# Sentinel-Times

COVERING SOUTH GIPPSLAND AND BASS COAST

**Tuesday, December 16, 2025** | $2.00

## $1.9m upgrade for San Remo's Griffiths Point Lodge

**Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale, with executive director of primary and community clinical services Kirsten Weinzierl, and interim chief executive of Bass Coast Health Simone Alexander, celebrate the allocation of a $1.9 million refurbishment grant.**

# THE LAST HURRAH?

## Bikies ride into Bass Coast as insignia ban looms

THE Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission identifies 35 Australian Outlaw Motorcycle Gangs, among them the Red Devils MC Australia.

Not as well-known as their affiliate club the Hells Angels, and others including the Comancheros, Bandidos, Coffin Cheaters, Gypsy Jokers and Outlaws, they are nonetheless on the list.

And they rolled into town around lunchtime on Saturday.

About a dozen of them rode in formation down the main street at San Remo, just after noon, stopped briefly at the San Remo Hotel, parking their shiny machines out the back and then continued on to Cowes where they roared up the main street and into Chapel Street on their way to overnight digs in Cowes.

It's unlikely the world-famous Penguin Parade was on their itinerary.

The group stayed overnight at a well-known hospitality venue in town where fellow patrons said they caused no problems and quietly exited the premises on Sunday morning, around 9.30am.

They left no debris or mess in their wake. Why would they, asked someone on social media.

**Continued page 3**

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# In a spin over Island's new ferris wheel

YOU need a permit to build a shed in your backyard if it's more than 10sqm.

You need a permit to operate a mobile food van.

You need a planning permit to put up an advertising sign in the farming zone.

You definitely need a permit to run a music concert on your own land.

But you don't need a planning permit to operate a 30-metre high ferris wheel, right in the middle of Cowes. Who knew?

That's according to Bass Coast Shire Council:

"Bass Coast Shire Council confirms that the activity (ferris wheel etc) at 85-87 Thompson Avenue, Cowes does not require a planning permit.

"Council teams will work closely with the operator throughout the temporary activation to ensure the operation remains compliant and that local and surrounding amenity is protected.

"Council will continue to monitor the site and respond to any issues should they arise."

So, it's tick, tick, tick on all council's boxes for the new ferris wheel ride that looks set to be a part of the whole summer holidays in Cowes.

The ferris wheel's last big engagement was at the EKKA in Brisbane, the Queensland equivalent of the Melbourne Show, where its capacity of 120 people, six to a cabin, was rarely tested. After that the Gold Coast.

**By Michael Giles**

And it's been well received by the punters since it opened on Friday.

"Yeah, great. It was her first ride. Now we know she's not afraid of heights," said visitor Meg with youngster Matilda.

"You can see a lot. The jetty, Western Port, water all around. A great view," she said.

One group that's not so pleased is the team from the Island Summer Carnival, set to kick off their annual carnival at the Hilton Chadwick Reserve on New Year's Eve.

The subject of extensive council permits, the carnival operators, who lease the land they used to own from the council, believe they have been dudded by the ferris wheel and rides start-up right in the middle of town.

"We can't say anything, legal action is pending," they say.

It stands to reason that the new mini-carnival next to Berninneit in the middle of Thompson Avenue Cowes will have an impact on trade out at the traditional carnival, but is it fair competition or has someone gained a competitive advantage?

**Meg and her daughter Matilda were among the first to ride the new 30-metre high ferris wheel in Cowes and came away impressed with the ride and the commanding view.**

## $1.9m upgrade for San Remo's Griffiths Point Lodge

**By Michael Giles**

BASS Coast Health will receive $1.9 million in funding to refurbish Griffiths Point Lodge in San Remo.

Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale announced the funding as part of the ninth round of the Regional Health Infrastructure Fund.

Worth a total of $75 million across the state, the funding will support health services to deliver 61 projects and upgrades, including refurbishments, equipment upgrades, expansions as well as funding to plan and design future projects.

Kooweerup Regional Health Service will also receive $182,000 to upgrade its Nurse Call System at the Killara and Western Port Unit.

"This is such welcomed funding under our signature funding program and goes to strengthening local healthcare, improving safety and comfort for patients, and backing the dedicated staff who care for our community every day," Ms Crugnale said.

Interim chief executive of Bass Coast Health Simone Alexander, which manages the 29-room aged care facility, also welcomed the funding announcement for the much-loved San Remo hostel.

Since establishing the fund in 2016, the state government has funded more than 675 projects for regional health services, the largest program of its type in Victoria.

Now worth a total of $790 million, it plays a vital role in ensuring regional health services can attract and retain a highly skilled local workforce, with construction also supporting the creation of hundreds of jobs statewide.

## Candle in the window

THE Prime Minister Anthony Albanese asked all Australians to place a candle in their front window last night, at 6.47pm, in solidarity with the Australian Jewish community so shattered by the heinous events at Bondi Beach last Sunday evening.

Many locals obliged.

In response, a number of municipalities across the state also lit up local landmarks in white, including the South Gippsland Shire Council.

Bass Coast Shire Council had flags at half mast yesterday and will be lighting up the Berninneit cultural centre in Cowes last night.

Alongside municipal councils, local fire brigades, police stations, SES units and emergency services lowered their flags to half mast on Monday.

# Bikies ride into Bass Coast as insignia ban looms

**From page 1**

"They were just sitting there, having a few drinks and keeping to themselves," said another visitor to the food and refreshment venue.

Local police were aware of their presence and did a couple of drive-bys.

Their visit to Phillip Island comes at an interesting time for so-called "one per cent" motorcycle riders, those involved in outlaw motorcycle gangs, after legislation passed in the Victorian Parliament last October came into force on August 25 introducing a new offence that bans adults from publicly displaying the insignia of an organisation listed in the regulations.

Most other states already have these laws.

However, while it is an offence to display the colours of an outlaw motorcycle gang, the penalties that apply, and they are considerable, more than $12,000 for an individual and $61,000 for an organisation, only apply if a club is named as "prescribed" under the new insignia offence.

**Members of the Red Devils Motorcycle Club Australia, in full regalia, rolled into San Remo and on to Phillip Island at the weekend for an overnight stay. They caused no trouble but was it their last hurrah?**

The Attorney-General is considering whether to recommend prescribing the following organisations for the insignia offence: Hells Angels Motorcycle Club, Red Devils Motorcycle Club, Finks Motorcycle Club, Sixty Sixers Motorcycle Club, Mongols Motorcycle Club, Raiders Motorcycle Club, Bandidos Motorcycle Club, Diablos Motorcycle Club, Soldados Motorcycle Club, Outlaws Motorcycle Club, Comanchero Motorcycle Club, Rebels Motorcycle Club and Gypsy Joker Motorcycle Club.

So they've got the rules, but they haven't said which clubs it affects.

Whether the Red Devils' insignia, patches and colours become the subject of the legislation has been addressed in a Department of Justice and Community Safety consultation process to which the Victorian Attorney-General is yet to reply.

Whether the visit to Bass Coast at the weekend by the Red Devils MC, in their club regalia, was their last hurrah only time will tell.


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# Sentinel-Times

COVERING SOUTH GIPPSLAND AND BASS COAST

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## ADVERTISING DEADLINES

**DISPLAY:** Advertising closes at 3pm on Fridays
**CLASSIFIEDS:** Advertising closes at 12 noon on Mondays

The South Gippsland Sentinel-Times is published on Tuesdays.

*Please note changes occur as a result of public holidays.

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Produced and published by Michael Giles, of 47 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi for South Eastern Newspapers Pty. Ltd. A.B.N. 30 005 353 168. Printed by Express Print, 5 Jones Road, Morwell. Registered by Australia Post Publication No. VAC 336188/00002.

AC0757-V50


## 6 Day Weather Forecast

SOUTH GIPPSLAND

| TUE \| Dec 16 | WED \| Dec 17 | THUR \| Dec 18 | FRI \| Dec 19 | SAT \| Dec 20 | SUN \| Dec 21 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cloudy. | Sunny. | Sunny. | Shower or two. | Shower or two. | Shower or two. |
| Wind AM: Light<br>Wind PM: Light | Wind AM: Light<br>Wind PM: Light | Wind AM: Light<br>Wind PM: SW 15-20km/h | Wind AM: E-SE 15-20km/h<br>Wind PM: N-NE 15-20km/h | Wind AM: NW 15-20km/h<br>Wind PM: W-SW 15-25km/h | Wind AM: W-SW 15-25km/h<br>Wind PM: W-SW 15-25km/h |
| 11° 19° | 9° 25° | 13° 30° | 14° 29° | 14° 23° | 13° 22° |

# IN BRIEF

### Aerial inspections for grid

AUSNET are undertaking their annual aerial inspections this week (until Thursday, December 18) in Bass Coast. The inspections allow AusNet to identify and repair wear and tear on powerlines and poles, particularly ahead of the bushfire risk in summer.

### MP calls on leaders to keep community safe

NATIONALS MP Melina Bath has called on political leaders to keep the community safe following the Bondi Beach terrorist attack.

"Our hearts are with the families who lost loved ones, those injured and the Jewish community deeply affected by this terrible act," Ms Bath said.

"We collectively praise and sincerely thank the brave citizens who alongside the first responders acted so courageously in the face of peril."

The Eastern Victoria member said it was vital leaders worked together on the critical issues facing the nation to "protect the freedoms and values Australians hold dear."

"Violence and hate have no place in our country," she said.

Ms Bath said Gippslanders were no strangers to adversity, having faced bushfires, storms and floods together, but this terrible event was a different kind of darkness.

"In times like this, we need to stay united, look out for one another, show kindness, and support anyone who may be feeling vulnerable or afraid," she said.

"We must rebuild together by strengthening mutual respect, tolerance and rejecting anything that threatens and divides the people of our nation."

### Christmas shopping evening in Korumburra

THE South Gippsland Concert Band will set the festive mood in Korumburra at this year's Christmas shopping night on Thursday, December 18, with the Korumburra Business Association supporting the event.

The music begins at approximately 5pm outside Terry White Chemmart, which will also be the setting for an earlier performance by a trio of Korumburra Secondary College students beginning at 11.30am.

As well as Christmas gift shopping for the adults, there is a colouring competition for local primary school students.

Stephanie of The Burra Pantry and Larder has been busy decorating the street, ensuring it will exude Christmas vibes.

### Free support services for business owners

FREE confidential mentoring sessions are still available for local businesses in South Gippsland for this year.

Designed to fit into day-to-day busy schedules, the NEX Business Farming and Wellness sessions are available online or in person to help build a successful team and help businesses thrive, whilst reducing burnout and supporting wellbeing.

The sessions are also available for those looking for succession plans to help prepare for a smooth transition into the next chapter. Guidance is also available on grant access and managing money smarter to help build success.

Schedule an appointment at nexsolutions.org.au/south-gippsland-business-mentoring-support-program.

### Grandview Rise lights up for Christmas

A WALK-THROUGH Christmas display in Grandview Rise, Korumburra, is bringing the spirit of Christmas this year, with an outdoor and undercover viewing open to the public. The display will open on Friday and Saturday nights until December 18 and then nightly from 8pm until 11pm from December 19 until December 24.

Save the date for Santa's visit on December 23 and 24 from 7.30pm (weather dependent), where Santa will give the children a small gift this Christmas. Donations appreciated.

### Local students share in Melbourne University scholarships

VCE students from across South Gippsland and Bass Coast have been awarded 11 prestigious Narrm Scholarships offered by the University of Melbourne.

Bass Coast Secondary College received three, Leongatha Secondary College two, Foster Secondary College one, Newhaven College three and Mary McKillop College two scholarships.

University of Melbourne Interim Provost Professor Jane Gunn said the Narrm scholarship program provided a pathway to a world-class education and life-changing employment opportunities.

Now in its third year, the Narrm Scholarship Program is offered to applicants who have traditionally faced barriers to tertiary study, providing financial and enrichment support throughout their time at university.

"These students have shown exceptional dedication and accomplishment. We look forward to welcoming those who choose to study at Melbourne to our vibrant student community," Professor Gunn said.

"Our scholarships, especially the Narrm Scholarship Program, create transformative opportunities for talented students from all backgrounds the chance to pursue their academic passions and aspirations."

The Narrm Scholars will be welcomed to the Melbourne campus through a pre-orientation camp early in 2026.

### Wombats day in court

THE alleged massacre of up to nine wombats at Venus Bay in February has continued to attract the attention of animal rights activists and the national media at the Wonthaggi Court last Tuesday.

In the latest round of court appearances for Tyson Delbridge, the Fish Creek teenager charged in relation to the incident, the accused man had to run the gauntlet of placard-waving protesters as he made his way into and out of the Wonthaggi Court with family and supporters.

But it's not over.

Despite being offered the opportunity of a sentence indication by Magistrate Tony Burns, which could have resolved the matter there and then, Mr Delbridge has continued to maintain his innocence and will fight the charges at a two-day hearing at the Latrobe Valley Magistrates Court.

The contested hearing is set down for May 7 and 8, 2026.

However, while the court heard a harrowing account of what Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action officials say happened on the night of February 18, barrister for Tyson Delbridge David Hancock told the court that everything about the case and its investigation was in dispute, starting with an allegedly botched record of interview by DEECA officials and the police.

He said DEECA had so far interviewed two of the three passengers in the car with Mr Delbridge, claiming they gave conflicting accounts of what happened on the night.

He also claimed there was a lack of information in the charges levelled against his client detailing exactly where, when, which and how many wombats were allegedly killed in the incident.

Mr Delbridge is facing 20 charges, 10 alleging cruelty and 10 involving offences against protected wildlife.


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# Responsible Bass Coast land managers may miss out

By Andrew Paloczi

**Geoff Groves makes a point while Bass Coast Shire Council chief executive Greg Box looks on.** A01_5025

**Bass Coast Shire Mayor Rochelle Halstead engages with attendees at the recent rate discussion in Corinella.** A03_5025

BEEF farmers Geoff and Aleta Groves, who run Groves Estate in Jam Jerrup on 600 acres, stressed their business will be significantly worse off under all three rating options proposed by Bass Coast Shire Council than would be the case under the existing rating structure.

Community members are being called on to rate the suggested options and put forward their ideas by January 5 to help council create an updated rating strategy, determining how the rates pie should be divided fairly across different types of properties.

While the trio of options all involve a reduction in the rating differential applicable to farmland, from the current 80 per cent of the general rate to as low as 65 per cent, those reductions are contingent on ending council's Land Management Rebate (LMR), also known as the Rural Land Management Program.

Council states that ending the LMR will result in a saving of $650,000 a year.

However, as recently as April this year, council noted, "The program supports a range of projects that improve environmental sustainability and agricultural productivity," such projects including weed and pest control, protecting and enhancing remnant vegetation, prevention of soil erosion and control of soil salinity.

Mr and Mrs Groves argued their case during Tuesday's community drop-in session at the Corinella & District Community Centre, explaining the importance of the LMR in helping meet the cost of measures such as weed and pest control.

"It's not just our land we take care of," Mrs Groves told the Sentinel-Times, giving the example of spraying to control weeds between their property and the Bass Highway.

Currently the LMR returns $16 per hectare, effectively reducing rates in recognition of good land stewardship.

Mrs Groves explained that land management is for the betterment of all, helping control issues such as blackberries, and must continue to be done for a variety of reasons including animal welfare, but loss of the LMR will be another blow on top of already testing times.

"There comes a point when you can't take it anymore and we're at that point," she told those present on Tuesday, including Mayor Rochelle Halstead, Cr Jan Thompson, council chief executive Greg Box and other council staff.

Should the LMR be sacrificed, Mrs Groves and Mr Groves argue it will be another financial hit after a couple of years of drought that resulted in spending $136,000 to feed their animals this year, when the business is normally self-sufficient in terms of hay and silage.

Skyrocketing insurance costs have included a 30 per cent increase this year on top of one of 20 per cent the previous year, and rising land value recently increased the couple's rates by 10 per cent.

In better times, the Groves have been strong supporters of distant farmers requiring assistance, donating hay to 'Need for Feed' and agisting animals for others with no feed.

Now facing a challenging period, they are simply calling for the current Bass Coast Shire Council rating structure to be retained along with the LMR.

While Mayor Halstead and council staff stressed on Tuesday that no decisions have been made on the new Rating Strategy, concerns have been raised by the Groves and others that survey respondents through council's Engage Bass Coast website are being called on to rank council's three rating options.

Such concerns stem from the belief that councillors will be advised to vote in support of the most popular of those options and other possibilities won't receive due consideration.

Survey respondents can provide their own suggestions but must rank council's options to complete the survey.

Visit engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/rating-strategy to have your say.

# Tallest residential building blindsides neighbours

By Rick Koenig

A 30-UNIT social housing development being fast-tracked by the state government will be the tallest residential building in Wonthaggi.

The three-storey development at 9 Hagelthorn Street would stand 12.2 metres high on a former church site, just 500 metres from the Wonthaggi CBD.

The $12.7 million project is being progressed under the state government's Development Facilitation Program, which bypasses standard council planning processes and strips Bass Coast Shire Council of any authority to reject or approve the project.

The final decision rests with Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny.

Bass MP Jordan Crugnale told the Sentinel-Times the proposed development met building design standards under council's local planning scheme and Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan.

"We are not used to three-storey buildings so I understand if people are taken aback a bit – it's a new visual on the landscape," Ms Crugnale said.

