

Merrijig Matters

Merrijig's Monthly Newsletter

June 2014

Issue No. 14

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Quote of the month

"I've learned that people
will forget what you said,
people will forget what you did,
but people will never forget
how you made them feel."

Maryo Angelou
1928 - 2014



Feedback is back

'What an amazing read! Congratulations on producing such a quality newsletter. I own a house on Alpine Ridge Drive and I'm very interested in the local community 'goings on'.

Regards,
George Galdin'

And

'Hi Adele,

Thank you for another wonderful newsletter. It is such an important way for us to feel connected to the Merrijig community. I particularly enjoyed reading about the Merrijig ANZAC Day service. Bruce and I missed this year's service as we were interstate, however really appreciated reading Frank's overview of proceedings and seeing the photos of Mum and Dad (Jan and Peter Howarth) and others in attendance.

Thanks again.
Catherine Easton'

Also

'We read your Merrijig news and love it. Well done and may it continue. John & Sylvia Steele.'

This and archived issues of the newsletters can be viewed on
Merrijig's Community Website

at http://www.merrijig.com.au/html/local_news.html

**Some articles in this newsletter may be picked up
by the Mansfield Courier so consider this if you
are submitting stories you could be sensitive about sharing
with the community wider than Merrijig.**

If you're looking for a **Justice of the Peace**, here are our two local JPs:

Dale Daly, Timbertop School 5733 6777
Laurie Jacob, Buttercup Rd 0439 280 333

June 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2 Conflict resolution workshop at MACE	3 Trivia night at the pub	4	5	6	7 Opening of Ski Season John-Luke and High Speed Steel on at the pub 8:30 meals from 6
8 3rd of the Tri Series Grass Track motor bike club day	9 Queens birthday public holiday - No school	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Trivia night at the pub	18	19	20	21 Bushwalkers Snow shoe day walk
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

Who's doing what lately?

The Department of Environment and Primary Industries sent out this impressive invitation to a farewell luncheon for Merrijig resident, Chris Deutscher, after he has been protecting our community each summer for nearly four decades.



This report was extracted from DEPI Facebook page:

“After 37 years, Chris Deutscher is hanging up his binoculars at the Mt Buller fire tower. The 67 year old has been the resident fire spotter (for the Department of Environment and Primary Industries) at Mt Buller for 34 years and prior to that at Paps tower (west of Mansfield at the Delatite pine plantation).

Since he took up his post as a fire spotter at the young age of 30 years, he has worked almost every Christmas Day and Boxing Day to help keep surrounding townships safe during the hot and dry summer months.

The tower, a 14-foot square room, became a second home to Mr Deutscher.

Mr Deutscher has spotted thousands of fires during his time and has even had some knocking on his door. Mr Deutscher wanted to thank the dedicated firefighters he has worked with over the years.”



Pictured above: A relaxed Chris Deutscher. Courtesy Peter Hunt, Mansfield Courier

Brigitte Wentworth, one of Chris's co-workers, expresses how highly regarded he is and outlines the dedication to his job, that he has given in protecting our space in this poem she wrote entitled -

A Standing Ovation for "Deutsch"

Brigitte Wentworth - May 2014

**In a pyramid hut at the top of the peak,
You'd find him on any day of the week.
Through the endless summer's endless days
He'd be searching through the heat-filled haze
For the tell-tale signs of that blue-grey curl
That told of flames beneath its swirl.**

**When he first arrived in seventy-seven,
He thought the new job was nearly heaven,
But three years later his outlook grew
When he swapped the Paps for a Buller view,
And it was there in his hut of rock and stone
The surrounding vista became his own.**

**He was King of his castle; cowboy hat for a crown;
Surveying his empire all around.
Every gully and ridge of the outstretched land,
He knew it all like the back of his hand.
With eagle-eyes he'd scan the hills;
Doing cryptic crosswords just for thrills.**

**And when something caught those eagle-eyes,
Our ears would prick and our hair would rise
When the radio barked the sharp retort
Of: "Buller Tower - Smoke Report!".
Then out would peal the siren's sound
As crews raced toward the fire-ground.**

**He's been ever aware of the job to be done,
Underneath that baking summer sun.
Through our Christmas lunches and holidays,
He's protected us all with his trusty gaze.
Alert and wary he'd circle the room;
Always ready for that smoky plume.**

**He's watched our back for all these years;
Looked out for us; helped allay our fears.
While we played, relaxed and paid no mind,
To one tiny room he was confined.
So we'd like to say thanks for his dedication
And offer these words as our "Standing Ovation".**

Chris said he has to admit that when Brigitte read this poem out aloud at his farewell luncheon, it brought "a teary eye" to know his work was so valued.

As a community, I believe Merrijig people want you to know Chris that we appreciate what you have sacrificed for our safety. I reckon we also extend out thanks to Helen and Sam, who did without you at Christmas time and on so many occasions during each summer for the health of the environment and the safety of people and property in this watch zone.

Speaking of Christmases missed, his only child Sam sent a message to be read out at his farewell as she was unable to come down from Lismore where she lives (with Chris & Helen's grandchildren) It is a beautifully written description of her Dad's life as a fire watcher.

Sam writes: "My first memory of a 'fire tower' is the wiggly, bumpy, corrugated road leading up to the "Paps Tower". Up there the grass was always dry and the landscape sparse and

barren. Perfect conditions for a fire. There was always an annoying abundance of insects which included moths, cicadas, dragonflies and flies. Dad had an incredible collection of deceased insects pinned to a cork board which may - or not have acted as a deterrent to other pests!

There were numerous days during the school holidays when I spent the day with Dad at the tower and lucky for me I was an avid reader and keen on drawing as Dad was always focused on various aspects of his 'watch'.

