 13:** 7.00 pm Landcare Meeting, Harcourt Heritage Centre.

**Sunday March 23:** 10 am Landcare Working Bee. See the web site for information.

**Saturday March 29:** Gather Abba (see page 28).

**Friday April 25:** ANZAC Day march and ceremony.

**Community House:** See page 11 for March activities

**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.

# Plan Harcourt Legal Success

In a long term venture from 2018 to 2025, the planning team of the Shire of Mount Alexander, Harcourt residents, representatives of Harcourt Valley Landcare and the Harcourt Progress Association were involved in a robust debate about development in Harcourt. There were many public meetings in Harcourt, appearances by the Shire at local events, regular bulletins in The Core, and a VCAT hearing of great importance. As a result of the outcome of the VCAT hearing a new type of housing development for Harcourt has arisen; a model for environmental protection.

President of Harcourt Valley Landcare, Terry Willis said, 'We have a chance for Harcourt to be a leading example of development with an environmental focus.'

'We'd like to recognise the hard work of the members of Harcourt Valley Landcare and the support of nature-loving residents of Harcourt. Without their passion for biodiversity, wild life corridors and the natural beauty of Harcourt Valley there would be no protection for Harcourt's stunning old river red gums, our incredible spring-time wildflowers or our threatened brush-tailed phascogale.'

For more information on Plan Harcourt and associated plans see: <https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au> and type in *Plan Harcourt*



# Sustainable growth in Harcourt secured following new planning scheme changes



Mount Alexander Shire Council is pleased to announce new planning controls for Harcourt that respect heritage, environment and economic potential have been approved by the Victorian Government's Minister for Planning, Sonia Kilkenny.

These planning controls, referred to as Amendment C94malx, have resulted in a number of changes to the Mount Alexander Planning Scheme.

From now on, any development in Harcourt will need to refer to the new planning controls, which aim to support the sustainable development of Harcourt.

Specifically, key planning changes are:

- ▶ Protecting biodiversity – Rezoning select farming areas to Rural Conservation Zone and applying Environmental and Vegetation Protection Overlays.
- ▶ Encouraging commercial activity – Rezoning parts of High Street and Harmony Way to Commercial 1 and Mixed Use Zones.
- ▶ Managing residential growth – Rezoning land east and northeast of town to Neighbourhood Residential Zone while discouraging development outside the township boundary.
- ▶ Transitioning land use – Rezoning a parcel at Coolstore Road and Blackjack Road to Rural Living Zone, removing references to future industrial use.
- ▶ Maintaining visual character – Applying a Design and Development Overlay to commercial areas, ensuring open space and view protection.
- ▶ Coordinating new residential areas – Applying a Development Plan Overlay to guide future growth with agricultural buffers.

The planning controls apply to public and private land in Harcourt, and have been informed by extensive community input over a number of years.

They are part of Council's long-term strategic planning project, Plan Harcourt, which has been underway since 2018. Plan Harcourt also includes the Harcourt Framework Plan, and was supported by several technical studies,

including the Harcourt Strategic Infrastructure Plan.

Calder Ward Councillor, Tony Cordy said he was happy to see the planning controls introduced, and thanked the community for their ongoing input and support. 'This has been an incredible journey, and one that our community has been a part of, right from the very start. It's involved multiple community consultation sessions over a number of years, and highlighted issues that are really important to Harcourt residents, for example: protecting biodiversity and the natural environment, managing growth, and the development of a distinct town centre. Thank you to everyone who's been involved in the project across the years. Through sharing your feedback with us, you've made a positive difference in our community,' said Cr Cordy.

**For more information on Plan Harcourt and Amendment C94malx, visit [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Plan-Harcourt](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Plan-Harcourt)**

## Plan Harcourt – Timeline:

- ▶ 2018  
Community consultation to inform development of Plan Harcourt.
- ▶ July 2020  
Plan Harcourt adopted by Council.
- ▶ Nov 2022  
Minister authorises Amendment C94malx with conditions.
- ▶ Jan–Mar 2022  
Public exhibition period.
- ▶ June 2022  
Council reviews submissions, appoints planning panel.
- ▶ Sept–Nov 2022  
Panel hearings and recommendations.
- ▶ Dec 2022–Apr 2023  
Further research and commercial land assessment.
- ▶ Mar 2023–June 2024  
Biodiversity assessments and community feedback.
- ▶ Aug 30 2024  
Amendment submitted for approval.
- ▶ Feb 7 2025  
Plan Harcourt approved for gazettal.

# Roundabout Saga

Who are you going to call?



When the roundabout is left unmown, the whole roundabout is a traffic hazard as visibility is significantly reduced. This sign has been left in place for a number of weeks after mowing further down the road to Castlemaine took place.

There have been some minor accidents when cars on the off ramp from the freeway arrive at the roundabout. It seems they are travelling too fast. A variety of incidents including hooning plague this site and residents who live nearby put up with a lot of noise.

## Parking beside a roundabout is illegal

Mown or not, the roundabout has a continuing traffic hazard which is the area where cars park beside the roundabout, behind the bollards. There is an ineffectual 'no standing' sign which can barely be seen until a car travelling to Castlemaine chooses to head in that direction. However, it can be seen as drivers take the option to head to Melbourne – so it's quite useless! The other sign is faded and also in a place that's difficult to read.

It is a policy of VicRoads that all fixtures on roundabouts are frangible. This means they will collapse without causing significant injuries. As a result of this policy, the bollards fall over



when given a nudge by a four wheel drive. Hence, several bollards have been removed and cars come and go off and onto the roundabout disrupting the flow of traffic. The potential for an accident is high.

Castlemaine Police have advised that if a car is seen parked behind the bollards, give them a ring and they will send a van out.

Phone: 5470 4100 to speak to a member of the local police. Strangely, this number comes up as Castlemaine Fire Station on my phone. If this happens, don't be deterred, it is the correct number.

There is an approved plan for an upgrade of the landscaping on the roundabout sitting with VicRoads however just as it was approved, severe funding cuts to VicRoads took place. VicRoads representatives have stated that maintenance would continue and that if features of the roundabout were damaged they would be replaced.

## Call the Hotline

### ► Road and traffic enquiries

Road and traffic enquiries are now managed by Transport Victoria. Call Transport Victoria on 13 37 78 from 8am-6pm, Monday-Friday.

### ► Report a road hazard

Road hazards are now managed by Transport Victoria. Call Transport Victoria on 13 11 70, 24 hours, 7 days a week.

Robyn Miller



Cultivating **community carbon** in Central Victoria

We are looking for landholders with a planting area of five hectares or more, or a collaboration with neighbours, to create native vegetation corridors. The Grow Towards Zero program is a unique opportunity for landholders to enhance biodiversity, offset carbon emissions, and restore ecosystems through large-scale revegetation.

Attract diverse wildlife, increase visual appeal, reduce soil erosion, improve soil health, and enhance your water quality.

Group presentations on offer throughout February.

Book now



Join us in promoting habitat restoration while enjoying lasting personal and environmental rewards - every action counts towards a sustainable future.

For more information, including eligibility criteria:

Visit - [www.nccma.vic.gov.au/grow-towards-zero](http://www.nccma.vic.gov.au/grow-towards-zero)

Email - [GrowTowardsZero@nccma.vic.gov.au](mailto:GrowTowardsZero@nccma.vic.gov.au)

Phone - (03) 5448 7124





## Councillor Comment

Hi all,

I paid my credit card yesterday. The bank teller took the time to show me how to do it at the ATM and explained that the teller only worked part time so it would be better if I did it that way. It seems like banks don't want to provide customer service. Like some of you, I have resisted going to internet banking, but it looks like that is the future. Nice business model for banks if they don't have to employ people.

At Council we have just about completed the induction of the new Council. The induction and training are mandated by the State Government. I guess the golden rule applies. He/she who has the gold controls everything. It is great to see our new Council working together and getting to know the extent of services Council operates and gets involved with.

Good news for Vaughan and Tarilta residents. The low-level crossing is now in place. If I recall correctly the bridge that the crossing replaces was in need of urgent repair in 2014. So, it has taken more than ten years to build a culvert. Not our best project.

During March and April there's lots on. By the time you read this our Applefest will be done and dusted. A big thank you to all involved. I am sure it will be a success and it will be well run by the team. We are also looking forward to the Fringe festival. There are so many events showcasing our local creative and performing artists.

At Council our work on the budget is well underway. This week we will be looking at what can be fitted in and what misses out. There is still a fair way to go with this before the draft budget goes out for public comment. The other major work in progress is the four-year Council plan. It sets out the roadmap for Council going forward. Plan for success!!

Best regards to all, Tony.

**A G Cordy**  
0439 742 434



## Didn't vote in the 2024 local council elections?

Close to 530,000 Victorians who appear to have failed to vote in the October 2024 local council elections will have an opportunity to explain why when they receive an 'Apparent failure to vote notice' in the coming days.

Electoral Commissioner Sven Bluemmel says the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) is urging people who receive a notice to respond with a detailed explanation, as the VEC is required to issue a fine of \$99 if a person fails to respond in writing within 28 days.

'An 'Apparent failure to vote notice' is not a fine – it's a chance to explain why you appear not to have voted,' Mr Bluemmel said.

'If you respond to the notice in writing with a valid reason and evidence, you are much more likely to be excused.

'Completing and sending the notice back to us within the 28-day timeframe gives us a chance to consider your explanation and whether you can be excused.'

Voting in local council elections is compulsory in Victoria if you were enrolled to vote.

Voters are encouraged to sign up to receive VEC VoterAlert updates to receive reminders about future state and local council elections at: [vec.vic.gov.au/VoterAlert](http://vec.vic.gov.au/VoterAlert)



Seen at Applefest. Photo: Mike Rule



## Harcourt Lions Club

Who will be the Harcourt Community Member of the Year?

At the recent meeting of Harcourt District Lions Club Inc. we voted on the nominations received for the Community Member of the Year award. We thank those who took the time to submit their nomination for a commendable member of their organisation or club. A decision has been made; however, I am not going to announce the worthy citizen here.

The winner will be announced at the Harcourt Applefest on Saturday 8 March 2025 at the Harcourt District Leisure Centre, on the Main Stage at 12 noon. Please come along so you can congratulate the worthy citizen chosen for the award.

