

The New Woodend Star

Rotary  Club of Woodend

April 2025
Volume 29 | Issue 3



**Kyneton Navy Veteran to MC the
Mt Macedon Dawn Service ...
details on page 3.**

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Woodend RSL Anzac Day activities

Woodend RSL will again host the traditional Anzac Day March and service on Friday 25 April 2025.

The march will step off at 11.30am, pausing at the Vietnam war memorial and the memorial clock tower before arriving at the RSL at 32 Anslow Street. Marchers should form up on the High St slip road near the laundromat by 11.20am.

The Anzac service will be held at the RSL cenotaph between 12 and 12.45pm, followed by refreshments (gold coin please). This year's guest speaker will be Mrs Diana Ellis, Principal of Woodend Primary School, who will speak on Travelling with the First Anzacs.

Please contact the RSL President, John McCausland, on 0448 205 698 if you wish to discuss any aspect of Anzac Day in Woodend.

SUBMITTED BY JOHN MCCAUSLAND, WOODEND RSL PRESIDENT

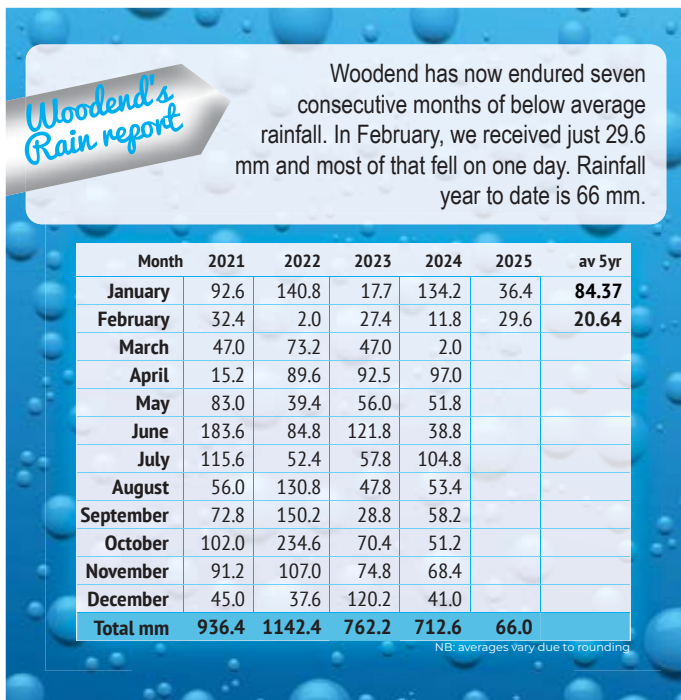
Knit, Chat and Cuppa

Third Wednesday of the month from 11am, Norma Richardson Hall next to the Woodend Primary School.

Come along to knit your own garment or squares, which we make into knee blankets to be donated to various charities.

Yarn and needles provided if needed. See you there!

SUBMITTED BY SYLVIA MATHEWS



Woodend's Rain report

Woodend has now endured seven consecutive months of below average rainfall. In February, we received just 29.6 mm and most of that fell on one day. Rainfall year to date is 66 mm.

Month	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	av 5yr
January	92.6	140.8	17.7	134.2	36.4	84.37
February	32.4	2.0	27.4	11.8	29.6	20.64
March	47.0	73.2	47.0	2.0		
April	15.2	89.6	92.5	97.0		
May	83.0	39.4	56.0	51.8		
June	183.6	84.8	121.8	38.8		
July	115.6	52.4	57.8	104.8		
August	56.0	130.8	47.8	53.4		
September	72.8	150.2	28.8	58.2		
October	102.0	234.6	70.4	51.2		
November	91.2	107.0	74.8	68.4		
December	45.0	37.6	120.2	41.0		
Total mm	936.4	1142.4	762.2	712.6	66.0	

NB: averages vary due to rounding

The New Woodend Star and the Rotary Club of Woodend acknowledge the Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Peoples and their Ancestors as the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands of the Macedon Ranges on which we meet, work and live. We recognise their living culture and continuous connection to the land and waters in our area and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Local Navy Veteran to MC Dawn Service

Kyneton Navy Veteran Luke Bordonaro will lead this year's Mount Macedon Anzac Day Dawn Service, which will take place on April 25 at the Mount Macedon Memorial Cross.

This year's theme, 'The Unseen Wounds of Conflict', will explore the many impacts that war has on those who serve, from the physical injuries to the mental effects and the wider repercussions for families.

Luke, who joined the Royal Australian Navy in 2003 and served on HMAS Newcastle, Cerberus, Maitland, Ararat, Sydney IV and Hobart III attaining the rank of Petty Officer, said this year's theme was particularly close to his heart and he was honoured to be involved in the 2025 service.

"The unseen wounds of conflict and service can leave lasting scars on a veteran's mind and soul, often resulting in struggles that extend far beyond the deployments," said Luke, a father of two.

"Personally, the ability to regulate my acute stress response – once essential for survival in my role – became a challenge in everyday life; leading to hypervigilance, anxiety, and difficulty in high-stress situations. Additionally, adapting to civilian life presented its own battles, as the structure, camaraderie, and purpose found in service was hard to replicate."

As part of the service, students from local high schools will read excerpts from the accounts of local veterans: Dr Francis Donovan OAM from Woodend, the late Colonel John Charles Barrie, (known to most as Charlie), formerly from Kyneton, and James Gardiner Daniel, whose parents resided in Kyneton.

The service commences at 6am at the Mount Macedon Memorial Cross and runs for approximately an hour. Free shuttle buses run from Tony Clarke Reserve in Macedon from 4.15am as roads to the Cross are shut to public traffic for the morning for the safety of attendees.

Plenty of parking is available at Tony Clarke Reserve and free bus services will also run from Gisborne, Woodend, Sunbury, Kyneton, Riddells Creek, Lancefield and Romsey. The timetables for the town buses will be available at www.mtmacedondawnservice.org along with details of how to book.

Attendees are encouraged to dress for the weather and bring a water bottle and torch. A sausage sizzle will be available, and a gold coin donation would be appreciated. MMADDS thanks its sponsors including the Victorian Government through Victorian Veterans Council, Macedon Ranges Shire Council, Community Bank Gisborne & District, Public Transport Victoria, Gisborne Region Events Activities & Tourism and KGMG Creative. Thanks also go to the organisations that help the service come together and run smoothly on the day, including CFA, SES, Victoria Police, Parks Victoria, Woodend Scouts and the Mount Macedon Memorial Cross Reserve Committee of Management.

For more information, visit:

www.mtmacedondawnservice.org and follow updates at www.facebook.com/MountMacedonAnzacDayDawnService.

SUBMITTED BY SARAH KATSAVOS



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A guaranteed warm glow this winter



Staying cool in summer or warm in winter is not an option for many of our fellow Victorians doing it tough and sleeping rough. Homelessness is on the rise and impacting people of all ages.

Over the past decade Woodend Rotary has coordinated a blanket drive and had great support from you, the Woodend community. Your support is required again this year as Woodend Rotary is coordinating the collection of the following items.

- Blankets, coats, backpacks, waterproof jackets and sleeping bags (adult sizes only please)
- New socks and underwear (M/L/XL)

All items must be clean and in good order. The basic rule is if you wouldn't give it to a friend, then don't give it to us.

Items can be dropped off at **Mort & Pestle** (only during business hours) who continue to be a great support to the community and to Woodend Rotary with the collection continuing until the end of May.

Items are collected and delivered to The Living Room located in Hosier Lane in Melbourne, to make a real and immediate impact to those in need.

The Living Room is part of Youth Projects and offers a wonderful service to the homeless in and around the city by providing free healthcare and support to improve the physical, mental and social well-being of individuals who are, or are at risk of, experiencing homelessness. The Living Room is a safe place for people to not only receive health care but also wash and dry clothes, use computers, and have a meal and a shower. The facility also provides night nurses and employment support to help break the cycle of disadvantage. Find out more at www.youthprojects.org.au/the-living-room

I know the Woodend community will again get behind this project and I look forward to once again being overwhelmed by the generosity of spirit shown by so many in our community and creating the warm glow that comes from helping others in need.

Contact Melissa Hocking 0417 254 579 for more information or questions.

Find out more about Woodend Rotary and the great work we do at www.woodendrotary.org.au

SUBMITTED BY GRANT HOCKING

**WINTER IS COLD IN THE MACEDON RANGES
BUT ITS EVEN COLDER ON THE STREET**

Support the Victorian Homeless

**We want your
Blankets, Coats, Backpacks,
Waterproof jackets and
Sleeping Bags**

Adult sizes only please

**as well as
New Socks and Underwear M/L/XL**



All donations must be clean and in good condition.

Drop off at Mort and Pestle in Woodend.

Donations accepted until the end of May 2025.



JOIN US FOR THE MOUNT MACEDON ANZAC DAY DAWN SERVICE FRIDAY 25 APRIL AT 6AM



ACCESS TO MEMORIAL CROSS VIA BUS ONLY

VISIT THE WEBSITE FOR BUS BOOKING LINK & TIMETABLE

www.mtmacedondawnservice.org

Follow us on Facebook for updates

@MountMacedonAnzacDayDawnService



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS



WWAF celebrates 20 festivals with a stellar line-up

The Woodend Winter Arts Festival is excited to celebrate its 20th festival this year as it delivers another feast of music, film, words and ideas over the King's Birthday long weekend – 6 to 9 June, 2025.

Over four days, WWAF will present a dynamic, entertaining and engaging program. World class performers will be joined by some of Australia's brightest literary minds for a series of incredible performances and discussions.

Highlights of the music program include an Arpara from international guests Davide Monti (violin) and Maria Christina Cleary (harp); along with a breathtaking performance from Moroccan vocalist Lamiae Naki and her ensemble Seffarine, who will bring to life the vibrant musical heritage of the Straits of Gibraltar, paired with flamenco dance.

In another exclusive direct from Vienna, Anne-Harvey-Nagl will perform Brahms' three sonatas for piano and violin, accompanied by John O'Donnell.

Attendees can also enjoy an evening of unforgettable jazz with Chris Johnstone (guitar) & the Mat Jodrell Quartet; Trio Phantasies from Trio Anima Mundi; Spanish guitar with Ken Murray; a stirring solo piano performance from Berta Brozgul; and two incredible performances from 8 Cellos.

There will also be performances from festival favourites such as Ensemble Gombert and Accademia Arcadia, along with an enchanting and family friendly performance of the music of Cinderella by Inventi Ensemble.

The Words & Ideas program will deliver engaging debates and discussions on challenging contemporary issues. In celebration of 250 years since the birth of the great Jane Austen, we will hear from her great niece, Caroline Jane Knight; while art consultant Christopher Menz will discuss the works of one of the greatest pattern designers of all time, William Morris.

We will also hear from literary greats such as Rodney Hall and Margaret Simons; political historian Judith Brett; leading scientist Dietmar Toubier; and local garden designer Michael McCoy.

This year's engaging program is rounded off with both theatre and film, with two absurdist plays from award-winning author and publisher, Peter Rose, along with a screening of *The Great White Whale* by Michael Dillon.

And much more! Head to WWAF website to view the full program: woodendwinterartsfestival.org.au

SUBMITTED BY THE WOODEND WINTER ARTS FESTIVAL COMMITTEE



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Anne Harvey-Nagl – from Vienna
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Berta Brozgul · Melbourne Cello Octet
Accademia Arcadia · Ensemble Gombert
John O'Donnell · Jacqueline Ogeil
Chris Johnstone & the Mat Jodrell Quartet
Highly Strung Players · Judith Brett
William Morris Lecture with Christopher Menz
Margaret Simon · Rodney Hall · Michael McCoy
Dietmar Tourbier & Peter McTaggart
Award-winning film: *The Great White Whale*
Inventi Ensemble: *Cinderella*, for families
And much more!

For tickets and more information visit
woodendwinterartsfestival.org.au






















Open Studios Macedon 2025

Macedon area artists will again open their studios to the public this year on the weekend of May 3–4. This is the first of two events and is being held slightly later than previous years.

Nine artists will welcome visitors to their studios set in their autumn gardens, sharing their particular artistic expressions, processes and working environments, including pottery, painting, drawing, jewellery, textiles and printmaking. There are some changes to the group, welcoming new member Yvonne O'Connell and Caroliza Job will be set up in Waterfalls Road.

The studios are within a short distance from each other and are marked on a map in the brochure and online on Instagram. Experience the Macedon area with its autumn gardens, and combine art with food at nearby cafes.

Brochures will be at The Gallery, Mt Macedon and Mt Macedon Trading Post, as well as in local cafes and businesses in the area.

We are on Instagram: @openstudiosmacedon

The Gallery 2025 Art Prize

The Gallery Mount Macedon is very excited with the fabulous entries in this year's Art Prize. For the first time, artists were not restricted by theme and have responded with a range of portraits, landscapes, even dried flowers! Sponsored by Community Bank Gisborne & District, with a first prize of \$1,000, the prize has attracted some talented artists. The official opening is on Sunday 13 April at 2pm, when the prize winners will be announced. This event is open to everyone, so join us for the celebration. The exhibition runs from 7 April to 4 May.