We moved to 'Corn Hill' and it was there all our family fell in love with the amazing view. Dad worked long and unpredictable hours and for a kid, I guess that's something you accept. Christmas Day was always tough as I was only allowed to open one present from under the tree in the morning and then I had to wait until Dad arrived home from work in the early evening to open the rest! Tough choice for a kid! There are not many people who have worked Christmas Day for 37 years. Dad always put the safety of the community ahead of the dates, time and occasions which today is an attribute hard to find. A move to Mirimbah bought him even closer to Mt Buller and also a winter connection.

There were many days of smoke filled skies but none like that of February 1983. These devastating fires also known as Ash Wednesday burnt out more than 210,000 hectares and killed 47 people. At 8.15am when the school bus stopped at Merrijig we couldn't see the children outside getting on the bus for the smoke. Many townships and communities lost houses, animals and loved ones. The unsung heroes involved in spotting, fighting and controlling the fires worked around the clock, giving continuous support to those that needed information which ultimately kept many more communities safer from the perils of the flames.

The Eastern Victoria Alpine fires of 2003 brought fire very close to home! Once again Dad worked tirelessly, staying overnight at the Buller tower on several nights and doing everything in his power to protect Mt Buller, Mirimbah and Sawmill Settlement from fires which raged incredibly close by! People have said "Deutsch saved Buller, he's a bloody legend"! They are right!

When I was in and around Mt Buller in the fire seasons of the past, I always had the sense that Dad was watching over us! I felt safer knowing his keen eyes and knowledge gained over many years on the tower were there to protect us and minimise any dangers looming.

Today you are all saying thanks and farewell to that legend; a man who has irreplaceable and extensive knowledge of fire, mountains, terrain, landscape, fire towers, maps, wind and tower men. It's a shame the DEPI couldn't include in their budget a Helicopter to pick up Chris in the morning and drop him home in the evening because he can still do the "job".

I am proud of my father's wonderful dedication and devotion as well as his achievements with the DEPI on the tower and know that he will be missed. Chris has a great sense of community and a love of his local area and I am sure his talents will be missed into the future."



Picture by Brooke Lee Davis

Chris and Helen have taken to the air and tripped off overseas for a while, I want to write a bit of an article about Chris's life as a fire watcher for next month's issue. Maybe they will supply us with some pictures and comments about their first trip in retirement.

They Made It - all the way

Cheryl and Will Christopher successfully completed the 40 km walk along the Heysen Trail.

On May 24th Cheryl posted on Facebook "We have just completed the South Australia Heysen Trail Challenge. It's been a grueling – but an utterly terrific two days. The terrain has included single file tracks through heavy bush, gravel roads, walking through farmland and lots of clambering up and down rocks - plus walking on sand which to many, proved to be the hardest to negotiate." She went on to say "We want to send our huge thanks to friends and family who sponsored us and to those who encouraged us and assisted. We feel pretty exhilarated and know that our small contribution when added to that of others WILL make a difference to the health of others in the future."

Having lost a close friend to bowel cancer only last year Cheryl and Will took on this challenge to raise awareness about how early detection can save lives, they both believe, "Whilst there's nothing we can do - despite our greatest wishes and prayers - to alter the past, we can have a hand in the future".

As well as raising some \$'s for the Jodi Lee foundation, the bond between mother and son will be a special one as they together can reflect on this experience they shared for the rest of their lives - what a wonderful gift to each other that is.



Cheryl and Will happy to have completed the challenge



Oh what a wonderful view from Heysen Trail



Will Christopher happy to have completed the Heysen Trail Challenge for Bowel Cancer Awareness

Sue O'Brien crosses from East to West in her trusty motorhome with her friend Warren. Sue kept her friends updated with some fantastic photos - here you can enjoy some of her trip too.



Fishing at Esperance – Hmm not much dinner there

And at right a flat tyre not far from Ceduna





Warren and Dotty having breakfast in WA.



One reason for the trip - Warren's sister turned 80 in Perth, Sue made her a quilt which she LOVES!



The breast cancer awareness tree - women are invited to hang their bra on the tree and post a photo on Facebook

Sue joined the other women who had participated and wrote on Facebook:

“As we passed this tree I said "we gotta go back, that's a new tree"

“Once there, I read with stillness in my heart.
Thinking about all of these women, all revealing not only their breast but their hearts.
The sincerity of this 'tree' was very moving.

I thought
Imagine losing a breast.
Imagine losing both.
Imagine losing your mum or sister or daughter to breast cancer.
Imagine not being able to breast feed or comfort your child due to having no breasts.
Imagine how you would feel intimately with your husband after a mastectomy.
These are all difficult questions. I pray they find a cure very soon.
Until then - yes I will stand with the women of the 'bra tree'.....in the middle of nowhere”

Sue O'Brien

Kerrie and her boys walk for breast cancer awareness



Daniel, Kerrie and Glenn Purcell helping with Breast Cancer Awareness

Jack's in the outBack



*Jack doing his bit to help with the muster on his brother-in-law's property

Kate Bergmuller at Chilton Barrel Racing Day



"It was a wonderful family activity, very relaxing and happy. My boys loved it as much as I did."

Rhyll McCormack works at the Courier office in Mansfield and made a discovery from the archives recently.



Yes It's her father in law Bruce from a few decades ago.