Unfortunately, no nomination for the Youth of the Year was received by the closing date. I am sure there are many young people who have achieved success in their chosen field who could, and should, be encouraged with recognition in their achievements. Please consider nominating a young citizen next year.

In the previous *Core*, I wrongly announced our attendance at Gather Harcourt Abba at the end of March. Due to the format of the evening, we will not be doing our BBQ at that event, though I understand there will be food vans present. It sounds like it will be a lovely event to attend.

The next BBQ for the Harcourt Lions will be at the Muckleford Engine Club Rally over the weekend of 12 and 13 April 2025. It's always a good time to see many restored engines of past years and the vintage Tractor Pull event.

Those wishing to know more about the Harcourt District Lions Club can contact: PO Box 100 Harcourt 3453 or talk to one of our members at a BBQ event.

Loretta Rice

**CASTLEMAINE  
FRINGE *mm*  
FESTIVAL 2025**  
22nd March - 6th April

**The 2025  
Castlemaine Fringe  
Festival Program  
has landed...and it  
is HUGE!**

**Tickets to the 2025  
Castlemaine Fringe  
Festival program are now  
on sale.**

**What:** 2025 Castlemaine Fringe Festival

**Dates:** Saturday 22 March -  
Sunday 6 April

**Location:** Castlemaine &  
Surrounds, Dja Dja Wurrung  
Country, VIC

The festival's biggest program yet  
features a mix of **more than 160  
ticketed & free events**, including:

**20 Theatre & Fabulous Theatrics** –  
From experimental theatre to  
cabaret to immersive performances

**44 Live Music** – Showcasing a  
diverse lineup of artists & genres,  
including international acts

**62 Open Studios & Exhibitions** –  
Meet local artists and explore  
Castlemaine's creative spaces

**10 Comedy Acts** – A mix of stand-up,  
improv, and boundary-pushing  
performances

**7 Film & Literature Events** –  
Bringing storytelling to life through  
cinema and literature

**8 Social Impact Events** – Thought-  
provoking performances and  
conversations

**11 Creative Workshops** – Learn from  
experienced artists & industry  
professionals

For over **30 years**, **Castlemaine  
Fringe has been a platform for  
independent artists, musicians,  
performers and creatives**, offering  
space for innovation and artistic  
expression outside the mainstream.  
Fringe is rooted in **inclusion,  
accessibility and community**,  
committed to **affordability,  
accessibility** and ensuring local talent  
is supported, while keeping the arts  
accessible to all audiences.

The 2025 Event will kick off with a  
**HUGE, FREE STREET PARTY  
SPECTACULAR on Saturday 22  
March**, outside the Castlemaine  
Town Hall and in surrounding streets:  
featuring 3 stages, 150+ performers,  
food & drink, all ages, bands, dance  
acts, live art painting, projections,  
DJs and more.

Castlemaine Fringe 2025 will close  
with **MONSTER MASH on Sunday 6  
April in VICTORY PARK**

A family friendly afternoon of cosmic  
delights for space monsters and  
adventurers of all sizes,

featuring performance, creative  
activities, dancing & DJs. Space  
themed costumes, picnics and  
blankets encouraged!

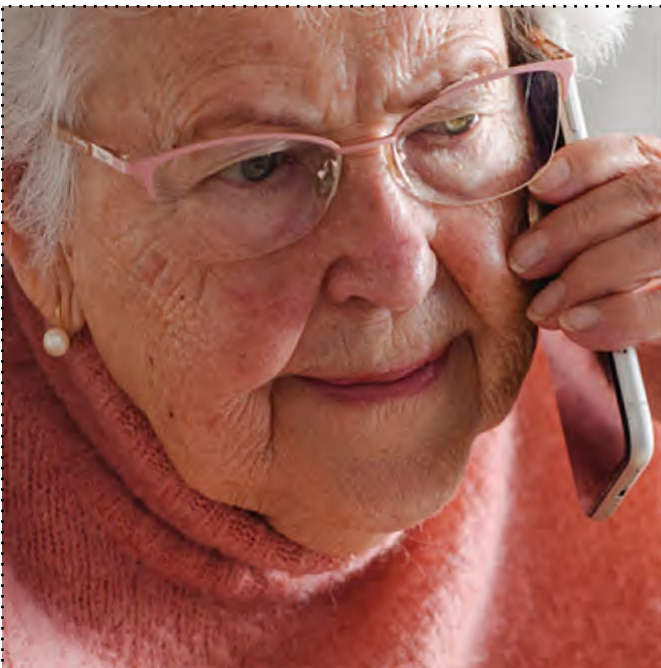
**TICKETS FOR 2025 CASTLEMAINE  
FRINGE ARE AVAILABLE via:**  
**[www.castlemainefringe.org.au](http://www.castlemainefringe.org.au)**

For further information, please  
contact:

**Fionna Allan - Operations Manager**,  
Castlemaine Fringe:  
[castlemainefringeoperations@gmail.com](mailto:castlemainefringeoperations@gmail.com)

**Azzy Jones - Festival Director**,  
Castlemaine Fringe  
[castlemainefringefestival@gmail.com](mailto:castlemainefringefestival@gmail.com)

Follow  
Castlemaine Fringe Festival  
on **Instagram** ([www.instagram.com/  
castlemainefringefestival/](http://www.instagram.com/castlemainefringefestival/))  
and  
**Facebook** ([www.facebook.com/  
CastlemaineFringe/](http://www.facebook.com/CastlemaineFringe/))  
for updates.



**Are you concerned  
about scams?**

You're invited to a free community session with Jack Kennedy from Bendigo Bank's Financial Crime Risk Department and Lyn Hartley from Community Bank Maldon who will share insights on the importance of online safety and how to identify and prevent scams.

**Thursday, 27 March, from 5pm to 6pm** at the **Maldon Neighbourhood Centre** (1 Church Street, Maldon).  
You don't have to be a bank customer to come along.

RSVP for catering purposes by calling 5475 1747  
or emailing [MaldonMailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au](mailto:MaldonMailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au).

Community Bank  
Maldon & District

 Bendigo Bank

# CASTLEMAINE FRINGE FESTIVAL 2025

22 MARCH - 6 APRIL

KICKING OFF ON 22 MARCH WITH AN OPENING NIGHT STREET PARTY SPECTACULAR ON THE STEPS OF THE CASTLEMAINE TOWN HALL, MECHANICS LANE & COMMUNITY HOUSE PRECINCT. 4PM TO LATE.

## 160+ EVENTS

- MUSIC
- THEATRE
- COMEDY
- FILM
- LITERATURE
- SOCIAL IMPACT
- WORKSHOPS
- EXHIBITIONS
- OPEN STUDIOS
- FOOD & DRINK

& MORE

SEE WHAT'S ON & BOOK TICKETS ONLINE  
**CASTLEMAINEFRINGE.ORG.AU**



Seen at Applefest. Photo: Mike Rule



Seen at Applefest. Photo: Mike Rule

Lmct:10769



# HARCOURT Auto Wreckers

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# Harcourt CFA

## Fire Restrictions Not Ended Yet

Fire restrictions do not end at a set time each fire season but are determined by the weather. Significant rainfall and cooler conditions are factored into when they finish.

February has had some significantly hot days leading to declarations of Total Fire Ban days (TFBs). On these days there are extra restrictions as to what can be done to ensure the risk of a fire starting is reduced. The 'Can I, Can't I' brochure lists what these restrictions are.

Victoria is divided into nine fire districts for the determination of TFBs, and the greater Harcourt area is divided across two of the districts being Northern Country for the area in the Shire of Greater Bendigo and North Central for the area in the Shire of Mount Alexander. On occasion, one of the fire districts can have a TFB and the other not, and this did occur in February this year. That is why it is always important to know – whether you are at home or away on holiday – what fire district you are in.

On major roads there is signage to show where borders of fire districts are. There is also a full list of which shires are in each fire district as well as the 'Can I, Can't I' information on the CFA website ([cfa.vic.gov.au](http://cfa.vic.gov.au)), or we have paper copies available.

### Brigade Training

Our 2025 training program kicked off in late January with a desktop exercise in Command & Control, Strike Team requirements and Turnout Procedures. In February, we invited the Taradale brigade along to join us in a hose lay exercise. We have used the hose lay techniques for a number of 'hard to get to' fires over the years, and the Taradale brigade was interested to learn about the advantages that this can offer. We utilised the park area near the fire station, and doing that gave the grassed area a bonus drink.

### An Increase in Turnouts for February

February saw an increase in the number of turnouts, with eight callouts. It is pleasing to note that only three of these were actual fires.

The first was to support the Elphinstone brigade to a fire started by a lightning strike. The second was to support the Sutton Grange brigade to a rooftop solar panel installation fire and the third was to a shed fire that spread into nearby trees in Specimen Gully Road, Barkers Creek.

The other incidents were to a tree across the Harcourt North/Sedgwick Road in the early hours of February 3, a smoke sighting in Tomkies Road Castlemaine, a car that ran off the road on the Sutton Grange side of the north gap road of the mount, a vehicle accident on the Calder Freeway, and an alarm at Don KR when a fire sprinkler head had been accidentally broken off.

As you can see, we can get quite a variety of calls for assistance and we therefore train across a wide spectrum of scenarios.

Preparation is vital for efficient responses and this was demonstrated at the recent shed fire. There was a delay in getting vehicles on scene due to two factors: the first being no accurate address given to the Triple Zero call taker, and the second was the narrow access through the bush. Please keep this in mind if you need to call for help. Tell the call taker as much as you can about your emergency and remember to indicate what access is available to your property, house and other buildings.

Stay Safe and Stay Prepared.

*Tyrone Rice*  
Brigade Community Safety  
Coordinator



Brush-tailed Phascogales rely on the hollows of large, old trees for shelter and a place to raise their babies. But a huge proportion of the trees that once provided these hollows have been lost. With young trees taking over 100 years to grow large enough hollows for Phascogales, nest boxes provide the only alternative. Learn to build a nesting box that's right for Phascogales with wildlife nesting box expert Miles Geldard. (Hint: not just any nest box will do. All our native creatures have preferences.)