Of course, the rest of the Gallery will still be on display during this time. The 26 local artists who are members of The Gallery proudly display their talents and work. You will find a range of art and gifts, including cards, paintings, drawings, pottery, beanies, gloves, scarves and lots more.

A few of our members have recently left the area, so there are some vacancies for 2 or 3 new members. If you are an artist or craftsperson living in the Macedon Ranges or Sunbury and would like to join our fabulous Gallery, look on our website for details of membership conditions, or call into The Gallery during opening hours, Friday to Tuesday 10–4.

The Gallery Mount Macedon, 684 Mount Macedon Road, Mount Macedon.

SUBMITTED BY SUE ANSON



Jo Hoyne at her garden studio

Lancefield Mechanics Institute to host CWA 2025 Exhibition

An absolute celebration of creativity – and a chance to catch up with friends and discuss favourites over a cuppa and a scone – a visit to the CWA Central Highlands Group Creative Arts Exhibition is a must!

CWA members from all over our region are putting the final touches on their entries and can't wait to show them off to you on 12 and 13 April.

The hall will be brimming with a wonderful display of art, craft, preserves and home cooking. We're offering home made lunch or a cuppa and a scone in our cosy cafe area. While you're visiting, take the chance to stock up on bargain craft supplies at our popular craft de-stash stall, and don't forget to take home some preserves that have been lovingly made by our members.

Event Details:

- Dates: 12 and 13 April
- Location: Lancefield Mechanics Institute, 4 The Crescent, Lancefield
- Time: Saturday 12, 10am–4pm. Sunday 13, 10am–3pm.
- Awards Ceremony: Saturday 12, 11am

Join us for a weekend filled with creativity, community, and chat! Spread the word and invite your friends and family along for a lovely autumn day out.

For more information, contact Mel Pritchard, 0423 672 719. See you there!



Colleen Weste with some of her creations



What's On?

Easter School Holidays

The Easter school holidays are fast approaching, and our exciting School Holiday Program will be available soon! Get ready for a range of fun activities for all ages. Stay tuned and visit our website www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au to be the first to secure your spot!

Drop-in activities

Beyond Curious: Tuesday 8 April, 10am–1pm.

Drop by and join facilitators from the Discovery Science and Technology Centre, Bendigo to take on a series of STEM challenges. Unleash your inner inventor as you dive into the fascinating world of electricity! In this hands-on session, you'll have the chance to build, experiment, and connect components to create your very own electrifying working circuit. Ages 5–12 years

Woodend Art Group Display: 5–17 April during opening hours

We're excited to host a display of artwork by local students from the Folio Club – an after-school art group for ages 7 to 18, run by the Woodend Art Group. Come and admire the creativity and talent of these young artists!

Looking for some other fun activities? We've got you covered! Our Lego, Duplo and board games will be all set up and ready to enjoy over the holidays. Whether you want to build amazing structures, spark your imagination with Duplo, or challenge friends to a classic board game, there's something for everyone. Come relax, play, and make the most of your time in the library!

Reading Apps: Wednesday 7 May, 10–11am



Do you ever find yourself forgetting the details of a book you've read or struggle to remember which books you wanted to read next? You're not alone! Join us for a fun and interactive session where we'll explore a range of exciting apps designed to help you track your reading, organize your book lists, and discover new titles tailored to your interests. Whether you're an avid reader or just getting started, these tools will make managing your reading journey easier and more enjoyable. Don't miss out—come along and find the perfect app to keep your bookshelf in order!

April Closures

Woodend Library will be closed Friday 18 to Monday 21 April, then closed again on Friday 25 April for ANZAC Day.

Don't forget our eLibrary is always available at www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/elibrary

For all bookings, please head to our website or give us a call. See you in the Library!

5427 2074 | woodend@ncgrl.vic.gov.au | www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au



SUBMITTED BY EMMA KEENAN

AURA BEAUTY

ABOUT US

FOUNDED BY CHARLIE TUCKER IN 2022, AURA BEAUTY IS LOCATED IN THE HEART OF WOODEND OFFERING VARIOUS SPECIALTY BEAUTY TREATMENTS.

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✉️ AURABEAUTY222@OUTLOOK.COM
📷 @AURABEAUTY222_

Kyneton Horticultural Society

Autumn Flower Show 2025

**Saturday 5 April, 11.30am–4pm
and Sunday 6 April – 10am – 3.30pm**

Watts Pavillion, Kyneton Showgrounds, Mollison Street, Kyneton.

The Society's motto is "Show what you grow and tell what you know". Entries are encouraged from all ages, from floral art to dahlias, vegetables, pot plants and garden scavenger hunt displays. Enter items into the Show online at <https://events.humanitix.com/exhibitoraf>. Entries close 12pm, 1 April 2025.

As well as horticultural displays, there will be refreshments, local business trade stalls, artist-in-residence and plant sales. For further information or enquiries, please contact kynetonh1894@gmail.com

St Ambrose Catholic Church Easter services

An invitation to all to join us in the celebration of Easter at St Ambrose Catholic Church Woodend.

Our Services:

- Palm Sunday – Saturday Vigil Mass 12 April – 5pm OR Sunday Sung Mass (with Choir) 13 April – 11am
- Holy Thursday 17 April – 7.30pm
- Good Friday – Passion of the Lord – 18 April – 4pm (note the change in time)
- Easter Vigil mass – 19 April – 7.30pm (Saturday)
- Easter Sunday – Sung Mass (with Choir) 20 April – 9am (note the change in time)

47 Urquhart Street Woodend

Parish Priest: Fr John Healy

Contact: woodend@cam.org.au

SUBMITTED BY MAURICE FANNING



Your community diary

Always check with organisers about any events listed. To have your event listed on our calendar just send the details to: content@newwoodendstar.org.au

—APRIL—

- 1–30 Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival
- 2 Spotlighting @ Barringo Reserve
- 5 Woodend Farmers' Market
- 5 Lions Community Market
- 6 End of Daylight Saving Time
- 6 Seedling Planting Day, Five Mile Creek
- 14 AI for the Everyday Historian @ Old Courthouse
- 15 Woodend Community Lunch at RSL
- 16 Spotlighting @ Bullengarook
- 18 Good Friday
- 18 CFA collecting for Good Friday Appeal
- 20 Easter Sunday
- 21 Easter Monday
- 22 Chatty Cafe @ WNH
- 23 Understanding Autism Workshop, Kyneton
- 25 Anzac Day
- 26 Artists' & Makers' Market

—MAY—

- 1 In-depth First Aid Course @ Woodend Hub
- 3 Woodend Farmers' Market
- 3 Lions Community Market
- 3–4 Great Trentham Spudfest
- 8 Woodend Lifestyle Group workshop
- 9–25 Mount Players present The Girl on the Train
- 11 Mother's Day
- 24 Artists' & Makers' Market
- 30 Community Catch-up with West Ward Councillors

—JUNE—

- 6–9 Woodend Winter Arts Festival
- 7 Woodend Farmers' Market
- 7 Lions Community Market
- 9 King's Birthday holiday
- 28 Artists' & Makers' Market

—JULY—

- 26 Artists' & Makers' Market

Read us online: www.newwoodendstar.com/view

News from the Woodend Neighbourhood House



School Holidays at the Woodend Neighbourhood House

Our School Holiday program this April is packed with exciting workshops to keep the kids entertained! Creative Me is back with two craft sessions – create your own critters using found natural materials in the Imaginary Insects Workshop, or design a seasonal decoration with pipe cleaners, a wooden log, and your imagination in our Easter Craft Workshop. Our fabulous volunteers are also getting crafty with a Sun Catcher Workshop, where kids can make beautiful sun catchers from old CDs.

For those keen to combine fun, relaxation, breathwork, and mindful movement, we have a series of Yoga Workshops for all ages. Try Bendy Buddies for preschoolers (ages 2–5), Creative Yoga for kids in prep to grade 6, or Yoga for Teens for senior school students in years 7–12.

Finally, back by popular demand, we're thrilled to welcome Paul from Storyboard Drama for two energetic and engaging Storyboard Drama Workshops.

It's shaping up to be a fantastic couple of weeks – don't miss out!

Woodend April Community Lunch

Bring the whole family and enjoy a delicious two-course meal among friends, old and new. The April Community Lunch falls during the school holidays, making it the perfect opportunity to gather with friends and join this regular local event. Everyone is welcome at the Woodend RSL on Wednesday, 15 April at 12 noon. Bookings are essential as this event has sold out in the past few months. A \$5 donation is welcome to help cover costs but is by no means necessary.

Chatty Cafe

Mark your calendar for our regular Chatty Café! Pop in for a cuppa, a sweet treat, and some great conversation on the fourth Tuesday of every month. Our next Chatty Café is on Tuesday, 22 April at 10am. No bookings required – just turn up and enjoy!

Term 2, 2025

April marks the start of Term 2, and our new program will be available for pick-up from the House at the beginning of the month. Expect a mix of exciting new classes and returning favourites. You can also check out our website to see What's On.

For more information about any of our upcoming activities, workshops, courses, or events, drop by the House, visit our website at www.woodendnh.org.au, or call us on 5427 1845.

Understanding Autism Workshops

23 April at the Kyneton Mechanics Institute.

Presented by award-winning autism advocate and access consultant Bryce Pace, these workshops will focus on providing participants with resources and tips to assist in making employment, tourism and the community more accessible for the 1 in 40 Australians on the autism spectrum.

More about the workshops: www.brycepaceautismadvocate.com/events

Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival – April

Discover autumn-inspired food and drink adventures across the Macedon Ranges, plus a month-long calendar of events, artisanal workshops, genuine farmers markets, gallery exhibitions, and more!

Pick up a Festival Map & Passport, collect stamps at Trail venues, and let your palate guide the way along Australia's biggest Pie & Tart Trail, the Edgy Veg Trail, or the full-of-spirit Tipple Trail, showcasing autumn's signature drinks. Follow the Autumn Festival Treasure Trail, collecting clues to discover the secret pie recipe, and taking you to the best leafy autumn picnic spots.



Look out for the QR Code across the eight Treasure Trail parks for a unique picture-perfect autumn picnic moment.

Enter the 2025 Colouring Competition with thanks to Community Bank Lancefield & Romsey, and find out more at www.visitmacedonranges.com/autumn-festival/ You can find out more information about the colouring comp on the Visit Macedon Ranges website <https://www.visitmacedonranges.com/events/kids-colouring-in-competition/> (and a printable version is also there).

The Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival will run from 1–30 April 2025.

New Woodend Artists and Makers Market

St Mary's Anglican Church's Woodend Artists & Makers Market, is showcasing local artists and makers, with proceeds from rental of the venue contributing to St Mary's mission to assist local and international communities in crisis.

Artists include The Macedon Ranges Art Group, with work rotating from their community of local painters and printmakers, as well as other artists specialising in jewellery, fabric and garment design, ceramics, weaving of baskets and wall hangings, natural body creams and soaps.

Good coffee, food, face painting, and live music at lunchtime.

The Woodend Artists and Makers Market is held monthly on the 4th Saturday.

The next Market will be held on Saturday 26 April, 10am–2pm at the Norma Richardson Hall and lawns, 15 Buckland Street, Woodend.



The Great Trentham Spudfest: 3 and 4 May 2025

Trentham's beloved annual festival is back, serving up a weekend packed with spud-filled fun!

And it's not just about potatoes (okay, maybe it mostly is) – it's also a celebration of Trentham's vibrant community spirit and proud potato-growing heritage. This year, there are two days of fun-filled events, with activities for all ages, held against the backdrop of spectacular autumn colour.

Street Fair | Saturday, 3 May | 10–4

Trentham comes alive with the legendary Street Fair held in the heart of town. Explore four main precincts, packed full of spud food, fresh regional produce, a local makers market, live music, and the Spud Olympics. Grab a bag of famous Trentham potatoes, direct from local growers. Bus tours of the district's heritage-protected Spud Huts run throughout the day.

Saturday evening brings the Spudfest Cèilidh, a family-friendly celebration of Celtic music, food, and dancing. Or join local chef Annie Smithers for an exclusive four-course potato feast at her famous Trentham restaurant Du Fermier.

Discovery Day | Sunday, 4 May | 10–4

Join 'Cooks in Conversation' with Alice Zaslavsky, drop past Spud Hub in Trentham Town Square to discover delicious farm gate foodie trails, or join a local farm tour. Sign up for The Great Spud Scavenger Hunt, take a gnocchi-making class, enjoy the Red Beard Bakery Scotch Oven tour, or spend the day eating spudtastic dishes at venues across the region.

Event website: www.trenthamspudfest.org.au

SUBMITTED BY KATE ANDERSON

The Mount Players present A Psychological Thriller!

After a sellout season for *The Importance of Being Earnest*, our second production opens on Friday 9 May.



The Girl on The Train is a psychological thriller adapted by Rachel Wagstaff and Duncan Abel from Paula Hawkins' novel – an international phenomenon selling over 20 million copies worldwide.

Synopsis: Rachel Watson longs for a different life.