"If approved this development will provide a home for our community members living with a disability, at risk of homelessness, women and children fleeing family violence, young people and men.

"We are a kind, compassionate, welcoming and generous community and deep down we know that everyone deserves a roof over their head."

Ms Crugnale said community feedback and submissions were encouraged as the project is currently on public exhibition, with submissions closing in January.

But Wonthaggi resident James Reynolds, who lives next door to the proposed site, told the Sentinel-Times he was shocked when plans appeared on the Department of Transport and Planning website on December 9 without announcement.

"The government can't be fast-tracking this without any community consultation whatsoever – no one has any idea this is happening," Mr Reynolds said.

Mr Reynolds lodged an objection on Friday over concerns the building's height exceeds residential limits and would drive down property values for at least 30 homeowners in the area.

"The old high school block has been sitting there – there's enough land there to do four storeys," Mr Reynolds said.

"There's plenty of commercial-grade land available that wouldn't destroy property values for everyone in the area."

Mr Reynolds said he was not opposed to community housing but believed there were better sites available that would not have such an impact on homeowners.

He said residents had less time than usual to lodge objections under the fast-tracked program and was exploring legal avenues to challenge the approval.

Bass Coast Shire Council has been contacted for comment.


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# Mayor's Message

BASS COAST

Cr Rochelle **Halstead**

LAST Tuesday evening, we gathered at The Union in Wonthaggi for one of my favourite events of the year, our Community Grants celebration. It was a joy to come together and recognise the people and projects that quietly strengthen Bass Coast every day.

We were delighted to hear from former Mayor, Pam Rothfield, who spoke beautifully about how these small but significant investments empower local people to bring their ideas to life. Pam is from the Phillip Island Cemetery Trust and she also spoke about the grant the Trust received for wayfinding signage and how it helped to bring the project to life much more quickly than if they were to do it without Council's support.

We also heard from Dr Laura Brearley on behalf of Bass Coast Adult Learning (BCAL) and saw the inspiring short film a community grant helped them to create. The film showcased the work BCAL do with community members who are part of the English as an Additional Language program.

And finally, Catherine Watson tested our knowledge with a quiz on the Western Port Woodlands where there were some pocket guides up for grabs which they were able to print thanks to a community grant from Council. I didn't win but I sure learnt a few things I didn't know!

Across our three wards, this year's grants supported an inspiring mix of initiatives: sustainability upgrades at community clubs, improved learning and play spaces for children, cultural storytelling projects, kitchen and facility renewals, disability access improvements, emergency-response equipment, and mentoring programs that help young people thrive.

Our Climate Action Grants once again showcased the leadership of our community groups, who are embracing renewable energy, running sustainability workshops, and creating inclusive spaces for conversations about our shared future.

What shines through every one of these projects is the passion behind them. Volunteers and committee members are people who care deeply about their community and give their time, skills and imagination to make it better.

On behalf of Council, thank you to everyone who applied, participated, volunteered and supported these initiatives. Your dedication enriches Bass Coast in ways that are felt far beyond the walls of any meeting room or hall.

Congratulations once again to our grant recipients!

# Social housing to be Wonthaggi's tallest

**By Rick Koenig**

A 30-UNIT social housing development being fast-tracked by the state government will be the tallest residential building in Wonthaggi. The three-storey development at 9 Hagelthorn Street would stand 12.2 metres high on a former church site, just 500 metres from the Wonthaggi CBD. The $12.7 million project is being progressed under the state government's Development Facilitation Program, which bypasses standard council planning processes and strips Bass Coast Shire Council of any authority to reject or approve the project. The final decision rests with Planning Minister Sonya Kilkenny. Bass MP Jordan Crugnale told the Sentinel-Times the proposed development met building design standards under council's local planning scheme and Wonthaggi Activity Centre Plan.

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**The proposed site at 9 Hagelthorn Street sits on a former church block surrounded by residential properties.**

Ms Crugnale said community feedback and submissions were encouraged as the project is currently on public exhibition, with submissions closing in January.

But Wonthaggi resident James Reynolds, who lives next door to the proposed site, told the Sentinel-Times he was shocked when plans appeared on the Department of Transport and Planning website on December 9 without announcement.

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# Wonthaggi Hospital next stages on track, they say

**By Michael Giles**

THE state government has responded to reports, rumours and requests for information about its $290 million pre-election promise, made in September 2022, committing itself to Stages 2 and 3 of the Wonthaggi Hospital expansion project.

While a spokesperson for Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas has stopped short of attaching a money value to the project, there's nothing to say the funding is "off the table" as a local health official reportedly said recently.

Here's what the Sentinel-Times asked the Minister, and also local MP Jordan Crugnale.

Can the Minister please advise if the government still stands by the $290 million funding commitment to stages 2 and 3 of the Wonthaggi Hospital?

Can the Minister please advise about the status of the project and when the government expects work to start on the next two stages of the Wonthaggi Hospital redevelopment?

Here's what we received from a government spokesperson.

"We're continuing with detailed planning work to expand Wonthaggi Hospital - funding for this planning was provided in previous budgets.

"In Victoria, we have a significant pipeline of health infrastructure projects - we are staging the delivery of our major hospital investments, helping to make sure we balance these builds with our broader infrastructure agenda.

"We've already delivered a number of major health projects across West Gippsland and the Latrobe Valley – including the major expansion of Latrobe Regional Hospital and new ambulance stations in Traralgon, Moe, Warragul and Morwell."

Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale has also committed to the work.

"Funding to plan the Wonthaggi Hospital expansion was secured in previous budgets and I continue to push for early works funding to fit out the existing shell spaces for services including maternity, diagnostics and pharmacy in the Stage 1 new hospital and ED," Ms Crugnale said.

"I make constant representations to the Minister for Health Infrastructure for this and continue to work with her in the stage 2 planning for our important hospital expansion."

Concerned that a cash-strapped state government might be getting cold feet about continuing with its commitment to the Wonthaggi Hospital, Eastern Victoria MLC Melina Bath addressed the issue in State Parliament on Tuesday, December 9.

Bass Coast Shire Council has also increased its advocacy efforts on behalf of the Wonthaggi Hospital.

"Council doesn't provide health services, but we know how critical they are for our community, from GP access to hospital care to maternity services. These needs are equally important across mainland Bass Coast and Phillip Island," said shire chief executive Greg Box.

"Council will be writing to the Minister to seek an update on the Victorian Government's 2022 election commitment for Stages 2 and 3 of the Wonthaggi Hospital.

"We continue to advocate for strong, accessible healthcare across the region, including the retention of promised funding and support for upgrades.

"Council will keep ensuring our community's needs are clearly heard by the state government."

## Bin collection changes for Christmas

BASS COAST

- There are no kerbside bin collections on Christmas Day (Thursday, 25 December)
- If you're in **Silverleaves** or **Cowes** please put your Recycling and Organics bins out on Christmas Night (Thursday night) for collection on Boxing Day (Friday morning)
- Trucks may be labelled differently to the bins they are collecting, but please rest assured all waste is being disposed of appropriately
- Weekly Recycling bin collections start on Monday, 29 December until Friday, 23 January 2026.

For a copy of the bin collection calendar scan the QR code, visit **basscoast.vic.gov.au/bincalendar** or contact Council's Waste Services Team on 1300 BCOAST (226 278) or (03) 5671 2211


## We're having a break too!

Readers, advertisers and contributors please note:

**The final edition of the South Gippsland Sentinel-Times for this year will be published on Tuesday, December 23, 2025.**

Our office will be closed between Christmas and Friday, January 2.

Publication date for the first paper in the New Year is Tuesday, January 6, 2026.

Usual advertising and news deadlines apply.

**Sentinel-Times**

JA23700

# Seismic council shift in South Gippsland building portfolio approach

By Andrew Paloczi

DESPITE the objections of some councillors that South Gippsland Shire Council should not be in the business of arranging commercial tenants for its buildings, focusing instead on downsizing its bloated asset portfolio, council chief executive Allison Jones has now been called on to seek a possible commercial tenant for council-owned premises in Foster.

With a vote on whether to support pursuing a lease arrangement for the land concerned split four-all in the absence of Cr Bron Beach, Mayor Nathan Hersey used his casting vote in favour of that course.

While councillors at Wednesday's council meeting were originally asked to vote on a recommendation to sell the land at 4-6 Power Street and part of 5 Simpson Street Foster, Cr Scott Rae put forward an alternate motion.

That motion recommended that council authorise chief executive Jones to begin the process of seeking a possible commercial tenant for the premises, with a report to be provided to council no later than the April 2026 council meeting on the progress of that process.

Furthermore, the motion specified the report to council should consider the options for any commercial tenant, costs involved and financial benefits, including potential income over the life of a commercial lease, as well as any immediate and long-term Budget implications to maintain the building to a standard fit for lease.

**South Gippsland Shire Council chief executive Allison Jones and Mayor Nathan Hersey were involved in discussions concerning the prospect of a lease arrangement in Foster.** A05_5025

"Long-term, an asset that grows in value and returns an income might be a wonderful thing for the Shire," Cr Rae said in explaining his leasing suggestion, that sentiment backed by Cr John Kennedy who considers leasing arrangements should also be explored for some other council-owned properties.

While some councillors, including the mayor, argued that supporting Cr Rae's motion will result only in a report at this stage and is not a commitment to a lease arrangement, Cr Sarah Gilligan questioned that assertion.

"This says, 'Authorise the chief executive to begin the process of seeking a possible commercial tenant'; that's about finding people," she said, stressing "that's well beyond finding out if it's going to be viable, so for me this motion doesn't make sense."

Cr Hersey responded that council officers provided the options of looking at the sale or lease of the relevant land.

Cr Gilligan declared that the leasing idea flies in the face of the Sustainable Building and Asset Management Plan on which council is embarking having long argued its asset profile of more than 400 buildings is unsustainable.

Crs Kennedy, Rae, Brad Snell and Hersey voted in favour of Cr Rae's alternate motion, with Crs Clare Williams, Gilligan, Steve Finlay and John Schelling taking the opposite view that council should set the wheels in motion to sell the Foster land.

Noting the Foster building concerned has been sitting idle for a number of years, Cr Schelling remarked he believes council has previously unsuccessfully pursued a lessee, being unequivocal about what needs to happen now.

"It's time we start making the big decisions and this building's surplus to our needs," he said, stressing council can't continue to hang onto all the properties it owns and try to make something of them, and arguing that entering the field of commercial leasing would simply add further stress to already busy council staff.

"Let's put this on the market right now," Cr Schelling said, Cr Finlay backing that call and noting money would need to be spent to bring the building up to standard before it can be leased, chief executive Jones highlighting the fact it is yet to be determined what expense council would need to undertake to achieve that.

Cr Williams argued strongly that commercial leasing arrangements are best left to the private sector and that during public consultation no community members have expressed the view council should get involved in that area.

Before using his casting vote, Cr Hersey expressed the view that selling assets does nothing for council's long-term financial position, instead providing short-term sugar hits.

"I think this is in line with our longer term sustainability goals," he said of the lease option.

## Marinus Link gains momentum with a place on the national grid

PROJECT Marinus is fast gaining momentum with a confirmed place on the national electricity grid just months before the first shovel of sand is turned at Sandy Point.

The joint proponents Marinus Link Pty Ltd (MLPL) and TasNetworks have welcomed the release of the Australian Energy Market Operator's Draft 2025 Integrated System Plan which gives Project Marinus a key role in Australia's energy future.

Renewable energy connected by transmission and distribution cables, firmed by storage systems and backed up by gas powered plants has been determined as the least-cost way to supply reliable electricity to consumers through to 2050.

The report also listed Project Marinus Stage 2 as likely to remain actionable, a signal of the project's important and ongoing role in providing a secure and stable energy grid.

Marinus Link Pty Ltd chief executive Stephanie McGregor said the report recognises the pivotal year of progress on Marinus Link and reaffirms the project's value to consumers.


wishing everyone a safe and happy holidays

FROM THE TEAM AT TERRYWHITE CHEMMART

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|---|---|---|---|
| Tuesday 23rd Dec | 8.30 to 5.30pm | 8.30 to 6pm | 9.00 to 5.30pm |
| Wednesday 24th Dec | 8.30 to **4.30**pm | 8.30 to **5**pm | 9.00 to 5.30pm |
| Thursday 25th Dec | CLOSED | CLOSED | CLOSED |
| Friday 26th Dec | 9.00 to 2pm | CLOSED | CLOSED |
| Saturday 27th Dec | 9.00 to 5pm | 8.30 to 1pm | 9.00 to 12pm |
| Sunday 28th Dec | 9.00 to 2pm | CLOSED | CLOSED |
| Monday 29th Dec | 8.30 to 5.30pm | 8.30 to 6pm | 9.00 to 5.30pm |
| Tuesday 30th Dec | 8.30 to 5.30pm | 8.30 to 6pm | 9.00 to 5.30pm |
| Wednesday 31st Dec | 8.30 to **4.30**pm | 8.30 to **5**pm | 9.00 to 5.30pm |
| Thursday 1st Jan | 9.00 to 2pm | CLOSED | CLOSED |
| Friday 2nd Jan | 8.30 to 5.30pm | 8.30 to 6pm | 9.00 to 5.30pm |

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# HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW FIRE?

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# Hopes for ongoing bus services in Venus Bay and Sandy Point

By Andrew Paloczi

WHAT'S been achieved during a two-year trial period for electric community buses in Venus Bay and Sandy Point was celebrated on Friday, but while those buses, fondly known as 'Sunny' and 'Sandy', will continue operating, there is apprehension about their long-term viability.

That has sparked a call for funding assistance.

Venus Bay resident Ada Patestos has found the service transformative.

"The community bus gave me wings and I am able to go places independently," she said, adding it's also a great way to meet others in the community.

While the volunteer-run service is considered essential for youth and elderly residents unable to drive or without cars, the pilot program funding has ended, with the costs of continuing to run the service now falling on the Community Houses in Venus Bay and Sandy Point.

Alyson Skinner, Manager of Venus Bay Community House, put the funding figure needed at between $15,000-$20,000 per year, covering expenses such as registration, insurance, maintenance, tyres and safety checks.

State leader for the Nationals, Danny O'Brien, said he gets a lot of calls and emails from those in Venus Bay who have retired to the town and have no public transport.

**Venus Bay's Ada Patestos loves the freedom a community bus has provided.** A18_5025

"It's something we'll look at if we get into government next year," he said of the electric bus funding needs, having listened intently to the importance of the service.

He acknowledged the part the Victorian government's Department of Transport played in enabling the recently completed bus trial and would like to see further financial support for the Venus Bay and Sandy Point services from the state government.

Ms Skinner explained that a lack of transport is a driving factor in people having to move out of their community, with resultant isolation and loss of a network of friends often triggering negative health impacts.

"There's funding that goes into helping people stay at home longer through aged care packages and support for in-home care; let's apply that to transport initiatives as well because it doesn't take much," she said.

Arguing those in rural communities such as Venus Bay and Sandy Point are just as important as those in the city, Ms Skinner commented that, "Public transport is heavily subsidised," and in certain circumstances fare free in Melbourne, but is unavailable in many country locations.

While the Community Houses continue fundraising efforts for the bus services, that competes with the need to fund many other community initiatives they provide.

The bus trial was run in partnership between the two Community Houses, La Trobe University, iMOVE Australia Cooperative Research Centre and the Victorian government's Department of Transport.

Sentinel-Times heard representatives of those organisations speaking about the project at Venus Bay Community House on Friday.

Harvey Dinelli, Director of Regional Operations at the Department of Transport and Planning spoke of the value of the community bus initiative and said information gained through the trial period will help those implementing similar programs in other locations.

Managing Director of iMOVE, Ian Christensen said the organisation strives to solve transport problems around Australia.

He congratulated those in charge of Sunny and Sandy for succeeding in addressing the challenge faced by most small towns in providing transport services.

"Transport is about human connection," Magda Szypielewicz of La Trobe University said, like Ms Skinner noting it reduces social exclusion.

The University's report on the bus trial project for Sunny and Sandy is expected to be released early next year.

**The stolen TAC L2P vehicle.** *Photo: Victoria Police.*

## Thieves steal vehicle used to teach disadvantaged youth to drive

A VEHICLE which helps disadvantaged young people learn to drive has been stolen in a brazen theft at Foster.

Police said two offenders arrived at an education facility at Pioneer Street about 6pm last Saturday and stole a 2021 white Toyota Yaris hatch.

The vehicle is used by The Salvation Army's TAC L2P program which matches young people aged 16 to 21 with volunteer mentors and a car to help them gain the 120 hours of supervised driving required for a probationary licence.

The program supports learners who do not have access to a supervising driver or suitable vehicle, often due to family circumstances or financial hardship.

Police said the theft was disappointing given the vehicle's importance to the community.

The car was displaying registration plates 1UR5NL and has distinctive signwriting which makes it easily identifiable.

Anyone with information about the offenders or the vehicle's location is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or at crimestoppersvic.com.au.


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HM13196

South Gippsland Shire Council

# *South Gippsland Shire Council News*

## Help Shape the Youth Strategy 2026 to 2030

Council is seeking your feedback to develop a new Youth Strategy for South Gippsland.

Young people play a key role in the health of our region. Retaining and attracting them is vital to South Gippsland's social, economic and cultural wellbeing.