Chris Dunlop in the snow on the last trail ride of the season



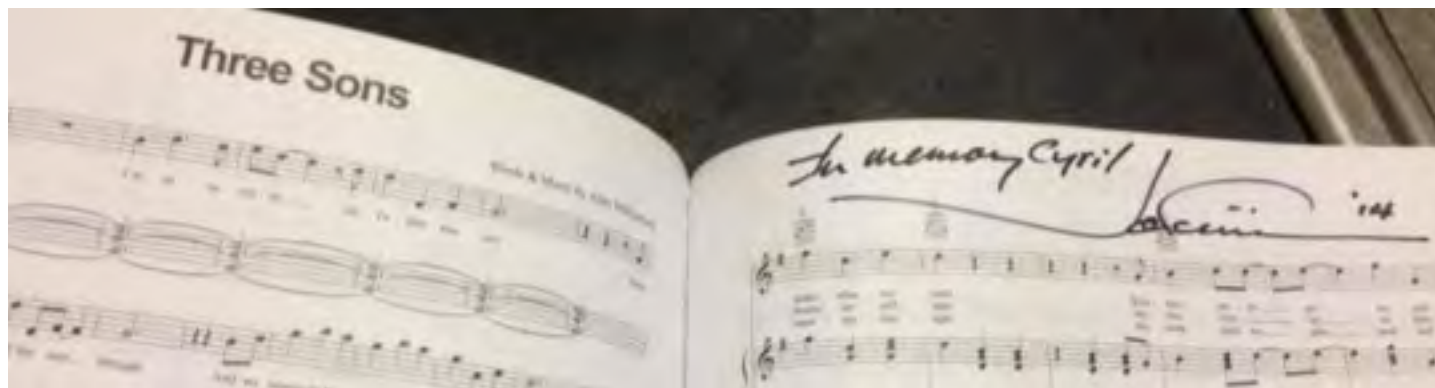
May 6th, Chris in the snow on Mt Stirling

“The last ride for the season is over.” Fiona said, “It was a great weekend if not a little cold - however it was pretty special waking up to snow fluttering down on Sunday morning. A nice way to finish up our season”.

Tess & Frank Johnson went to Mulwala in the caravan to catch John Williamson’s show at Yarrawonga. **Jackson and I** (Adele) caught his show in Shepparton the following night.



The show was excellent, the set was simple but brilliant, a painted backdrop with reflective dabs in the sky and as the various coloured lights hit the backdrop it altered the mood of the set. For instance when they performed “Raining on the Rock” all the bottom of the backdrop was deep orange while the sky was deep dark blue. For “Old Man Emu” it was lit something as this picture shows. For “True Blue” it was all deep blue. The effect was terrific.



I waited for his autograph on his song book at the page of, my late husband, Cyril's favourite John Williamson song. It was written about The Hayes family of Deep Wells Station out of Alice Springs in the West McDonald Ranges. This family has links to the Merrijig Purcell's as Jan Hayes is the daughter of Molly - nee Purcell, who grew up in Merrijig. Molly was the elder sister in the family of Bill and Frances Purcell and this pair were the grandparents of the Purcell people living in Merrijig today. So Jan Hayes is a first cousin to the local Purcells, as well as Noel Willaton whose mother was Molly's younger sister, Amy. *(Thanks to Kerrie Purcell for straightening out this family tree link).*

This song was written about Jim Hayes, who had three sons, Bill and Jan have one daughter Jenny and two sons, Bill and Matt, still this takes nothing away from the song being a favourite, as it begins with “I'm into cattle my father was too, great, great grandfather all the way through..... and they stuck to Herefords just like Cyril did.

The poem entitled “Turbulence” was written about Bill Hayes though, and hopefully we will manage to get a poet to recite this at the next bush poetry night. It's very funny story about Bill's first ever plane ride, which he likened to bronco riding.

Timbertop Community Service

(at Bally Patrick)

Sadly, my first group of boys, who I reported on in the last newsletter, had to go back to school and since they did, I have had two letters both saying how they all miss both Jackson and I. When student's had a family visiting weekend one boy made contact and brought his parents, Grandpa and little brother to the farm to show them where he worked and to meet Jackson, myself and the horses.

My next group were girls. They were just as much fun as the boys were but we noticed one stand out difference when we were teaching them how to play 3 Joes, the girls asked a lot more questions than the boys did, they needed to know in advance 'what happens when?' where the boys figured they would find out when the situation arose. Still the game was a big hit, and the second night one of the girls taught us all how to play the new Cluedo. I must say I prefer the original version.

We did lots of work as well as playing games, they picked up a trailer load of rocks which were placed on black plastic to stop weeds taking over Cyril's chosen resting place.



They finished the painting by second coating each frame then doing the base boards too. (Now Jackson is pressure washing down the walls because they look terrible next to the lovely new painted window and door frames.) The second trailer they loaded up for me was not so pleasant; they picked up horse manure (with latex gloves) as I am making a new garden bed for growing asparagus. When we decided to burn off some of the dropped timber around the dam near the house Michele and her girls came out for the bonfire and marshmallow toasting.



The Timbertop girls loved the little ones. One particular girl who misses her eight year old brother befriended Ailish and has written her a couple of letter. Ailish was equally enamored and drew her pictures and wrote her a fairy story which she says she has put on her wall at Timbertop. I also received a letter from the girls, who told me they appreciated the chocolate cake in particular and that they had a lot more fun than they thought community service would be.

Our final group (or so we thought) came to help with firewood for some people who are very special to me and after the first load in a loaned and manned tipper trailer; the boys really appreciated the freshly baked banana cake made by the lady of the house receiving the firewood. The boys came with their own work gloves, safety goggles and willing attitude. After a second load which was possibly even a bit larger, the householder called it quits and we returned to the house for a barbecue lunch. The boys normally would have made their own lunch, so they were really appreciative that lunch was made for them. After lunch they stacked more combustible materials on the bonfire then helped the owner of the tipper trailer get some white gum from the house paddock.



The boys jumped into the trailer to level out the load before it was taken to the house in Happy Valley.

Our final group (or so we thought) came to help with firewood for some people who are very special to me and after the first load in a loaned and manned tipper trailer;

That afternoon the boys helped Jackson light the big bonfire and after dinner, (which they had cooked for themselves), we all toasted marshmallows before the now traditional game of 3 Joes.

Some of the boys were accomplished pianists and I don't think I have ever heard the old piano sound so lovely. One piece sounded to me like a sprinkling of rain, which became heavier till it was a rippling creek then a waterfall before dropping back to being tinkling sprinkles of rain again. So beautiful!



The boys who were not pianists even fired up the old pianola and ran a few rolls through. There is a small hole in the bellows system making this not so easy, still they persisted and we had some fun before they had to pack up and go back to school. These boys asked me if they could be in the report going into this newsletter.