Her only escape is the perfect couple she watches through the train window every day, happy and in love. Or so it appears. When Rachel learns that the woman she's been secretly watching has suddenly disappeared, she finds herself as a witness and even a suspect in a thrilling mystery in which she will face bigger revelations than she could ever have anticipated. This gripping play will keep you guessing until the final moment.

We will be celebrating Mother's Day at the matinee on Sunday May 11 – there will be a complimentary bubbles for all the mums and a 'high tea' at interval.

Warning: this play contains strong language and depicts scenes of domestic and sexual violence and alcoholism. Suitable for mature audiences 16 years plus.

The season runs 9–25 May and tickets are available at www.themountplayers.com or call 5426 1892 for assistance. Book early to avoid disappointment.

See you at the theatre!



Woodend Lifestyle Carers Group: A beacon of support for local carers

In an effort to provide comfort and support for those caring for loved ones with memory loss, the Woodend Lifestyle Carers Group (WLCG) is making a significant impact on the lives of local carers and their families.

The WLCG is a volunteer-run organisation that aims to improve the quality of life for carers. The group provides social and educational support for unpaid carers, who often experience isolation, due to the daily stress of their roles. WLCG offers weekly coffee mornings at The Milko Café, 118-126 High Street, Woodend on Wednesdays from 10am to 11am; twice-monthly meetings on Thursdays at the Woodend RSL, 32 Anslow Street Woodend from 1pm to 3pm; and a unique community-oriented respite care facility due for completion in October 2025.

The organisation serves residents across the Macedon Ranges and its neighbouring areas, addressing the growing need for carer support in the region.

On 8 May at Woodend RSL, Anslow St Woodend 1pm to 3pm. Woodend Lifestyle Carers Group will be holding a workshop with Merilee Bennett from Macedon Ranges Counselling – "I am not an expert on dementia, though I have some personal experience with close family members, including my grandfather. I have facilitated many groups and run workshops for many years, prior to obtaining a Graduate Diploma in Counselling and Psychotherapy. I'm now also studying for a Masters in Psychotherapy. My focus and interest have always included working with people dealing with loss and grief of many kinds. I am trained and experienced in facilitating groups where everyone feels safe to say what they need to say, and hear what others might say, with respect." Please register to attend.

More information about WLCG can be found at www.wlccg.org.au, email info@wlccg.org.au, phone 0476 373 483.

SUBMITTED BY ALLISON KINGSTON, WLCG SECRETARY

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Maddie and Leon's Story

Maddie is an inspirational young person who decided to volunteer during her final years of high school to improve her skills and give back to her community. Her interest in speech pathology and experience working in aged care during a school placement led her to discover the Aged Care Volunteer Visitors Scheme Program (ACVVS) – an Australian Government-funded program delivered by Council.

Leon, a resident at BUPA Aged Care Service in Kyneton, was matched with Maddie for regular weekly visits. Leon, a writer of four novels, plans to have them published. After travelling extensively with his late wife in his younger years, and with their children having moved on to start their own families, Leon and his wife settled together in the Kyneton aged care facility before her passing.

Maddie found the volunteering experience with ACVVS to be flexible and supportive, making it easier for her to complete her final years of high school feeling proud and accomplished. "I think [Council is] really supportive and flexible," Maddie said.

When asked about his thoughts on the ACVVS program, Leon said: "I would straight away say come in and talk, it's great to have someone talking to you because I'm 91, yeah. I love having young company around. Your family's all grown up and moved on and got their own families."

With Leon's family keeping his passion for travel alive, he looked forward to his weekly visits with Maddie. He proudly shared stories of his vast overseas travels with his wife and his upbringing in the small country town of Gilgandra, New South Wales. "I really enjoyed learning about Leon's past, his stories, and everything. I don't know, I just feel wiser. I feel wiser with all [Leon's] stories, some of them are a bit silly," Maddie said.

When asked what he enjoyed most about their visits, Leon responded: "We talk and look through photographs. Talk about what she was doing at school." Maddie jokingly added: "Leon loves to talk about himself."

Although Maddie hadn't volunteered before, her natural gift with conversation made it easy to get along with Leon. "I think that we are just both really big talkers. Yeah, we can talk for hours," Maddie said. Maddie encourages others to volunteer, saying: "I think definitely do it. You don't really understand the impact you have on others. Even if it's only an hour a week, it means a lot to them. So do it, that's what I say."

When asked what he has learned about Maddie through their visits, Leon said: "She's a terrific person. I hope she continues through life like that."

Since the publishing of this story, the participants named are no longer actively meeting through the ACVVS program, but remain happy to share their story. If you would like to help, we are always looking for more volunteers to take up these important roles in our community.

Learn more about ACVVS

- Email at VolunteerVisits@mrsc.vic.gov.au
- Call (03) 5422 0333

Join our weekly Coffee Catch-Ups

Looking to connect with like-minded individuals in our community? Whether you're a new resident, navigating life's changes, living alone, or simply enjoy a regular social chat, our weekly Coffee Catch-Ups are the perfect opportunity for you to meet others and foster meaningful relationships.

Attending can help you to build new connections and friendships; share experiences and insights in a relaxed setting; and enjoy a regular, informal social gathering.

Coffee Catch-Ups are held every Thursday at 10.30am at multiple locations across the shire including Riddells Creek, Lancefield, Kyneton, and Gisborne.

Join us for an opportunity to chat, laugh, and connect with others in a supportive and welcoming environment. Everyone is welcome, so bring yourself, a friend, or come solo – we'd love to see you there! Please contact Sharon Gill on 5422 0333 or villageconnect@mrsc.vic.gov.au

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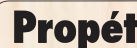
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Give your child the best start to their learning journey at one of Council's eight kindergartens. **Register online by 31 May 2025.**

Visit mrsc.vic.gov.au/kindergarten or call our Enrolment Officer on **5422 0239** to:

- find out information regarding eligibility
- receive guidance on making a decision about when to send your child to kindergarten
- receive assistance with registering



Is your child ready for kindergarten?



As registrations for kindergarten open across the shire, you might be wondering what the right time is to start your child's education journey.

Being ready for kindergarten is an important consideration as it directly relates to the age they will start primary school. Your child will be supported on their kindergarten journey whether they show all signs of readiness or not. Every child is different, and every child is welcome at kindergarten.

When thinking about readiness for 3-year-old kindergarten, some things you may want to consider are:

- How your child separates from you – with support from educators, will your child be able to separate from you without becoming greatly distressed?
- Is your child beginning to understand sharing and turn-taking?
- Do they understand simple instructions?
- Are they easily understood?
- Is your child able to ask for help?
- Do you see your child being able to positively engage in a group of up to 30 children?
- Is your child progressing with toilet training?
- Can they feed themselves?
- Are they able to help pack up?
- Does your child tire easily? Do they still need a daytime sleep?

If your child's birthday is between January and April, consider whether your child is ready to start 3-year-old kindergarten in the year they are eligible or if they would benefit from starting the following year.

For more information, watch Council's Kindergarten Information and Readiness Session at mrsc.vic.gov.au/ready-for-kinder

You can also contact Council's Kindergarten Enrolments team on (03) 5422 0239 or kinderenrolments@mrsc.vic.gov.au



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Telstra Macedon Ranges Community Choice Awards 2025

The Macedon Ranges has many outstanding businesses committed to delivering excellent customer experiences. In recognition of this, we're inviting residents and visitors to vote for their favourite business/businesses for the 2025 Telstra Macedon Ranges Community Choice Awards in the following five categories:

- Excellence in Customer Service – Agribusiness and Primary Production
- Excellence in Customer Service – Health and Wellbeing
- Excellence in Customer Service – Hospitality and Accommodation
- Excellence in Customer Service – Professional, Retail and Service
- Excellence in Customer Service – Trades and Manufacturing

An extension of Council's Business Excellence Awards program, the Telstra Macedon Ranges Community Choice Awards seek to recognise and celebrate those who go above and beyond in their day-to-day delivery of goods and services.

Voting for nominated businesses will commence from 1 April 2025 and run until 30 May 2025.

For more information on how to vote, visit mrsc.vic.gov.au/community-choice

School holiday fun in our environment reserves

Looking to take the family out for a fun educational experience? Come along to our free environment events in April:

Creatures of the Night – Spotlighting

Join the Environment team for an exciting night walk and learn about the nocturnal creatures living in the Macedon Ranges.

- Wednesday 2 April, 7pm – Barringo Reserve, Barringo
- Wednesday 16 April, 7pm – Hobbs Road Reserve, Bullengarook

Discover citizen science at Hanging Rock Reserve

Explore the native biodiversity on a walk of the less-visited parts of Hanging Rock. Children over the age of 8 are welcome if accompanied by an adult.

Events are run by the Environment team to celebrate National Play Week and the Autumn Festival.

For more information and to register, visit mrsc.vic.gov.au/environment-events



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Message from your councillors



What a relief that the run of hot weather is abating, and we are (hopefully) getting some decent rain. Reports indicate that 2024 was both the hottest and driest year on record, and this trend is expected to continue which is just one of a number of factors council takes into account when planning for environmental, financial and social sustainability.

To mitigate risks, careful consideration needs to be made by council into the allocation of budget resources to reduce the impact of adverse weather on the various assets it manages, such as roads, footpaths, bridges, drains, and buildings.

Council is currently updating its four-year Council Plan and setting the upcoming 2025/2026 Budget, so trending data, as well as lived experience and community feedback are essential for forecasting and decision making.

We appreciate everyone who participated in the formal budget submission process, and we extend a big thank you to residents across the shire who took part in our Citizens Assembly in March to examine the Council Plan and Community Vision. This work will be finalised in October and will help update action and budget item priorities for the next four years, while the draft 2025/2026 Budget is targeted for adoption at the May or June Council Meeting.

Community suggestions on Council priorities and services, however, are welcome at any time of the year, and we encourage ideas for alternative solutions that improve efficiency or better address the community's current needs. While some decisions are more challenging than others, we are always available to explain our decision-making process through a variety of channels such as Community Catch-ups, email or phone.

By the time this edition is published, West Ward Councillors will have completed two Community Catch-ups. Our next catch-up will take place in Woodend on Friday 30 May from 11am to 12pm, and we would like to thank Nellie's Shed for hosting this event. Find out more on Council's website: www.mrsc.vic.gov.au/About-Council/News/News/Meet-your-Councillors

Thank you to all businesses and residents for your patience during the pedestrian safety upgrades in High Street and to those who have already provided feedback.

And finally, don't forget the Autumn Festival, which will be held in April. This event is designed to showcase and celebrate the natural and cultural uniqueness of the region, as well as our businesses and local produce. The Edgy Veg competition will also return, and we encourage everyone to visit all participating venues.

WRITTEN BY CR ANDERSON ON BEHALF OF WEST WARD COUNCILLORS



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February 2025 Council Meeting wrap

Some of the key items considered and endorsed at the February 2025 Council Meeting include:



Draft Kyneton Urban Design Framework – Phase 3 Consultation Outcomes

Council noted that additional consultation had been undertaken on the draft Kyneton Urban Design Framework (UDF) Plan and acknowledged that a final report would be scheduled for next month's Council Meeting (March 2025) for a decision.

The draft UDF is a strategic plan for public realm improvements in Kyneton's commercial area, including Piper Street, Mollison Street, and High Street. It aims to enhance the appearance, amenity, and functionality of the town centre through various projects, such as pedestrian safety improvements, upgrades to public spaces, and building design guidelines.

In the most recent round of consultation (October–December 2024), 20 public submissions were received and a summary of these – including a small number of recommended changes to the draft UDF as a result – are outlined in the Agenda Attachments.

Recognition of Australia Day Honours Recipients 2025

Council endorsed sending a letter of congratulations to Darraweit Guim resident, Dr Christine Helen Craik (AM), in recognition of her 2025 Australia Day Honour Award. Dr Craik was made a Member of the Order of Australia for her significant service to the community as a social worker, her contributions to tertiary education, and her volunteer work.

Quarterly Financial Report – October to December 2024 and Mid-Year Budget Review

Council received an update on the Quarterly Financial Report as of 31 December 2024, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2020, and adopted budget changes identified in the mid-year budget review.

The update noted an operating surplus of \$50.02 million for the six months to 31 December 2024, compared with the budgeted surplus of \$49.28 million. The reasons for this difference are detailed in the report, some of which include favourable income from interest, operational expenditure below budget, and a variance in infrastructure expenditure.

Community Funding Scheme Guidelines Update

Council endorsed updates to the Eligibility Criteria for the Community Funding Scheme and Small Project Grants Guidelines. The 2025/2026 Community Funding Scheme will open on 28 April 2025 and close on 26 May 2025.

[...] Additionally, the 2025/2026 Community Funding Scheme will open concurrently again with the Events and Festivals Grant Program to enhance community awareness of funding opportunities and streamline the grant assessment and administrative processes.

Community Awards Guidelines 2025 – Briefing Report

Council endorsed the 2025 Community Awards Nomination Guide, including the nomination opening and closing dates. The nomination period will commence on 3 March 2025 and close on 28 March 2025, allowing the celebration event to be held during National Volunteer Week in May 2025.