Accurately representing the values and aims of South Gippsland's young people in Council's Youth Strategy helps to ensure they feel seen and appreciated within our community.

The Youth Strategy will outline:

- What matters most to young people aged 12 - 25 years old in South Gippsland.
- How Council can support the needs and aspirations of young people.
- Ways for young people to collaborate with Council and have a say on issues that affect them.
- Suggestions for how the broader community can support young people to achieve their goals.

To make sure the new Strategy truly reflects what young people want, we need to hear your voice.

For more information, and to complete the survey or submit your ideas to our forum, visit: **www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/youthstrategy**

## Final Weeks of Green Waste Amnesty

Make the most of the amnesty by disposing of green waste for free at any Council transfer station up until 31 December.

Be mindful that some plants aren't accepted during the amnesty.

It's an ideal time to get prepared for summer by clearing your gutters and removing dry leaves, branches and any other potential fire hazards from around your property.

For more information, please visit **www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/greenwasteamnesty**

### COUNCIL MEETINGS

The next Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 February 2026 at 2.00pm.

Details will be available on Council's website: **www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/councilmeetings**

To watch the meeting live or when it suits you, visit: **www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/live**

### CHRISTMAS CLOSURE DATES

**Customer Service Counter:** Closed from 1.00pm on Wednesday 24 December for the Christmas and New Year's Eve period. It will reopen on Monday 5 January 2026 at 9.00am.

For emergencies only, please call us on (03) 5662 9200 during this time.

**Bin Collections:** Properties scheduled to have their kerbside bins emptied on Christmas Day will be serviced on Friday 26 December instead. This affects Leongatha and Leongatha South.

**Maternal and Child Health:** Services will continue to operate (except for public holidays) and are by appointment only. Please call 5662 9294 to make an appointment. For general support please call the Maternal and Child Health support line on 13 22 29.

**Immunisation:** Community Sessions will not be held in the first week of January and will resume on Thursday 15 January. Visit: **www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/immunisation**

**Waste Management:** All transfer stations and the Koonwarra landfill are also closed on Christmas Day, operating as scheduled all other times.

Opening hours are displayed at sites and at: **www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au**

### REQUEST FOR TENDER

Council is seeking submissions from qualified companies/applicants for the following:

**RFT/456 – Construction of Longstaff Rd Landslip Repair (Toora North)**

Tenders close at 2.00pm AEDT on Tuesday 20 January 2026.

Documentation is available from Council's e-Tendering Portal: **www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/tenders**

### CONTACT US

9 Smith Street, Leongatha
03 5662 9200
**www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au**

# Hospital a triumph of island spirit

By Michael Giles

THE first stage of the multi-million-dollar Phillip Island Community Hospital was finished in July and since then there has been a steady rollout of services. The Urgent Care Centre, which is three times the size of the original urgent care centre in the Phillip Island Health Hub, is ready for summer emergencies and the daily requirements of locals.

According to radiographer Lucy Whaley, chatting to visitors on an open day on Saturday, the hospital's magnificently-appointed imaging department has already completed more than 800 x-rays and 400 CT scans since it opened on July 29.

Hemodialysis, according to nurse unit manager Sky Martin, is set to roll in February, using six dialysis and chemo chairs donated to the hospital by the Phillip Island Ladies Golf Auxiliary, the Phillip Island RSL and the Phillip Island Lions Club.

"Four consumers at Wonthaggi will be relocating over early in the new year and we would expect the service here to be heavily used," Ms Martin said.

The beauty of these facilities and all of the equipment at the new Phillip Island Community Hospital, according to Deputy Chair of Bass Coast Health Julia Oxley, is that it replicates what's available at the Wonthaggi Hospital to ease transition for staff at both locations.

**Nurse Unit Manager Hemodialysis at BCH Sky Martin speaks about the roll out of dialysis and chemo services at Cowes early in the new year during Saturday's open day at the new Phillip Island Community Hospital.**

It's an issue that theatre nurses Alyssa Hughes and Bec Toronyi are quick to seize on as they meet visitors making the tour through the new hospital to the two-theatre complex which will handle a developing book of day surgeries as more specialists are attracted to treat patients at Cowes.

There's a sensory garden and a central courtyard providing comfort and light to patients and staff while they're in the hospital and moving about, and as elder-in-residence Aunty Dr Doseena Fergie OAM notes, there has been a special effort made to cater for the children who visit the hospital with features including a new playground.

Everyone was on hand for the tour day, including Member for Bass Jordan Crugnale, who championed the crucial efforts of the Phillip Island Medical and Health Action Group to get a local hospital to replace Warley.

None of this, she said, would have happened without the community's commitment to delivering a new community hospital and funding much-needed equipment.

"The fact that so much of the equipment has been fundraised for and that the support is ongoing demonstrates the level of community commitment to the hospital and the community spirit that brought the project to fruition," Ms Crugnale said.

Phillip Island Medical and Health Action Group president Peter Paul concurs but he said the Island community was only asking for what other communities were already getting.

"There were a whole lot of factors, of which the campaign and community support was just one, a commitment over 17 years I might add, but we mounted a very strong case to the building department of government and were fortunate enough to be included as one of the 10 community hospitals the government committed to funding," Mr Paul said.

"We also supported the redevelopment of Wonthaggi which was a crucial part of it as well.

"But to see it open for the community at the weekend was a great day, and confirmation that together we have developed a great legacy for Phillip Island."

The impressive new facility is expected to be officially opened by Health Minister Mary-Anne Thomas early in the new year.

# Not what you'd expect from social media generation

By Michael Giles

YOU could hear the self-congratulatory backslaps from here.

And it hasn't been lost on local kids that the government was trying to make a hero of itself on the international stage by introducing the world's first social media ban on young people under 16 years of age.

"It's the government trying to take over and do the parenting they think everyone else should be doing but that's not their job," said Flynn Nation, a 14-year-old in Year 8 at Bass Coast College.

"I haven't got a phone myself. I don't want one, but you get the impression the government is just trying to look good as the first in the world to introduce a ban," said co-college captain at the Dudley Campus Ruby Barsony.

She's also aged 14 in Year 8 at Bass Coast College.

"Plus, it's a breach of privacy. They want all this extra personal information about you to verify your account," Flynn said. "I'm not prepared to give it up. I don't use Facebook. Twitter (X) is a mess, and I don't need Instagram or Snapchat but I do go on YouTube and I do use Reddit when I'm looking for different information on companies and other things.

**Year 8 students at Bass Coast College Ruby Barsony and Flynn Nation, both 14 years of age, say there's plenty of talk but the kids are taking the social media ban in their stride.**

"I don't upload content to YouTube, but I do look at the things I'm interested in like history, politics and music," Flynn said.

"I haven't been kicked off yet, I don't have a YouTube account, but some kids have been kicked off their social media platforms of choice. Others haven't. But there's a lot of talk about it," he said.

"Most kids aren't worried. They've got ways around it, but it has been annoying for some.

"One thing I would say is some kids use it for therapy, for a social outlet, and they've just kicked them off without knowing what the impact will be," Flynn said. "That could be a problem."

Ruby's coming at it from a different angle.

Without a mobile phone, by choice, she's blissfully unaffected, and while she can empathise with friends who've been excluded, she's getting on with her other interests.

"I don't want my time taken up with a phone. I'd rather be playing my baritone sax. I go to intermediate band and junior band, that's two rehearsals a week which keeps me busy.

"Plus, I'm a reader."

Flynn's also in a couple of bands including the junior Wonthaggi Citizens Band and he's a keen gamer, his favourites at the moment being Team Fortress 2 and Terraria.

As for the subject of inappropriate content, both say it's not accessible on school computers and should be discussed between kids and their parents.

Following the passing of the Online Safety Act 2021 legislation, with amendments in late 2024, children under 16 are banned from having accounts on major platforms like TikTok, Instagram, YouTube and X, allegedly to protect them from online harms, but according to local experience, with only limited success.

# Mayor's Message

South Gippsland Shire Council

Cr Nathan **Hersey**

HELLO South Gippsland,

## Stay Safe this Christmas

Christmas is a wonderful time of the year, but it's also important to take a few simple steps to keep yourself, your family and your property safe.

Help emergency services find you quickly by making sure your house or property number is clearly visible from the roadside. If you live in a rural area, you can obtain a property number by contacting Council's Rates team on 5662 9200.

The Emergency Plus app also has helpful tools to assist emergency services to locate you quickly in an emergency.

And finally, remember to lock your home and vehicles — a simple step that can help deter potential thieves.

## Green Waste and Long Grass

Council's Green Waste Amnesty ends Wednesday, December 31, so now is the time to do some last-minute clean-ups around your property as you prepare for summer.

All the recent rain has been great for lawns and gardens, but with warmer weather on the way, long, dry grass can quickly become a fire risk.

A quick mow or trim now can make a big difference in keeping your home and neighbourhood safe this summer.

Council's Community Safety team will soon begin grass inspections; please remember to keep your grass short in township areas and take appropriate fire risk measures in rural areas. Our Open Space and Environment team is also hard at work slashing roadsides, with this work continuing over the coming months.

## Photo Competition

The South Gippsland Australia Day Photography Competition is now open. Capture a moment in our beautiful region around the theme "Australia Day: South Gippsland – Our Home" and your photo could be selected as the winner.

There are two prize categories:

- Open category – $500 prize
- Junior category (under 15) – $300 prize

Entries close on Sunday, January 18, 2026, with winners announced on January 26 2026. Start snapping and show us what makes South Gippsland feel like home!

## Merry Christmas

As we head towards Christmas, please shop local and help keep money circulating in South Gippsland.

On behalf of Council, I hope you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!


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ALL WELCOME

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# West Gate Tunnel now open

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VICTORIA State Government

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**Terry Hall with Danny and Meika of Inverloch Bike Hire and Megan Krause from the Proactive Policing Unit Wonthaggi, united in helping children access new bicycles.**

# Lions launch bike program for children in need

**By Trent Westaway**

LOCAL children doing it tough will soon be riding into the new year with brand-new bicycles, thanks to a new initiative from the Lions Club of Inverloch and District.

The Lions Pedal Power Project has been launched in collaboration with both the Wonthaggi Proactive Policing Unit and Inverloch Bike Hire. The aim is simple, giving children in the Inverloch and Wonthaggi areas access to bikes they may otherwise never have.

The first round of funding includes $4000 from the Lions Club, aiming to deliver bikes and helmets to selected children before Christmas. The program will rely on further community donations to hopefully extend the initiative into 2026.

Lions president Terry Hall said the club wanted to do something meaningful for young people who may be experiencing hardship.

"The Lions Club was wanting to do something special for the youth of the area. We see the youth of the area as the future, and so we've got to put more time into our young people," he said. "We saw this as one way of working with the proactive policing unit and also working with Inverloch Bike Hire. Being able to recognise some of these children who may be in a bad situation, and wanting to find some way of helping them."

The Wonthaggi Proactive Policing Unit will work closely with schools and welfare services to identify recipients confidentially, making sure the bikes reach the children who need them. Inverloch Bike Hire will do their part by sizing, supplying and checking each bike and safety kit individually, while the Lions will coordinate funding, donations and ongoing support. Bunnings is also supporting the project, donating tools and grease to ensure the bikes are received in top shape.

For Mr Hall, the impact goes far beyond the gift itself.

"They see that there are people out there who care about them," he said. "When you have that sort of feeling, you respond, hopefully in a positive way, whether it's at school, at home, or in the community. That helps everybody, I think."

Proactive Policing Unit Leading Senior Constable Nick Carlson said his unit was proud to be part of the program.

"The Wonthaggi Proactive Policing Unit is proud to be partnering with the Lions Club of Inverloch and Inverloch Bike Hire in the Lions Pedal Power program, supplying bicycles to children and families doing it tough in these challenging times," he said. "We look forward to continuing our partnership delivering the Lions Pedal Power and other programs that benefit our local communities."

Inverloch Bike Hire owners Meika and Danny also praised the initiative, saying it highlights the strong community spirit that exists locally.

"This project is another example of the hard work, dedication, and community-mindedness of our local Lions Club. We are extremely pleased to support such a fantastic initiative in conjunction with the Wonthaggi PPU," they said.

Mr Hall said the club hopes to raise enough funds to continue the project into the new year, allowing even more children to experience the independence and joy that comes with owning a bike.

"The community has responded magnificently, as this community always does," he said. "This is a very proactive community when it comes to helping people."

Donations go directly toward purchasing additional bicycles and safety kits. If you would like to contribute, please visit: inverlochlions.au/pedal-power.

# Stormy seas for offshore wind

**By Bruce Wardley**

THE cancellation of AGL's Gippsland Skies wind turbine feasibility study south-west of Wilson's Promontory has opened the way for alternative investments in power technology but not necessarily in South Gippsland.

AGL said it was considering other investment options including taking a final decision on grid-scale batteries after deciding not to go ahead with Gippsland Skies.

Acknowledging the challenging economic conditions globally for offshore wind technology, AGL said it had diversified its development pipeline into a diverse mix of options including grid-scale batteries, onshore wind, pumped hydro and gas-peaking.

The estimated cost of offshore wind technology has risen four to five-fold according to AGL with an original plan to utilise the Port of Hastings to support offshore wind development rejected on environmental grounds.

The Victorian Government has since submitted an alternative plan that involved a multi-port strategy but is yet to re-open its stalled offshore wind auction process.

South Gippsland Mayor Cr Nathan Hersey, who chairs One Gippsland, said offshore wind continued to be a huge opportunity for Gippsland but to ensure Victoria's offshore wind ambitions were fair, responsible and sustainable One Gippsland has called for mandatory early and ongoing consultation.

Despite the cancellation of a number of offshore wind projects in Bass Strait the Blue Mackerel feasibility study east of Wilson's Promontory has been awarded major project status after securing support from the federal Major Projects Facilitation Agency (MPFA) to help navigate environmental and regulatory approvals.

Country Manager Australia for JERA Nex bp Anil Chanana said major project status was a strong vote of confidence in Blue Mackerel.

"It recognises the project's scale, its contribution to energy security and emissions reduction, significant lasting benefits to the local community and the importance of getting complex approvals right and in time.

"As one of the first offshore wind projects to secure a feasibility licence and the first with an approved management plan under the new offshore regulations Blue Mackerel is ideally positioned to help replace coal generation with large-scale, renewable energy."

Located approximately 10 kilometres off the Gippsland coast on Bratauaalung and Tatungalung Country, between Seaspray and Woodside, Blue Mackerel has the potential to generate enough electricity to power up to 750,000 Victorian homes by 2032.

## Expressions of Interest

Inverloch and District Financial Enterprises Limited (IDFEL) operates the locally owned Inverloch and District Community Bank.

**Expressions of Interest are now being accepted for the voluntary position of Director.**

We are inviting interest from candidates who reside in, or have strong connections to Inverloch and/or surrounding region who are keen to be actively involved in the Inverloch and District Community Bank - Bendigo Bank franchise located in Inverloch and the community investments enabled by running a successful banking business.

As part of the skills matrix process, preference will be provided to applicants who can demonstrate experience or capability in the key areas of human resources, information technology and attributes necessary to contribute to the governance and strategic direction of the company.

As a director you shall be motivated, well organised and community orientated. You will provide leadership at a Board level to support and drive the company's strategic direction, goals and objectives to have a real say in the future direction of the branch and community.

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# Kidz Klub and genYOUTH are coming to Sandy Point

KIDZ Klub (Primary age students) and genYOUTH (Secondary age students) are back for the 41st year of operation at Sandy Point this January, with Kidz Klub kicking off on January 5 and genYOUTH on January 6.

Cara Little said the team is excited to be coming back to Sandy Point Community Centre. "To kick off the week we are starting with a Family Day on Monday, January 5 from 10:30 am-1:30 pm. Then on Tuesday, January 6 to Friday, January 9, 2026, our program will run just like previous years from 9:30 am - 12:30 pm," said Cara.

All activities are free and are specially designed for primary school aged children. "We offer a fun week of Bible stories, games, craft, quizzes, singing and prizes."

Kidz Klub is also a great place to meet new friends! In addition to the regular program, the special birthday party will feature face painting, fairy floss, games, craft and much more!

"Parents are welcome to leave their children under the care of us, or to stay and have morning tea while the kids enjoy the fun."

The genYOUTH is a free activity for teenagers held at the Sandy Point Community Centre from 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm Tuesday, January 6 to Thursday, January 8, 2026.

Each night features high energy games, a positive message from the Bible, and – as in previous years – Sandy Point's best supper!

"All activities are free, we hope you will be able to join us. Don't forget to tell all your friends!"

For more information, visit www.sandypointkidzklub.org or contact the team via email, kksandypoint@gmail.com or phone (03) 5940 0926.

All Kidz Klub activities are conducted in compliance with Victoria's Child Safe Standards.

# Nature Parks celebrates one million visitors this year

A RECORD number of sell-out nights at the world-famous Penguin Parade has seen Phillip Island Nature Parks celebrate its one millionth visitor across its attractions this year.

The Nature Parks have seen a 10 per cent increase in visitor numbers compared to the previous year, powered by the return of international tourists and a strong domestic market.

China has regained its position as the largest international market since 2020, contributing to 17 per cent of visitation in 2025. Hong Kong is now second and growing quickly, with Taiwan, the USA and Singapore rounding out the top five nations.