I feel we may have on going friendships with these students. It is also very refreshing to find so many youngsters who are being taught to appreciate the little things, having been told to be responsible for themselves and expect nothing before they come to the hosts' home. I found myself feeling more than happy to cook the odd meal for them or break open a pack of chips to eat while we played cards, because they genuinely appreciated my smallest efforts.

As I work a bit more on the newsletter a group of five girls are shredding old documents for me which is another job I have been putting off for YEARS. Jan phoned me wondering if I had any inside jobs for a group of girls as a host had to suddenly cancel. So over the last few days they have washed the inside of my windows through the whole house and then began shredding papers and removing staples and paperclips. On the first night they learned 3 Joes before bed. The weather cleared up for a short time and Jackson took them out to brush down the horses then on day three they washed the outside of the windows too, vacuumed the floors and swept the kitchen. What great kids!

I can recommend this as a fantastic experience, for contact with wonderful young people as well as having more hands to make light work. So don't hold back. Merrijig people are so lucky to be given this opportunity to have FREE labour for a job or project. To be involved you only have to let Jan Purcell in Timbertop's office know you are interested in the program in the future - phone her on 5733 6777 during office hours.

Valuing each day and Still LOVE Merrijig

The Steele family made a Sea Change a few years ago and Sylvia recently wrote to me to say, "I enjoy waking up every morning knowing I have another day to enjoy. It really is paradise living down here, less than 1 km from the beach, no frosts and especially no SNAKES. Although it's not Merrijig. But it's the people that make Merrijig, not just the views."

A year ago Sylvia was not so sure she would be telling me that she and John have welcomed their third grandchild Thomas Steele, second son for Jonathan and Amanda, into the world, as it was discovered 12 months ago that she had a brain tumor.

Only shortly before Sylvia's brush with cancer, John had been diagnosed with prostate cancer and received treatment in October 2012. "All went well, or as well as it can, it was not a lot of fun but I recovered." John recalled, "Sadly the operation did not get rid of the cancer and I was booked for follow up radiation treatment."

"My first day of radiation was the same day that I found Sylvia had unexpectedly collapsed" John told me, "she was diagnosed with a brain tumour."

"Life was a bit hectic." He remembered, "Luckily I had no real side effects or symptoms of either the cancer or the radiation, so I was able to visit Sylvia in Monash Medical Centre then later in the Alfred." Unfortunately Sylvia's critical condition eclipsed John's confrontation with cancer, and he didn't get all the sympathy he was due yet it was fortunate he was able to get his issues under control while he devoted his attention to his wife, spending many days by her bedside.

"Lucy," their delightful granddaughter (compliments of their daughter Caroline and her husband Marc), "was born on the first day of Sylvia's radiation treatment."

Both finished their respective treatments at about the same time and Sylvia followed up with six months of chemotherapy while John was given six months on hormone treatment. "Neither treatment can be recommended," John said, "and it seems that the cures for cancer at times can be worse than the disease."

Both have since recovered and report feeling very well. Various tests and scans continue on a regular basis, but so far they have been told they are in remission. "Long may it last." They both wish out loud.

"Cancer is a very nasty disease and in my many discussions with oncologists, doctors and others, reading lots of "stuff" on the internet, all agree that the outcomes can be very different." John remarked, "Some people survive happily and well for a long time, others fall in a heap. No-one knows why some go into remission and others don't. If medical science could find the answer they would bottle it and make a fortune."

With them both having a positive attitude, they find that they are simply grateful for every day and look forwards always, not backwards. I must say that I feel proud of Sylvia and John for their attitude and outlook and as one of their Merrijig friends very happy they are both survivors.

Sylvia goes to a small school much like Merrijig to tutor a little boy who sadly had a stroke at the age of six. "I take my dog Badger, to run a reading program for the preps where they read to Badger." Sylvia said, "The children and Badger love it. Badger does not criticise their reading and he loves the children." "The children really enjoy him coming." She laughed, "When I was in hospital the children sent cards to Badger, not me!"

The family is getting ready to celebrate the first birthday of Lucy, Caroline and Marc's daughter, and Thomas and his big brother Lachlan will come along. Uncle James may or may not be there as he flits between England, where he works for a builder, and Australia to see his family. I get the feeling that it's not the work which keeps him returning to England. "He has a lovely English girlfriend who is into horses." Sylvia mentioned.



Sylvia, John, holding Lucy and James Steele. Picture by Lucy's mum, Caroline.

Sylvia wants to say "I would like to thank all the Merrijig folk who have telephoned and visited in the past year. Your caring has made such a difference to my recovery."

John added, "Attitude certainly does play a large part, keeping positive, waiting for the birth of a grandchild, or birthdays or Christmas, then perhaps it is in our genes, our lifestyle, our food, our religion maybe it's a combination. I wish I knew."

Then finally Sylvia said, "We have a guest wing consisting of two bedrooms and own bathroom, so love having friends to stay. This week Tom and Kiera Dunlop with their gorgeous son Henry called in."



On Westernport with an "elephant shark" . Great eating

John enjoys taking his boat out into the bay and on Westernport, while Sylvia keeps herself busy in her vegie garden which John has built raised beds for which flourish in the front garden.

Welcome to Merrijig

Bess and Chang Lovick announce the arrival of 7 new babies:-

Although Bess was not meant to be having another litter just yet, apparently her husband Chang had different ideas. Dave Lovick had said a few months ago that he would give Bess a rest for 12 months then mate her again in 2015. Ah well the best laid plans will come undone, particularly where nature MUST be followed.



Dave is determined that his beautiful Bess will have a two year rest after this litter, but as she is such a good mother it would be a shame to stop her and Chang breeding altogether.

Merrijig Primary School News

There is no school on Monday June 9th as it's a public holiday for the Queen's Birthday weekend. On the Wednesday after school returns to normal the lucky students in grades 3 to 6 are going on an excursion to see Wicked.

School breaks up for the start of term holidays on Friday, June 27.

What's going on at the Merrijig Hall ?