**Bring:** drill, safety glasses, ear protection, work gloves

**Wear:** close-fitting clothing to avoid entanglement when using power tools

**We will provide:** Lunch, tea and coffee

**Bookings:** [Harcourtnestboxes.eventbrite.com](http://Harcourtnestboxes.eventbrite.com)

**About Miles Geldard:** [wildlifeneboxes.com.au](http://wildlifeneboxes.com.au)

**Contact:** [info@harcourtvalleylandcare.org](mailto:info@harcourtvalleylandcare.org)



Thanks to the generous support of Landcare Victoria Grants program 2023



Tickets: [Harcourtnestboxes.eventbrite.com](http://Harcourtnestboxes.eventbrite.com)



# Recycling rigid plastic containers

Empty, rigid plastic containers from the kitchen, laundry and bathroom go in the mixed recycling bin.

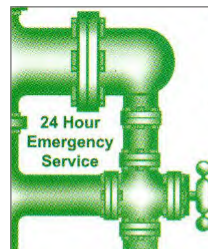
Unless you have access to a dedicated soft plastic recycling service, place plastic bags, polystyrene (styrofoam), foam meat trays, take away coffee cups and other soft plastics (codes 3, 4, 6 & 7) in the rubbish bin.

\*Visit [www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/My-Property/Waste-and-recycling](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/My-Property/Waste-and-recycling) for lid recycling programs



solar power | battery storage | insulation | heat pump hot water, heating and cooling | insulating blinds | ceiling fans | EV charging

49 Lyons Street, Newstead 3462 Tues to Sat from 10am  
t: 5472 4160 e: [energy@enviroshopnewstead.au](mailto:energy@enviroshopnewstead.au)  
[www.enviroshopnewstead.au](http://www.enviroshopnewstead.au)



## PLUMBER

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**Covering all Aspects of Plumbing**

Mobile: 0408 371 885

Email: [brucerae3@bigpond.com](mailto:brucerae3@bigpond.com)

# Harcourt Celebrates



**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)

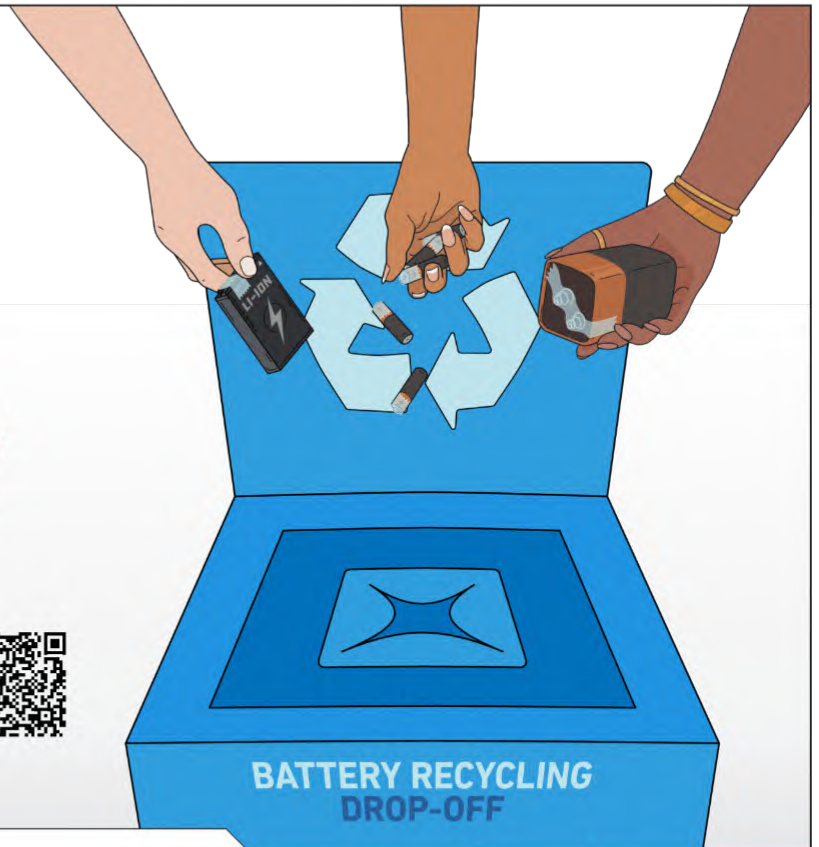
or

[harcourtapplefest.market.vic@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtapplefest.market.vic@gmail.com)

## Small acts make a big impact.

Take used batteries to the Castlemaine and Maldon transfer stations.

Disposal for recycling is free.



**KNIGHTMOVES**  
 R n B = 4 Piece Band  
 60s 70s 80s +

**BOOKINGS**  
 Trev: 0421 957 168  
 Tony: 0439 742 434  
 Lou: 0416 146 417  
[knightmovesband@gmail.com](mailto:knightmovesband@gmail.com)

### HARCOURT VALLEY VINEYARD

Visit Bendigo's Most Awarded Winery

- ▶ Weddings, events and functions
- ▶ 2021 Brides Choice Awards winner

Open Sunday 12–4 pm or by appointment only

Bookings please call Marie on 0431 996 515

Harcourt Valley Vineyards

3339 Harmony Way, Harcourt, Vic 3453

P: 03 5474 2223



HARCOURT VALLEY VINEYARDS



# Harcourt Valley Community House News

The HVCH have been open since February 17 on Mondays from 10 am until 2 pm and we have had a quiet start to the year with the new operational committee (the H-Team) busy planning activities. While our regular day will be Monday, we have found that we will occasionally offer programs or activities on alternative days (see schedule below). When that happens, we won't be open on the Monday of the same week. This chopping and changing about is to accommodate various guest tutors or presenters when the Monday doesn't suit or if the activity is best offered on an alternative day for other reasons. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page to keep you up to date.

## Activities for March

Coming up for the remaining weeks in March...

- ▶ **Monday March 10:** Closed due to Labour Day public holiday
- ▶ **Thursday March 13 from 1 pm - 2 pm:** Free Health Checks and information on health screening with a community nurse from Dhelkaya Health. Please let us know in advance if you wish to attend as it will help the Community Health Nurse plan the session.
- ▶ **Monday March 17** Closed as the HVCH will be open on Wednesday this week.
- ▶ **Wednesday March 19:** Community Lunch 12:30–1:30 pm. Cost \$7 for 2 courses including gluten free and vegan options. Enjoy good food in good company. Watch our Facebook page for the announcement of the menu a bit closer to the day. Bookings are essential as places will be limited. To book, please email [harcourtvalleych@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtvalleych@gmail.com) or phone 4417 8742 (leave a message)
- ▶ **Monday March 24 from 10:30 am - 11:30 am:** Basic First Aid for your Pet. Local Vet, Dr. Rena Geroe will help build your knowledge in basic pet first aid to help you care for your fur babies. Cost \$15 per person (full) or \$10 concession card holders.
- ▶ **Monday March 31 from 10:30 am - 1:30 pm:** Cooking for Kids Workshop. Are you at a loss for new healthy recipes your kids will actually eat? Learn some new healthy recipes to revitalise your child's lunch box and enthusiasm at the dinner table. Cost \$15 per person (full) or \$10 concession card holders and

includes food. Bookings are essential as numbers are limited and food has to be purchased in advance.

- ▶ **Mondays April 7 & 14:** Closed due to school holidays.
- ▶ **Monday April 21:** closed due to Easter Monday

**Look for our April/May program in the April edition of *The Core***

## HVCH Logo

Big thanks to Wayne WiHare from WPW Designs for his work to produce our logo. Look for our branding on posters and socials. A little bit of background: Wayne has stylised the outline from a historic photo of the old railway station incorporating a golden/red apple to represent the setting sun over the building. The green roof is to further remind you we are in Harcourt Apple Country – the colour of a Granny Smith. Thank you so much Wayne for our wonderful and unique Community House logo!

## A big thank you for your continued support with our bottle and cans fundraiser

Wow, thanks to the residents and businesses from Harcourt, we have now raised over \$800 from the collection of 10c (refund) bottles and cans! This is amazing support, and we thank everyone most sincerely, please keep them coming! We have two little requests; no full-size wine bottles please, as they are not eligible for refund (fortunately, the little piccolos are, so keep them coming), and please do not crush cans or plastic (PET)



bottles. If you can't see the barcode and/or they do not travel smoothly on the conveyor belt, they will be rejected by the collection centre.

Did you know you can take your own cans and bottles to a collection centre and choose us from the 'Donation' menu on the CDS Vic North App? Go to 'Donations; and put 'Harcourt' in the search and we will pop up under 'Harcourt Valley Community House'. But we are happy to do that for you, it's the least we can do for your wonderful support!

## Contact us,:

We have a new email address, please contact us on [harcourtvalleych@gmail.com](mailto:harcourtvalleych@gmail.com)

Come and see us at **23 Station Street, Harcourt** (the old railway station) during advertised opening hours.

Phone us on **4417 8742** – please always leave a message, the phone doesn't ring but messages are always monitored and we will call you back.



## Fundraising: Container Deposit Scheme

We collect 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)



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Police are out there to keep you safe. If you still choose to take risks while driving and break the road rules, chances are you will be caught.

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### News

Dhelkaya Health runs regular monthly walks in various locations in our shire. Often supported by volunteers, these walks are free and offer a great way to connect with others and explore our beautiful region.

Our Parenting in the Modern World series kicks off this month. These free talks are designed to help parents and carers support the health and wellbeing of the young people they care for.

### Programs & Services

#### Care at Home

The benefits of receiving care at home can be transformative. Dhelkaya Health's comprehensive at-home care solutions are designed to meet your unique health needs while enabling you to stay at home in a familiar, supportive setting.

Learn more about Care at Home: [dhelkayahealth.org.au/care-at-home](http://dhelkayahealth.org.au/care-at-home)

### Events

#### Maldon Monthly Walking Tour at Maldon Vintage Machinery Museum

Explore the treasures the museum has to offer while enjoying meeting new people or reconnecting with old friends. Meet at the museum.

**Time:** 9.30-10.30am  
**Date:** Thursday, 27 March  
**Cost:** Free

#### Parenting in the Modern World - Friendships, Relationships & Big Emotions in Young People

Free talk about parenting young people with changing emotions and behaviours. Information and tips on communicating well, negotiating boundaries, and talking about healthy relationships.