Domestic visitors make up 49 per cent of visitation, with international visitors 51 per cent.

The one millionth visitor came from the UK with a family visiting from North Wales and London.

General Manager Tourism at the Nature Parks, Mark Anderson, said the strong growth in visitor numbers this year reflected an increasing global trend for nature-based experiences.

In 2025 to date, 709,673 people visited the Penguin Parade, followed by 170,239 at Koala Conservation Reserve and 123,624 at Churchill Island, with the total of one million visitors across all attractions achieved on 29 November 2025.

**The one millionth visitor to Phillip Island Nature Parks came from the UK with a family visiting from North Wales and London.** *Photo: Phillip Island Nature Parks.*

"Nature and wildlife are key attractions for this market, and we're proud to be contributing significantly economically to Victoria. As an internationally renowned ecotourism destination, the Nature Parks supports 2,600 Victorian jobs and contributes more than $600 million in direct and indirect spend within Victoria annually," Mr Anderson said.

"We have seen 131 sell-out nights at the Penguin Parade across the 2024-25 financial year, with a record-breaking 52 sell-out nights over the last summer holidays."

The trend is set to continue this summer, with 19 nights already sold out across December and January at the Penguin Parade.

Mr Anderson said while one million visitors was a great result, the Nature Parks were continually looking to grow and improve the experience with the new upgrades, including a new fully accessible Shearwater Boardwalk that connects to Summerland Beach, a refreshed Penguins Plus viewing platform and a purpose-built guided tour platform for the Penguins Premium experience.

This year, the Nature Parks has delivered further upgrades to the Penguin Parade boardwalks, providing greater accessibility and improved viewing of the penguins returning to their burrows.

Early next year, work will continue on the boardwalk upgrades including, a fast and slow boardwalk, a new penguin viewing area, new toilet facilities and a looped path back to the Visitors Centre. The upgrades will be delivered by the project team consisting of Simpson Construction and Terroir Architects.

The Nature Parks also operates the recently opened, free St Kilda Penguins experience, which has been hugely popular, booking out until March within days of tickets being released, with the plan to start releasing tickets more regularly with a shorter booking window from April onwards.

Significant planning work is underway for a potential future redevelopment of the Penguin Parade stands, and Summerland Peninsula, which includes addressing the future of the Nobbies precinct, with the Nobbies building remaining closed for public safety after two separate structural incidents during high winds.

The Nobbies boardwalks – which are the true attraction of the precinct – are open, with the Penguin Parade Visitor Centre continuing to open from 12pm every day for retail and café options as well as bathroom facilities.

Bookings for the Penguin Parade are essential. Please plan your visit and book your tickets in advance at penguins.org.au to avoid missing out.

# Motion backed for roof action at Splash

**By Andrew Paloczi**

SOUTH Gippsland Shire Council will receive a report on replacing or repairing Splash Stadium's leaking roof in Leongatha, following a motion highlighting ongoing community frustration with the issue.

The motion by Cr Clare Williams at Wednesday's council meeting said the report needs to include an assessment of the current roof condition and feasible solutions, including cost estimates and expected lifespan.

"The roof has had numerous persistent leaks, which have continued despite repeated efforts to investigate, manage and repair them," she said.

That has resulted in an extraordinary arrangement featuring upside down umbrella-like structures suspended from the ceiling that are connected to drainage hoses.

As a former Leongatha Basketball Association president, Cr John Schelling hit out at the situation, labelling it "embarrassing".

"I understand all the logistics that go with trying to solve this issue but we've got to bring it to a head," he said, remarking that the severity of the leaks prevents basketball tournaments being played in the stadium.

"We've got kids going to Drouin and Warragul to play in tournaments rather than Leongatha," Cr Schelling said.

While Cr Scott Rae shares the concerns of others about the Splash roof, he pointed out it is not old and hasn't achieved its expected lifespan, alluding to a legal case he said he is unable to discuss but that involves the builder and council. "Maybe we should be pushing further to understand the process that we can't discuss," he said.

Cr Williams responded that councillors are there for their community members and her motion was on the community's behalf, but didn't address Cr Rae's concerns.

While Cr Williams' motion was comfortably carried, Cr Rae voted against it.

The Sentinel-Times has previously reported the ongoing Splash roof saga that prompted a Federal Coalition funding promise, rendered redundant when Labor won this year's election.

# Community grants awarded

BASS Coast Shire Council this week celebrated the lucky recipients of the 2025 round two community grants at The Union Theatre.

Over the past year, 92 community groups received a total of $294,000 in funding, by Bass Coast Shire Council.

The Council's Climate Grants also dedicated $40,000 to local climate initiatives this year. Amongst the lucky recipients of round two were Wonthaggi Urban Landcare Group, Phillip Island Senior Citizens Club and San Remo Bowls Club, with projects including reinvigorating Wonthaggi Urban Landcare Group, The Future of Power and Sustainability in Action: Energy Update, respectively.

Bass Coast Mayor, Cr Rochelle Halstead hosted the night, and spoke proudly about the impact of the program:

"Nights like this truly remind us why Bass Coast is such a special place. This event is our chance to recognise and celebrate the enormous contribution you all make across Bass Coast. Council can provide funding, but you turn that support into action, connection and real impact."

**Save the Western Port Woodlands' Catherine Watson and Dr Laura Brearley from Bass Coast Adult Learning (right), pictured with Mayor Rochelle Halstead, both spoke on Tuesday night of the impact of the funding.**

Among the highlights and stories shared on the night:

Way Finding Signage for the Cemetery:

Pamela Rothfield from the Phillip Island Cemetery Trust shared how access to a $10,000 Major Grant enabled the installation of historic-style section signs to improve navigation for visitors seeking ancestors' graves in the 150-year-old cemetery, which holds more than 2500 burials – and allowing the project to happen far more quickly than the Trust could have achieved with its remaining funds.

Long Journeys, Stories from the BCAL Community:

Dr Laura Brearley from Bass Coast Adult Learning shared the group's short film, funded through a $4500 Community Grant. Long Journeys is a storytelling and filmmaking project capturing the voices and experiences of BCAL's English as an Additional Language learners.

Pocket Guides to the Western Port Woodland:

Armed with a lively nature quiz, Catherine Watson from Save the Western Port Woodlands shared the group's $5000 Community Grant project: a series of pocket-sized guides celebrating the rich biodiversity of the Western Port Woodlands. These booklets are now in the hands of walkers, families, and nature lovers across the region.

Council's Community Grants Program is open year-round and assessed twice annually, offering funding across several categories:

*General Community Grants: $2001–$5000 for equipment, activities, or project seeding.

- Festivals, Celebrations, and Events Grants: $2001–$5000 for community-led events.
- Minor Capital Works Grants: Up to $5000 for facility improvements or fixed equipment.
- Major Project Funding: $5001 up to $10,000 for larger-scale projects, excluding equipment, with up to three funded per round.

Community Grants 2026 Round 1 are currently open and close Friday, March 6, 2026. In addition to Community Grants, the 47 recipients of the 2025 Quick Response Grants were also celebrated on Tuesday evening. These grants provide immediate funding of up to $2000 and support a diverse range of needs, like equipment and small events. Quick Response Grants are offered monthly with the current round closing on Friday, December 26.

STAR OF THE SOUTH | KUT-WUT BRATAUALUNG

WISHING YOU A SAFE AND HAPPY CHRISTMAS

THANK YOU FOR WORKING WITH US

**As the year draws to a close, we extend a heartfelt thanks to everyone who took the time to talk with our team, share knowledge and provide feedback in 2025.**

Your feedback has helped shape project planning and environmental assessments for Star of the South. We look forward to sharing these assessments, which document years of scientific research, consultation and specialist studies, with you in 2026 as we become the first offshore wind project to seek Australian environmental approvals.

How to connect with us over the holidays

**Sea Days Festival -** join us at this family-friendly festival in Port Welshpool. Stop by our stand to chat about offshore wind on Saturday 3 January 9:30 am – 3:30 pm.

**Stop by our Gippsland office -** we're open Tuesdays, Wednesdays and by appointment, right up until Christmas Eve. After a short break, we'll reopen Wednesday 14 January.

**Connect online -** follow us on Facebook at 'Star of the South Project' or subscribe to monthly email updates via our website.

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# Opioid Management Clinic to expand to Gippsland

**Dr Eric Hadinata will join the Opioid Management clinic's existing Addiction Medicine Physician Dr Adam Straub from January.**

A LIFE-SAVING harm reduction Opioid Management Clinic is expanding its reach across regional Victoria. Orticare, the Grampians Loddon Mallee Pharmacotherapy Network, will introduce new services in the Gippsland region from January 1.

The expansion follows the recruitment of Dr Eric Hadinata, an Addiction Medicine Specialist and immediate past chair of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners' Alcohol and Other Drug committee. Dr Hadinata will join the clinic's existing Addiction Medicine Physician Dr Adam Straub.

The clinic supports healthcare professionals and improves access to opioid pharmacotherapy services. Orticare manager Pauline Molloy said the service is growing to meet demand and provide equitable access to services across regional Victoria.

"We have been at full capacity with an appointment wait time of up to seven weeks, and there has been no similar program operating in the Barwon and Gippsland regions, so this expansion is timely," Ms Molloy said.

The clinic provides expert opioid pharmacotherapy support for prescribers such as GPs and Nurse Practitioners to manage patients using opioids.

Ms Molloy described the clinic as an important service that gives prescribers expert advice to continue managing their patients.

Over the past year, Orticare received 222 patient referrals from healthcare professionals from 130 different prescribers, including 37 referred more than once.

The Gippsland services are being offered via telehealth in partnership with the local Pharmacotherapy Area-Based Networks.

"There's no current service in the Gippsland and Barwon South West regions, so we're pleased to be able to fill the void," Ms Molloy said.

"The clinic is already 70 per cent telehealth. Many prescribers serve large catchment areas, and their patients often travel long distances to access care. These patterns highlight the importance of telehealth in overcoming distance, transport and financial barriers in regional and rural Victoria."

The clinic is designed to reduce barriers and support consistent engagement, achieving a 92 per cent attendance rate.

"We know from the number of repeat referring prescribers that the model we have works," Ms Molloy said.

"Feedback from practitioners has highlighted how the clinic has increased their confidence in prescribing opioid pharmacotherapy and empowered them to continue caring for referred patients."

# Cool summers and warmer winters for Union Theatre

WONTHAGGI's Union Theatre is about to get a $1 million upgrade to its climate control system with Bass Coast Shire Council voting last week to approve a $1.1 million upgrade.

Fully funded by ratepayers the available budget for the project is $1,120,000 comprising $900,000 from WUCAC Electrical Supply Design and $220,000 from the Open Space Building and Painting Program.

"Nice to see the mighty Union Theatre getting a bit of love," said Cr Mat Morgan.

Preparation of management plans will be included in the tender as well as provision of the required information and documentation to assist council in obtaining a building permit; coordination of all necessary approvals, inspections, testing, and certifications; and completion of all handover requirements including as-built drawings, test reports, warranties, maintenance manuals and other compliance documentation.

**Cr Clare Williams succeeded in winning councillor support for fairer crossing arrangements.** A07_5025

# Councillors back Specialist School kids

**By Andrew Paloczi**

BOOSTING the safety of South Gippsland Specialist School students prompted councillors to support an earlier start for the Horn Street, Leongatha school crossing supervisor.

All eight councillors present at Wednesday's meeting, with Cr Bron Beach away, voted in favour of a move to start the supervisor's shift at 2.45pm, quarter of an hour earlier than is currently the case.

In putting forward a motion to bring about that change, Cr Clare Williams acknowledged the unsatisfactory nature of the existing arrangement, in which the crossing supervisor's shifts start a little after Specialist School pupils finish for the day.

"This timing gap leaves vulnerable students crossing a busy road unsupervised, directly contradicting the intent of council's Disability Action Plan," Cr Williams stated.

Her motion called for council to assess whether an interim adjustment could be accommodated for the January to June 2026 school term periods within the current operational budgets.

It is noted that the change would entail just an extra 46 working hours a year.

Cr Williams declared that her motion is on behalf of her community, with Cr Sarah Gilligan stating that when councillors are made aware of such issues they need to address them.

For more details go to **eSafety.gov.au**

Australian Government

eSafety Commissioner

Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra

# Next generation of riders could be the key to MotoGP

**By Bruce Wardley**

AS BASS Coast Shire takes up the fight to keep the MotoGP on Phillip Island one group of fans seem to have all but been forgotten except that is by the new owners Liberty Media.

Liberty Media acquired 84 per cent of the MotoGP earlier this year and this season's MotoGP events have figured prominently in Liberty Media's latest financial results.

With the Asia Pacific accounting for a growing number of MotoGP fans it makes sense that the MotoGP remains firmly rooted in the Asia Pacific. With the MotoGP calendar of events now confirmed up to 2031 in many locations Liberty Media has identified young fans as the key to the future of the MotoGP.

Moto2, Moto3 and Moto4 are all seen as essential to cultivating the next generation of international and local riders. Australian rider Senna Agius from Camden, NSW was the first Australian to win a Moto2 race at Phillip Island.

Liberty Media has also signalled its intention to boost cultural influence through MotoGP events, improve fan zones and music offerings, increase local market penetration and turn races into destination events.

Bass Coast Shire Council last week reaffirmed its strong support for the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix to remain at Phillip Island beyond its current contractual term.

The event is seen as a cornerstone of Bass Coast's visitor economy, delivering significant economic benefits, global exposure, and community activation.

The Island hosted the first Australian Grand Prix in 1928, cementing its place in national motorsport history. The MotoGP itself was first run at Phillip Island before being relocated to Eastern Creek for a brief period in the 1990s, ultimately returning to the Island where it has remained since 1997.

**Superbike riders Max Neukirchner and Jakeb Sullivan with Bass Coast Shire Mayor Rochelle Halstead, Rosa Scarlato from Pino's Trattoria and Destination Phillip Island General Manager Kim Storey calling for the Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix to remain at Phillip Island.**

The event has proven to be a major economic driver for Bass Coast and Victoria.

An economic impact study by Ernst & Young in 2023 found the Grand Prix generated $54.6 million in total economic benefit for the state, including $29.4 million in direct local spend for Bass Coast.

Securing the MotoGP beyond 2026 aligns with council's long-term objectives to grow the visitor economy, strengthen regional partnerships, and enhance global recognition.

Having worked in the motor industry for many years Cr Tim O'Brien said the risk was if we lose the iconic Grand Prix from the Island we'll probably lose it from Australia.

"Tailem Bend and Avalon have been touted as possible places where the event could be run but it is its iconic status that has kept it here," said Cr O'Brien.

Cr Ron Bauer said the importance of the MotoGP to the Island could not be overstated.

"The GP is the most important short term accommodation stay event in terms of dollars brought in over a week. The loss of homes opting out of the short term accommodation scheme due to the loss of the GP could have enormous repercussions to our bottom line.

"The MotoGP is a growing event not an event in decline. We know the riders wish the event to stay on the island. They love riding on the track, and we love having it here. We need to stay out in front in this race, not slide off the track and get the chequered flag."

"Coming second is not an option," said Cr Bauer.

"Failure to retain the world class event would represent a significant economic and reputational loss for Bass Coast while continued hosting will consolidate Bass Coast's position as a leading destination for major events."

In 2024/25 Bass Coast Shire Council contributed $98,000 towards the MotoGP split between traffic and transportation implementation costs and entertainment in Cowes.

The owner of the Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit the Linfox Property Group is responsible for capital improvements required to maintain the event's sustainability.

A petition can be signed at engage.basscoast.vic.gov.au/SaveOurMOTOGP.

# Fight to save Phillip Island MotoGP revs up

BASS Coast and Gippsland councils, businesses and the community have formed a united coalition to campaign to keep the iconic Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix at Phillip Island as fears intensify that it could soon be poached by an interstate or overseas track.

The Mayors of Bass Coast Shire Council and South Gippsland Shire Council, and tourism and business groups Destination Phillip Island and Destination Gippsland last week wrote to Premier Jacinta Allan seeking an urgent commitment to keep the race, which is worth more than $60 million to the local community.

Businesses and the community have also launched a public campaign to force the Government to save the race.

The October 2026 race is the final race in the current contract, and the Government and Australian Grand Prix Corporation, chaired by former minister Martin Pakula, have not yet secured an extension for Phillip Island or provided a commitment to save the race.

An announcement by the global MotoGP rightsholders Dorna Sports is believed to be imminent.

The MotoGP has been held at Phillip Island since 1997 and is a major drawcard for the state's Major Events calendar and plays a critical role in supporting the tourism sector and the wider economy across Phillip Island, Bass Coast, Gippsland and Victoria.

The 2025 event drew more than 91,000 attendees – the highest since 2012, and up 10,000 from 2024.

The Phillip Island racing track, owned by the Fox family, is in the State electorate of Bass, which is currently held by a small margin by the Labor Party.

The regional leaders have also written letters to Mr Pakula and Opposition Leader Jess Wilson seeking their support for the public campaign to save the race, as well as Dorna Sports Chief Executive Carmelo Ezpeleta.

"The community is extremely proud that the Phillip Island MotoGP has established itself as the biggest regional sporting event in Australia and will fight hard to keep it," wrote Bass Coast Shire Council Mayor Cr Rochelle Halstead to the Premier.