Following the 2024 Community Awards Ceremony in January 2024, a review of the Community Awards program was completed. This review considered:

- the timing of the Community Awards Ceremony
- opportunities to streamline Council's various award programs
- the relevance of the current award categories.

As a result of this review, certain award programs run separately last year – including the Community Awards in January 2024 and the Youth Awards in September 2024 – have been consolidated into this single awards program.

Further information on this Council Meeting, including minutes and a meeting recording, can be found at mrsc.vic.gov.au/meetings

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Thriving Communities grant applications open for 2025

Greater Western Water is encouraging community groups to apply for a grant or sponsorship through its Thriving Communities program.

Applications are now open for not-for-profit organisations to apply for a grant of up to \$20,000 for projects and up to \$5,000 for community activities that help local communities, environment and industry to thrive.

Greater Western Water's General Manager for Strategy and Partnerships Kessia Thompson said GWW is proud to support projects that make a meaningful difference.

"Our service area is diverse, vibrant and growing and we're supporting initiatives that help people feel connected and included.

"Through Thriving Communities, we're investing in local projects that strengthen community ties, promote sustainability and enhance wellbeing," she said.

Since 2022, GWW has supported over 60 community-led initiatives including: In 2024 Eastern Macedon Ranges Business and Tourism Association received a \$5,000 grant to support its 2024 Christmas in Romsey festival. The event involved the Main Street Christmas Tree Installation, the Main Street Landmarks Illumination Night event, the Home and Business Lights and Decorations Competition, and a much-loved Community Carols event.

Fellow grant recipient Macedon Ranges Music Festival Inc received \$5,000 to support Macedon Ranges Music Festival at Hanging Rock, held on 22 March. This year's line up featured Emma Donovan, Steph Strings, Fools and more!

Greater Western Water is accepting applications for projects that occur between 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026.

Applications are open until 9 April, with successful recipients announced in June.

Learn more, sign up to an information session and start an application at Thriving Communities.



Photo: Macedon Ranges Music Festival

Creekside Clean Up and future Seedling Planting Day



As part of national Clean Up Australia Day, Woodend Landcare along with Macedon-Woodend Scouts, Girl Guides, Woodend Primary School and others, gathered throughout the first week in March at various locations around Woodend to clean up our town.

Woodend Landcare volunteers focused along Five Mile Creek between Jeffreys Street and Campaspe Park. The low water levels meant we could get into areas we have been unable to access in recent years.

Over three hours, 16 volunteers collected six large bags of rubbish. An inventory of the rubbish was undertaken to complete a report for Clean Up Australia. This important step enables data to be obtained, such as how much rubbish was collected, and waste trends identified. A snapshot of our Woodend Landcare collection includes:

- Total number of items collected – approximately 650
- Most common item – soft plastic (261 items including about 120 chip wrappers/lolly packets)
- Aluminium cans – 39
- Glass bottles – 13
- Disposable coffee cups – 8
- Paper – 247 items, almost half of which were takeaway food paper bags.

The use of the area for recreation was recognisable from the rubbish collected:

- Dog poo bags – 28
- Recreational items – 6 tennis balls, a frisbee full of dog tooth marks and a small pink tennis racket broken into eight pieces.

Happily, we did not find any soy sauce fish, syringes, vapes, cigarette butts, nappies or other hazardous items.

Some plant guards previously used by Woodend Landcare or creek frontage properties that were flooded in 2022 were discovered. Since 2022, Woodend Landcare has changed to using biodegradable cardboard plant guards and weed mats for all plantings within creek flood zones. We are not purchasing any more plastic plant guards and any that we do use are guards we already had in stock, or guards we are reusing, and these are only to be used above the flood zone. If you are undertaking seedling planting on your property, you might like to do the same. Contact us if you would like to know details of the guard/mats we use.

All rubbish collected has been disposed of appropriately, including recycling and composting where possible.

Next Working Bee:

Seedling Planting Day

Sunday 6th April – Five Mile Creek between the Scout Hall, Tennis Club and Jeffreys Street.

Join us to plant lots of understory seedlings adjacent to Five Mile Creek. This will help protect the population of rare Black Gum trees, whilst also creating habitat for native animals and insects.

See flyers around town or woodendlandcare.org for more details.



Volunteers Jim, Oswald and Clarabelle collecting rubbish from Five Mile Creek (Photographer Simone Duffield).



PETE'S GARDENING & MAINTENANCE

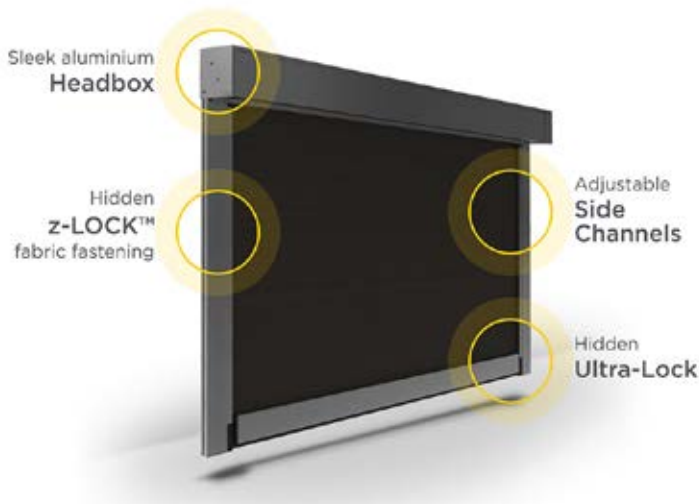
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Woodend tool trailer with bags of rubbish collected. Volunteers Katie, Heidi and Nicole (Photographer Adam Bourke).



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The Edgy Veg Awards are now on for 2025! Don't miss out !

From 1 to 30 April, locals will have the chance to taste 'vegelicious' meals and desserts, from Gisborne to Maldon, and rate them to help choose this year's Edgy Veg winners.

Be adventurous! Get behind your local businesses competing to win, taste their imaginative and innovative creations and rate the taste on the Edgy Veg Awards website. Visit the website for all the dishes, in each village, and your chance to choose your favourite: edgyvegawards.com.au

Now in its fourth year, the Edgy Veg Awards span both Macedon Ranges and Mount Alexander Shires, with 47 dishes competing, from celebrated local chefs. The event is part of the Autumn Festival, which is now on. Get out, see the rich colours of the region as you support our local producers and chefs.

The Edgy Veg Awards are delivered by Veg Action of the Macedon Ranges Sustainability Group and are generously supported by Healthy Loddon Campaspe in Mt Alexander Shire; and Community Bank Gisborne & District, Snap Fitness Woodend and Mt Macedon Realty in the Macedon Ranges.

In Woodend and Newham, nine local businesses are competing:

- Bourkies Bakehouse (a new entrant in 2025!) with their Spiced Harvest Veggie Pastie (a plant-based creation combining the hearty flavours of pumpkin, carrot, potato, onion, and peas, all delicately seasoned with a touch of curry and wrapped in their signature flaky pastry).
- Paysanne café with their Roasted Pumpkin Quinoa Salad (roasted pumpkin, cherry tomatoes, cucumber, baby spinach, Spanish onion, quinoa with lemon dressing).
- Holgate Brewhouse with Holgate's Roasted Stuffed Capsicum (a Roasted Stuffed Banana Capsicum, with quinoa, mixed nuts and seeds, diced apricots, oranges and prominent red currants, served on coconut cream corn puree and topped with tempura fried gnocchi mushroom).



- Woodend Cellar and Bar (a new entrant in 2025) with their Tomato Tartare (A vibrant and refreshing twist on a classic tartare, featuring finely diced tomatoes dressed with a zesty herb vinaigrette. Served with capers, microgreens, and a side of Woodend Bakery sourdough. A perfect balance of flavors and textures, celebrating the essence of fresh, seasonal produce).
- Hanging Rock Café with their Middle Eastern Chickpea Salad (Spiced chickpeas, tri-coloured quinoa, tomato, cucumber and onion salsa with vegan flatbread and minted coconut yoghurt).
- The Victoria Hotel Woodend with their Handmade Pan Roasted Gnocchi & Homemade Falafel (Pan roasted gnocchi, basil pesto, mozzarella, pine nuts, baby herbs, homemade falafel, tzatziki, breads).
- 600 Above with their 'Make Me Feel Good' Platter (A generous platter consisting of plant-based items complemented by locally produced condiments. You will enjoy roasted pumpkin, eggplant and capsicums, humus, olives, roasted beetroot relish, piccalilli relish, olive tapenade and lightly toasted pumpkin bread).
- Sizzler Restobar with their Aloo Gobi (Cauliflower and potatoes cooked with onion, tomato, ginger and garlic sauce and spices).
- Big Tree in Newham (a new entrant in 2025) with their Seasonal Vegetable Soup (Hearty and delicious seasonal vegetable soup).

Photos: Several Edgy Veg Awards contestants and their creations.

Credit Tiffany Warner Photography



Welcoming your new puppy

Bringing home a new puppy is an exciting experience, but it also requires careful planning to ensure your furry friend thrives.

Dr Candice Priest and her team at Greencross Vets Macedon Ranges are here to help you every step of the way.

The first 24 hours

Give your puppy peace and quiet during their first day at home. Encourage gentle handling and allow them time to rest and adjust to their new environment.

House training

Establish a routine by taking your puppy outside after waking, eating, or being alone for extended periods. Accidents are normal – respond calmly and reward good behaviour with praise or treats.

Puppy school

Training and socialisation are crucial. Puppy school helps you teach obedience and manage behaviour while providing a great way to bond with your pet.

Vaccinations

Vaccines protect against serious diseases. Puppies require a series of vaccines at 6–8, 10–12 and 14–16 weeks of age. Annual boosters maintain immunity. Keep your puppy away from public areas until fully vaccinated.

Parasite prevention

- Worming: Every two weeks until 12 weeks old, then monthly until six months old and every three months thereafter.
- Heartworm: Prevention starts at six weeks. Annual injections or tablets are effective options.
- Fleas and ticks: Regular treatments help prevent infestations. Check your puppy daily for ticks in high-risk areas.

Desexing

Desexing reduces roaming, fighting and behavioural issues. Desexing will also reduce the risk of ovarian and mammary cancers in females, and testicular and prostate cancers in males. Consult one of our team members to determine the best time for your puppy.

Nutrition

A balanced diet supports growth and overall health. Ask our team for recommendations tailored to your puppy's needs.

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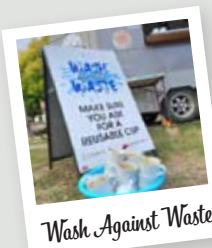
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Country gardeners missing out on free soil screening

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, Professor 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," Professor Taylor says.

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

Professor Taylor says that EPA's scientists add gardeners' 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 and ensure your family is gardening in soil you can trust – we just need more country people to get involved," says Professor Taylor.

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

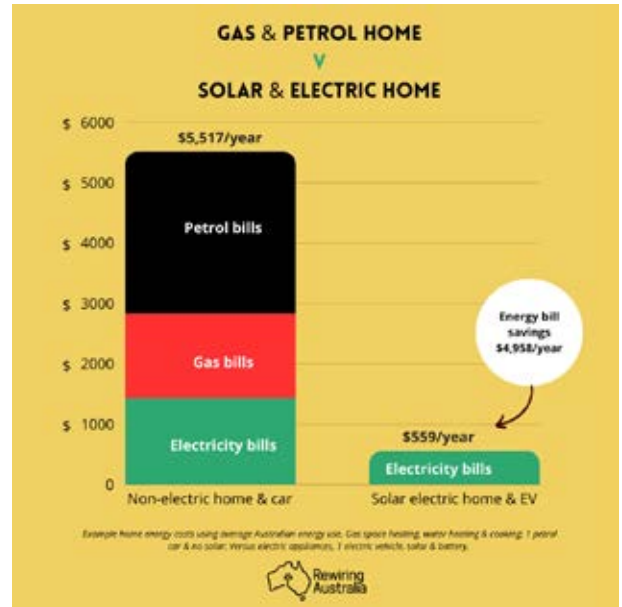
SUBMITTED BY PETER BEATON

Electrify 3442 – Save \$5,000 per year on household energy bills

They say a picture's worth a thousand words, so this month we thought we'd share one from Rewiring Australia: a comparison of energy costs for a typical home with multiple fuel sources and one powered by rooftop solar.

Over the next few months, we'll look at where those savings come from and how you can take advantage of them at your place. Stay tuned!

SUBMITTED BY SUE BARKER, ELECTRIFY 3442



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News from Trentham Branch

Mental Health Initiative for Woodend Sport Clubs

Due to the popularity of Sport and Life Training sessions (SALT), we are proud to offer a Wellbeing and Mental Health Session, incorporating both the Woodend Hasket Football and Netball Seniors, and Woodend Masters clubs.

The session promotes understanding of anxiety and depression, provides participants with positive mental health tools, educates participants on how to have real conversations, and aims to reduce stigma that remains around mental health.

From Beyond Blue...