**Time:** 5.30-7pm  
**Date:** Thursday, 27 March  
**Venue:** Castlemaine Library

### Opportunities

#### Volunteering Opportunities

- **Men's Group Volunteer**  
Assist with a resident-led men's group on Wednesdays with aged care residents from 1.30-3.30pm
- **Footy Tipping Volunteer**  
Visit our aged care residents weekly to help manage the residents' footy tips

T. 5471 3565

#### Current Vacancies

- **Personal Care Workers - various positions**
- **Hotel Services Assistants - various positions**
- **Administration - various positions**

[dhelkayahealth.org.au](http://dhelkayahealth.org.au) | (03) 5471 3555



## Too Many Country Gardeners Missing Out

EPA Victoria says too many country gardeners are missing out on free soil screening from a government citizen science project that's mapping soil conditions across the state.

The state's environmental regulator says 2,000 home gardeners have registered and sent in more than 5,000 soil samples so far, but most have come from the metropolitan area.

Victoria's Chief Environmental Scientist, Prof Mark Patrick Taylor says it's a free service for home gardeners that does science and the environment a favour.

'Register on the EPA Victoria website, send in three small samples and you'll receive a scientific assessment of your soil condition and the trace elements it contains,' Prof Taylor said.

'It's a free offer to home gardeners anywhere in Victoria, but we're not seeing many samples from country areas so far,' he said.

'EPA's scientists will add your soil data to a study that is mapping soil condition across the state. You'll be helping scientific research and getting a detailed report on what's feeding your garden.'

So far, approximately 80% of the 5,800 individual samples screened have shown trace elements that are within recommended levels. EPA provides a scientific report, and if the soil is not up to scratch, EPA can give you some tips on ways to manage your garden.

'Any home gardener who sends in samples can have scientific results for the price of the postage to ensure your family is gardening in soil you can trust - we just need more country people to get involved,' Prof Taylor said.

**Register or see more details on GardenSafe on the EPA Victoria website: [epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/get-involved/citizen-science-program/gardensafe](http://epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/get-involved/citizen-science-program/gardensafe)**

## Summer competition finals soon for Harcourt Carpet Bowls

The Harcourt Carpet Bowls summer competition finishes on Wednesday 26 March. We have had a small number of bowlers unable to attend at times with members on holidays or illness but, generally, a good time has been had by all.

In the summer competition we had four teams of four players Alpha, Beta, Charlie and Delta. Thank you to Peter Henderson for organising the teams each week so we all had a game. The top team for the summer competition will be announced on the last night and be entered on the shield.

**Winter Competition -** The winter competition will begin in May after our Annual Meeting in April where the decision will be made as to whether we have enough players to continue the Harcourt Carpet Bowls Association. All new players will be made welcome and shown how the game is played. Everything is supplied, just come along and join in.

**Annual Meeting -** The Annual Meeting for the Harcourt Carpet Bowls Association will be held on Wednesday 16 April 2025 at 7.30pm at the Harcourt District Leisure Centre, Bingham Road, Harcourt, in the kitchen area. All will be made most welcome. If interested, but unable to attend the meeting, make contact on either number below.

**For further information, contact: John 5474 2226 or Loretta 5474 2453.**

# 2025 – Applefest Report



Thompsons Foundry Band opened Harcourt Applefest 2025 with the stirring notes of the Metro Goldwyn Meyer fanfare. With this upbeat note, Harcourt Uniting Church's Reverend Sarah Tomilson opened proceedings with a warm and inclusive Acknowledgement of Country. Rev Sarah said that from First Nations people through the various waves of immigration, our nation has been enriched and given vitality. These words were echoed later in the day by the deputy mayor and by our federal MHR, Lisa Chesters. And so, with a flourish, with enthusiastic creative sentiments, Harcourt Applefest was launched in its new location at the Leisure Centre and with an expanded range of attractions.

It is too early for the hard-working committee to calculate the actual attendances but, from kick-off time, huge crowds streamed through the gates. In past Applefests, vendors and clubs had found parking in the centre of town to be a tight squeeze, but all agreed that the new venue was generously sized and accommodating. Mount Alexander Shire staff and the volunteers who look after the Recreation Reserve and Leisure Centre should be proud to present such a well-maintained, user-friendly facility.

It was a joy to see throngs of people in

cornucopia of crafts, cakes, jams and relish that we have come to expect of the CWA. George Milford, Applefest Committee Chairperson said, 'It was a heartening demonstration of the values of CWA to see members from various towns across the region working together in peace and harmony under the leadership of the Regional Group President'.

A colourful and intricate display by the children of Harcourt Valley Primary School also drew the crowds. The underlying theme of their creations was the impending opening of the Miniature Railway. It was worthwhile lingering over their display to appreciate the children's work. Years 2 & 3 had created a felt map on which you could pick out many local features. Years 3 & 4's train posters adorned the wall, while the years 4/5/6 artwork focused on the all-important aspect of perspective. We can expect some wonderful art from these children in the future; they are being given a good foundation at our local primary school.

It was pleasing to see that the Applefest Art Show included a large section of student works. The high quality of the artworks submitted by the artists, young and old, can be judged by the fact

that sales of paintings were just over double the sales of last year. More than 30% of the works were sold. Mention must be made of the Art Show opening held on Friday night. Over its life of 31 years, the Applefest Art Show has built up a family of creative artists, determined to meet an exacting standard. There was palpable regret to learn that five of our loyal artists were no longer with us this year. But it was a real celebration of the achievements of the award winners. A full list of the art show awards is appended. Dr Paul Northam's comments about the various art works were, as usual, thoughtful and helpful. The overall winner, Col Brown, was visibly moved when he came forward to accept his Best in Show award to sustained applause.

There was an amazing range of market stalls, the cookery competition, and the Lego display, the children's entertainment which included rock wall climbing, laser tag and camel rides and the flawless and engrossing flow of on-stage entertainment. There was a lot to take in (and there were so many happy children – we know that they had a good time). Your reporter had a good laugh while watching the apple-pie eating competition.

The 2025 organising committee included several new faces. Our grateful thanks are due to them for the new insights and the new initiatives that were such a winner and crowd pleaser at Harcourt's big day.



Photo supplied by Ruth Hay



Photo supplied by Ruth Hay



Photos: Mike Rule

## Awards Applefest Art Show 2025

### Best in Show (Chairman's Award)

Artist: Col Brown, Title: 'Mount View'

### Highly Commended Oil/Acrylic

Artist: Janice Nokes Title: 'Enchanted Solitude'

### Best Oil/Acrylic (Cameron Lang Memorial Award)

Artist: Ann Neath Title: 'Bush Falls'

### Highly commended Watercolour

Artist: Garry Henshall Title: 'The Balcony'

### Best Watercolour (Shirley Stewart Memorial Award)

Artist: Aimee Black Title: 'The Kingfisher'

### Highly Commended Other Medium

Artist: Brian Harding Title: 'Light House, Point Lonsdale'

### Best Other Medium

Artist: Linda Newton Title: 'Robin's Nest'

### Highly Commended Local Subject

Artist: Colinda Mannix Title: 'The Garage'

### Best Local Subject

Artist: Col Brown Title: 'Harcourt Valley Apples'

### Student Awards

### Highly Commended Junior 12 years & under

Artist: Elvie Dobson Title: 'Woollen Landscape'

### Best Junior 12 years & under

Artist: Josie Allen Title: 'Apple Train'

### Highly Commended Senior 13 to 18 years

Artist: Tahlia Giffard Title: 'Henry'

### Best Senior 13 to 18 years

Artist: Holly White Title: 'Kookaburra'



Photos supplied by Ruth Hay

## Symmetry Yoga with Sarah

For yoga lovers and those who just want to give it a try, Sarah Allen holds classes in hatha style yoga in Harcourt, where she has lived since 2018. In her daily life she is a mother of three children, the younger two have attended kindergarten and primary school in Harcourt.

Sarah has practiced yoga for twenty years and is a trained and certified teacher with 200 hours of yoga training plus thirty hours of chair yoga training. 'I was drawn to yoga teaching because I wanted to be able to give people everything that I wanted in yoga,' she said.

'I began teaching in October 24 at the Coolstore Café; I also teach in Castlemaine and Bendigo. As well as yoga poses, I like to include elements of yoga philosophy and mindfulness in my teaching. In addition to group classes, I offer private lessons and private yoga plans tailored to the individual. I also offer separate workshops, for example, a children's yoga workshop or a more in-depth yoga workshop for three to four hours.'

### Wednesday class times in Harcourt at the Coolstore.

- ▶ Flow 7.15 – 8.15 am
- ▶ Chair 8.30 – 9.15 am
- ▶ Flow 5.45 – 6.45 pm
- ▶ Relax 7.00 – 8.00 pm

Sarah commented, 'As long as a student can get up from the mat they can participate in a flow class, as I offer adaptation to suit all those in class. All of my classes include Savasana and Pranayama. Savasana is a relaxation pose, often done lying on the back in a relaxed position with eyes closed. It's usually used at the end of a yoga session to help calm the mind and

body. Pranayama focuses on breath techniques that can bring clarity, stillness and vitality.

'Chair yoga suits those with less mobility and balance issues, however, while being seated, the students can do breath work, meditation and work through all the joints in the body to keep everything moving as much as possible. You are never too old to take up yoga. The oldest chair participants are in their early 80s.

'The Flow class includes breath work, warm up, then we flow through movements and balances followed by cooling down and savasana.

'The relax session at 7 pm is restorative yoga on a yoga mat, with breath work, holding postures and relaxation and includes philosophy through guided meditation during Savasana to finish.

'I am always mindful that yoga is an individual pursuit and needs to be adaptive so that it works for each person. It is always possible to build up to the final posture through a series of steps. Yoga can also incorporate hand weights and ankle weights to challenge those with a little more ability, and I can tailor training to any level of ability.

'I have noticed that there is really a strong community feeling about the classes in Harcourt. There are eight people per class. The chair class is currently full, with a waitlist available, but other classes have some capacity. Attendees can book per week or buy a pack of lessons, and rates are on the web site. People are able to attend a trial class for \$10, and if you bring a friend you both get a free class.'

Harcourt is fortunate to have its own 'live in' yoga teacher. So why not give yoga a go? See Sarah's advertisement for details.

Symmetry  
Yoga

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## Harcourt Valley Landcare has a Health Check

President of Harcourt Valley Landcare, Terry Willis called members together recently to discuss the achievements and goals of the group. 'Having a written five-year plan keeps us on focus and drives change where needed', said Terry.