"Economically, culturally and socially, the MotoGP holds huge significance for the Bass Coast community, particularly the small businesses in hospitality, retail, accommodation and tourism who rely heavily on the race weekend for a substantial portion of their annual income, which allows them to stay open and employ local staff.

"The economic benefits from the event also flow on to our neighbours in South Gippsland and across the Gippsland region. The race plays a critical role in promoting Phillip Island and Gippsland's global profile as a premier destination for major events and international visitation. Losing it would diminish the region's exposure to international markets and weaken Gippsland's visitor economy and international appeal."

"Losing the race would be a huge blow for the community, residents and visitors, impacting vital economic activity and identity, and, not surprisingly, I have been alerted by business and community groups of their plan to use the busy summer holidays on Phillip Island and the Bass Coast region to campaign to keep the race at Phillip Island."

"The Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix is an integral part of our community, and the state's Major Events calendar, and we look forward to your commitment that it will stay at its Island home and not be allowed to be poached by another state or country," Cr Halstead said.

# Rabbits or cats, it's out of control

**By Michael Giles**

YOU'VE no doubt heard the term "breed like rabbits".

A report to the Bass Coast Shire Council meeting last Wednesday, titled 'Possible Eradication and Control Options for Rabbits, Feral Cats & Deer in Bass Coast' demonstrates the point succinctly:

"Rabbits reach reproductive maturity at three months of age, meaning that under favourable conditions one pair of rabbits can become 184 rabbits in 18 months."

And you don't need to look far past the Jetty Triangle in Cowes to see that scenario being played out before your very eyes with rabbits invading the gardens around the cenotaph and in front of the foreshore area in ever-increasing numbers.

The "unfolding catastrophe", as Cr Tim O'Brien termed it, has even become something of a tourist attraction as visitors, pulling up in their buses for a bit of R&R before heading out to the penguins, admire the cute and fluffy bunnies, munching away on the lawns at the end of Thompson Avenue.

Of course, it's only an indication of what's going on right across Phillip Island in particular, with no apex predator, and to a lesser extent elsewhere.

The situation prompted Cr Ron Bauer to raise a Notice of Motion at the September 17 council meeting, initially about the rabbits on the Island, but expanding into a call for a report on "the possible eradication and population control options regarding rabbits, feral cats and deer in Bass Coast".

He wasn't happy with what he got.

"This report does not go far enough," said Cr Bauer.

"The aim of the motion that I introduced two months ago was to have a report with strategies to deal with the pests, especially the rabbits. There is not one eradication recommendation in this report," he said.

"I believe the very least we need is to create a task force to deal with the problem. I understand that any remedial action carries some risk of collateral damage but as the saying goes, you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs.

"We not only should support the other stakeholders, but it's our legislated obligation to be proactive in this space. I call on officers to provide councillors with a briefing in February with some effective strategies. Ratepayers deserve better."

Whether he gets an implementation report or not is yet to be seen.

Cr Matt Morgan wants council and the community to focus its attention on a bigger problem – feral cats.

"Cats are one of Australia's most destructive invasive species. They occupy 99.9 per cent of mainland Australia and are found on nearly 100 islands, surviving in more habitats and over a wider area than any other introduced species, including rabbits and foxes," he said, claiming there are between 2.8 million and 5.6 million domestic or feral cats.

As well as conducting pest control on its own land and co-operating with other agencies, the shire will consider increasing its investment in strategic pest animal control across the municipality.

SUNDAY MORNING
RAIL TRAIL COMMUNITY MARKET LEONGATHA
BAKED - MADE - GROWN
21 DECEMBER
8.30AM - 1PM
3RD SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH
RAILWAY PRECINCT LEONGATHA
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ME0480-V6

# Ambulance response rates alarmingly low, says O'Brien

THE Nationals Member for Gippsland South, Danny O'Brien, has raised urgent concerns about the response times for emergency medical callouts. "Not the fault of our paramedics," he said. "They're working hard and doing the best they can, but they're let down by a government that simply hasn't backed them up."

"The statewide target is for an ambulance to reach at least 85 per cent of Code One incidents within 15 minutes, but in South Gippsland that figure is just 47.4 per cent, with a wait time of more than 19 minutes on average," Mr O'Brien said.

"These are emergencies where every minute matters, and it is clear that the system is simply not keeping up."

Mr O'Brien highlighted that the delays extend beyond the most urgent callouts, with Code 2 callouts (non-life-threatening incidents still requiring timely medical attention), leaving locals waiting more than 40 minutes in both local government areas.

"As well as risking the lives of Gippslanders, these delays place unfair pressure on our hardworking local paramedics.

"Our paramedics are dedicated, skilled and doing everything they can, but they continue to be let down by a government that has failed to invest properly in the system.

"Gippslanders deserve to know an ambulance will come when they need one, but right now the data shows they simply cannot rely on that."

Mr O'Brien said he is again calling on the state government to take immediate action to improve ambulance performance in regional Victoria.

"Gippslanders should not be waiting longer and longer for life-saving care.

"The state government must act urgently to ensure our local ambulance services have the resources, staffing and support they need to meet their targets and keep our community safe."

# Phillip Island community advocacy leads to daytime hot water trial for Rhyll residents

TOTALLY Renewable Phillip Island (TRPI) has successfully partnered with AusNet to implement a small-scale hot water trial for Rhyll residents, demonstrating how community advocacy can drive innovative renewable energy solutions.

Starting March 1, 2026, up to 60 households in Rhyll will have their electric hot water systems automatically shifted from nighttime to daytime operation, harnessing the region's abundant solar energy during peak generation hours between 9am and 3pm, keeping the existing supplementary boost period from 4am to 6am.

The initiative addresses a growing challenge in renewable energy communities: what to do with excess solar energy generated during the day. As Phillip Island continues its transition toward 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030, this trial offers a practical solution that benefits both the local grid and individual households.

By shifting hot water heating to daytime hours, the trial will maximise the use of locally-generated solar power that would otherwise go to waste. This means more solar energy is used within the community, reducing the need for electricity from the grid during nighttime hours when fossil fuel generation is still required.

"This is about being smart with the solar energy we're already generating," said TRPI Chair, Simon Helps. "Instead of curtailing solar systems or exporting excess energy, we're now using it to heat water when the sun is shining. It's common sense, and it will be happening right here in Rhyll."

**Zoe Geyer and Garry Busowsky (TRPI) , working on sustainable architecture and energy efficiency, have previously provided strong support for TRPI's goal of 100% renewable power by 2030. Zoe is now assisting First Nations communities with their transition to renewable energy.**

The Rhyll trial aligns with Bass Coast Council's Climate Change Action Plan initiatives currently being updated, positioning Phillip Island as a leader in practical renewable energy innovation. The project demonstrates how regional councils can actively contribute to Australia's renewable energy transition through community-led partnerships.

TRPI will be conducting multiple community engagement sessions to ensure all residents understand the trial and can ask questions.

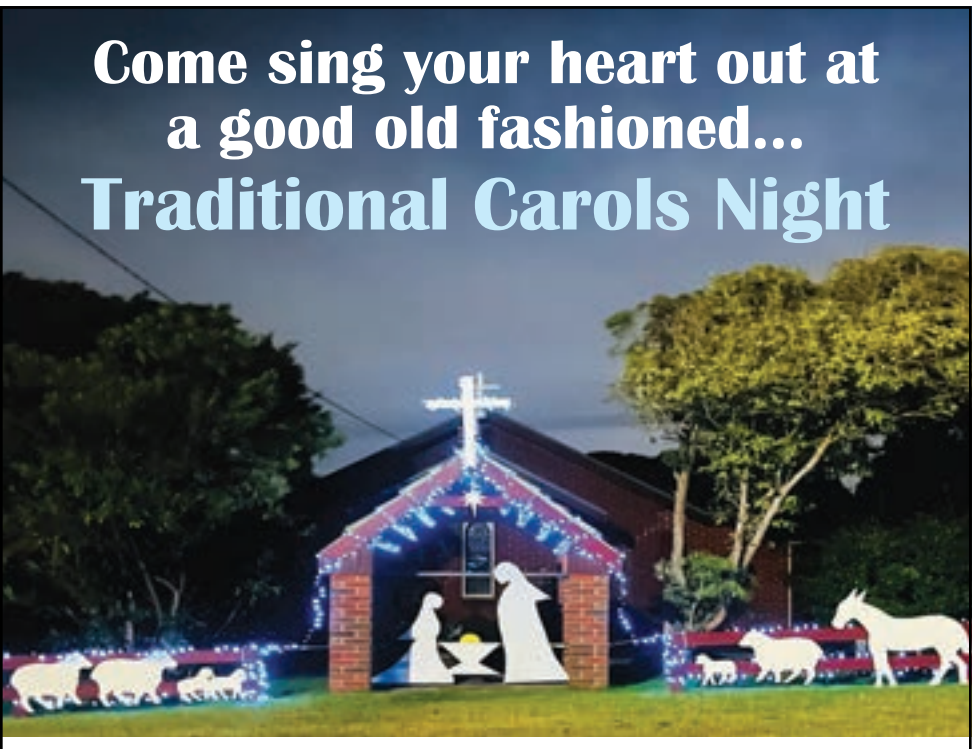
A public meeting will be held at Rhyll Community Hall on Saturday 24 January 2026 at 11am until 12.30pm. Information stalls will be at Rhyll Twilight Markets at Site 54 between 4pm and 8pm on Friday, December 12, Friday, January 2 and Friday, January 16. A community drop-in session will be held at Rhyll Community Hall on Saturday 21 February 2026 at 11am until 12.30pm.

An online information session via Zoom will be held on Wednesday, February 4, 2026 between 7pm and 8pm, open for all including non-residents and property owners. Expression of interest can register via Humanitix registration and Facebook updates.

Facebook updates are available by following Totally Renewable Phillip Island at facebook.com/totallyrenewablephillipisland. Online registration for updates and FAQ document available at events.humanitix.com/register-for-rhyll-hot-water-trial-updates.

This initiative is a significant step toward TRPI's goal of making Phillip Island 100 per cent renewable by 2030. By demonstrating how existing infrastructure can be optimised to use solar energy more effectively, the trial creates a blueprint for similar communities across Australia.

For more information about the Rhyll hot water trial, including FAQs and notification of upcoming information sessions register via Humanitix page, or stay in touch via the TRPI Facebook page or email totallyrenewablephillipisland@gmail.com.


**At St George's Anglican Church, 24 Smythe Street, Corinella**

**Christmas Eve, December 24, 7pm**

*Silent night, O Come all ye faithful, O Holy nigh, Joy to the world,*
*Away in a manger, We three Kings, Once in royal David's city,*
*O little town of Bethlehem, The first Noel,*
*While Shepherds watched their Flocks by night,*
*Angels we have heard on high, Adore, What child is this,*
*O come o come Emmanuel, Joyful joyful we adore thee*

**Jesus... the reason for the season.**

*For God so loved the world He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. John 3.16.*

HM13247

**Join our Community Advisory Committee**

BCH Bass Coast Health

Do you have strong community connections and a passion for local healthcare?

BCH is seeking Expressions of Interest for members of our Community Advisory Committee, to act as a conduit between the community and the Board and Executive.

Be a voice for your local community as we transition into Bayside Health on 1 January 2026. You will provide feedback and advice, and represent the community on committees that ensure consumer voice is central to the delivery of our services.

We seek members of all ages and backgrounds, bringing lived experience and skills. See our committee members here: basscoasthealth.org.au/cac

This is an exciting time to join BCH, with significant growth in services and infrastructure.

For more information, contact Kristen Yates-Matthews: Kristen.Yates-Matthews@basscoasthealth.org.au

# Upgrade welcomed for Queen Street

QUEEN Street residents in Wonthaggi once fearful their deteriorating street could be ripped up and turned into a dirt road have been offered a welcome lifeline.

Bass Coast Shire Council last week voted to approve a road seal upgrade for Queen Street between Merrin Crescent and Broome Crescent.

Council notified residents and property owners earlier this year that it intended to remove the existing asphalted dust suppressant seal because it had deteriorated to the point it no longer met acceptable service standards.

Council had been routinely removing remaining dust seals in line with its management strategy adopted in 2013, however after a petition was received from property owners council voted to postpone the planned asphalt removal works.

Council was told that not only will the Queen Street upgrade improve road safety, accessibility and visual amenity for local residents, it will position the community to better withstand current and future extreme weather events and strengthen the community's resilience to climate change impacts.

Giving thanks to the Wonthaggi residents who had agreed to the works Councillor Mat Morgan said in a cost of living crisis no-one wanted to be stumping up cash for road upgrades.

"I acknowledge the generosity and community spirit of these residents," he said. "Enjoy your new sealed road."

Peter Carden said it was a victory for Queen Street residents.

"We're very happy, and hoping for a start to the re-sealing project by the middle of next year," he said. "Hopefully it will be finished by next Christmas."

The estimated cost of the proposed upgrade is $107,031 with Bass Coast Shire to provide 63 per cent of the funding and the balance to be obtained from property owners.

# Inverloch Men's Shed donates garden boost to Kirrak House

**By Trent Westaway**

KIRRAK House residents now have a brighter backyard to enjoy after the Inverloch Men's Shed donated six handmade planter boxes, complete with a collection of pot plants to help get them started.

At 10.30am on Thursday, December 11, several members of the Inverloch Men's Shed arrived for a handover ceremony. The group first unloaded the planter boxes, before setting them in place underneath the residents' windows, chatting with them as they inspected the new additions. Even Kirrak House's much-loved dog, Max, couldn't resist the excitement, bounding straight over to the planters the moment they touched the pavement.

The idea for the planter boxes started close to home for Kirrak House. Resident Brian Williams was once a founding member of the Inverloch Men's Shed, and his wife, Helen, first suggested the project. With her encouragement, the men got to work. Vice president Matt McDonald said the support from Bunnings made a huge difference. The timber was donated to the shed entirely free of charge, and they were noticeably beaming with appreciation.

"They give us space when we do our sausage sizzles, and we have a lot to do with them. We have a great relationship with Bunnings," Mr McDonald said.

**Trevor Howard, along with Inverloch Men's Shed members, President Trevor Key, Vice President Matt McDonald, Paul Cross and Cam Liddicoat with Kirrak House residents Brian Williams and Ida Rammage.** W05_5025

Men's Shed president Trevor Key agreed.

"When we first put our Men's Shed up, Bunnings donated all the plants. We've always had a great relationship."

Mr Key said the planter boxes took around two months from start to finish, including organisation, gaining the materials, and of course, building. He spoke at the handover ceremony and thanked Kirrak House for embracing the project.

"Firstly, on behalf of the Shed, I'd like to thank Kirrak House for giving us the opportunity to do this. An integral part of the Shed is doing community work, and we really appreciate it. We get a lot of support from our community, and we love to give it back, not only to help with men's health, but also to give back to the community in general."

The Inverloch Men's Shed is always happy to take requests from the community, whether it's building or repairing something. If it's within their capabilities, they're always willing to lend a hand. If you would like more information on what the Inverloch Men's Shed get up to, you can visit their website at inverlochmensshed.com.au.

**CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan is urging Victorians to prepare before heading off on holiday.**

## CFA warns grassfires outpace runners

THE Country Fire Authority is urging residents to stay vigilant this fire season as grassfires can move faster than people can run.

CFA Chief Officer Jason Heffernan said Christmas festivities and family holidays could distract Victorians from the heightened fire danger that comes with summer.

Firefighters are reminding holiday-goers to remain conscious of the hot and dry weather conditions to keep their families safe.

Mr Heffernan said people needed to be prepared before heading off on holiday.

"You may be travelling to an unfamiliar area and it's important to understand the fire risk of your holiday location," Mr Heffernan said.

"Now is not the time to become complacent.

"Grassfires can move at speeds of more than 25 kilometres per hour, faster than you can run, and they can jump highways in the right conditions.

"We have already seen some large grassfires this season, Victorians must stay vigilant, have a fire plan in place and be ready to act."

The fire season has already begun with large grass and bushfires breaking out in the state's north-west and north-east.

With many holiday regions surrounded by open grasslands and the Bureau of Meteorology's outlook predicting a hotter and drier summer than usual, the risk of significant fires is a real concern towards the end of December and beginning of the new year.

Mr Heffernan said bushfires and rural grassfires did impact built-up areas.

"It really is everyone's responsibility to be fire ready," he said.

"Recent growth across pastures, woodlands and roadside reserves has created unbroken stretches of dried grass along many roadsides, increasing the chance of roadside fires."

Victorians should take responsibility for their own safety by monitoring Extreme and Catastrophic Fire Danger Rating days and reconsider travelling into bushfire-prone areas on days when fire ratings are high.

"It is also important not to drive if you can see smoke or fire," Mr Heffernan said.

"Thick smoke will make it hard to see and make accidents more likely."

The VicEmergency app is vital in staying safe while travelling.

Victorians are urged to download the app and set up watch zones for the locations they plan to visit.

Mr Heffernan said visitors should learn about the area they are travelling to and monitor the Fire Danger Ratings every day throughout summer.

For all travel safety tips visit cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/before-and-during-a-fire/leave-early/staying-safe-when-you-travel

# Inquiry calls for more local jobs in Bass Strait decommissioning

**By Bruce Wardley**

A PARLIAMENTARY inquiry into the decommissioning of oil and gas platforms in Bass Strait has heard there must be a framework that protects the environment, supports innovation in recycling and delivers economic benefits to Gippsland.