Learning about mental health will help you look after your social and emotional wellbeing. It will also help you support people close to you. It's important to get support early if you're feeling unsettled or struggling.



Mental Health Support contacts

- Emergency 000
- Lifeline Australia 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800
- 1800 Respect 1800 737 732
- MensLine Australia 1300 78 99 78
- Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467
- Beyond Blue 1300 22 4636
- Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling 1800 011 046
- Qlife – anonymous and free LGBTI peer support 1800 184 527 (3PM-Midnight every day)
- Thirriili 24/7 1800 805 801
- Brother to brother 24-hour crisis line 1800 435 799
- Be part of creating Community Impact

Make a choice to move your banking where your heart and values are. When you open an account with our Trentham branch, profits from your banking are directed back into local community through Grants, Sponsorships and Initiatives. And something fun for April – sign up mulletsforsmentalhealth.org.au to fund raise for Black Dog Institute's mental health research.



For all your banking needs please contact:

Edyta Wyatt — Branch Manager & Mobile Lender

37b High Street
Trentham VIC 3458

Ph: (03) 5424 1608

Email: Trenthammailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au

News from Gisborne Branch



Magic Moments Youth Leadership and Business Summit

Are you 14-17 years old and keen to develop your leadership skills? Want to learn more about yourself and what life can offer you? Interested in how you can create your own career through business?

Community Bank Gisborne & District are sponsoring three youth to attend the 2025 Magic Moments Youth Leadership and Business Summit at the Collaroy Centre, NSW from Saturday 5 July to Wednesday 9 July.

To find out more, visit www.magicmoments.org.au and speak to your school year-level coordinator. Alternatively, email admin@macedonrangercommunityenterprises.com.au for an application form.

Congratulations to Caitlin Harrison, 2025 scholarship recipient

Ashbourne resident, Caitlin Harrison, was one of 12 successful scholarship applicants through our 2025 early tertiary scholarship program. Caitlin will be studying a Bachelor of Arts at Monash University, majoring in politics.

"I am incredibly grateful for the support from Bendigo Bank through this scholarship. It will provide me with essential resources to excel in my studies at Monash University and work towards achieving my academic and career goals. This support will make a meaningful difference as I begin my university journey."

We congratulate Caitlin on her scholarship and wish her all the best in her studies this year and beyond.



For all your banking needs please contact:

Courtney Alexander— Mobile Lender

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Email: gisbornemailbox@bendigoadelaide.com.au

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Contact your local branch for more information: Trentham on (03) 5424 1608 or Gisborne on (03) 5420 7210.



Community Bank Gisborne & District partners with Sisterhood Project to enhance child safety through first aid training

In an inspiring initiative aimed at increasing child safety, Community Bank Gisborne & District has announced a partnership with the Sisterhood Project, focusing on providing essential first aid training for parents and caregivers in the Macedon Ranges area. This year, the project aims to train 300 individuals through a series of baby and child first aid courses led by experienced paediatric nurse specialists and will cover critical topics such as CPR for babies and children, managing burns, choking, poisoning, and understanding childhood illnesses.

Scheduled sessions include:

- Free Introduction to First Aid/CPR
20 June, 2025, 2.30pm–4pm at Woodend Hub
- In-Depth First Aid Course
1 May, 2025, 9.30am –1pm at Woodend Hub
20 May, 2025, 10am–11.30am at Mannagum Children’s Centre, Gisborne

Feedback from previous participants underscores the course’s value. One attendee stated, “I had basic first aid training, but the baby and child content is so much more and, in my opinion, vital for parents and grandparents.” Another remarked, “The course was thorough and informative, delivered in an engaging manner with real-life stories. It gave us all more confidence for when those accidents and sicknesses are bound to happen for our little ones. I would recommend this course to all new or expecting parents!”

The Sisterhood Project’s mission is to provide accessible health education to caregivers, aiming to increase the survival rates of children facing preventable illnesses and injuries. The project also

focuses on bridging the gap for under-resourced communities, particularly in rural and remote areas where access to health education is limited.

In 2024 alone, the Sisterhood Project has trained a total of 347 people across Victoria, with plans to extend offerings into New South Wales and Western Australia. By the end of the year, they hope to reach 25,000 people indirectly through community engagement and education.

With a proven impact and a commitment to empowering caregivers, this partnership represents a significant step toward enhancing child safety and wellbeing in the Macedon Ranges region. For those interested in attending a course, registration is available by visiting www.thesisterhoodproject.com.au.

Together, we can ensure that every parent and caregiver is equipped with the skills needed to protect our children.



Photo: Grace Larson, founder, The Sisterhood Project



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Open call for Artists – 2025 Queerthentic Art Prize

My name is Andie and I am writing on behalf of Macedon Ranges Accessible Arts Inc, a volunteer-run not-for-profit. We are dedicated to enriching the lives of marginalised community members through the power of art. Our mission is simple: to enhance the lives of marginalised community members through access to art in an accessible manner and to decrease the stigmatisation and discrimination faced by those community members.

Macedon Ranges Accessible Arts are excited to announce the open call for artists to participate in the 2025 Queerthentic Art Prize, with \$2,000 in prizes to be awarded. Now in its third year, this regional LGBTQIA+ art prize will be hosted at The Old Auction House in Kyneton from May 1 to May 26, 2025, with the official opening aligning with IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia, and Transphobia) on May 17th.

Queerthentic provides a dedicated platform for queer artists from all backgrounds, mediums, and experience levels to showcase their work. The exhibition celebrates lived experiences, amplifies underrepresented voices, and builds connections within the broader community. By creating a space where queer artists can authentically express themselves without the pressure to conform, Queerthentic aims to foster empathy, challenge stereotypes, and spark meaningful conversations.

Artists working in any medium – visual arts, sculpture, digital media, and more – are encouraged to apply. The exhibition is open to both emerging and established artists who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community or whose work explores queer identity and experience. Applications are open until 20 April, 2025. For submission guidelines and to apply, visit www.mraai.org.au/queerthentic25.

Join us in making Queerthentic, a vibrant, inclusive celebration of queer authenticity and a powerful reflection of our community's diverse stories.

SUBMITTED BY MACEDON RANGES ACCESSIBLE ARTS INC.

Woodend Senior Citizens

The March bus trip was to Cricket Willow at Shepherd's Flat. It was very interesting with all the different collectibles and of course, the shaping of the cricket bats and the growing of willow trees which in time will be made into the blade of the bat. The well-kept cricket oval is used by different clubs, one being Newstead. On leaving Cricket Willow, we enjoyed a nice lunch at the hotel in Trentham.

Please support the bus trips as well as our other activities:

Button Bingo on Tuesdays 1pm–3pm

Playing cards on Fridays 1pm–4pm

Next bus trip: Ballarat Wildlife Park on Thursday 10 April. On the day, please take your time to walk around the park and when ready, buy your lunch at the Wildlife Park Cafe.

New members are always welcome, so come along and join us at the Undercroft of the Woodend Neighbourhood House or call Margaret (0458 272 767), Irene (0417 676 843) or Alma (0400 134 478).

SUBMITTED BY ALMA W.





CFA Update

The Royal Children's Hospital Appeal collection will again be held on Good Friday

The Woodend CFA will once again be collecting on behalf of the Royal Children's Hospital on Good Friday, 18 April. Woodend CFA volunteers will begin collecting at around 9am and will cover as much of the Woodend area as we possibly can during the day. The Heskett-Kerrie and Newham CFA brigades will also be collecting at the same time.

The Macedon Ranges community is normally very generous, and we're sure this will continue. If you are not going to be home on Good Friday, or we miss you on the day, you can drop donations off at the CFA Stations on any Sunday morning or visit the Woodend CFA Virtual Tin Shake and donate online: <https://fundraise.goodfridayappeal.com.au/fundraisers/woodendnewham>



Change your clock, change your smoke alarm battery

Sunday 6 April is the end of daylight saving, and at 3am, you need to move your clock back one hour. Along with changing your clock, it is the perfect time to also change your smoke alarm batteries.

All smoke alarms, whether hard-wired or wireless, require a battery. Hard-wired alarms use a battery as a back-up and that battery needs to be changed as well.

Only a working smoke alarm saves lives.

If there's no sound from your smoke alarm, there's no warning.

Remember, it is normally smoke, not flame or heat, that kills the majority of fire victims. When asleep, our sense of smell is largely diminished, and we're unlikely to smell smoke. The smoke may also put occupants into a deeper sleep, so a smoke alarm actually helps wake you. And, with all of the plastics, materials, electronics and chemicals around – house fire smoke can be extremely toxic.

Our busiest start to the year ... ever!

So far, 2025 has proven to be a very busy year for the Woodend CFA. At the time of writing this article (mid-March) we had been called to a total of more than 50 jobs. To put that in perspective, we reached that mark in 2022 and 2024 in late July. We have attended some 30 primary jobs in the Woodend area and over 20 support jobs in other areas, including numerous callouts for our Rehab Unit.

For further information, contact the Woodend CFA on 5427 2356 or visit the station in Urquhart Street. Follow us on Facebook, or you can visit our website: www.woodendcfa.org



Macedon Ranges Obedience Dog Club



The first two months of the year have been well supported with new Club members, and the weather has been ideal for spending Sunday morning outside.

It's always great to catch up with our returning members, many who have been with the club for three or more years. These members come and enjoy the time spent with their dogs and friends they have made over the years. Our senior class often regroups after class, spending time chatting whilst their dogs socialize and play.

Macedon Ranges Obedience Dog Club (MRODC) is run by volunteers, including our instructors, and without them, we could not operate each Sunday morning, February to November. Each week these people give up a good part of their Sunday to provide a safe and friendly environment for each member and their dog/puppy to learn/socialise. We are a bit like postal delivery and train rain, hail or shine. There are not many times that we cancel Sunday training, Code Red fire rating days and instructor shortages are the main reasons.

If you have nothing to do on a Sunday morning, and are interested in training your dog, or are just curious about what we do, please call in and have a chat. We train from 9am till 11am every Sunday, excluding Easter Sunday, at the Riddells Creek Recreation Reserve, Sutherland Rd Riddells Creek.

If you are interested in joining us, we look forward to seeing you. Details can be found on our website: www.macedonrangesdogclub.org.au. Or contact us via our Facebook page or by email to info@macedonrangesdogclub.org.au and a representative from the club will contact you.

Take care, stay safe and remember a dog is for life.

SUBMITTED BY CAROL, INSTRUCTOR/TREASURER MRODC



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Woodend CFA's new Tanker is now in service



Woodend CFA's new Tanker 2 is now in active service and joins their fleet of five fire fighting vehicles to protect our Woodend community – and beyond! The new Tanker arrived last year and has undergone extensive fitout and member training before it came into active duty recently.

"We applied for the grant in 2020, when I was Captain of the brigade" said former Captain Mike Dornau.

"The CFA provides the Woodend Fire Brigade with vehicles and equipment to suit its brigade risk profile, however they do not fund all of our vehicles. In fact, of the Brigade's five vehicles, only two are fully funded by the CFA. The rest are either fully or partly funded by the brigade.

"We also purchase specialist equipment on our own behalf, that is not covered by the CFA. Hence, the importance of raising funds to maintain our fleet and service to a quality that we believe will best serve our community. High on our list for replacement was our ageing Tanker 2".

"The new Tanker is a state-of-the-art fire fighting vehicle that replaces our 25-year-old Tanker 2," added Captain Steve Ritchie. "This would not be possible without a Victorian Government VESEP Grant (Volunteer Emergency Service Equipment Program). However, it would certainly not be possible without the the generous donations from members of the Woodend Community over many years.

"The new vehicle will provide the Woodend community with a more modern and capable vehicle when our primary Tanker 1 is away on Strike Team duty, which it often is. Tanker 2 then becomes the primary response vehicle to bush and grass fires. The new tanker is also much better equipped for the special and unique geographic make-up of the Woodend area, which includes mountains and forests, as well as high risk grass and bushfire areas."

The Medium Tanker is designed to carry 2,350 litres of water, making it a reliable resource to attend grass, scrub and bushfires, as well as to attend structure fires and urban incidents. It is fitted with lockers that include drawers and shelves to carry support equipment, including breathing apparatus.



First Lieutenant and Equipment Officer Malcolm Judd commented, "The new tanker is a 4WD vehicle, while the old T2 was 2WD, which will make it better suited to handling the rough terrain and steep tracks in our area. It is also a Crew Cab design, unlike the old tanker, where the crew were exposed on the back of the truck.

"The new tanker joins the Woodend CFA's modern Tanker 1 and FCV, our Rehab vehicle (which will soon be replaced by a brand new purpose-built vehicle), and our nearly 30-year-old Pumper, which will hopefully be replaced with a more modern vehicle in the near future".

For more information, contact: Woodend Former-Captain Mike Dornau, 0409 093 935 – mike@dornau.com.au

SUBMITTED BY MIKE DORNAU, FORMER CAPTAIN WOODEND CFA

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The Possum Died

The 2025 retreat of the Kyneton Marist Brothers Old Boys to Torrumbarry Weir Tourist Park scheduled to commence on 22 March has been cancelled, due to insufficient acceptors.