'Some of our achievements include the creation of an extremely attractive website, thanks to member Vanessa Chiang, and we are regularly posting to Facebook and Instagram. We are moving to strengthen relationships with Harcourt Valley Primary School, other Landcare groups and other environmental groups in the area. A survey of our members has come up with some new ideas, for example, WhatsApp has given members a sounding board which enables quick messaging, and we believe it boosts connectivity between members.

'The 25-year anniversary was a great success as was our participation in Plan



*At the Pippin Court working bee, we weeded and cut back native grasses. The area is not maintained by the Shire, but @harcourtvalleylandcare does maintain it – 20 hours of community service on the day.*

Harcourt over the years. We closely worked with council to assist with protection of environmental values in Harcourt and we continue to keep communication open with the Shire's environmental officer. One of our major contributions to the Shire was the development of fruit fly awareness. This effort, run over a number of years, led to the council providing up to date information on its website about fruit fly.'

Opportunities identified included: getting a calendar set up and promoted, running kids' activities, conducting educational working bees or events, sharing knowledge and increasing opportunities for people to participate in addition to membership.

'We are always looking at ways to welcome the broader community,' says Terry. 'We are a family friendly and all ages group and welcome all genders,

neurotypes, ages, cultures, abilities. You can contribute in whichever way suits you, whether it's once or twice, or on a more regular basis.'

You can find out more about us on our website or our Facebook or Instagram pages! [www.harcourtvalleylandcare.org/](http://www.harcourtvalleylandcare.org/)



*It's a great example of some of the work we do in Harcourt Valley. We also: plant and maintain native plants on Barkers Creek; weed and clean up rubbish in the Flora Reserve; plant trees on members' properties; help out at working bees for Harcourt Valley PS, and have joint working bees with Barkers Creek Landcare. #harcourtvalleylandcare*

## Blumes Bakery Soft Opening

Fancy a 'Morning Bun' or some other treat? Blumes soft opening on March 1 proved tempting to many. The queue was out the door and lining up along the fence when *The Core* arrived.

People were enthused about 'being there' on the first day. Some travelled from Castlemaine and from over the mount. One patron from Sutton Grange said, 'I recommend the Monte Carlo biscuits and the lemon tarts. I can't I can't wait to try this cheese and jalapeño loaf!'



*Harcourtians Di, Paul, Vicki and Phil were delighted to be at the opening of the bakery.*

## Blumes Historic Bakery Reimagined and Reopened

On Saturday March 8, Maree Edwards MP, Member for Bendigo West, joined with the Harcourt community to officially re-open the Blumes Historic Bakery – made possible thanks to \$184,300 from the Allan Labor Government's Victorian Timber Innovation Fund (VTIF). Maree said, 'I congratulate Jodie, David and the whole team for the fantastic work they've done in transforming this bakery, and I know it will continue to be a much-loved meeting space for this community and beyond.'

The bakery's renovation is set to unlock new possibilities, increasing both the quantity and variety of baked goods, while becoming another drawcard for Central Victoria.

The grant has helped owners Jodie and David Pillinger to breathe new life into the building, funding renovations and the installation of a new electric deck oven and prover – replacing their reliance on the old wood-fired Scotch oven, affectionately known as Pearl. Jodie said, 'It's amazing for our small business and our community as well. This bakery has been at the heart of the Harcourt community for over a century and thanks to this grant it has the opportunity to be around for another hundred years.'

More jobs for local trades have been created during the restoration and fit-out phase. The owners have hired three new staff members as a result of this project, in addition to retaining the two full-time positions. The renovations to the bakery building included plumbing, plastering, painting and outdoor landscaping. The old oven has been kept as part of its restoration, and the space surrounding it will be used for community workshops and events.

### Learn more about the Victorian Timber Innovation Fund

**VTIF supports existing forestry businesses to transition away from native timber to alternative fibre, investigate manufacturing opportunities or pivot to other industry sectors.**

**Round 3 of the grants program is currently open. For more information call 1800 318 182 or visit, [vic.gov.au/forestry](http://vic.gov.au/forestry)**





# Harcourt Valley Primary School

The Core visited the primary school on the day that the school leadership positions were announced. The students were abuzz with anticipation to see which students were elected to positions of responsibility. As part of the proceedings the school captains took on their new roles and showed their skills, quickly bringing the students to attention and awarding points to students who were the first to settle and sit quietly.

Principal Andrew Blake announced in a recent newsletter that in terms of wellbeing, HVPS Wellbeing performance measures are rated high against similar schools' wellbeing performance measures. He said, 'Wellbeing is measured against a number of factors relating to: emotional awareness, managing bullying, school connectedness, stimulating learning, student voice and attendance at school. Well done HVPS on achieving such strong results. To continue to strengthen our wellbeing supports at school, Mrs Milne has been appointed as our Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader, and Marc, our school Chaplain continues to be here 3 days a fortnight.'

From a reading of the bulletins and newsletters for February, the school is well settled into its busy schedule.



*First day back and already making magical memories and learning experiences! The students learnt about the chemical changes of solids, liquids and water vapour as they got to observe the changes that occur when you add dry ice to water. What a fun way to celebrate the first day of the 2025 school year!*



Photos supplied by Ruth Hay



*Lisa Chesters presented the school with new Australian flags which will be hung in the assembly area.*

Year 3 and Year 5 students will be commencing NAPLAN (National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy) testing on Wednesday 12th March.

Mr Blake congratulated the students for their terrific enthusiasm and whole-hearted participation at the swimming sports. He said, 'It was great to see a lot of spirited barracking and thank you to the many parents who attended the event to help support all students on the day. I would also like to acknowledge the outstanding leadership shown by our House Captains and senior student leaders on the day. The final results saw Barker house in first place, Mitchell house in second place followed by Lang House. Congratulations to our team who entered the Division Swimming Carnival: Merryn, Ada, and Matilda. Matilda came third in freestyle, Ada fifth in freestyle and backstroke, and the team came third in the relay.'

'Other activities for the first month of school have included parent teacher interviews; the School Council meeting, and our big fund raising activity baking and selling apple pies at the Harcourt Applefest. Thank you to everyone who assisted during the numerous sessions of apple pie baking with parents and CWA members assisting.'



# I WEAR TWO HATS



At the last meeting of *The Core* committee, the topic of succession came up, again. The members of the committee are mostly 'of a certain age', and we often ask, how are we going to get more volunteers – none of us is getting any younger!

One important aspect of producing *The Core* is the layout – that's my role. It would be fantastic if we could find someone (or several someones) who would like to learn what was once called Desktop Publishing (DTP), but is now more likely called Design.

Learning DTP means that you could produce all sorts of designs – newsletters, flyers, cards, posters, even books – which could become an income stream. Learning DTP could count as credit towards a student's course assessment.

If you would like to learn DTP, then make contact with *The Core* by email: [news@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:news@harcourt.vic.au)

## Same message, different hat

I also do some volunteer work at the Harcourt Heritage Centre and, surprise, the topic of getting some 'not so grey-haired' volunteers crops up often. I do the technical side of stuff, and over the last three years I've converted the Centre's database to Microsoft Access. It would be terrific if someone (or several someones) could be found with some technical skills willing to learn the ropes of Access.

If you would like to learn the ins and outs of Microsoft Access, then make contact with the Heritage Centre by email: [heritage@harcourt.vic.au](mailto:heritage@harcourt.vic.au)

Bernie Schultz



# Harcourt Bowling Club

## A Winning Season

### **Pennant**

The Harcourt bowling season has been very successful this year with both Midweek and Weekend Pennant sides contesting finals. There is certain to be more about this in the April Core.

### **Midweek Pennant**

Harcourt Divisions 2 and 4 played out their preliminary finals games on Monday 24 February with both divisions playing at South Bendigo. Division 2 put up a valiant fight against Castlemaine with one rink up and a draw on another – they were just unable to get through to the next round.

Division 4 had a tussle all day against Strathfieldsaye and were delighted to come out of it as victors giving them a spot in the Grand Final. A great effort from a fourth ladder spot!

On Monday 3 March, Division 4 will play South Bendigo in the Grand Final at Eaglehawk. Results will be in the April Core.

### **Weekend Pennant**

Overall, it was a good result for Harcourt with two of the four Weekend Pennant teams contesting finals. Division 4 with fourth place and Division 7Blue with a commanding first ladder spot. So, in terms of semi-finals at the time of going to print, on Saturday 1 March Division 4 will play White Hills at Marong and Division 7Blue will play Bendigo East at Bendigo Bowls Club. We wish them all good luck and good bowling. Results will be in the April Core.

### **Girls on the Green**



The February Girls on the Green has been a great success with six teams of local women enjoying their bowling over the four weeks. As we go to print after the third round, Bee Jays were leading with Hooters a close second.



### **Singles Champion of Champions**

Harcourt Club Singles Champions, Kathy Harding and Mark Swain both represented the club in the Champion of Champions competition at Strathfieldsaye. Both bowled well in their respective games and were unfortunate not to go through to the next rounds, being beaten by stronger opponents on the day.



### **Men's Annual Fours Tournament**

Harcourt Bowling Club was host to 104 bowlers from across the state, for the Annual Men's Fours Tournament on Sunday 2 February. The event was played out in two 'Fills' with each playing 2 games of 8 ends and 1 game of 10 ends.

The First Fill sponsored by Kosmac & Clemens was won by John Grant's team with Rod Fletcher, John Grant, Willy Slingo and David Slingo. Runners-up were Daylesford team of 'Gibbo', Rod, Frank and Robin.



The Second Fill sponsored by Maxi IGA was won by a Strathfieldsaye team with Trevor Featherston, Vik Sabi, Terry Rasmussen and Travis Lyon. Runners-up were Phil Clarke's team of Benno, Barry, Rod Hamilton and Phil.

Tournament organiser, Rod Harris



presented the prizes on behalf of each of the sponsors, thanking them for their generous support of the event each year. Rod also extended thanks to the volunteers catering for the delicious lunch; the bar staff, and all who participated in organising the successful event.