Gippsland MP Melina Bath said as Victoria retires its offshore infrastructure, it was vital to seize the opportunity to create local jobs through dismantling and potentially recycling components, while ensuring the highest environmental standards.

"Gippsland has been the backbone of Victoria's energy supply for decades. There are real prospects for the Gippsland region in the safe decommissioning of assets but also in the establishment of new industries," Ms Bath said.

ExxonMobil Australia told the inquiry it was committed to safely decommissioning its Bass Strait offshore facilities in an environmentally responsible way. Over the last few years ExxonMobil said it had expended nearly $3 billion on decommissioning in Bass Strait permanently sealing more than 200 wells.

Using lessons learned from other locations ExxonMobil said it had assembled a multidisciplinary leadership team with vast international experience to ensure the Bass Strait decommissioning activities met all requirements.

"The process of offshore decommissioning presents complex challenges."

ExxonMobil said the aim was for more than 95 per cent of the mostly steel material from the oil and gas structures to be recycled or reused. All of the steel will be transported to recycling facilities by road or sea and ExxonMobil said it would actively seek opportunities to recycle materials locally wherever possible.

The National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) told the inquiry it was fully committed to ensuring decommissioning was carried out in a timely, safe, and environmentally responsible way.

**Richard Perry Esso Decommissioning Project Manager at Barry Beach Marine Terminal.** B27_0825

"Decommissioning is an inevitable stage in the lifetime of an offshore petroleum project and should be planned from the outset and matured throughout the life of operations, including consideration of late-life asset management, cessation of production, removal of property, plug and abandonment of wells, and finally title relinquishment."

"There is no 'one size fits all' approach to decommissioning," said NOPSEMA.

NOPSEMA warned unremoved infrastructure posed significant hazards to vessel traffic, particularly trawlers and other fishing vessels operating near the seabed.

"While some argue in favour of artificial reefs, the commercial fishing sector views such proposals with caution unless reefs are specifically designed and located away from fishing grounds," said NOPSEMA.

The Gippsland fishing industry called on regulators including NOPSEMA to honour the original commitments made to the fishing industry when oil and gas operations commenced, requiring the complete removal of offshore petroleum infrastructure and seabed-level capping of all wellheads, strict accountability for oil and gas companies to fully fund decommissioning and compensation, and immediate clarification on liability, buffer zones, and compensation mechanisms.

According to the South East Trawl Fishing Industry Association (SETFIA) abandoned pipelines and structures block access, make fishing less efficient, and significantly increase risk and increase operating costs.

"Trawlers can snag on objects on the seafloor and with 50 years of marine growth on oil and gas equipment within petroleum safety zones subsea structures can pose a real danger to vessels and crews."

SETFIA recommended fishing associations should be funded to take part in decommissioning discussions and a dedicated trust established funded by oil and gas operators to cover both immediate and long-term losses to fishers.

"The Victorian Government has an opportunity to set clear rules by removing infrastructure wherever possible and providing ongoing compensation for fishers and quota owners when this is not possible," said SETFIA.

The Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC) said Victoria's relatively small geographic size, skilled workforce and abundance of port infrastructure made it an ideal location to decommission offshore oil and gas platforms safely and efficiently.

"Decommissioning could provide Victorians with thousands of jobs in engineering, logistics, shipping, environmental monitoring and recycling," said VTHC.

"As some of our oil and gas sector nears its end of life, total decommissioning presents an opportunity to develop a new industry and boost existing ones, such as steel production.

"Rather than see our decommissioned infrastructure taken overseas, we can dismantle, process and recycle the materials locally, create skilled jobs in ports, process and recycling yards, and help to boost local economies."

Trades Hall Council said the Victorian Government should develop strong oversight of the decommissioning process and enforce strict standards around materials processing, workforce development, and environmental protection.

"Leaving any section of an offshore oil or gas well in-situ is unacceptable, and not in line with the regulatory standards. Removing and recycling the entire structure is good for Victoria's workforce, good for the Victorian marine environment and ultimately good for all Victorians," VTHC said.

Trades Hall also called for TAFE-based training and licensing for high-risk decommissioning work, including crane, rigging, and heavy-lift operations, confined-space entry, and hazardous-materials management providing vocational pathways, bridging programs and retraining for Victorian maritime and energy workers with increased participation by women, First Nations people and young workers.

# Disaster looming as wild weather slows sandbag repairs

**Thomas and Liam with grandfather Stephen are losing hope the sandbag replacement works at Inverloch surf beach will be completed by the end of this week.** B94_5025

**By Bruce Wardley**

UNSEASONABLY wild weather continues to play havoc with the December 19 deadline for the replacement and repair of geotextile sandbags at the Inverloch SLSC.

"It's an utter disaster," said former Liberal leader and Wonthaggi mayor Alan Brown, speaking as a member of the Inverloch Foreshore Action Group.

Inverloch SLSC president Glenn Arnold said contractors will continue to work as planned until December 19, after which the earthmoving equipment will be removed to restore access to the surf beach.

"They will be back on January 27 after Australia Day to finish the works," Mr Arnold said.

"It's slow progress, and it's not pretty," Mr Arnold admitted.

"Contractors only have a small window to work with in-between tide changes.

"At the end of the program it will look terrific."

Work to date has been confined to the western end of the sandbags which Mr Arnold said was a priority to allow access to the ramp to the surf beach for visitors and the club.

The eastern side remains vulnerable he said, but Bass Coast Shire had been quite diligent by keeping an eye on it and replacing the sand when necessary.

The new committee of the Inverloch Tourist Association predicted an unprecedented number of tourists to Inverloch this summer.

"It could be our busiest Christmas and New Year ever," said Inverloch Tourist Association president Glenn Morris.

Visiting the Inverloch surf beach in her first week as Liberal leader, Jess Wilson said months had been lost in addressing the beach erosion problem at Inverloch.

"A permanent solution is needed," Ms Wilson said.

Visiting the surf beach on Saturday with his grandsons Thomas and Liam, local resident Stephen said it was unlikely the sandbags would be finished by Christmas.

"I hope they do," he said.

"There is still a lot of work to be done. We live in hope."

Bass Coast Shire Council was contacted for comment but failed to respond by the time of publication.

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HM13245

## Public transport is a social investment, they say

MEMBER for Bass Jordan Crugnale said public transport is one of the highest priorities for people of all ages across the Bass electorate, yet despite making public transport free for more than one million young Victorians from January 1, there is no promise for accessibility in Bass Coast or South Gippsland.

Announced as part of the Victorian Budget 2025/26 to deliver free public transport to children, and available for purchase on the Transport Victoria website, the Youth myki ensures all passengers aged under 18 can travel for free across the network from the start of next year. However, its limited access is the downfall for those living regionally.

"I will continue to advocate strongly for service uplift, timetable tweaks to better suit how we move around the area and region more broadly," said Ms Crugnale.

"Some examples that I have been working on are meeting with relevant Ministers and putting up for budget consideration each year, include our very popular Cowes Inverloch V/Line service, our PT buses Cowes – Wonthaggi, Wonthaggi – Traralgon," she said.

"Our transport system must reflect the way our communities move with better connections, more services and timetable adjustments that make daily life easier to get to work, recreational activities, study and cultural performances. Public Transport is a social investment.

"We have already seen encouraging progress this year with additional services and extra buses for San Remo students, as well as continued support for South Gippsland Bass Coast LEN to help young people reach their TAFE studies.

"I also want to thank everyone who took part in the recent V/Line Bus Consultation. Although this consultation focused on the Yarram and Leongatha line, it was also a valuable chance for Bass Coast residents and visitors who use the Cowes and Inverloch services to share their experiences and aspirations. Together, we are helping build a transport network that truly supports our future needs."

The Youth myki will be available to purchase at staffed stations from Saturday, December 27. On booked V/Line services, the Youth myki card number can be used to access free travel. On non-myki regional buses, children can use Youth myki as a flash pass.

From January 1, seniors, carers and disability support pensioners will also be able to catch a train, tram or bus for free on weekends. Passengers must carry their proof of concession and continue to tap on and off as usual, but they won't be charged on weekends.

Plus families have access to free public transport across Victoria every weekend until February 1, 2026.

# Farewell to South Gippsland Motors after nearly nine decades

**By Trent Westaway**

**Chad, Todd, Paul, Geoff and Laurie Huther wish to thank the community for decades of support.** W01_5025

THE lights will go out at South Gippsland Motors for the final time on Friday, December 19, bringing an end to a business that has been part of Wonthaggi for as long as most locals have been alive.

The building has sat on the corner of Graham Street since 1939 and in that time, it has simply become a Wonthaggi icon, welcoming visitors straight off the Bass Highway.

Sam Huther bought the business just before World War II and slowly added to it over the years. Geoff Huther said the family built much of it themselves, bit by bit. There is a sense of history in the walls, and the building has not moved from Graham Street.

South Gippsland Motors has experienced a few different eras. It was a Ford dealer for more than sixty years, then later worked as a sub dealer until 2018. New and used cars were sold out the front, while panel beating, spray painting and repairs happened out the back.

Geoff, Paul and Anthony Huther jointly own the building, while Paul continues to run the business.

When asked why the doors are closing now, Geoff said it came down to the building becoming tired and the family slowly stepping back.

"The building is pretty run down now. We have all got out of the business and Paul's boys do not want to run it. It just feels like the right time," he said.

Geoff has been retired for three years, so the decision has settled with him. Paul, who still works day to day, said the whole thing feels a bit heavier.

"It's a bit sad to shut it down. But you can't keep going forever. You need a holiday at some point," he said with a chuckle.

Both men were clear on what kept the place going for so long. Geoff said the community trusted them and that mattered.

"Good work ethic and honest workers. People got to know you and they trusted you. That's really it," he said.

The business supported the Wonthaggi Football Club for years. Originally the Blues and then the Power, after the Wonthaggi Rovers merged with the Blues at the end of 2004.

Things in the workshop have changed a lot though. Paul said the modern cars have become harder to diagnose because of the amount of electronics inside them.

"At the end of the day it is still a car, but the new ones are harder to work on. There has been a lot of safety improvements though," he said.

With the days now counting down, the men hope people remember South Gippsland Motors for being a place where you could walk in and feel comfortable.

"You could come in, get your car fixed, have a good yack. It was friendly. People could come up the back and talk to the managers. We always tried to do the right thing," Geoff said.

The building is currently up for sale. Once it is sold, the future of the site will be someone else's decision. The business itself will not continue.

Before they close their doors for the last time, Paul and Geoff wanted to say something to the community.

"We would like to thank all the customers over the years. They have been fantastic. The community has really supported us," they said.

Eighty-seven years is a long time for any business to last. When South Gippsland Motors finally closes its doors, this will end a remarkable chapter of Wonthaggi's history.

# Call for long-term road repairs on the South Gippsland Highway

THE Nationals Member for Gippsland South, Danny O'Brien, says the South Gippsland Highway is being kept on life support with constant patch-ups instead of receiving the proper investment it clearly needs.

Mr O'Brien was commenting after the Minister for Roads advised that 169 separate maintenance tasks have been carried out on the Leongatha–Korumburra section of the South Gippsland Highway since July.

"The Minister's response highlights the wastefulness of repeatedly fixing the same road with short-term, temporary measures," Mr O'Brien said.

"In just five months, crews have been called out 169 times on one, 15 kilometre section of the highway.

"That is not proper maintenance; it is evidence that the road was never repaired or funded correctly in the first place."

Mr O'Brien said the government has advised that works will be undertaken this summer at Stony Creek and through the Korumburra town centre, with a small amount of resealing also proposed.

"Not enough resealing and rehabilitation has been undertaken on our roads.

"This could all be avoided if the state government invested properly in long-term repairs from the start."

Mr O'Brien, who is also the Shadow Minister for Roads and Road Safety, said figures from the independent Parliamentary Budget Office show Victoria is spending $1500 less per kilometre on road maintenance than the national average.

"The South Gippsland Highway is vital for our community, and we deserve a road that is built to last."

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**Gippsland Southern Health Service chair Athina Georgiou and CEO Lou Sparkes addressed last Thursday's AGM, outlining the health service's year of growth and preparations for the Bayside Health merger in 2026.**

## GSHS well set for its next chapter

GIPPSLAND Southern Health Service (GSHS) is well-positioned for its next chapter after a year of service growth and developing stronger connections with the local community.

Speaking at last Thursday's AGM, chair Athina Georgiou and CEO Lou Sparkes said GSHS was preparing for its transition into the Bayside Health merger in January 2026 with clarity, cohesion, and a deep sense of purpose.

"Our identity, values and culture remain strong, and are recognised as assets in this next phase of statewide reform," they said.

Ms Georgiou and Ms Sparkes said the decision to undertake the voluntary merger into Bayside Health was proactive, strategic and carefully considered by the Board of Directors.

"It reflects our commitment to both the health service and the South Gippsland community to ensure that they have access to strong health services into the future," they said.

"This is an exciting time, as together with the other four health services (Alfred Health, Peninsula Health, Kooweerup Regional Health Service and Bass Coast Health) our Board and executive team are working on a design that will make all our communities healthier."

They described 2024–25 as a dynamic year of sector change and challenges requiring significant leadership and decision-making.

"A large amount of work focused on how to ensure the very best for our community to continue to grow and thrive into the future," they said.

"At the same time, GSHS's clinical teams continued to deliver care that was not only high quality, but ensured a good health experience for consumers and their carers."

During the year, GSHS achieved full compliance with the National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), aged care, and food safety standards, reflecting the health service's strong culture of safety and continuous improvement.

There was also more demand for services, with the Urgent Care Centre recording a 57.3 per cent year-on-year increase in presentations, more than 5000 for the year. Notably, 88 per cent of ambulance arrivals were transferred within 40 minutes – making GSHS one of the highest-performing services in the region on this benchmark.

Cardiac, cancer, and maternity services were redesigned to support delivery closer to home, including telehealth-integrated survivorship care. This included establishing a dedicated midwifery unit manager, transitioning breast screening appointments in partnership with BreastScreen Victoria from a monthly mobile service to in-hospital access for more than 20 women each week, and expanding the innovative Cancer Survivorship Program.

GSHS also connected with the community, not only through media and social media but by taking care out of the buildings and into community life through local education sessions.

"Improvements in clinical indicators such as readmission rates and infection control benchmarks confirmed that our ongoing commitment to quality translates to improving outcomes," Ms Georgiou and Ms Sparkes said.

GSHS recorded an operating deficit of $2.8 million for 2024–25 from expenditure of $67.4 million, a result driven by a conscious decision of the Board and executive management to continue supporting and providing services to the community at levels above the NWAU activity targets.

"While this approach placed additional pressure on staffing and consumable costs, it ensured community needs were met," they said.

Clinical teams consistently upheld high standards across acute, subacute and aged care services, achieving 96 per cent positive patient experience results, and maintaining falls and pressure injury rates below national targets.

Workforce sustainability was strengthened throughout the year with a significant reduction in agency and locum staff. There was also an uplift in staff and consumer experience survey results.

**Director of Community Care for South Gippsland Hospital Samantha Park, Member for Gippsland South Danny O'Brien, hospital chief executive Paul Greenhalgh and Aboriginal Liaison Officer Kane Horvath with Andrew Noble's Bunjil the wedge-tailed eagle.** A46_5025

# Cultural celebration at South Gippsland Hospital

**Callum Jorgensen, Lola and Fletcher Storr and Kaylee Walsh of Foster Primary School with the totem pole they worked on.** A41_5025

**Foster Secondary College students Dylan Ward, Abbey Lees and Jahkoa Morton with the school's Marrung Lead Tika Hicken.** A43_5025

**Fish Creek Primary School students Maddesyn, Frankie, Brylie and Jarrah with principal Dale Banks beside the school's totem pole.** A45_5025

**By Andrew Paloczi**

TIMBER from a pin oak tree outside Foster's South Gippsland Hospital was put to good use in furthering efforts to promote awareness of Indigenous culture, the results celebrated through a ceremony on the site last Wednesday.

The tree was deemed unsafe after dropping branches, meaning all but the bottom section of its trunk had to be removed.

Wednesday's event served a dual purpose, acknowledging the completion of four totem poles, each painted by students from a different local school, as well as a spectacular sculpture of Bunjil the wedge-tailed eagle by Leongatha-based chainsaw artist Andrew Noble.

While timber from the tree was repurposed into totem poles through the generosity of Amber Creek Sawmill operator Dan Bright, the initial idea of Mr Noble carving his eagle into the remaining tree trunk at the hospital proved impractical due to the trunk's condition.

However, in a creative twist, the trunk was featured as the base for the eagle's nest.

The hospital's Aboriginal Liaison Officer Kane Horvath was instrumental in the project, expressing delight in the enthusiastic involvement of participants from Foster, Fish Creek and Toora Primary Schools and Foster Secondary College.

He enjoyed working with the children, a number of whom have some Indigenous heritage.

South Gippsland Hospital chief executive Paul Greenhalgh is thrilled to have Mr Horvath on the staff, helping celebrate First Nations culture and broaden awareness of what it entails, describing the latest initiative as "a good news story".

Mr Horvath acknowledged the assistance of Amber Creek Sawmill and South Gippsland Shire Council, along with everyone who has helped with the project, elaborating on the role Mr Bright played.