One who was keen to attend arranged for annual leave days immediately after the 2024 event, so had a genuine apology. But despite badgering by the convenor Len Young, the other likely candidates came up wanting!

The Possums Trophy is a perpetual award presented each year to the participant that provides some action of note. It can be anything between outstanding and ridiculous.

The annual retreat commenced in the last part of the twentieth century, but the first Possums Trophy was awarded in 2002. It is named in memory of Brother Paul Bourke who taught at the school for a total of seven years, and was principal for six of them. (At the seminary he was nicknamed Possum).

The late Brian Fleming was the inaugural winner of the Possums Trophy in 2002. He placed his keys in an ice-cream container and left it on the river bank. A passing boat’s wake washed ashore and moved the container into the river and it floated away.

Leo Law (Dec.) and Flemmo headed the boat downstream and caught up with the container intact with the keys; and so a tradition commenced. The names of the winners are recorded on the website: kynetonmaristbrothersoldboys.com.au/testimonials

One previous winner was Kevin Willey from Nagambie. Kevin died on 3 March 2025 and has been interred at Nagambie. As the surgical team and family were discussing Kevin’s needs for palliative care he reminded them that Torrumbarry was coming up!

So the 2025 winner of the Possums Trophy is Kevin Hugh Willey the first posthumous awardee. Rest in Peace Kevin!!

WILLEY, Kevin Hugh

27/01/1937–5/03/2025

Loved son of Hugh and Ruby (both deceased). Loving brother of Frank and Kathleen (both deceased).

Dearly loved husband of Margaret, father to Megan, Jodie and Robert, their partners and proud Pop to all his grandchildren.

Passed away peacefully at GV Health, aged 88.



SUBMITTED BY MICHAEL HALLEY



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How Do VEEC Rebates Work?

VEECs are part of the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program, providing rebates for installing energy-efficient reverse cycle air conditioning, heat pump hot water systems, and ducted heating upgrades. The rebate amount depends on what system you're replacing and what you're installing. The biggest savings come from switching from gas to electric.

Hot Water Upgrades: Big Savings Available

Upgrading to a heat pump hot water system qualifies for multiple rebates, including:

- VEECs – A Victorian Government rebate for installing an energy-efficient system.
- STCs (Small-Scale Technology Certificates) – A federal incentive for heat pump and solar hot water systems.
- Solar Victoria Rebate – Further savings for eligible homeowners (means-tested, property must be at least 3 years old).

Air Conditioner Upgrades: The New VEEC Rebate

For the first time, air conditioning upgrades now qualify for VEEC rebates - especially when replacing gas heating.

- Replace gas ducted heating with ducted reverse cycle for the highest rebates and whole-home comfort.
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If you have solar panels, switching to a heat pump hot water system or reverse cycle air conditioning allows you to use more of your own power instead of gas, cutting your energy bills even further. Running these systems during the day lets you take full advantage of free solar energy.

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Woodend Traders gear up for a new phase with executive committee formation



Last month, the Victoria Hotel in Woodend became the hub of collaboration as approximately 20 members of the 3442 business community came together to discuss the future of the Woodend Traders group. In a significant step forward, an executive committee has been formed to lead the group into a new chapter, enhancing the support for local businesses in Woodend.

The newly appointed committee includes:

- Louise Pannell – President
- Nikki Barker – Vice President
- Raoul Noffke – Treasurer
- Ed Irons – Secretary
- Nicole Jacks – General Committee Member
- Adam Halliday – General Committee Member
- Tom Marsh – General Committee Member

Over the past few years, the Woodend Traders group has successfully operated as a project-based organisation, executing various initiatives aimed at enhancing the local business community. Notable projects include the “Greatest Woodend Gift Voucher” promotion, the Woodend Late Night Shopping evening, and the popular Woodend Christmas tree project.

As the group transitions into this new phase, special recognition goes to Catherine Bartlett for her dedicated leadership as president over the past five years. Her commitment and vision have laid a strong foundation for the group, and her efforts are deeply appreciated by all.

“We are excited to see such a committed group of business owners come together to support and represent our local business community,” said Louise Pannell, the newly elected president. “The goal of the group is to foster the vibrant business community in Woodend, and we invite all local business owners to join us as we move forward with different projects this year.”

The Woodend Traders group is actively seeking new members and encourages anyone with a business in the 3442 postcode to register. Interested businesses can sign up via the website: woodendvictoria.com.au/become-a-member

This is a pivotal moment for the Woodend Traders group, and with the community’s support, it aims to enhance the local business landscape for years to come.

For more information please reach out to woodendtraders@gmail.com

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SUBMITTED BY NIKKI BARKER

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A message from your local police sergeant

Woodend Police have had several challenging situations of late, including serious collisions, missing persons in bushland and several thefts or damages within the community. I don't like repeating myself, but while it is unlikely that Police will stop all thefts or property damage, by doing a few simple things, you can greatly reduce your risk of being a victim and our light-fingered friends will move onto someone else less prepared than you. The simple rule is lock it or be prepared to lose it.

We've had a spate of anti-social behaviour around Woodend, including intentional fires in bushland and park areas, and graffiti. We have apprehended and processed several youths for this offending. They have been identified through investigation and public assistance.

Woodend and Macedon are busily preparing for the challenges of Autumn Leaves (Macedon) and Anzac Day (Mt Macedon). There will be an expectation that Woodend Police will be reinforcing good driving behaviours.

Woodend Police have recently had a turnover of staff. Hopefully you will have some new (experienced) faces within the community. I hope you will make them welcome.

SUBMITTED BY DAVID ARNOLD, SERGEANT 27575,
OIC WOODEND POLICE STATION

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What's Coming Up at Big Tree Distillery?

At Big Tree Distillery, we believe in crafting not just exceptional gin, but also memorable experiences. Whether you're looking for a relaxing Sunday afternoon with live music, delicious food, and handcrafted cocktails, or an exclusive one-night-only celebration under the stars, we've got something special in store for you.

Sunday Sessions at Big Tree – A New Tradition

On the first Sunday of every month, we welcome guests to kick back with live music, pizzas, gin flights, and flowing cocktails. These Sunday Sessions have quickly become a favourite for locals and visitors alike, offering a laid-back way to experience our farm distillery with great company and even better drinks. If you haven't joined us yet, mark your calendar and make a day of it!

Sunset Cocktails at Big Tree – One Night Only!

As part of the 2025 Macedon Ranges Autumn Festival, we are hosting an exclusive Sunset Cocktails & Canapés event on Saturday, 26 April. This one-night-only experience is the highlight of our year, bringing together:

- Three expertly crafted gin cocktails
- Gourmet canapés, perfectly paired with each cocktail
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- A breathtaking sunset over the Cobaw Ranges

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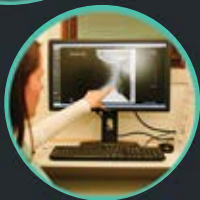
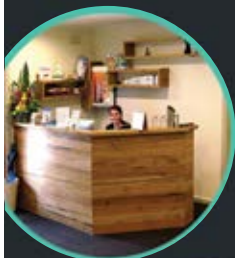
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Make a difference by joining the Disability Advisory Council

The State Government is calling for applicants to join the Victorian Disability Advisory Council.

Minister for Disability Lizzie Blandthorn and Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas last month called for applicants with lived experience of disability from diverse backgrounds, such as First Nations people, those from multicultural communities or the LGBTIQ+ community.

Members of the council provide policy and strategic advice to the Minister for Disability to improve the participation and inclusion of Victorians with disability, ensuring the voices of people with disability are heard.

"Giving a voice to Victorians with lived experience of disability is key to understanding how we can improve services and systems for the entire state," said Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas.

A maximum of 14 positions are available, including two positions for First Nations people. The chairperson and deputy chairperson roles will be filled by people with disability.

Council members will serve for a three-year term that starts on 31 July 2025.

Applications close on Saturday, 12 April 2025. For more information and to apply, visit boards.vic.gov.au.

SUBMITTED BY KATE LEE, OFFICE OF MARY-ANNE THOMAS MP



Welcome Dr Matthew Poulter



Dr Jacques de Groot



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Cancer care project donation appeal to Macedon Ranges community

Kyneton Health launched an appeal in August 2024 to raise funds for a Scalp Cooler to enhance the care provided to their Oncology patients. To date, \$10,231.25 has been donated with a further \$37,012.75 needed to purchase the much-needed equipment. Central Highlands Rural Health is reaching out to individuals, businesses and community groups across the Macedon Ranges seeking their support for the appeal.

Oncology nurses at the health service have requested a 'Scalp Cooling Machine' to minimise the impact of cancer treatment and support patient wellbeing. Patients receiving chemotherapy treatment often experience hair loss which can be physically uncomfortable and emotionally distressing. Currently, Kyneton Health's Oncology patients are unable to access this important technology designed to minimise side-effects and maximise best care.

"Cold caps or scalp cooling may help reduce the amount of hair loss for some individuals. They work by narrowing the blood vessels and reducing the amount of chemotherapy reaching the scalp." *Cancer Council*

Susan Whitfield, Nurse Unit Manager, Kyneton Health, said, "Our patients receive high-quality care in a friendly and compassionate setting. We would like to enhance our service with the introduction of a scalp cooler so that cancer care in the Macedon Ranges provides patients with equipment that reduces the impact of treatment close to home."

Spirit de Cure and Suncorp contributed \$10,000 in August 2024, which was a great start to the appeal, however further donations are needed.

Susan Jennings, Executive Director of Clinical Operations, Central Highlands Rural Health said, "We are truly grateful to receive funds from Suncorp and Spirit de Cure's donors to enhance our Oncology services. We're now asking our local community to consider giving a gift that will make a difference to our cancer patients receiving chemotherapy treatment."

They would like to purchase vital equipment as soon as possible and need your help!

If you can make a donation, please visit Kyneton Health's reception and complete a donation form or you can request forms and invoices by contacting Kathryn Kosloff, Engagement & Fundraising Manager, on 0439 705 039 or giving@chrh.org.au

You can also give online via www.chrh.org.au/donate or you can create your own fundraiser via www.givenow.com.au/scalpcooler if you'd like to run, walk, read or bake to raise funds for this important community fundraiser.

SUBMITTED BY KATHRYN KOSLOFF



Kyneton Health's oncology nurses: Samantha Jones, Britt Poynton and Colleen McGarvey

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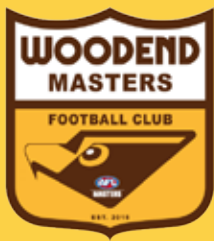
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Celebrating 10 years of footy for fun!



Hawks fired up for local derby

Finally, the Vic Country AFL Masters season kicks off this weekend with Woodend heading down the road to Gisborne for the local derby.

The Bulldogs will be desperate to make amends for our win at Gardiner Oval last year where the Hawks had our first win over the Bulldogs since a practice match in 2016.

Beer flowed after that win, not much was spilt last year. So we are all pumped for a tough game knowing that Gissy doesn't like losing, and we expect a bench loaded with some serious talent.

But so will ours! So come down to Gardiner Oval on April 6 and support the Hawks.

Our fellas have been finetuning their skills with our annual practice match against Ballarat a few weeks ago showing that what we lack in ball skills we make up for in socialising.

Ballarat and Woodend have played an annual pre-season game for many years now and it's a game full of laughs and few bruises.

Thanks to the Diggers for lending a few blokes to fill our side on a very hot day, who helped us take the win.

And a special mention to Showbags' dad for driving the thirsty players to and from the game, via some watering holes. Most notably some well-earned refreshments at our sponsor the Pig and Whistle Hotel.

On March 28, the Juniors, Seniors, and Masters teams gathered for the season launch with a fabulous turnout by families, players, supporters and volunteers to emphasise that the three clubs are ultimately one big club.

It was a chance to once again play our annual community/intra club match where we welcome anyone interested in playing Masters footy to enjoy a contact-free game.

In the past we've had a few dads show their kids some of the skills that they've talked up while sitting on the couch yelling at the TV.

It's a chance to recruit a few blokes too!

We are always welcoming new faces throughout the season, whether you want to train, play, or just help out and be involved with the best social club in town.

On June 14 we are hosting our 10th birthday celebrations at the Vic Hotel with live music, a short trip down memory lane and our very own superstar DJ Doolz hitting the decks for a couple of hours. Anyone who saw Doolz light up High St at the Holgate Brewhouse Christmas party will know that he will have everyone on the dancefloor.

Past parties have been massive nights, from Bogan Bingo, Yeah Nah, and who can forget the Suburban Footballer's comedy night where everyone dressed as '80s footy stars!

To keep up to date with the club, follow us on our Facebook page by scanning the QR code.



Anyone wanting to join in is encouraged to monitor the Woodend Masters Facebook page for updates or just join us for training on Friday nights from 6.30pm.

For more information, email us at woodendmasters@gmail.com

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Authorised by MA Thomas, Shop 14, Nexus Centre, 9 Goode Street, Gisborne

Dozens of kinders create 6,500 new places for kids in 2025

Thousands more children will get a high-quality education at a local kindergarten with dozens of new or expanded services opening this year – creating more than 6,500 kinder places.

Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas visited Lancefield Kinder in February to celebrate the new kinder year and officially open the service – one of 65 new or expanded services welcoming children in 2025.

The new and upgraded kinders are helping address demand in Australia's fastest growing state, where more than 70,000 children are starting three-year-old kindergarten this year, with around 80,000 children joining four-year-old kindergarten.

Twenty of these kindergartens are opening at government schools, providing up to 2,575 new kinder places for Victorian children – and saving parents time during busy periods by eliminating the dreaded double drop-off.

Another 45 new or expanded kindergartens are opening at council, non-government school and other sector sites, supported by funding through Building Blocks Partnerships and Capacity Building grants. These projects will collectively create more than 4,000 new kindergarten places.

SUBMITTED BY KATE LEE, OFFICE OF MARY-ANNE THOMAS MP

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Growing our regional kinder workforce

The early childhood education workforce is being strengthened to support more kinder places for children and better support for working families.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn and Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas recently launched the latest round of the Certificate III Upskill Support Program to help train more early childhood teachers, particularly in regional and rural areas.

Applications are now open for the Certificate III Upskill Support Program, which will provide 400 places for educators looking to upskill to a Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care.

The program includes \$7,000 in financial support that can be used for living expenses while studying and working. This year, half of the places are reserved for students in rural and regional Victoria – meaning students can study and work close to home. In 2024, 416 students accessed the upskilling payment.

Deakin University is also offering online courses for early childhood education students who want to study while working. As part of Victoria's Early Childhood Tertiary Partnerships program, Deakin is one of several institutions providing tailored study options.

Scholarships of \$25,000 for bachelor's students and \$12,000 for graduate diploma students are available through the Early Childhood Scholarships Program.

More than 200 places are available over two years, with priority access for applicants from selected rural and regional areas.

These initiatives will strengthen the early education workforce – meaning more kinder places for children and better support for working families.

Member for Macedon Mary-Anne Thomas said, "By expanding training opportunities for early childhood educators, we're strengthening kinder and giving children across Victoria the opportunities they deserve – no matter where they live."

Applications for the Certificate III Upskill Support Program close on 13 June, for more information visit, vic.gov.au/financial-support-study-and-work-early-childhood#certificate-iii-upskill-support-program.

Deakin is currently taking applications for its employment-based pathways, for more information visit, vic.gov.au/financial-support-study-and-work-early-childhood.

Big score for country footy and netball in 2025

A new round of grants from the State Government for regional footy and netball clubs.

Minister for Community Sport Ros Spence and Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas have announced a new round of Country Football and Netball Program grants.

Developed in partnership with the AFL, AFL Victoria and Netball Victoria, the program has invested more than \$40 million and delivered more than 580 projects since 2005.

Applications for the new round of grants close on Monday, 7 July 2025. Regional councils can apply for grants of up to \$250,000 for sports infrastructure developments including court lighting upgrades, changeroom overhauls, new pavilions and more.

For the latest information and successful grant recipients visit sport.vic.gov.au.

"Better facilities mean the Macedon community can continue playing footy and netball in their local community for years to come," said Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas.

Free Kinder Kits for 70,000 Kids to kickstart education

The State Government is giving a free Kinder Kit to every child starting three-year-old kindergarten – full of books, toys and stationery to help children get their best start in life.

Minister for Children Lizzie Blandthorn and Member for Macedon, Mary-Anne Thomas have unveiled this year's Kinder Kits, which about 70,000 children starting three-year-old kinder this year will receive.

Kinder Kits ensure that all children can enjoy the benefits of Free Kinder, with engaging activities that set them up for a lifetime of learning.

Kits are equipped with playdough, crayons, stacking blocks, alfalfa seeds for planting and stories from Australian authors. This year's Kinder Kits double as a backpack which can be opened into a felt playing surface for imaginative play.

Other items for kids include timber story rollers, a colouring book, a jumping frog game, a card game exploring maths concepts, and felt stickers that can be used to create stories on the backpack's lining.

Every item in the kits is recommended by education experts to support learning through play. More than 50 Victorian businesses have contributed to the kits since 2022 – with products made, designed or printed in Victoria, written by a Victorian author, or produced by a Victorian business.

Kinder Kits are part of Victoria's Best Start, Best Life reforms, which are transforming early childhood education, saving families money and supporting parents and carers to return to work or study if they choose.

Mary-Anne Thomas said, "Kinder Kits are a helping hand at a time when every dollar counts – it's about giving children the best possible foundation for life. By providing these Kinder Kits, we're reinforcing the message that every child deserves access to the resources that support their learning and development."

SUBMITTED BY KATE LEE, OFFICE OF MARY-ANNE THOMAS MP



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Walk in the footsteps of the Anzacs

A dozen Victorian students will have the opportunity to embark on a fully funded 11-day study tour to Gallipoli, Türkiye, where they will retrace the footsteps of the Anzacs.

Minister for Veterans Natalie Suleyman and Member for Macedon, last month invited students in years nine to 12 to apply for the 2025 Spirit of Anzac Prize and gain a deeper understanding of Australia's wartime history.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize, ensuring that Victorian students continue to learn about our veterans' service and sacrifice. This milestone is particularly significant as students will visit Gallipoli on the 110th anniversary of the Anzacs landing on 25 April 1915.

By walking the same ground as those who served, students will gain a profound appreciation of the resilience, mateship, and courage that define the Anzac spirit.

As part of their application, students will reflect on their interest in wartime history, their understanding of Anzac values, their contributions to their school and community, and the knowledge they hope to gain from this unique experience.

Member for Macedon Mary-Anne Thomas MP said, "The Premier's Spirit of Anzac Prize not only deepens students' understanding of the Anzac spirit, it also creates lifelong memories and friendships that stay with the participants well beyond the tour". More than 4,000 students have submitted applications in the last 20 years, with more than 500 of these given the opportunity to visit historic battlefields and memorials across Europe, Southeast Asia and Australia.

Through government support, the contributions of veterans are recognised through educational programs, school initiatives, and commemorative events, in an opportunity that fosters a deep respect for history, so the sacrifices of past generations are never forgotten.

Applications are open until Monday, 28 April 2025. To apply or find out more visit www.vic.gov.au/soap.

SUBMITTED BY KATE LEE, OFFICE OF MARY-ANNE THOMAS MP

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Kyneton Aero Club set to soar

Kyneton Airfield is one of nine regional airports receiving funding under the Regional Airports Program. The Federal Government grant of \$413,500 for upgrades at Kyneton Aero Club.

The project will include the extension and resealing of the runway, as well as sealing taxiways, increasing tarmac area around the refuelling bay and the installation of a dedicated helipad for emergency services rotary aircraft.

The runway extension will accommodate the larger aircraft that are used for aeromedical flights and fire-fighting operations, and will improve safety, operational efficiency and emergency response capabilities at the airfield. Sealing the taxiway will help to prevent damage to aircraft and will make the airport operational in all weather conditions.

The total project will cost \$827,000, with the Kyneton Aero Club matching the Federal Government's grant with a \$413,500 contribution of their own.

For more information on the Regional Airports Program, including a full list of Round 4 projects in Victoria, visit www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/aviation/regional-remote-aviation/regional-airports-program.

Federal Member for Bendigo Lisa Chesters MP said that the grant will make residents safer and the region more resilient in the face of natural disasters.

Kyneton Aero Club general committee member Sophia Eldridge said of the funding boost, "We're excited to transform our airfield into a safer and more efficient space for the vital aero-medical and fire services that keep our community protected.

"We are excited and grateful that the needs of our community are being seen, and decisive action has been taken to support us to enhance safety measures and access to emergency services.

"Thanks to the Regional Airports Program, Kyneton Aero club will be able to make key upgrades that will have lasting benefits to the wider community."





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Woodend Cricket Club – Jensen Third Premiers!

Woodend Cricket Club Third XI have won the GDCA Jensen Shield Third Division Premiership, beating Sunbury Kangaroos 7/169 vs 9/119. Woodend batted first and after a patient start and some tight bowling from the opposition, found ourselves in some trouble at 5/62. Enter Aaron Cavric and Peter Bosanko, who got stuck in against the older ball and put together a 103 run partnership. Aaron 'The Rhino' Cavric made 35 runs from 43 balls and Peter Bosanko made a swashbuckling 65 not out from 52 balls. Talented youngster James Gray came in to bat with one ball to go and smashed it for four, bringing our final score to 7/169 from the 40 overs. Tom Rickard opened the bowling, taking the first two wickets of the Sunbury Kangaroos innings. Father and son Alistair and James Gray combined to take the next wicket to have the opposition 3/47. Then Peter Bosanko took 3/25 and James Fiford also took 3/25, claiming important wickets and restricting Sunbury Kangaroos to 9/119 from their 40 overs – securing the victory! Peter Bosanko was named Player of the Final for his batting and bowling heroics.

Mr 500!

Congratulations to Warren Else, who recently took his 500th senior wicket for the Woodend Cricket Club. Warren has had an outstanding season with the ball, taking 30+ wickets at an average of 11.7 and also securing the GDCA First XI League bowling award! Warren currently sits fourth on the All-Time list of senior wickets taken for the club, behind Hall of Fame member Grant McDonald (532) and Legends Peter Barker (615) and Mick Barker (830).

GDCA league award winners!

Congratulations to the winners of the GDCA league awards – Senior and Junior.

- McIntyre First XI Bowling: Warren Else
- McIntyre Second XI Aggregate: Brett Gardner
- Club Grade South Batting: Dale Ranson
- Under 13 Girls Bowling: Philippa Jellinek
- Under 13 Boys West Batting: Ben Sumpter
- Under 15 Boys Aggregate: James Gray



Photo, back Nick Tucker, Aaron Cavric, Peter Bosanko, James Gray, James Black, Mitchell Bosanko, Adam Tucker.
Front: Alistair Gray, Sam Deol, Joshua Johnston, Jamie Walker (captain), James Fiford.
Absent: Thomas Rickard



Sean Huddle (left) and Warren Else, from recent First XI One Day Premiership, where Warren won the Player of the Final.

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Woodend Hanging Rock Petanque Club

On "Teams Night" at Hanging Rock on the last Thursday of the month, the members choose their own team to play in "tournament-like" conditions to compete against each other. Graham Cole, Shane Wellington and Ed Lowe were the winners on February 27. Well done, all!

The club is celebrating its 25th Anniversary this year, so they kicked off their celebrations with a Long Lunch, picnic-style, at the beautiful Hanging Rock Reserve in March. The sun was shining upon us, and a mob of kangaroos hopped by as we sat down to our lunch – it was a treat for all.

Each member attending the lunch was presented with a "25th Anniversary" cap as a memento, supplied by Sign Obsession in Kyneton.

A glass of champagne started off the lunch, with toasts to all our members for their support and encouragement towards the club. They continued the celebration with a delicious lunch and finished with a lemon curd and blueberry cake from Mignon in Kyneton, which was cut by three of the long-standing club members, Louise and Clive Potter, and Shirley Marshall.

Shirley is presently in New Zealand, playing in the Trans Tasman Australian Team against Christchurch. We all wish her good luck.

The fun then continued with three games of competitive petanque play underneath the magical gum trees of Hanging Rock.

On 22 March, the club hosted the biannual Mixed Triples Tournament, with teams travelling from afar, as well as local clubs.

SUBMITTED BY LOUISE POTTER



Photo: Clive and Louise Potter and Shirley Marshall



Futsal in the Macedon Ranges: A fast-paced, growing community sport



Played with a round ball, on a hard court and only five players per side, Futsal is an exciting and fast paced variant of soccer that is growing in popularity around the world; including here in the Macedon Ranges.

Macedon Ranges Futsal (MRF) – a community-based league – was established almost 30 years ago with humble beginnings at Buffalo Stadium, Woodend. Today, MRF fields as many as 142 teams in the current summer season.

The league includes mixed competitions for juniors from grade one through to a mixed open division. And following the "Matildas effect" (resulting from the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup) female participation in futsal has significantly increased with female-only competitions for girls in grade one through to late secondary school.

Futsal is played across the year, with two seasons – winter and summer. Games are played on Thursday and Friday afternoons and evenings from 4.30pm. Courts are located at Gisborne Secondary College, Gisborne Primary School, Willowbank Primary School, the new Macedon Ranges Regional Sporting Precinct and Tony Clarke Reserve in Macedon. Community members are welcome to come along and watch a game.

For more information visit www.mrfutsal.org.au

SUBMITTED BY KRISTY MUTSAERS (MACEDON RANGES FUTSAL COMMITTEE MEMBER)

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WOODEND ARE 2025 SATURDAY CHAMPIONS

Our Saturday Division 2 team finished second on the ladder at the end of the season, having been on top for much of the year. We defeated top team Kyneton Golf in the first round of the finals, winning all three rinks with a total of 68 to 48, progressing straight into the Grand Final.

We played a strong Kyneton team in the Grand Final at Lancefield and after trailing them all afternoon, we won the Championship by 2 points (54 to 52), scoring an amazing 4 and 3 on two rinks on the very last end. We won one rink, lost one rink and drew on the other.