### **Ladies' Annual Fours Tournament**

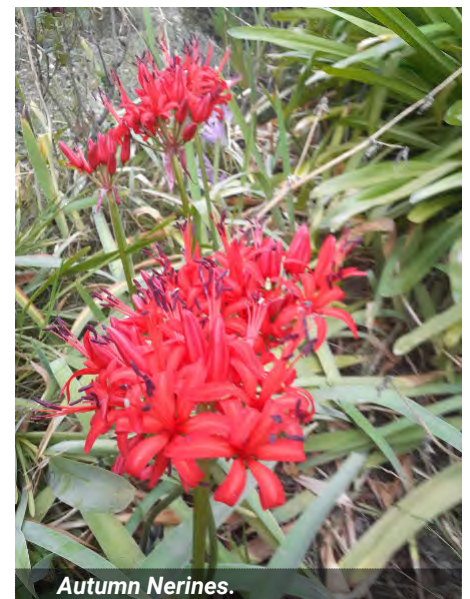
The annual Harcourt Ladies' Fours tournament sponsored by Mount Alexander Funerals was held on Thursday 20 February with all rinks filled by bowlers from across the region. The day commenced after morning tea with roll of ditch to ditch and winners being Kaye Tranter, Eaglehawk (Leads); Stella Gill, South Bendigo (Seconds); Marg Bennet, Bendigo (Thirds), and Sharon Koch, Bendigo (Skips).

Brian Leidle of Mount Alexander Funerals presented the prizes to the winners of the day, those being the Golden Square1 team with Lorraine Rowley, Kristin Skinner, Jenni Holborn and Rhonda Gould.

Also to the runners-up, a South Bendigo team of Ruth Challinor, Stella Gill, Bev Jennings and Marg Kirkpatrick. Tournament coordinator, Judi Miles extended thanks to the generous sponsor, Brian and to all who participated in making it a successful and enjoyable day. (See attached photos)

### **Friday Socials – Fortnightly Meal Nights**

The Friday night socials and meal nights have been very successful and will continue. It is expected that Barefoot Bowls will be incorporated into Friday nights after the Pennant season has finished.



Autumn Nerines.

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# Harcourt Uniting Church

No doubt you've noticed that hot cross buns and Easter eggs appeared on the shelves just after Christmas. It used to be an exciting moment when buns were cooked just before Easter and Easter eggs were simply chocolate eggs!

Easter in the church begins with Shrove Tuesday on March 4. It has also become known as Pancake Tuesday. On this last day before Lent, the tradition was to bake up a type of pancake using up any luxury items in the cupboard before fasting for Lent. Today, some decide to give up a favourite thing for Lent instead, namely chocolate, coffee, alcohol etc. At Harcourt we will cook up a pile of pancakes for morning tea, with any monetary donations going to the

Coffee Cup Challenge I wrote about in the February Core. Easter in 2025 begins on Good Friday, 18 April.

We look forward to inviting the community to the opening of the extension on our church later this year. We will have a modern kitchen area, a meeting place, plenty of cupboards and, most importantly, an all-accessible inside toilet!

In the meantime, we still meet every Sunday at 9.00 am, and all are welcome to join us anytime.

**'Darling,' coily apologised the new bride, 'I'm afraid your dinner is a little burnt tonight.' 'Good grief,' exclaimed the husband, 'don't tell me they had a fire at the take-away shop!'**

Jan Jenkin

Linda Newton



Robin's Nest

## Apple Cooking Competition Winners Applefest 2025

- |                           |                  |
|---------------------------|------------------|
| Apple Pie                 | Jane O'Donohue   |
| Apple Muffins Open        | Libby Page       |
| Apple Cake                | Robyn McConville |
| Apple Cake Gluten Free    | Angie Lane       |
| Apple Muffins – Secondary | Gemma Hartnett   |
| Apple Muffins – Primary   | Zoe O'Donohue    |
| AppleChutney              | Victoria Gibson. |



Maree Edwards assisting the cookery judges Anne Marie Primmer and Anne Marston.

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FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BENDIGO


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Authorised by Lisa Chesters, ALP,  
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# Chatting with Harcourt CWA

Hello everyone, greetings again from the Harcourt CWA ladies.

February was a really busy month for us with the usual fun and friendship! A group conference was held where Harcourt /Faraday locals Dani Kent and Judi Kent were re-elected group president and group secretary respectively. Congratulations to them both.

Preparing for the Harcourt Applefest was our major activity with jams, pickles, relishes, sauces and cordials made. Cakes and biscuits have been baked and huge hampers assembled and raffled. Some members helped Harcourt Valley Primary School with their apple pie making for the Applefest. Last year some CWA members won prizes in the cooking competitions and will enter again in 2025.

Thanks to everyone who supported our stall, bought raffle tickets or popped by to say hello, or to enquire about joining our happy bunch. Don't forget we meet on the first Thursday each month at the Harcourt Leisure Centre at 1.30 pm.

Let us leave you with a terrific apple cake recipe from our Harcourt CWA president, Robyn McConville, and a few apple themed jokes for the kids.

Until next month,

Bev Orgill, on behalf of the Harcourt CWA Group.

## Apple Cake

### Ingredients:

- ▶ 1½ cups of SR flour
- ▶ ¾ cup sugar
- ▶ 1 egg
- ▶ 1 teaspoon vanilla
- ▶ 125g melted butter

### Method

1. Mix all together with a fork.
2. Press ¾ of the above mixture into a greased cake tin. (I use a sponge tin.)
3. Spread well-drained fruit (pie apple, pie apricot, fresh rhubarb, or any other canned/fresh fruit over the top.
4. Drop dobs of remaining cake mixture over the top then sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.
5. Bake for 35-40 minutes in moderate oven.
6. Sultanas/flaked almonds or icing sugar can be sprinkled liberally over the top if you like.

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### Jokes for the Kids and the Mums and Dads

**Why did the apple pie go to the dentist?**

Because it needed a filling.

**Why did the apple pie cry?**

Its peelings were hurt.

**What did the fairy folk tell their kid when he ate his apple pie too fast?**

Stop goblin your dessert.

**Why did the apple stop in the middle of the road?**

It ran out of juice.

**If you have 13 apples in one hand and 10 apple pies in the other, what do you have?**

Very big hands

Enough!

## The Alchemy of Gold



The arrival of the Gold Escort in Melbourne by William Strutt 1851

As part of the National Trust's Australian Heritage Festival, **The Alchemy of Gold** will be a series of lectures, workshops and field visits which will take place in and around Castlemaine from **16 to 18 May 2025**

**The Alchemy of Gold** will be a special forum which brings together experts, historians and the community to explore how the discovery of gold in Victoria in the 1850s reshaped the colony.

From a fledgling colony, Victoria was transformed into an economic powerhouse with gold influencing not just the economy but also environmental, social and political landscapes.

*The Alchemy of Gold – The Golden Transformation of Victoria* event will offer an inspiring and thought-provoking program designed to illuminate the Victorian goldfields' rich gold history and its transformative impact on the colony. Engaging keynote presentations, panel discussions and field trips, led by renowned historians, cultural leaders and industry experts, will explore themes ranging from the legacy of the gold rush era to sustainable futures and regional development influenced by the goldfields' storied past.

The diverse line-up of eminent speakers will include local storytellers, researchers and innovators, each bringing unique perspectives to the conversation. Whether delving into historical insights, cultural evolution or community resilience, their expertise will captivate and inspire you.

You can visit **The Alchemy of Gold** website at: [thealchemyofgold.com.au](http://thealchemyofgold.com.au)





# Harcourt Heritage Centre

## Sixty-five years ago in Harcourt

On Melbourne Cup Day, Tuesday 4th November 1958, ten boys and girls from grade six at Harcourt Primary School rode out of the school ground on their bicycles. The group pedalled up to the Harcourt Cooperative Coolstores. They were not accompanied by any teacher, but, on their arrival, they found that work had paused so that the workers at the Coolstore could listen to the Melbourne Cup. A horse named Baystone won the cup with Mel Schumacher in the saddle.

Once the radio was silenced, the grade sixers were rounded up by their fruit packing instructor, Mr WH Harris. Each child was to pack a bushel case of apples in accordance with the rules of the Fruit Exporters Committee. For several school terms the boys and girls had attended apple packing classes conducted by the Department of Agriculture.

Fruit packing was a vital skill for Harcourt families. The fruit had to be uniformly sized, wrapped in tissue paper and placed in layers, with each apple or pear placed in accordance with the department diagram, either stem to cheek or facing the same way, depending on the size and variety.

When the top layer of fruit was in place, the top was inspected to ensure that it was strictly even before the corrugated cardboard 'strawboard' liner was put in position. The wooden case was lidded and the lid nailed down and wired shut. By adhering to the standard layout for each layer, the buyer could be certain of the exact number of pieces of fruit in the box. The fruit was to be so carefully packed that the contents of the wooden case would not move (or bruise) during transport.

For the grade sixers, this was the end of the year's instruction, but for the fruit packers at the Coolstore, this was the daily routine. Most Harcourt men and women spent hours on end standing by the fruit grader (sizing machine) packing fruit destined for distant markets, mostly taken away by rail or, in later years, by semi-trailer.

Most growers packed their own fruit, often working late into the evening, standing by their own fruit graders, while larger batches were packed by Coolstore or Harcourt Fruit Supply packers.

Each packer took a turn to pack smaller or larger fruit, each packer was given a number so that each could be paid by the number of cases they packed each day. It was said that you could barely see the hand movements of the packers, because they moved so fast to pick up the tissue, wrap the fruit and place it 'just so'.



Ken James' 2024 book *Schools of Barkers Creek, Harcourt & Harcourt North* devotes an entire chapter (Chapter 21) to the apple-packing classes and competitions that took place over the years 1920 to 1960.

In the early years, students competed in packing competitions against children from other orchard districts – Harcourt, Ravenswood South, Harcourt North, Croydon, Hastings, Pakenham, Tyabb, Red Hill, Moorooduc, Wantirna, East Burwood and Somerville. The schools competed at the Melbourne Royal Show for certificates and for ornate shields. Harcourt North School seems to have won the most trophies.

We might pause to think over the idea of primary school children being given vocational



training in apple packing. Sixty-five years ago, the boys and girls from the Harcourt School had spent lots of time in the orchard, the family packing shed or at the Harcourt Coolstore. There was an expectation that the children might graduate to employment as apple packers. That this did not always eventuate can be attributed to technological change, for example in the replacement of bushel cases with cardboard cartons.