"He donated a lot of his time to mill these fallen branches, and he allowed us to go and use the sawmill to dress the timber, plane and sand it," Mr Horvath said, the timber needing to be prepared appropriately before painting.

The hospital's Director of Community Care, Samantha Park, explained that the four Aboriginal-inspired totem poles carry lots of stories and symbolise shared effort and community partnership as well as illustrating deep respect for the land on which they stand and the local community.

Mr Horvath spoke of the significance of the area in which the totem poles and Bunjil are located, seeing it as an ideal place for local schools to experience cultural days and activities, with other community members also welcome.

Wednesday's attendees heard from students and staff of the schools involved in the totem pole project about the symbolism entailed.

SHOP LOCAL
Last minute gifts

Members of the Connect Christian Church Bass Coast Band Pete, Fiona, Michelle, Steve, Tony and Marc soon had the crowd singing along at the Grantville carols on Sunday night.

Sally lines up for a couple of barbecue sausages at the Grantville carols on Sunday night from Nyree of the Grantville Kernot CFA.

# Grantville carols survives a windy start for a tuneful finish

SETTING up for the annual carols night in the gale-force wind was quite a challenge, but the resourceful members of the Grantville Business and Community Association and the Grantville Kernot CFA have overcome bigger odds.

In the end the wind moderated, the sky cleared, the jumping castle stayed tethered to the ground and with a bit of face painting, an animal farm for the little ones, Father Christmas and plenty of food, it was on with the show.

The members of the Connect Christian Church Bass Coast Band led the carols and with several guest singers coming up, it made for a fun community celebration which now clears the decks for a happy, relaxed festive season.

The Grantville Community Christmas Carols is a free, family-focused event designed to bring the local community together for an enjoyable and memorable evening and it certainly did that.

Well done to all involved.

Providing the manpower for the parking, barbecue and other duties at the business association carols night at Grantville on Sunday night were Helen, Michelle, Joan, Deb, Ash, Russell and Grantville Kernot CFA Captain Jason Duck.

Grantville Kernot CFA Brigade Captain Jason Duck and Lieutenant Michelle Venten lend a hand at the Grantville carols night.

Entertaining the crowd at the Grantville carols were Maddy, Aerin, Mariska, Shayla and Chelsea all dance group friends.

Young Lilly enjoys patting the animals at the Grantville carols on Sunday night.

## Christmas wishes

AS WE approach the festive season and the end of another year, I want to express my heartfelt thanks for the role you play in making our region such a wonderful place to live, work and visit.

Our towns are busy with seasonal cheer, and it's fantastic to see local small businesses bustling with activity as people shop, dine and socialise.

Christmas is a special time for many of us to reconnect with family, friends and neighbours, sharing in the spirit of community.

Despite ongoing cost-of-living pressures, the generosity across our region has been nothing short of inspiring.

Donations of toys, clothing and food hampers have brought hope and relief to those doing it tough. To everyone who has contributed – thank you for your kindness and compassion.

I'm optimistic about our region's future and the individuals and families who make our communities so strong.

This year marks my tenth year serving in State Parliament – an honour I never take for granted.

I will continue to stand up for eastern Victoria, ensuring our voices are heard and striving to deliver the support and investment our region needs to thrive.

As holidaymakers head to our beautiful coastal towns or explore our landscapes, please take care on the roads. Drive to the conditions, be patient and stay safe.

Whichever way you choose to celebrate the holiday period, I hope it is filled with laughter, love and cherished moments with those who matter most.

Wishing you a healthy, happy and wonderful start to 2026.

**Melina Bath, Member for Eastern Victoria**

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## Last minute gifts

**Locals Harlow and Jamie-Lee Harris look forward to a great evening at Leongatha Community Carols.** A25_5025

**Aria, Kai and Isabelle Payne get into the Christmas spirit, also celebrating Kai's birthday.** A26_5025

**Maddie and Ali Wightman settle in for their first Leongatha Community Carols after moving from Queensland.** A27_5025

**Amy, Elvis and Barry Radic of Cranbourne dress the part for the Leongatha carols.** A28_5025

**Indy and Renee McLaren are ready for their hometown carols in Leongatha.** A30_5025

**Leongatha's Aidan and Ivy O'Rafferty enjoy the family atmosphere at Friday's carols.** A29_5025


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# SHOP LOCAL
## Last minute gifts

**'Care Love Dance' performers Mayah and Summer Cardy, Ada Houston and Ailee Kilsby relax before taking the stage at the Leongatha carols.** A32_5025

**Alice and Stuart McDonald at Friday's Leongatha carols.** A31_5025

**Leah and Callum Jorgensen and Kane Horvath settle in for Friday's Leongatha carols.** A34_5025

**Locals Kirsty, Elena and Annabelle enjoy the Leongatha carols.** A35_5025

**Ghislaine and Tia Tali of Leongatha are ready for a night of carol singing.** A38_5025

**Riley and Alex Sommers enjoy the Leongatha carols.** A40_5025


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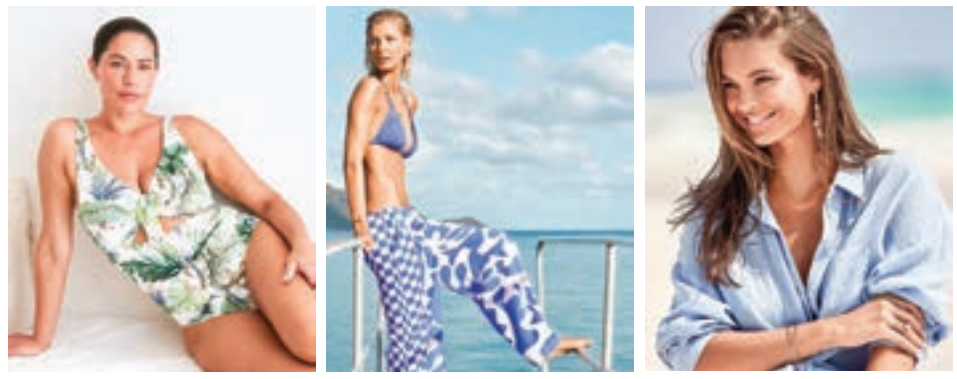

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# Leongatha Carols a family celebration

**Harleigh and Matilda Browne, Willow, Levi and Bailee Fitzgerald and Clare Williams with 'Cousin Koala' of The Salvation Army.** A19_5025

**By Andrew Paloczi**

A MILD evening set the scene for local families to get into the Christmas spirit at Friday's Leongatha Community Carols at the town's Recreation Reserve.

Local schools, kinders and church groups featured prominently in the entertainment, along with the South Gippsland Brass Band and the South Gippsland Singers.

Performances were mixed, featuring a variety of dancing, Christmas carols and songs, and other musical numbers.

Just prior to the fireworks that concluded the night, a stirring block of carols was performed, with Leisel Burrow's singing of 'Mary's Boy Child' and 'The First Noel' a highlight.

Meg Doherty's 'O Holy Night', Kerryn Lockhart's version of 'Angels We Have Heard on High' and Ashley Geary performing 'Joy to the World' also stood out.

All too soon, it was all over for another year, attendees having enjoyed a relaxing time with family and friends, chatting, eating and singing, and in the case of youngsters running, dancing and waving glowing objects.

Happily, one group adhered to carols tradition, bringing candles.

After repeated warnings from the event's MC that children weren't allowed on the velodrome oval, the message eventually got through, with children out of the way in time for the fireworks display.

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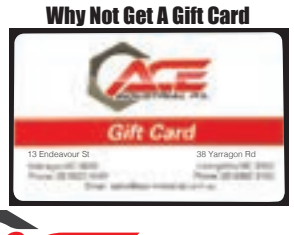

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# SHOP LOCAL
## Last minute gifts

**Peter McAlpine and Jim Pickersgill take it easy at the Leongatha carols.** A37_5025

**Leisel Burrow performs at the Leongatha carols.** A20_5025

**Gus Hemming sings 'Run Rudolph Run'.** A21_5025

**Kerryn Lockhart entertains the crowd at the Leongatha Community Carols.** A22_5025

**Ashley Geary performs Joy to the World.** A24_5025


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# Christmas
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## • FAITH FACTOR

### *Christmas: Immanuel – God Still With Us*

By Pastor Sandro Schietroma, Wonthaggi Baptist Church

CHRISTMAS is far more than a nostalgic remembrance of a child in a manger. It is the celebration of Immanuel – "God with us." Centuries before Jesus' birth, the prophet Isaiah announced the coming of a child who would be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Matthew's Gospel later declares that this promise was fulfilled in Jesus, born of a virgin, God in human form, dwelling among us.

John's Gospel describes this miracle in profound terms: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us." The eternal God, through whom all things were made, stepped into our world not in overwhelming glory but in human likeness. The God no one could behold in the Old Testament without dying came near so that we might truly live.

Wherever Jesus went, lack disappeared. Darkness retreated in His presence. He calmed storms, healed the sick, multiplied food, cast out demons, and even raised the dead. In Him was life–abundant, unshakeable life.

Though He has ascended, His promise remains: "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Christmas reminds us not only that He came, but that He stays. By His Spirit, He continues to be Immanuel – God with us today.

This season invites us to seek His presence as Moses did, refusing to move without Him. It calls us to walk closely with Christ, attentive to His Spirit, and to live in the confidence that His presence still scatters darkness.

Christmas is the enduring truth that God became one of us – and remains with us still.

# Santa Claus is coming for a miners' picnic

**Discover the festive surprises that await behind the train carriage door.**

SANTA and his elves may be busy packing the sleigh and finalising the list ahead of Christmas, but this Sunday, he's taking a little break and making a special visit to Wonthaggi's State Coal Mine.

Call your friends and family, bring your picnic blankets, baskets, and chairs, and share in a couple of hours of Christmas cheer at the mine with live music, a sausage sizzle (in support of Wonthaggi Power) and a special visit from the man in red himself, Santa Claus.

Following a year of special events, including the Easter bonnet competition and Halloween spectacular, the State Coal Mine is again inviting picnickers to dress in their favourite Christmas costumes and pop their heads into the old train carriage, which has received a festive Christmas makeover.

Wonthaggi Woodcrafters will be on site with a range of handmade items, perfect for last-minute Christmas gifts, while the State Coal Mine Café will be open for drinks and snacks throughout the evening.

"The Friends of the State Coal Mine would like to welcome the community to Santa's Picnic this Sunday," president Garry Wilson said.

"We'd also like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year."

For those unable to make Sunday evening, the old train carriage's Christmas Wonderland will be open this Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 2pm.

So pull on the festive gear, load up the car and toddle down to the State Coal Mine this Sunday, December 21 from 5pm to 7pm for Santa's Picnic.

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# Merry Christmas

## And Happy New Year

**The team at MyPhysio wish their patients a Merry Christmas! The practice will close from 12 noon December 24 and re-open Monday, January 5.**

**Lauren Truman and Sue Little from A Garden of Thoughts in Graham Street, Wonthaggi wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas with a big thank you to all their wonderful customers for supporting them through the year.** B77_4925

**The team at the Sentinel-Times would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!**

**Executive chef Subhajit Ghosh, general manager Steve Curtis and the team at The Wonthaggi Club would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas. The tables are full this Christmas but get in early for next year with bookings now open for 2026.** C01_5025

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THE NATIONALS for Regional Victoria

# Merry Christmas

## And Happy New Year

**Thank you to all our customers for a nice 12 months and look forward to the next 12 months. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Damien, Jo and the team at Dollar Curtains and Blinds Wonthaggi.** C03_5025

**The team at Revive Beauty and Spa Wonthaggi wishes the community a happy and holistic Christmas. From left: Michele Crellin, Erin Lee, Alison Adams, Kellie Burns, Kaitlyn Shepherd and Jasmyn Kent.** rk11_5025

**Jeff Robertson, chair of Christmas Carols in the Glade, was pleased with the large number of families enjoying the festive spirit at Inverloch.** B65_5025

**Ann Brown, conductor of the Wonthaggi U3A choir, finished Carols in the Glade at Inverloch with 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas'.** B69_5025

**Wonthaggi U3A choir taking a short break at Carols in the Glade at Inverloch before performing 13 well-rehearsed Christmas carols.** B64_5025

Merry
Christmas
And Happy New Year

# Inverloch Carols always a crowd pleaser

NOTHING could dampen the spirits of the big crowd that turned out for the annual Carols in the Glade at Inverloch despite the forecast of a wet ending to the night.

After rehearsing for six weeks a medley of show-stopping dance tunes performed by 45 young dancers from the Care Love Dance school soon had the audience tapping their feet for this special once-only Christmas performance.

Jeff Robertson, chair of Christmas Carols in the Glade, said it was one of the biggest crowds he could remember. The night's entertainment included the U3A choir, the inter-church community band, Care Love Dancers, Inverloch Primary School, Wonthaggi Youth Brass Band, and soloists Alana Eddy, Jan Blake and Karen Cross.

Organised by the churches of Inverloch and Wonthaggi, the major sponsors for Carols in the Glade were Bass Coast Shire Council and the Inverloch Community Bendigo Bank.

"It is always a night for families to come along and enjoy the festivities," Mr Robertson said.

"We were blessed with perfect weather."

Among the attractions was a Lions Club sausage sizzle and fairy floss for the children.

**The Care Love Dance school of Leongatha and Inverloch entertained the big crowd at Carols in the Glade at Inverloch with a medley of show-stopping favourites.** B55_5025

**Wonthaggi's U3A choir was in fine voice for Carols in the Glade at Inverloch.** B68_5025

**Coronet Bay's Evan Bekiaris got into the Christmas spirit at Saturday's Corinella Carols in the Park.** rk16_5025

**Siblings Lilah and Kynan Broman showed off their Grinch and reindeer face paint at Saturday's Corinella Carols in the Park.** rk18_5025

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Wishing you all a Joyous Festive Season

Photo @Aussie Santa Koo Wee Rup

and a year filled with Kindness & Good Health

As the year draws to a close, I want to thank our amazing community for showing your continued generosity of spirit, valuing all our volunteers; as to our first responders and health care workers, supporting local fundraisers, our local clubs, groups and organisations and checking in with those you love and cherish.

The collective kindness exemplifies our community is at the heart and our true community colours keep on shining through.

Sadly, we have community members doing it tough or facing the first Christmas without that beautiful someone by their side. If this is you, please reach out and let others know - you are not alone. My team and I are here to help too.

This is the true spirit of Christmas.

As we reconnect with family and friends to celebrate the festive season, please look out for each other, support your local businesses, show appreciation for our retail and hospitality workers and please take care on the roads and in our waters. A reminder to also be bush fire prepared and download the VicEmergency app.

My family and I wish you and those you cherish a joyous reuniting season and a year filled with kindness, positive experiences and good health.

T: 5672 4755 jordan.crugnale@parliament.vic.gov.au 9 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi 3995
jordan crugnale mp
STATE MEMBER FOR BASS

# Merry Christmas

## And Happy New Year

**Corinella CFA volunteers Bianca Peters, Les Smith, Lesley Hemley, Damien Merry, David Cox and Mick Hamilton cooked up a storm at Saturday's Corinella Carols in the Park.** rk14_5025

**Fairy Poppy from Melbourne enchanted children with bubbles of all shapes and sizes at Saturday's Corinella Carols in the Park.** rk12_5025

**Mum Katie Jean with Toby and Hannah at Saturday's Corinella Carols in the Park.** rk13_5025

**MC Greg Thompson and program manager Michael Kelzke said the children's performances were magical at Saturday's Corinella Carols in the Park.** rk17_5025

**Locals Georgie Hawkins, Greg Noakes, Jen Rutherford and Brian Hawkins enjoyed a lovely evening at Saturday's Corinella Carols in the Park.** rk15_5025


South Gippsland Water

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AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

Wishing all our valued customers a safe and happy Christmas. We look forward to serving you again in the New Year.

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Inverloch RSL Sub Branch

***Wishes all veterans and their families and the wonderful Inverloch Community all the very best for Christmas and the New Year.***

WE ARE OPEN 7 DAYS FROM 4.00PM

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Info on our Facebook Inverloch RSL

ME0795

We will be closed from 12pm December 24, re-opening Monday, January 5
***We wish our patients a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and look forward to seeing you in 2026***

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HM13260

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HM13261

Merry
Christmas
And Happy New Year

**Inverloch musician Tristan J Ross celebrated Christmas whilst raising awareness about veteran suicide and homelessness at the Inlet Hotel.**

## A festive afternoon of music at The Inlet's Christmas Party session

THE Young Veterans and popular Inverloch musician Tristan J Ross continued to raise awareness about veteran homelessness and suicide with an afternoon of live music at the Inlet Hotel's Christmas Party on Sunday.

Members of the Inlet Hotel gather regularly for Sunday Sessions to help veterans meet the challenges of mental health, addiction and homelessness.

Proceeds support the Boronia Centre which assists veterans with medical treatment and helps with their claims ensuring compensation and treatment as well as running a food bank for those facing financial hardship.

Attending the Sunday Sessions not only provides an opportunity to enjoy live music but also to engage in meaningful conversations about these pressing issues.

Inlet Hotel member Krista Scott said the Sunday Sessions are always well attended.

Check the Inlet Hotel Facebook page for the next Sunday Sessions in 2026.