Due to a hit on the server which serves the hall's email accounts resulting in thousands of emails being sent recently, the hall committee has had to change email addresses.

As the old email addresses are now defunct please note the new ones as follows:

President, Noel Willaton: hallpres@merrijig.com.au

Secretary, Louise Jacob: hallsec@merrijig.com.au

Treasurer, Sen Weir: senweir01@bigpond.com

Anything for the Merrijig Community Website should be addressed to:
enquiries@merrijig.com.au.

Steve Thompson has set up an enquiry form so people visiting the website (and internet bots) don't actually know what the address is they are sending to.

So please change your contacts to reflect the new addresses as outlined above.

Louise said 'I know this is a bit of a nuisance but necessary to prevent the outrageous amount of spam we were receiving.'

Some of the regular activities held at the hall include. New participants welcome.

THE STITCHING GROUP



"Which" Craft?

The group gathers on Thursdays at 11am, finishing up around 3pm. Everyone brings along a small plate of goodies to share for morning tea and/or lunch. Tea and coffee are supplied.

New members welcome. Cost per session is \$4. For further details contact Kerrie on 04 3738 0384



At Merrijig Hall
On Tuesdays
between 10 to 12
& only costing \$8.00



WALKING GROUP

Don't do any of these workouts pictured.

Its good fun & light muscle strengthening exercises



MERRIJIG HALL IS AVAILIABLE FOR HIRE FOR ANY FUNCTION AT MOST REASONABLE RATES

when looking for a venue for a birthday party, wedding, family reunion keep your community hall in mind as it's there for your use.

Call Sen Davies 0407 565 962 or 5777 5656



A WORD FROM THE SHIRE

Cr Marg Attley:- Your local representative on Mansfield Shire Council
Available to be contacted on: 5776 2231 or marg.attley@mansfield.vic.gov.au





Victorian Senior of the Year Awards

Seniors play a big and active part in any community.

They are not just all the old people on walking frames. (Most of whom have given all their lives to keep their communities going before they were forced to slow down)

This is your chance to acknowledge what any ONE of them have done and are doing for our community.

2014 award nominations now open

Nominations for the awards are accepted **until Friday, July 11, 2014.**

The awards recognise the women and men, aged 60 and over, whose volunteer involvement supports and inspires others. They might be a friend, family member, neighbour or volunteer in your local community.

Past award winners have been recognised for their volunteer contributions in, for example, providing comfort to hospital patients, being a mainstay of ANZAC Day Appeals, providing tutoring and financial support to disadvantaged students, and organising social opportunities for older members of Victoria's multicultural communities.

Award categories include:

The Premier's Award for Victorian Senior of the Year

The Veteran Community Award

Promotion of Multiculturalism Award

Healthy and Active Living Award

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria Senior Achiever Awards.

Winners will be acknowledged at a special Government House reception on 2 October 2014, leading into this year's Victorian Seniors Festival The 2014 Victorian Seniors Festival will run again in the month of October, with a core program of activities being held from **October 5 - 12, 2014.**

The Festival program and online events calendar will be available from mid August so I will watch out for that and keep you in the loop.

Download a nomination form now

To nominate someone for an award download the nomination from this [link](#)

The form includes the details below which may prompt you to think of someone you reckon deserves recognition.

Who is eligible for the awards?

To be eligible for these awards, the nominee must be an Australian citizen, a resident of Victoria and be aged 60 years or over. Nominees will be assessed on their volunteer contribution and achievements since reaching the age of 60.

What are the selection criteria?

Nominees will be assessed on
1. How they make a difference to community wellbeing through volunteering.
2. Their good standing in the community.
3. How their positive attitude to ageing inspires others.

Step by step guide to making a nomination

1. Complete the form on this page following the instructions carefully.
2. Keeping in mind the selection criteria above, on two separate pages tell us:
 - a. How your nominee makes a difference to community wellbeing through their service to social, cultural or civic life.
 - b. How their positive attitude to ageing involves and inspires other people.
3. Attach. You must attach at least two letters supporting the nomination from colleagues or individuals in the community.
 - b. You can attach photocopies (not originals) of up to 10 pieces of supporting information about your nominee such as awards and media articles.

Assistance with your nomination

If you require assistance, you can call Seniors Information Victoria on **1300 135 090** or email askcota@cotavic.org.au.

Here is a story about one senior citizen:-

Yesterday one old bloke’s daughter e-mailed asking why he didn't do something useful with his time.

“Like sitting around the pool and drinking wine is not a good thing ...” I said to her. Talking about my “doing-something-useful” seems to be her favourite topic of conversation he said.

“She was “only thinking of me” she said and suggested I go down to the Senior Centre and hang out with the guys.”

So he did this and when he got home last night, he decided to play a prank on her.

He e-mailed her and told her that he’d joined a Parachute Club.

She replied, “Are you nuts? You’re 73 years old and now you're going to start jumping out of airplanes?”

He told her that he even got a Membership Card and e-mailed a copy to her.

She immediately telephoned him, “Good grief, where are your glasses! This is a Membership to a Prostitute Club, not a Parachute Club.”

“Oh man, I'm in trouble again; I really don't know what to do ... I signed up for five jumps a week!!”

The line went quiet and her friend picked up the phone and said that the daughter had fainted.

Life as a Senior Citizen can be fun.

Go on ~ download the form and put in a nomination for someone in this age group you know who has done or is still doing their bit and deserves some acknowledgement.

Support for your community

VicForests’ Community Support Program assists local groups with funding for initiatives designed to benefit their community.

Grants of up to \$2000 are available to not-for-profit organisations for projects or events which help the community in your town or region.

Applications are now open for VicForests' Community Support Program 2014/15 and we would encourage you to apply once again.

For further information and application forms please [click here](#).

Alternatively you can contact Liz Langford, VicForests' Regional Engagement Manager, on 5969 9000.