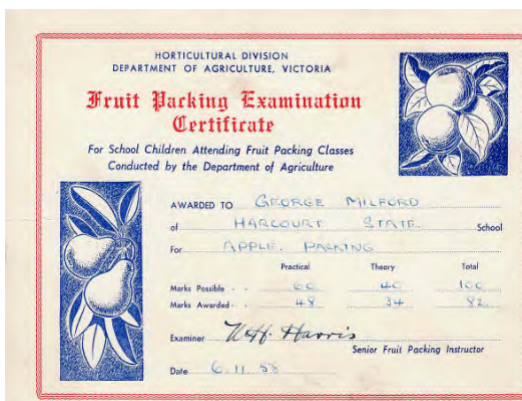
By the 1980s, most private graders had been scrapped. Fruit graders across the state have since been fitted with labelling devices, electronic and robotic gadgetry and tray fillers. But it did not hurt for the boys and girls to learn that, in the adult world, there are strict standards such as were imposed by the Fruit Exporters' requirements for the exact layout of each layer of apples in a bushel case.

Harcourt Heritage Centre displays many aspects of this era, including the DB Harvey & Co fruit grader, sizing rings, packing charts, embossed wrapping paper, bushel cases, award certificates and, notably, the shields. These shields, with their finely sculpted centrepieces, are each a work of art.

The collection provides an insight into a past era. It was certainly a different world, a world in which a schoolteacher could trust unaccompanied pupils to cycle to a distant workplace.

It was indeed a different era, as most of the districts that competed in fruit packing competition have now been absorbed into suburbia, leaving the Harcourt valley as one of the longest-surviving and pre-eminent apple-producing districts in Victoria.

*By George Milford, who was one of the schoolkids who arrived at the Harcourt Coolstores to be told to listen to the Melbourne Cup, 1958.*





# Weather & Water

## Hot and dry weather for final month of summer

I could be brief with the weather report and say that February was a dry month, but there was more going on beyond that simple statement. February began with a heatwave which lasted more than four days. On February 1, there was a wild wind from 10 pm. On Sunday February 2 we received 26 mm of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning. This was the only significant rainfall for the month. A cool change was expected on February 4 – on that day it was 39° at 5 pm. The expected cool change brought a drop in temperature to 29° on February 5.

The North Central Fire Region has had a rating of high fire danger nearly every day since early February, apart from three days of extreme fire danger on February 13, 22 and 23, which also had Total Fire Bans declared. On February 15, a rain squall darkened the valley briefly and a cold wind sprang up with it, however, the one or two millimetres of rain made no difference to the dry landscape. February 16 was a remarkably cool day beginning with a low of 6° and a top temperature of 18°. Less extreme weather lasted for about a week until February 22 and 23 when we had two days of extreme fire danger again. Since then there has been some moderation of the weather with temperatures in the low 30s during the day and cooler nights.

For the three months of December, January and February we had six days rated as total fire bans. There were six days of TFB in 2024 and only one in 2023, which was a wet year with a cool summer.

Signs of the approach of autumn were seen in the closing week of February. Crocus flowers bloomed (and quickly withered in the heat), and autumn flowering nerines began to burst into flower, and the plums and Nashi pears were ready for harvesting. Numerous bird species enjoyed the bird baths during the heat. The red gums burst their bark towards the end of the month and kangaroos have been coming in every night for a drink at the dam and a feed on the watered areas of grass.

### Reservoir Levels:

	16/2/25	19/1/25	17/11/24
Upper Coliban	64.3%	68.8%	83%
Lauriston	84.6%	91.3%	79.9%
Malmsbury	18.6%	16.8%	33.1%
Barkers Creek	33.7%	36.2%	38.7%

*Data sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology and Coliban Water websites.*



Crocus flowers.

### March to May Climate Outlook

- ▶ Rainfall is likely to be within the typical range for March to May for most of the southern half of Australia and parts of the NT and WA interior.
- ▶ Above average maximum temperatures are very likely (greater than 80% chance) for most of Australia. Days are likely to be warmer than average across much of the south and east. Nights are very likely to be above average across the continent, with an increased chance of unusually high overnight temperatures nationwide.
- ▶ The long-range forecast for February to April (issued 30 January 2025) suggests rainfall is likely to be above average for northern Australia and much of the south, with an increased chance of unusually high rainfall in these areas.

Sourced from the Bureau of Meteorology website: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary)

## Growing Abundance



Apple season is upon us and Growing Abundance is gearing up for a bumper harvest season! Having recently paired back up with Castlemaine Community House after its inception at the house over a decade ago, Growing Abundance is continuing to build networks of mutual aid and address food waste in our community.

Our frequent harvest days over summer and autumn are wonderful opportunities to meet new faces, learn skills and take home some gorgeous local produce. We are always welcoming new volunteers and fruit tree owners looking for support.

Get in touch via [growingabundance@cch.org.au](mailto:growingabundance@cch.org.au) and keep an eye on our Facebook page for upcoming events, for example, our annual Community Apple Juicing Day in May (details TBC). We'd love to share in the abundance with you!

# KATIE FINLAY'S FRUIT GROWING TIPS

## Fruit Tree Action Plan

Hi everyone,

We'd like to give a special hello to all the locals who just completed our Fruit Tree Action Plan live online course. A few hundred people did the course, and we helped them to write a plan for how to look after their fruit trees for the next 12 months. If the course sounds like it would be useful, but you missed it this time around, keep an eye on our newsletter (sign up details are below) because we'll probably run it again sometime.

### Good crop this year

We've had a cracker crop of apricots and plums this year, and the apples and pears are looking pretty good too! The best times to get fruit directly from the farm are at the weekly Farmers Market at the Camp Reserve in Castlemaine each Wednesday from 2.30-5.30 pm or the monthly Farmers Market on the first Sunday of the month at the Camp Reserve from 9.00 am-1.00 pm. We also offer occasional discount boxes you can order online; it's best to sign up to the Orchard Keepers newsletter to be alerted: [theorchardkeepers.com.au/contact](http://theorchardkeepers.com.au/contact)

As anyone with a fruit tree will have noticed, birds have been a shocker this year! Any fruit that hasn't been netted has been stripped from the trees. At least the musk lorikeets seem to finally have left the district (maybe because there's nothing left to eat!). So, hopefully you managed to get your nets on nice and early. We were a bit late with some varieties, which have severely impacted the quantities we picked. From now on, the rule is net everything, early!

How to deal with fruit-fly – danger period is not over

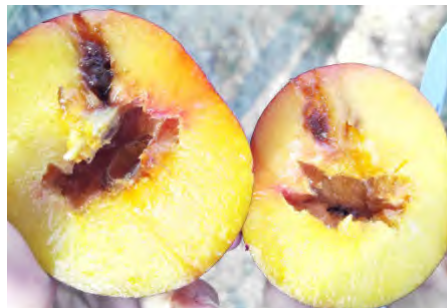
We've also had fruit-fly this year, but it turned up quite late in the season. Every year we learn a bit more about it, and are getting more confident all the time that we can identify and prevent it. If you still have fruit on your trees, the danger period is a long way from being over.

Here's what you can do:

1. Put monitoring traps out if you haven't already – 'Biotrap' is one that's recommended for monitoring (you can buy them from Mount Alexander Timber and Hardware in Campbells Creek, or online at

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

2. Monitor your traps at least weekly.
3. If you find flies in your trap or you notice infected fruit on the tree, go immediately to the next stage of your plan. This might include adding female bait and poison to your traps, putting out more traps (one per tree is not too many), netting, or spraying (with organic spray, of course!). The most effective way to protect your fruit is to net your trees, so it's worth having some fruit fly nets on hand in case you need to use them. Nets are expensive, so if you have a few trees think about buying a new one each year and gradually adding to your stock of nets.
4. Pick up all your fruit from the ground and make sure you kill any potential fruit fly larvae inside it before you dispose of it
5. Get more information from our website (we highly recommend you watch the fruit fly master class, if you haven't already), or the council website.



*Fruit fly in a plum.*

### Summer pruning

On other topics, it's just about time to start thinking about summer pruning of apricots and cherries. These trees are particularly prone to fungal disease. Pruning them in the warm, still weather of late summer/autumn can minimise the risk of disease, rather than waiting until the cold, wet weather of winter (when most other fruit trees are pruned).

However, in some circumstances it's also fine to prune your cherry or apricot trees in winter. For example, if they're still young (in the 'establishment' pruning phase), if the trees are disease-free, or if you're still learning how to prune and will find the job easier when

the leaves have fallen off and you can see what you're doing.

Before you start any pruning, make sure your secateurs are very sharp and clean, particularly if they've been used on diseased trees. It's easy to clean them in a 1:10 solution of bleach, or wipe the blades with eucalyptus oil. Some gardening experts recommend painting the pruning cuts, but we've found it preferable just to let the cuts dry naturally. Therefore it's always best to avoid pruning if there's a threat of rain.

Here are our top three tips for successful fruit growing in March:

1. If you've drape netted your trees, remove the nets as soon as you've picked the fruit. The heavy nets can weigh down the growing tips of your trees, and make it harder to prune them into a good shape, and it's also easier to get the nets off while there are still some leaves on the tree.
2. If you want to try growing your own peach trees this year (and save yourself the expense of buying trees), save the seeds from any peaches or nectarines that you eat. Any peach or nectarine will do. At this stage all you need to do is save the seed every time you eat one and just let the flesh rot off them. Then store the seeds in damp sand, keep them moist over winter, and they'll be ready to plant out next spring to grow your own rootstocks (which you can then graft).
3. Pears are one of the few fruit that need to be picked before they're ripe, and then ripened off the tree (some varieties can go floury if you ripen them on the tree). However, you still need to make sure the fruit is mature before you pick them. A great way to tell is to cut one open and look at the seeds – they should be dark brown and plump, or at least starting to go brown.

**Hugh and Katie Finlay are certified organic orchardists (The Orchard Keepers) 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.**

# Rabbits Invade Harcourt – Connecting Country Field Day

In mid-February Connecting Country organised a very well patronised Rabbit Control Field day led by Tim Bloomfield, from the Victorian Rabbit Action Network. The event was part of the Partnership against Pests Project funded by Agriculture Victoria. The day was held in Harcourt at the Heritage Centre before moving to a field site for demonstrations. Tim began by saying that rabbits 'love' the granitic soils which stretch in an arc from Harcourt to Maldon's Mount Tarrengower. He described how rabbits were introduced to Australia in 1859 by Thomas Austin, who for hunting purposes imported 13 wild European rabbits which eventually spread across the entire continent.