There was much celebration from the Woodend players and supporters, with Kyneton left to consider 'the one that got away'. Woodend is almost certain to accept promotion to the top division next season.

Thanks to the Selectors for their hard work through the season and also to those players who represented the club in Div 2 through the season, especially Judy Condon and Mark Paterson.

Woodend Triples a triumph!

The Annual Woodend 'Tilley's Triples' Tournament, in honour of club legend Bill Till, was played on Thursday 13 March with 24 teams and 72 players from clubs including Aberfeldie, Daylesford, Diggers Rest, Gemlife, Gisborne, Kyneton, Lancefield, Macedon, Melton, Romsey, Torquay/Deniliquin, Trentham and Woodend. This meant that every single rink on our new synthetic and grass greens was used.

There were multiple three game winners, with the winning team from Macedon of Graham Hobbs, Steve Graham and Paul Ritchie. Runners-up was the Woodend team of Stephen Pickles, Ron Ackroyd and John Geyer, with Diggers Rest third represented by Dave Odgers, Shane Crimmins and Frank Kremer. Best Last Game went to the Aberfeldie team of Ian Ferreter, Shaun Lee and Andrew Rakis.

A huge thank you to sponsors Woodards, the Brooke Street Medical Centre and Black Forest Meats. Also thanks to all teams who entered, as well as those who prepared the greens, catering and organised the event.

You could be ready for next Pennant season

If you are thinking of taking up bowls and may be interested in being part of one of our teams next season (which starts in October) please get in touch and come on down for a free trial. We can provide everything to get you started ... the bowls and the coaching.



Pictured left to right: Standing – John Shaw, Rob Smithies (emergency), Stephen Pickles (Skip), Garry Dryden, John Geyer, Steve Milesi, Ron Fitt, Mike Dornau (President). Front row: Derek Barber, Tony Lennie, Tim White, Geoff Symons (Skip) and Norm Bickerdyke (Skip).

However, if you are not interested in the competitive side and just want to have a friendly social bowl – it's a great way to get out and about with a low impact activity.

Check out our website and Facebook page

For more information please call our NEW phone number 5407 9220, visit our website at www.woodendbowlsclub.weebly.com. You can also follow us on Facebook.

SUBMITTED BY MIKE DORNAU, PRESIDENT WOODEND BOWLS CLUB



Membership Special

Get ahead of the winter chill – start training indoors now!

With this community newsletter exclusive offer, enjoy **25% off** all 3-month memberships at Council's aquatics and fitness centres, by using Promo Code "April25".

This offer is open to new and existing members but must be your sole active membership by 30 June 2025. This promotion is valid for the month of April 2025.



*Terms and conditions apply. scan the QR code or visit: mrsc.vic.gov.au/AF-promo



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Hawks ready to soar into the 2025 Season!



The Hawks are soaring into the 2025 season with confidence after a strong pre-season across both football and netball. With some solid practice matches under their belts, the teams are looking sharp and ready to take on the competition. The energy is high, and the commitment from our players, coaches, and supporters has been incredible as we fly into another big year.

The Season Launch was a massive success, bringing the Woodend community together for a fantastic evening. The free community event was a hit among locals, with plenty of entertainment, food, and fun for the whole family. It was great to see so many new and returning faces celebrating the upcoming season with us.

Exciting developments are also underway at the club, with the new netball court redevelopment at Gilbert Gordon Oval progressing well. The improvements will be a game-changer for our netballers, providing a top-class facility to train and compete on. We're looking forward to seeing the finished courts and the positive impact they'll have on our club.

We also want to take a moment to acknowledge our incredible sponsors who make community sport possible. Their generosity ensures our players have the best facilities, equipment, and opportunities to succeed. Please support the businesses that support us – whether it's shopping local, using their services, or simply spreading the word, every little bit helps. To see all our sponsors visit our website www.woodendhsketfnc.org

You can also show your support by grabbing a Hawks Social Membership. With social membership you'll receive free entry to all home games and your choice of a club scarf or stubby holder – the perfect way to show your Hawks pride and support local sport! Get yours today: bit.ly/WHFNCsocialmembership

We host the Good Friday game this year against Kyneton – it's a great local rivalry. Music to follow the game. If you aren't going away it should be a great day!

There's never been a better time to get behind the Hawks. Whether you're a player, supporter, sponsor, or volunteer – let's make 2025 another unforgettable year!

SUBMITTED BY PAUL PODBURY, PRESIDENT, WHFNC



Woodend Junior Hawks – 2025 Shaping up to be our biggest season yet!

The Woodend Junior Football and Netball club season 2025 is looking to be one of our biggest yet. Preparations are in full swing for our upcoming season, which officially starts on 6 April. Prior to this, we had a round of practice matches against Kilmore on 30 March.

Training has commenced at Buffalo sports oval for all age groups, from U9 to U17, with the warm weather making our sessions very enjoyable. The overall vibe around the club is one of positivity and growth. We are looking to field two teams in most age groups, so if you haven't registered yet, please contact Sally at registrar@woodendhawks.com.au.

The Nest has been aflutter with activity on the netball front. The new courts at Gilbert Gordon are under construction and we're hoping they will be up and going by round one. It will elevate the status of netball and be an absolutely first class facility.

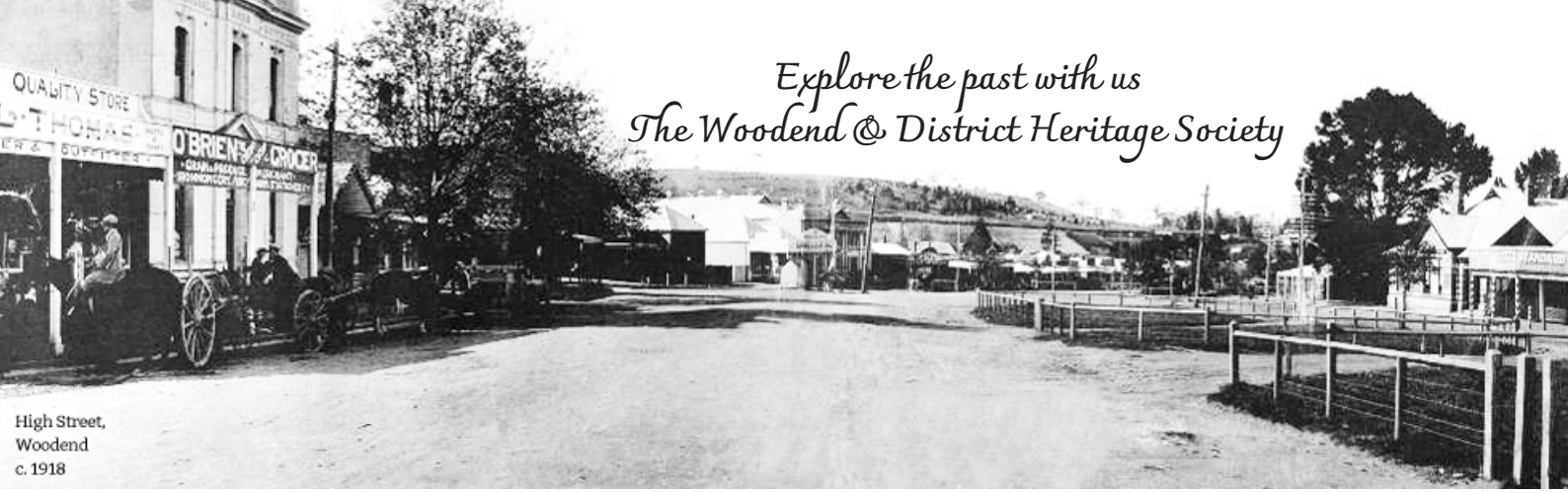
With growing participation numbers, the new courts will be fully utilised from day one. So good to see this facility come to life to help foster the engagement of young women in the club and in sport. Look out for updates about the opening in coming weeks and join us to thank all those who have contributed to making this a reality.

We're fielding junior netball teams this year from under 11s to 17s and have been enjoying hitting the court in recent weeks for pre-season training. Aply lead by a tribe of volunteers, we're also fortunate to have a few senior netballers taking charge of the under 15s coaching. Great coaches and role models!

With recent grant funding and support from the Woodend Rotary Club, we are fortunate to be able to support our coaches to support our kids by running training programs and providing external mentoring.

SUBMITTED BY EMMA TUCK, VICE PRESIDENT





High Street,
Woodend
c. 1918

Woodend Avenue of Honour

'The greatest and most impressive public event ever witnessed in the district', wrote the *Woodend Star*, was the opening of the Avenue of Honour on 11 September 1918. Along Mt Alexander Road, north of Woodend, 150 oaks had been planted in recognition of the services in World War I of men and one woman, connected to the Shire of Newham and Woodend.

The plan had only been initiated a couple of months earlier and involved an enormous effort by many volunteers; most of the soil was rich red, but more red had to be carted in further from town.

The *Star* acknowledged the huge amount of work achieved by the Committee of Management and the ladies who had catered for the several working bees during the work, and served refreshments at the end of the ceremony in a large marquee about halfway along. The number of trees did not quite include everyone on the honour roll, but more would be planted the following year. At the south entrance to the Avenue, an arch covered with ferns, wattle blossom and flags had been erected by Mr C. H. Overton, assisted by Mr J. Fisher and Mr L. Overton.

About 1,200 attended the event but the *Star* expressed disappointment verging on disgust at the lack of attendance by the Federal member, Mr E. Jowett, and the Acting Prime Minister, the Honourable W. A. Watt, who, on his way to another function in Bendigo, only slowed down through the avenue, 'gazing about him'. The program began with a procession from the town which included some returned soldiers, local officials and the Anzac Band.

Shire President Cr Don invited the Hon. J. M. Chanter, the substitute for Mr Jowett, to open the Avenue by cutting the red, white and blue ribbon stretched across the entrance. He spoke at length about the young men who had gone to war. Everyone then moved to tree number 28, in honour of George Green, the first in the area to die. The band played the Dead March and the Last Post was sounded with 'impressive solemnity'.

After further speeches and ribbon-cutting at the north end, the band played the National Anthem and 'concluded a memorable day's proceedings'.

AI for the Everyday Historian: Practical Uses Without the Jargon

Monday 14 April 2025 at 2pm at the Old
Courthouse, Woodend

AI isn't just for tech experts – it's a tool anyone can use, even in local history! Join Steve Simpson for an informal, hands-on session exploring how AI can help with transcription, photo restoration, storytelling, and more. No technical knowledge needed – just curiosity and a willingness to experiment!

SUBMITTED BY JANE HOLTH



- Photo 2056: The Wall of Remembrance was erected in September 2015 and includes a history of the Avenue of Honour and the names of men who enlisted in World War I.



- Photo 41: The procession in High Street prepares to march to the Avenue of Honour. The soldier with the crutch is possibly Private Arthur Liddy. The soldier with the flag is Senior Cadet Allen Haslett, senior cadets, school children, shire councillors and members of the Avenue Committee.

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Esteemed Paediatrician Dr Billy Garvey presents at SHC Kyneton

On Wednesday 12 March, members of the Macedon Ranges community were privileged to have an audience with highly esteemed developmental paediatrician, Dr Billy Garvey. The evening was part of Sacred Heart College's Parent Engagement Program, now in its eighth year, which aims to provide local parents with information on current areas of importance for children and teens from well-known guest speakers.

Dr Garvey is known by many from his popular podcast 'Pop Culture Parenting' and his work as a developmental paediatrician. During the evening, he facilitated an accessible, practical, genuine and engaging discussion covering topics such as: understanding presentations of anxiety at various ages, neurodiversity, building resilience, confronting challenging behaviour and the importance of understanding attachment and parenting styles.

The evening had over two hundred parents in attendance and Dr Garvey was very generous with his time, remaining to speak with individual families and share his wisdom late into the evening. The College is certainly hopeful of fostering further connections with Dr Garvey's enterprise Guiding Growing Minds – www.guidinggrowingminds.com and hopes to be able to have him visit again in the future.

The next guest speaker in our Parent Engagement Program will be Andrew Fuller who will focus on Raising Respectful Young Men & Women. Andrew is a best selling author with titles including: Unlocking Your Child's Genius, Tricky Kids , Life: A Guide, Raising Real People (ACER), From Surviving to Thriving (ACER) and Beating Bullies. His talks are always a lot of fun and very informative. These events are free and open to all in our local community, but tickets must be booked.

The messages that our speakers are presenting are valuable for everyone, and our hope is that by building knowledge and skills for all parents around specific areas of young people's lives, we will ultimately have a more informed regional approach to issues, that supports young people wherever they are, in a consistent way.

SUBMITTED BY HALEY GALLOWAY, DEPUTY PRINCIPAL STUDENT WELLBEING



Free Educational Parent Presentations

Save the Date

4 June Presenter: Andrew Fuller
Raising Respectful Young Men & Women

5 Aug Presenter: The Cyber Safety Project team

22 Oct Presenter: Sonya Karras
Safe Partying



Scan to learn more

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Thursday 8 May and Wednesday 11 June.
Visit the College website for tour bookings.

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