Applications close 5 pm Friday, June 13, 2014

Yours Sincerely
Liz Langford
Regional Engagement Manager
VicForests

Merrijig Rodeo - The Mansfield Courier has reported donations from the 2014 Rodeo totalling \$20,200 with beneficiaries gatering at a lunch at the Merrijig Motor Inn recently. Those to receive cheques were the local CFA, and Merrijig Public Hall committee, Mansfield Junior Cricket Club, Mansfield Guides and Scouts, Mansfield Apex Club, Delatite Cricket Club and MADEC. A donation of \$500 was given to Becky Watson who has been selected to represent Victoria in the Junior Polocross National Championships in Darwin in July; her brother Nick accepted this on her behalf.

The report included that \$500 will be donated to McCormack Park but no donation has been received, so they have so far given away \$19,700 from the profits of the 2014 Rodeo.

The president Nellie Walker thanked the wider community and sponsors for helping to make this year's event such a success.



Wild Dogs there will be aerial bating in the near future in the meantime our contact person is David Klippel – if you are suspicious of wild dog action call him on 0428 503 169

News from McCormack Park

Horses exercised and barrel racing practice

Last month it was pleasing to see the arena being used by some locals who needed a good safe area to work their horses and on other occasions practice some barrel racing. Three times people asked if it was available and as it was, these people are all singing the praises of the work done by Campdraft and Rodeo on creating this facility. Anyone can use the area, at no charge, just call 0409 600 655 to check that there is no one else already using it when you want to.



Merrijig Family Fun Day



On Sunday, November 2

“The Fergie Tractors will be there” Bob Bretherton, one of the ‘Friends of McCormack Park’ said in a phone call recently. “And I will have your tractor, “Cyril’s Pride”, finished and ready to do a ploughing demo before then” “I have never done any ploughing though Bob.” I said. “You will have time to practice” was his response.

He has rounded up some of the locals who have beautifully restored machines agreeing to come along, some even cancelling normal events they take their tractors to in favour of Merrijig Family Fun day. He believes that more people will want to attend once the notice come out in the Fergie Tractor Club newsletter.

Keep in mind There will be free kids games and a lolly scramble.

There will be fun pony events
and competitions just for fun – like the pony with the longest tail.
There will be a horse obstacle course to test the riders and the horse
(not a very tough course first off)

Dogs are also included with a dog jump contest.

Fun and games for all ages (like a tug of war)

There will be a vintage tractor display and possibly a ploughing event

As well as some vintage motorbikes on display

A Ute muster has been suggested too

And this is just the start.

The first meeting of those people who said they are interested in doing the “business” side of running the day formed a committee to do the forms and paperwork, dot the I’s and cross the T’s so to speak.

There are nine locals who have decided to form a committee called the “Merrijig Family Fun Day Co-ordination Committee” under the incorporation umbrella of McCormack Park Grounds Management Committee Inc. At the same meeting it was decided to have a support group called “Friends of McCormack Park” where the people who are time poor but who want to put in support when they do have time, can register their names and contact details. The list grows almost daily. Please add your name to the list if you would like to be involved at this level, the more the merrier.

Aims for the committee being the first item on the agenda:

To promote events and community participation by allowing community groups and organisations to promote their interests for the overall benefit of the community by involvement in the use of McCormack Park.’

Elections for office bearers were held resulting in:

President: Paige Webster,

Vice President: Ashleigh Jurrjens

Secretary/Treasurer: Adele McCormack.

Committee: Jacquie Pollard, Julie Webster, Juliet and Andrew Jurrjens, Frank Johnson, and Paul Jackson

It’s really pleasing to see how the Merrijig community is bonding and the two of our young ones who have been elected President and Vice President are so keen and ask intelligent questions about why we do things in certain ways at meetings. The enthusiasm of these young women is infectious, with the effect of making meetings much more pleasurable than normal ‘business type’ meetings.

With the make up of the committee as it is there are plenty of experienced people to guide the youngsters along the way. It was great to look around the table when they unexpectedly nominated, everyone was smiling, it’s so good to have the next generation WANTING to be

involved to this extent and we all want it to be a positive experience for them so they go into the future building on the success of this - their first experience being committed in a leadership role to an activity in their community.

Following the elections people were invited to present their ideas for the day and this turned into a brain storming exercise and a long list of activities has been made.

These include:

Tug of war,	Ute Muster,	Wheelbarrow races,
Sack Races,	Egg and spoon races,	Raw egg throwing,
Gumboot toss,	Bush poetry,	Cross country horse obstacle
course,	Horse/Pony games,	Fergie Tractor Ploughing contest,
Lachie Horse Demo,	Motorbike games,	Chocolate toss,
Mountain bikes games,	Animal nursery,	Vintage motorbike display,
Dog jumping,	Heavy horses,	Buskers,
Buckout,	Sheep riding,	Treasure hunt,
Fun ride for pushbikes,	Devonshire tea,	Cake stall (<i>if someone did allergy</i>
<i>free cakes they would make a killing</i>),		Helicopter Rides,
Pony rides,	<i>Poo Lotto (area marked out in squares, people put \$5 on the square they think the animal will poo in and if they win they get the lotto!)</i>	

A letter was sent to as many organisations as could be thought of in the whole of the Mansfield district, offering them the opportunity to fundraise for their own group.

If you know or hear of some groups who missed out on the letter, please tell them to make contact with Secretary Adele on 57775637 or adelemac15@bigpond.com who will make sure that a letter is forwarded.

There is a lot yet to be decided, as we are in our earliest stages of development but the ideas are flowing and this is aimed at families, some of whom will naturally have limited money to spend, so there will be plenty to see and do going on for free - still at the same time the opportunities for fundraising are there for those who wish to support the efforts of the groups in the district.

Part of the invitation letter (shown below) explains how an activity could be a good fundraiser for some community group, school or club.

For example, let's imagine the CFA decided to run the 'Tug of War', now there are international rules for such an activity, BUT, this is a fun day, so the CFA can make up their own rules. They can for instance, pit one CFA unit against another, all people of equal or approximate sizes so the balance is fair. BUT it doesn't have to be so fair, it can be men against women, with four men and six women, it can be the CFA against the Pub with whoever volunteers no matter what shape or size, there can be eliminations heats till there is one really good team against another really good team. The sound of a 'tug of war' could be quite boring, until you add the FUN element, where it becomes very entertaining.