He said, 'Killing rabbits by shooting is easy but managing the landscape to eradicate rabbits is the difficult thing. Rabbits change the landscape and it is important to use a variety of control measures in the right sequence. These include baiting, fumigation of burrows and ripping to destroy burrow systems. Rabbit proof fencing is an effective tool but requires upfront expense and ongoing maintenance.'

'Rabbits need to be reduced by 85 to 95% to stop a population explosion. Two adult breeding rabbits will result in 184 rabbits in 12 months. If you don't have effective prevention methods rabbits will fill your property after you have cleared them, as they will return to existing burrows.. They can survive on low levels of protein and it only takes one to three rabbits per hectare to stop the regeneration of native plant species. If you set up an exclusion plot, you will be surprised by the amount of natural grasses etc that will grow if you keep rabbits out. Rabbits can spread 500 weed seeds per day which allows them to create their own habitat, for example, Box Thorn and Gorse.'

Tim recommended that neighbours in adjoining properties work together. He said, 'By using an app called Feral Scan, burrow sites can be accurately recorded in order to locate them for the use of fumigants or poison bait.' At the field site Tim demonstrated smoking a burrow to find the extent of the burrow and to identify the entrances.

In deciding which chemical baits to use around burrows, the choice is between 1080 or Pindone. 1080 is not as poisonous to native animals but is very poisonous to introduced animals like dogs so it is important to select the appropriate option for your situation. Tim commented that 'It is better to use 1080 bait with oats as Australian native species have some protection against 1080. To apply these chemicals it is necessary to have a Chemical Users Certificate with an endorsement to use 1080 and Pindone.'

'The usual method is to: fumigate, rip the burrows, bait and finally shoot the last few survivors. Ripping prevents the survivors from being able to hide easily. Burrows can go to 850 millimetres and will not go lower than the water table. If burrows are being ripped, the ripping needs to go outside the holes by 4 meters. To make ripping cost effective, neighbours can share the cost.'

Tim was formally thanked by the Connecting Country organisers; the attendees were very impressed with Tim's knowledge and advice and enjoyed a delicious morning tea and lunch provided as part of the course. Thanks were also extended to the property owners, who generously allowed the demonstrations to be carried out on their land.

Participants were interested to learn that Connecting Country will soon run a two-day course, which is heavily subsidised, at Castlemaine Community House.

For more information follow the Connecting Country website: <https://connectingcountry.org.au>

## Grace Church

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

Glenise and I had the privilege recently of ministering in a church in Ballarat. The topic of my message was "A Call to Arms – The Plight of the Lost."

Christians have this concept of "lost" or "saved" from an eternal perspective. Jesus' injunction that "you must be born again" – or from above – is taught in John's gospel, chapter three.

Evangelical and Pentecostal Christians emphasise this teaching "You must be born again." In fact, Jesus went so far as to tell a character named Nicodemus, "Do not marvel that I said you must be born again." He was told that he would not see the kingdom of God unless he was born again.

Some churches have a tradition called the "Altar Call." At the conclusion of the "preach" the altar is "thrown open" for anybody who is feeling in need of prayer. The minister, a man, a woman, a couple, or indeed even a team, is then available to pray for whoever comes out.

Often, those who come forward are folk who have realised that they are sinners in need of a saviour. They want to be "born again." This is a second birth, a spiritual rebirth, in response to God's love, which follows on from one's natural birth, and that is why it is termed being "born again." Unfortunately, this has become a hackneyed phrase, and even a term of derision in some quarters, but for the truly born-again believer in Christ Jesus the Lord it is a truly precious moment.

By the time this edition of *The Core* is published the Ballarat message will have appeared on YouTube. If you go to the website for the Southside Christian Fellowship Ballarat you shall find it – 45 minutes that could change your life.

*Ps Roger Thurecht, Grace Church*

## 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**



*Attendees gather at the field site for a discussion of rabbit eradication methods.*





# Council news

## Local artworks rolls out across waste collection trucks

We're excited to roll out a series of local artworks printed on our waste collection trucks.

The project features works by Kirsten Moegerlein, Joe Pratt and Thea Sydes that explore the sustainability theme 'reduce, reuse, recycle'.

Keep an eye out for our Cleanaway trucks, they'll be on their regular routes around the shire.

Read more at [mountalexander.vic.gov.au/news](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au/news).



## Event Grants now open

Our Event Grants program supports groups and individuals who are running public events. The last round supported 16 groups including Newstead Live, The Maine Game and Taradale Mineral Springs Festival.

Applications close on Friday 14 March.

Find out more and submit your application at [mountalexander.vic.gov.au/EventGrants](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au/EventGrants).

## Stay in the loop on Council news

Are you interested in what events are on around the shire? What about sustainability updates, local business opportunities or arts news?

We have something for everyone! Sign up at [mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Connect-with-us](http://mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Connect-with-us).

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# March 2025 Xword

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1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9								10						
11					12									
14								15		16				17
18		19				20						21		
22						23					24			
										25				
26								27						
28						29								

**Down:**

1. What the hero puts into the case in some Westerns? (4-5)
2. Confusing? Incorporate fish! (7)
3. Making a big quid led Eric to desuetude. (4)
4. Suffers several turns below. (9)
5. Deed pole finished minced. (5)
6. If Trump is wanting to jettison his colleague he should hear what the chemist is up to! (10)
7. Model in alcoholics anonymous. (1,2,4)
8. Man with BSc rages about sheep's neck. (5)
13. What they danced sins away with, frankly... (10)
15. State of Laertes' tip? (9)
17. The thickness you get from a thick Scots dam. (9)
19. Quiet over milk source might elicit an involuntary tremor. (7)
21. What two vicious dogs fighting over a ball of string might do... (7)
22. Box the couple at the front of girl's uniform. (5)
23. Brisk sort of chap takes chances. (5)
25. Old liberal Liberals are back for hearty meal. (4)

**Across:**

1. A banality in quiet liberality of interpretation. (9)
6. Aden's not the right place for higher ed. figures. (5)
9. Eggs Molly? (7)
10. Not being praised causes teenagers to plunge into the depths. (7)
11. Apparent to the ear in atmosphere... (4)
12. Are angel cords drawn round baby while lullaby draws to a grand close? (6,4)
14. We need a bit of male rigor to get through this tedious process. (9)
16. A sitter ends up evenly balanced on a quadruped. (5)
18. Rented, lost the learner, became more relaxed... (5)
20. Quite an event seen at this birthday! (9)
22. Maybe what pirates are doing before they gulp dinner! (10)
24. Same thing as perception to George... (4)
26. Loop a clue forever. (7)
27. Gas off Macbeth's chest-thumping? (7)
28. Knocks up American rubber? (5)
29. Where not to use 28... (9)

# February 2024 Xword Solution

© McW Sept '19

	B		U			L		S		I		L		
T	O	N	S	I	L	L	E	C	T	O	M	I	E	S
D		U		A		C		U		P		V		
C	Y	P	R	U	S		T	A	D	P	O	L	E	S
G		P		S		U		I		R		L		
A	U	R	E	V	O	I	R		O	P	T	S		
A		R				E		U					A	
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N		T		I		T		R		A		T		
U	N	D	E	R	T	H	E	W	E	A	T	H	E	R
Y		R		E		R				S		R		

**Down:**

1. You might get a dodgy rub from minder.
2. Pursuers of the Crown taken to their logical conclusion? [Well?]
3. Use address [Vtr or N] as a lure, etc.
4. Don Juan [stud] is just over promissory notes, and adopts a suitable demeanour for the library!
5. Get a licence and romp it in! [6]
6. Either way you look at it—up, down—it's horizontal! [Well? As a builder...]
8. Girl with zilch gets rope. [Well?]
13. When asked to identify white material on a quiz show, ask about the blast area before having a real stab at it...
15. Get deep exit done quickly.
17. Pulls back about [re...] pleasurable events provided.
18. Six twenties could provide one. [Well?]
20. Joys terribly with his 18 as a first...
22. See look, hear step... [Well? The ambiguity clears up once you get either 25 or 26.]
23. It pains the French a little on US city for low-grade fur. [Well? Petit pain = bread roll, or this version of one...]
21. Get something from Chem. Lab to ascertain whether the old cross-ply tyre is punctured?
24. Albert [Camus] was a bit of a stranger once... [Well?]
25. [1,5] would not make you comfortable [2,4] [Well?]
26. A wet Thunderer, eh? A bit Brahms & Liszt...

**Across:**

7. It is not some cell these surgical procedures are removing, but two hard-to-swallow bits ...
9. Misspelt Timber Island? [Well?]
10. Get top deals from dam in spring.
11. Our six [VT] are saying hooroo for now.
12. He chooses to knock singular spots off the alternative.
14. Administrator has golf equipment [tee] sundered by oxidation.
16. Usually, alas, rue the Ural Sea...
19. TV cake? [Well?]



THE LAST SUNDAY OF THE MONTH FROM 10AM TO 1PM

**Castlemaine Community House**  
30 Templeton St  
(enter via back door/garden)

For Information phone Chris 5470 5508

First in first served, so be prepared to wait.

WE WILL TRY TO REPAIR ALMOST ANYTHING  
CLOTHES - FURNITURE - ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES  
TOYS - BICYCLES - etc

You'll have a chance to join our fixers to learn how to repair your useful items - to take up some new skills and avoid throwing your items into landfill.

Castlemaine Repair Cafe

**2025**  
Mar 30  
April 27  
May 25  
Jun 29  
July 27  
Aug 31  
Sep 28  
Oct 26  
Nov 30



castlemainerepaircafe.wordpress.com



December Solution

# SUDOKU

Difficulty: Moderate

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

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

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

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		1/2 page	\$80
		Full page	\$160

## 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



and **SOS - The Australian Tribute Band** presents

# Gather ABBA or ABBA Gather!!

**March 29th 2025 7pm**

**Food Trucks & Drinks available from 6pm**  
**James Park, Harcourt**

**Tickets at: <https://events.humanitix.com/gather-abba-or-abba-gather>  
or head to Gather Harcourt Facebook page/events**

**This is an outside concert - but we have it covered if its raining.  
An alternative inside venue has been tentatively booked.**