How the CFA raise funds from this is also completely up to them, they may charge each participant an entrance fee of say \$2, or they have tubs for people to throw \$2 into, to barrack for or sponsor a particular team, and the money in the tub, is part of the decision making process for who is the ultimate winner, so that it's not all dependant on who is pulled across the line first. The money collected goes to the favour of the team which raised it, that is - say the Pub pulled the CFA across the line, but in the CFA money tub they had \$20 more than the

Pub, that has to bring them back into contention and equal the match somewhat to allow for another bout. The judge's decision has to be final - but he could be open to bribery and corruption too, if before the decision is made more money is added to a team's barrel. There are no rules for how an activity runs – that is where half the fun is, your group gets to make up the rules. When you have established how the games will be played though, you submit the rules to the MFFDCC (Merrijig Family Fun Day Co-ordination Committee), so that we can print the rules in the program. That way they cannot be disputed.

All the money raised belongs to the group running that activity, yet if you have a very successful day and choose to, you can make a donation to the Family Fun Day Committee, to help with running costs or to McCormack Park for its future development, a toilet/shower block and permanent power supply are currently the improvements being looked at.

As well as this written information, a representative of Merrijig Family Fun Day is happy to attend any group's meeting to outline the concept and answer questions.

Entry prices are yet to be decided but they will be very reasonable and colouring competitions for the children will give an opportunity for three families to win a family pass. Families can bring a picnic lunch if they prefer, although we believe there will be plenty of food stalls offering a variety of yummys.

Your feedback is welcome, contact anyone associated with the Family Fun Day so your suggestions can be considered. This is envisaged as a Community Activity day and YOUR input is valuable.

Mansfield Bushwalking Club

a review from one of the walkers

'Walkers were driven in by Jackie and David Smithwick. Seven people braved the rain. Silver Mine Hut was the stop for the Saturday night - it was empty so we had the luxury of getting out of the weather and camped there rather than at Axe Creek campsite.

Dick Forrest had lead the charge so had a ripper fire going by the time we had arrived.



Lucky to see beautiful cover of pink and white heath and Crowea in flower. The track ranged from 4WD to narrow bridle trail high up on steep hill sides looking down into the Jamieson River valley. Spectacular!

We had a little challenge with a river crossing but other than seriously cold feet all went well.



Highlighted was the difficulty for those who were involved in creating this track and also the challenges in the transporting of stock and people from Mitchell's to Jameson in the early days of settlement.

We ended the walk for a much anticipated lunch and coffee before returning home tired and dry but pleased we did the walk despite the rain.

The next adventure for the Mansfield Bushwalking Club is where we live in hope that there will be snow to walk on when we will start at Skating Rink / Horse Hill Car Park on Mt Buller then follow the trail out to Corn Hill Rd and on to Howqua Gap /Hut for a cozy fire and lunch.

Planned for JUNE 21st on MT BULLER called a "Snow Shoe Day Trip"

Grade:- moderate ... Suitable for beginners.

Leaders :- Anne and Max Bloomfield 0400 677 199

There is offered a choice of two ways back depending on snow conditions. This is a very interesting way to explore the snow environment.

Day Ski tour check list

Hike shoes Hire snow shoes

ALPINE ALERT

Be prepared for the onset of cold wet and windy conditions at any time

Refer to the website for further information. <http://www.mansfieldbushwalking.com/>

Report and pictures supplied by Jackie Noble

Celebrating 50 years of skiing at beginning of winter 2014

by Georgie Deyell

As a small child of seven years old my parents introduced me to snow - little did I know that the following year I was to learn how to ski. I was given these horrible leather lace-up boots and big clothes. It was then I was made to walk down Stirling St in these heavy boots to the bottom of Bourke St where my ordeal was going to take place. Once we got there my father gave me instructions on how to fit the cable skis on. I hated it.



I fell over time and time again on this hard cold ground. I cried and hated every minute of the experience day after day. After a whole week of this terrible torture, I did manage to ski without falling but I still hated it.

Years later with ski lessons I improved and found myself enjoying the experience and the thrill of going fast down a ski slope. I can't tell you how many times I hit a tree in those days. Lots! But I have managed never to break anything.

Mt Buller has changed so much over the years and I can hardly believe what it was like in the early years now.



So here's to the next 30 years without an incident.

When life gives you a rough ride – there is help at hand

Katrina Watts from Ovens & King Community Health Services contributed to this month's newsletter.

Katrina wrote "Many wonderful things are mentioned in this newsletter however at times we all need a bit of extra support." The **Victims Assistance and Counselling Program** is a **free service** and available to anyone that may need that little bit of extra support when specifically dealing with the criminal justice system.

Have you or someone you know experienced or witnessed a violent crime?

If so and you require support, the Victims Assistance and Counselling Program (VACP) is able to provide services to victims to effectively manage and recover from the effects of crime.

This is a free service.

It offers support to access the criminal justice system (for both reported and unreported crime).

Victims Assistance and Counselling Program workers can help you with:

- communicating with police and making reports
- changing locks and emergency home repairs
- finding emergency accommodation
- transport and medical services
- counselling
- finding lawyers or legal aid
- getting ready for court
- making a Victim Impact Statement
- Applying for financial assistance.

VACP staff will arrange to meet with you at a place convenient to you.

Call the Victims of Crime Helpline on 1800 819 817 to get in contact with your local Victims Assistance and Counselling Program.

Call 1800 819 817

Text 0427 767 891

Open 8am -11pm, 7 days a week

Katrina Watts
Acting Program Manager Counselling & Support Services



E wattski@ovensandking.org.au
P (03) 5723 2000
F (03) 5722 2313
M 0400 775 220

www.ovensandking.org.au
90-100 Ovens Street, Wangaratta, 3677
PO Box 224, Wangaratta, 3676

Dynamic, accessible services to support active living

We acknowledge the traditional owners of this land upon which we stand and pay our respects to the elders past, present and future for they hold the memories, the traditions and the culture of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

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Motorbike Club – the place to learn safe riding practices

Round 2 Grass Track Series at Euan Friday's Farm May 18, 2014



Start off with some safety instructions From Paul Storey

Photo by Simon Young



Ready... Set.....Go



No one is too small to have a go. Dads are nearby keeping an eye on the tiny tots. Photo Blue Ribbon Images



This motorbike riding is not just for the boys either

Photo by Lee-Ann Campagnola of Blue Ribbon Images

Mansfield Motorcycle Grass Track Tri-Series Round two was held on Sunday, May 18th with winners recorded and listed on the MMC web site.

Brett Ramsey wrote a message to the organisers via Facebook, "Hey guys," Brett wrote, "thanks heaps for a good day today. A few of our group were first timers and all had a blast! Will be back next time for sure."

To which Kristie Payne the Club President replied, "Glad you enjoyed it - our next round is on June 8th would love to have you all back." She also wants to add that "The results for Grass Track Tri Series are now on the website for Round 2 www.mansfieldmc.com."

Simon Young, communications officer, says "Mansfield Junior Motorcycle Club are running this Grass Track Tri Series over three months as a fundraiser, where Junior and Adults can ride in separate events."

"We will have a beginners track for the Juniors as well, so if you are new bring along your bike and we will provide instruction and advise on the day. Thanks to Jim Friday in advance for the use of the land," Simon posted, "The final round on Sunday 8th June at **Mansfield Paintball Park**. (well in the paddocks behind it might make for an interesting final round if it was combined!)"

Mansfield Motorcycle Club
presents
**Grass Track
Tri Series**

**Round 3 - Sunday
8th June 2014**
**Mansfield Paintball Park
64 Soldiers Rd Barwite**
Breakfast & Lunch catered for

Pre-
registration
forms on website
to enter [www.
mansfieldmc.
com](http://www.mansfieldmc.com)

**SIGN IN Between
7.30 A.M. and 8:30AM**
COSTS
Entry for day
(includes \$11 MV Levy)
Member - \$20
Non - Member \$30
(incl day membership)
Extra Class - \$10
One Day Licence
Competitive Class - \$55
Recreational One Day Licence - \$30
(Licences can be purchased
on the day)
Classes set at discretion
of the steward:

Junior non competitive separate track
will also be operating on the day
Enquiries: www.mansfieldmc.com
or call 0438 578 300
**PROOF OF AMBULANCE
COVER REQUIRED**
Children under 18 years will need a
parent/guardian to sign
NO TEAR OFFS ALLOWED
Presentation at the end of Racing
Round 3 result are on website
www.mansfieldmc.com

 **WHAT'S GOING ON AT OUR LOCAL**

HUNT CLUB HOTEL SPECIALS

OPENING HOURS

Monday to Thursday from 2.00 p.m.

Friday, Saturday Sunday from 11.00 a.m.

Bistro open from 6.00 pm for dinner 7 nights

**Mondays: Kids Under 12 Eat Free with purchase of a main meal
(excluding Public Holidays)**

Tuesdays: Trivia every 2nd Tuesday

**Wednesdays: Pizza/Parma/Steak Night
Parma & a Pot of Boags \$20.00
(Ask for a loyalty card and receive
every 5th Parma Free, conditions apply)**

**Thursdays: Happy Hour from 5.30pm – 7.30pm
Bar Snacks & Prize Draw at 7.30pm
1Jug of Boags and 12 Chicken Wings \$20.00**

Lunches: Friday, Saturday Sunday

12.00 noon – 2.00 p.m.

Phone: 5777 5508

Keep an eye on the notice board on the roadside
to catch when live music or special events are coming up so you won't miss out.





SATURDAY 7TH JUNE 2014

John-Luke Shelley & High Speed Steel

Meals from 6.00pm

Entertainment from 8.30pm (Free Entry)

Bookings Recommended

Ever needed a face painter ?
Keep Michele in mind for when you find you need a
childrens' entertainer.

To hire Michele for a birthday party or club fundraiser check out the notice below.

The advertisement has a yellow background. At the top, it reads "Michele's Face~Painting," in a cursive font, followed by "\$50- p/h." Below this is a large collage of approximately 25 small photographs showing children with various colorful face paint designs, including animals, flowers, and abstract patterns. At the bottom of the collage, it says "Fundraisers" and "Having a Family Fun Day, Fete, Trash & Treasure?" Below the collage, there is a line of text: "Pay for 2 hours get 4 hours and charge a minimum of \$6 per full face and \$3- per cheek to keep for yourself."

AJ's
Laundry Services



4 Stirling St Merrijig
Juliet Mobile 0419 210468
Merrijig Office: (03)5777 5967

NOW FOR A FINAL GOOD LAUGH!

A GERMAN TOURIST JUMPED IN AND SAVED THE DOG.



**UPON GETTING BACK UP ON THE BRIDGE HE CHECKED THE DOG OUT AND TOLD THE OWNER THAT
"ZER DOG IS OK, AND VILL BE FINE"**

SHE ASKED IF THE DOG NEEDED A VET?

HE REPLIED, "VET.... I AM BLOODY VET!"

Bye for now Adele

Adele McCormack
45 McCormacks Rd
Merrijig 3723

☎ 03 5777 5637 **Mob:** 0409 600 655

This Merrijig Community Newsletter is compiled by Adele McCormack of Merrijig and edited and published on this website by Louise Jacob also of Merrijig, as a community service.

The newsletter is an outcome of the Merrijig Community Plan initiated by the Shire of Mansfield Council.

Every care has been taken in gathering and presenting the information on this site.
Inquiries can be directed to enquiries@merrijig.com.au

The site is designed and sponsored by Merrijig resident, Steve Thompson of Appaloosa Films
www.appaloosafilms.tv