**Liz and Glenn Tesone of Inverloch helped to raise awareness about veteran suicide and homelessness with an afternoon of live music with Tristan J Ross.** B88_5025

**Sheila Veltmeijer with Kathie and Gerry Surridge enjoying an afternoon of live music and festive cheer with Tristan J Ross at The Inlet Hotel.** B87_5025

**Dilene Hinton of Inverloch and Salwa Sleaby of Dalyston at the Inlet Hotel for their Christmas Party with Tristan J Ross.** B89_5025

**Krista Scott and Cam Byars supporting Young Veterans listening to Tristan J Ross at The Inlet Hotel.** B91_5025

abc
ABOUT BASS COAST HEARING

Thank you

We would like to thank all our loyal About Bass Coast Hearing friends for their understanding, good wishes, cards and prayers during Braden's long illness. There is no doubt that this support has helped us immensely.

We also acknowledge how fortunate we are to have our staff, Grant, Julie, Laurel and Grace. We are incredibly grateful for their loyalty and hard work.

*We wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and holiday season and look forward to seeing you all in 2026.*

Braden & Rhonda.

HM13231

*Merry Christmas and happy New Year from Keith, Doreen, David, Shane and Jesse at Korumburra and Glenn at Wonthaggi.*

T FOR TYRES
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HM13254

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*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from the team*

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HM13257

BRB LAW

*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year*

Our office will be closed for the Christmas break from Monday, December 22, 2025 at 5pm, and will reopen on Monday, January 5, 2026 at 9am.
We wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season, and we look forward to working with you in the New Year.

50 BAIR STREET, LEONGATHA 3953 • P 5662 2275
info@brblaw.com.au • www.brblaw.com.au

ME0793

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*Thank you for your support over the past year.*

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and a safe and happy New Year
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5672 1311
HM12256



T&G Mechanical Repairs
Terry, Clint and Team would like to wish all their valued customers a Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.
We will be closing Friday, December 19 and reopening Monday, January 12, 2026
ME0781
25 Sanders St, Korumburra
Ph 5658 1177

Laura and Kerrie Beauglehall from Dot & Lu Boutique Homewares stayed open late for Christmas shopping at Inverloch. B21_5025

Sue Cook travelled from Meeniyan for late night shopping with Jordy Rankin and Rosie at Dot & Lu Boutique Homewares of Inverloch. B03_5025

Christmas comes but once a year and Bliss in Inverloch was the perfect place to shop for Tayla and Glenda Robb and Rosie. B07_5025

Kerry Redmond, Kelly Griffin and Nicole Griffiths shopping for Christmas at Mookah in Inverloch. B09_5025

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ME0797



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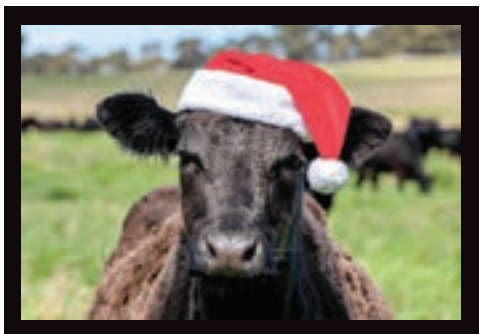
ME0794



J Garnham & Associates Lawyers
*Jenny, Shelley, Fiona & Kirsty wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.*
Our office will be closed for the Christmas/New Year period from 5pm on Friday, December 19, 2025 and will re-open at 9am on Monday, January 12, 2026.
Contact our friendly team at:
63 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi.
E: jgarnham@jjglaw.com.au
T: 5672 2144 M: 0447 619 595
ME0805

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ME0807

Merry
Christmas
And Happy New Year

# Inverloch stays open late for Christmas

By Bruce Wardley

THE night could not have been more perfect with warm balmy weather and happy beaming faces in every store as Inverloch retailers joined in the festive spirit for a special late-night Christmas shopping event.

It was an opportunity for busy people to shop local, support small businesses, and avoid the stress and crowds of the larger out-of-town shopping centres.

Late night shopping at Inverloch has grown into a much loved community tradition.

Inverloch Tourist Association Communications Officer Monique Wilson said it was fantastic to have so many people out and about enjoying the good weather.

"Traders went to a special effort to give the evening a festive vibe," said Ms Wilson.

Each business celebrated in its own way, from free gift wrapping and kids' stamp activities to in-store competitions, bubbles, eggnog and plenty of festive surprises.

One business had a secret Santa, another provided a free gift with every purchase, and eggnog and champagne was offered in other stores.

"This year we focused on a single night," said Ms Wilson.

"It was all about coming out and having fun shopping."

To help locals and visitors plan their shopping the Inverloch Tourism Association has launched a Christmas in Inverloch Guide, an easy-to-scroll digital resource showcasing who is staying open late, special offers, gift ideas by price or theme, including teacher gifts, edible treats and Kris Kringle options, and messages from the traders themselves.

For fabulous gift giving ideas go to visitinverloch.co/christmas-in-inverloch

You can also find the Inverloch Tourism Association on Facebook and Instagram.

**Lisa Golding of Inverloch shopping for something environmentally friendly during late night Christmas trading at the Bunurong Environment Centre.** B20_5025

**Virginia McEntee opened late for Christmas at the Red Cross Shop in Inverloch.** B17_5025

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SPORTS STORE
Wishes everyone
a happy Christmas and
a bright New Year
Andrew, Allison, Harpa & Paylen;
Russell, Shane, Ella, Molly,
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ME0782

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From silent nights to loud Christmas lunches, may your festive season be a special one.
During the festive season our branch will close on Thursday 25 December and reopen Monday 29 December.
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ME0779

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and will re-open on
Monday, January 12
Wishing everyone a happy and safe festive season.
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ME0798

Melina BATH MP
NATIONALS MEMBER FOR EASTERN VICTORIA REGION
May you celebrate Christmas with love in the way of your choice and may Peace, Good Health and Happiness be your foundation to begin 2026.
2/181 Franklin St, Traralgon
melina.bath@parliament.vic.gov.au
5174 7066

Sentinel-Times
COMMENT

# A luxury our leaders can't afford

**By Michael Giles**

IT'S hard to have an opinion about anything else after what we all witnessed in real time at Archer Park and Bondi Beach in Sydney on Sunday afternoon and evening.

Some people have said they never expected to see anything like this happening in Australia.

But honestly, it's a ridiculous statement to make and the sort of thinking that has seen the government so blind to the possibilities.

Australia's national terrorism threat level was raised from "possible" to "probable" in August 2024, with Mike Burgess, the director-general of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO), confirming at the weekend that we've been sitting at a one-in-two chance of a terrorism incident, like the one we saw on Sunday, happening somewhere in Australia for more than a year.

There's just as likely to be another.

As much as we all want to see a proper investigation of the incident by the authorities, and a proper response, we're all going to be bombarded with this for months to come.

So, I'll keep this to a minimum.

But the leadership of this country has one job to do, to keep the people safe, and at both state and federal levels they've failed in this most fundamental of tasks because they've listened to the views of the looney fringe.

Our key decision makers don't have that luxury.

It's time to acknowledge the root causes of these terrorism incidents, forget the woke appeasement, and do something about it.

And that extends to stopping government waste and the criminal excesses of the politicians and the public service that has seen funding drained away from proper resourcing of law and order, including crime prevention.

How is it, for example, that government can walk past the blatant activities of organised crime in every shopping centre in Australia, and especially in Victoria, where illegal tobacco importation and sales are generating billions of dollars for organised crime to carry out all kinds of nefarious activity, including terrorism?

As the former Chief of Army, Lieutenant General David Morrison once said on another subject, the standard you walk past is the standard you accept.

# Vox Pop

## Do you know of anyone banned from social media, and how is it affecting them?

**Ally Cengia**
*Wonthaggi*
"I have one two-year-old son, and another one on the way, so too young to have social media, but it'll be interesting to see how this affects their generation."

**Kelly Ambler**
*Cowes*
"My 13-year-old daughter. We talked about it, and she wasn't as upset as I thought she would be. She feels like she can still be social with friends."

**Nathan Louwdijk**
*Cape Woolamai*
"My daughter has not been banned yet, but we expect she will be. She's concerned about missing out but not too bothered because she doesn't know exactly what will happen."

**Megan Sell**
*Wonthaggi*
"My teenage son is concerned contact with his friends will diminish as it will make it harder to meet up with them when needed."

## Screw Creek walk screwed

I'M AN experienced bushwalker. So, when I took a visitor with me on a too-long-delayed ramble round the recently opened Screw Creek north loop walk, east of Inverloch's camping ground, I expected a doddle. I got a shock.

Beyond the steel gate, the walk quickly deteriorates from new boardwalk to virtual bush-bashing! Rarely more than a pad, it's overgrown with long grass, often indistinct between the app-numbered info posts, and blocked by several fallen trees or low branches. Before long the expensive bridges will be unreachable. We actually found ourselves repeating the loop, and realised we'd 'lost' the return route.

Now well-publicised, this environmental asset is a neglected blot on our tourist page. It discredits the half-dozen sponsors of the track extension, and will actually earn us negatives from bewildered visitors.

It's the Bass Coast Shire Council's job to clear regularly what is a quite minimalist piece of work – not that of the Conservation Society. There is yet time for a crash restoration before Christmas – is there the commitment?!

(And while they're about it, how about giving the new dog police a more urgent job – get down that way to shoo the mountain-bike riders off those trails – they're actually dangerous to pedestrians on the narrow paths, and damaging).

**Ken Blackman, Inverloch**

## Time for fair and logical rates

WHEN developing a differential rating strategy, Council should consider the good practice principles:

- A rating system should be fair and equitable.
- A rating system should be clear, simple, efficient and of benefit.
- There should be some rationale or basis behind each of the rating differentials.

The vast proportion of Council rate revenue is spent on services to people, and only a relative smaller proportion spent towards properties. The anomaly arises because rates are charged on property values, however it is the people who use the services – there is no correlation to each other. It would be much fairer by council to base its rates on the level of services and expenditure provided to each property type.

As we know, there are two factors that determine the amount of general rates assessed – the valuation, and the rate-in-the-dollar. Council cannot change the valuation, however, Council has total control in determining what the rate-in-the-dollar will be.

Farmers cannot use their rates payment as a deduction on their tax. However, with commercial and industrial properties and with rented residential properties, the rates assessed are tax-deductible.

Farmers have always been burdened with an unfair proportion of rates levied by Council, so it's long overdue that Council conduct a review to correct this anomaly. It's not fair that farmers should continue subsidising the residential, commercial and industrial sectors.

Although all council services are available to all residents, the farmers use very few of these services. Farming enterprises are perceived as not receiving the same level of service that are received by urban ratepayers because of their distance from urban infrastructure and services. Farmers do not use or need, or want the vast range of council services. Modern thinking is that we should be moving in the direction of a "user pays" principle.

For example, farms valued at say $2M are paying about $4000 in rates. Many farmers are working 12 hours a day, six days a week and barely make a living. Many farmers are "asset rich, but cash poor" and have no option but to continue to work well past retirement age. Farmers would be financially better off selling their farm and investing the money. Although farming is a lifestyle, we know farming is of vital benefit to our economy.

In Victoria, one farmer dies by suicide every 20 days, which translates to approximately 17 farmers committing suicide each year. This statistic highlights the significant mental health crisis from financial stress affecting the farming population.

Vacant land properties should be included with and rated at the general rate. Some councils levy a high vacant land rate because these properties are an "easy target" and don't complain. Rates should never be used as a weapon attempting to incentivise property owners to develop their land; this is not the purpose of council rating. There is no evidence that high rates on vacant land incentivises development. There are very few services of Council that benefit vacant land holdings.

The focus of levying differential rates should not be based on the percentage change from the previous year, but rather a fair amount that should be levied for that property type.

None of the three differential rating options shown on council's website are acceptable. There is a fourth option that would be fairer, that being only two rates: a general rate, and a differential farm rate, being 50 per cent of the general rate.

I trust Council makes their determination based on fairness and logic, rather than a subjective or compromised arbitrary decision.

**Ian Hales, Wonthaggi**

## From the Editor, thank you

IT'S incredibly rewarding to work for a local newspaper, that is also still owned locally.

You get to immerse yourself in your own community, tell the incredible heroics and recognise the achievements of those who you live amongst. There are challenges and as the saying goes you can't please everyone. We certainly heard you South Gippsland when breaking news meant puzzles were pulled that one week! However, I'm incredibly lucky to have had the opportunity to be the first female editor at the Sentinel-Times in its history, a role that I stepped into with a four-month-old baby on my hip.

And as I step away from the editor's seat, and head on maternity leave 2.0, I wanted to use this opportunity to thank you, our readers, our contributors, our advertisers, our communities, because this journey over the last two and a third years wouldn't have been possible without your understanding either.

News happens at all hours, and never once did someone question or hesitate in circumstances early on when I had my son with me. From the devastation in Mirboo North during February's storm when I walked in carrier and all, on a day off, to cover and help highlight your stories, to the handful of interviews that have been briefly interrupted when a toddler decides it's time to gate crash mum's office on a weekend, to the cricket grand finals with an infant assisting with the photos, when the matches were all looking to finish too closely together for the journalist to be in four places at once. It's been hugely gratifying to undertake a role that I could only have dreamed of years ago, and not have anyone question when exceptional circumstances have meant there has been an extra guest in tow.

I appreciate that these times were few and far between, but to you, the community I must say how grateful I am.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to highlight our local businesses, it really is a small circular economy, and as you run around collecting the last minute stocking fillers, 'thank you for a great year' gifts, alcohol for the Christmas tables, by supporting local businesses you genuinely are supporting those in your local communities, and not just at that moment in time, but the flow on to other local businesses and individuals is incredible, and often forgotten.

Finally, I wish to welcome and introduce Rick Koenig, who will be stepping in as the new editor for the Sentinel-Times from this week. You will see changes; there is no doubt about it, every individual has their own style, but I hope you welcome him with open arms. After all, you did welcome a former (Phillip) Islander turned Wonthaggite into the fold – and didn't hold that against me!

Wishing all a wonderful and Merry Christmas (or festive period) and Happy New Year.

**Chloe Kent**

The 'Sentinel-Times' encourages readers to write with issues of interest or concern but letters that have a local reference point will be given priority. Writers are also urged to be brief where possible. Letters may be edited for space and legal reasons, and must be submitted with the author's name and contact details of which only the name and town location will appear.

# Newhaven College celebrates excellence

Newhaven College Year 11 student Isabel Mahon was awarded the Reverend John Leaver Award, pictured with Louisa Warnock, Executive General Manager, Ecumenical Schools Australia and principal Tony Corr.

Newhaven College Year 10 student, Aidan Kelly, was awarded the ADF Future Innovators Award and Dux of Year 10, pictured with Chair of the Board David Jobe and principal Tony Corr.

Newhaven College Year 10 student Zoe Paterson was awarded the ADF Long Tan Youth Leadership and Teamwork Award, pictured with mum and Newhaven College teacher, Sharon Paterson and Chair of the Board David Jobe.

Newhaven College Year 10 student Mia Thompson was awarded the Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program, presented by Chair of the Board David Jobe and principal Tony Corr.

TO MARK the end of the 2025 school year, Newhaven College hosted two eagerly awaited Presentation Events, celebrating the achievements of both the Junior School and the Middle/Senior School communities.

Held in the College gymnasium, both events drew a full house of enthusiastic teachers, staff, students and their supportive families.

The Junior School Celebration Afternoon hosts – 2025 Captains Dallas Latham, Nate Kondarios, Peyton Rhee and Venus Herath Mudiyanselage – were outstanding for their contributions to the event. The Year 5–11 Presentation Evening was expertly hosted by 2026 College Captains, Harry Arceo, Kadek Humphris, Issy Mahon and Tilly Stecher, who carried out their first formal captaincy duties confidently.

The Junior School Celebration afternoon was a fitting end to the school year as the successes of all students were celebrated. Junior School students were presented with a certificate of achievement for completing a wonderful year of learning and improvement. The students demonstrated their talents with singing, music and spoken word performances onstage. Each student's performance on stage, before a significantly large audience, demonstrates the confidence fostered in the College's Junior School.

On Monday evening, the school came together with song, speeches and awards to celebrate students' achievements in academics, sport, values and music. The procession of award presentations was interspersed with some stunning musical performances. The Senior Vocal Ensemble performed Your Will Be Found by Benji Pasek and Justin Paul, and Senior music students performed Fly Fly Away from Catch Me If You Can, with powerhouse lead vocals by Year 11 student Aoife O'Connell.

In his Presentation Evening address, College principal Mr Tony Corr expressed his admiration for the healthy, positive and outward-looking attitudes shown by College students. He quoted his favourite author, Tom Stoppard, who said, "A healthy attitude is contagious, but don't wait to catch it from others. Be a carrier."

Mr Corr went on to say, "If there is one thing in common with all those you see on stage tonight, it is a healthy attitude. A healthy attitude of the heart. And a healthy attitude of the mind."

Newhaven College is incredibly proud of its teaching and non-academic staff. Director of Learning, Karen Milkins-Hendry, was recognised for 20 years of service, acknowledging her contribution to College Leadership, teaching and learning, theatre, House mentoring and mathematics across more than three decades at the school. For more than 10 years of service, recipients included Junior School teachers Marcelle Krieg, Fiona Smart, Bridget Haines (Librarian), plus Finance Manager Donna Stone, Middle School Teacher Melissa McMillan, and Senior School teachers Anna Paterson and Sharon Paterson.

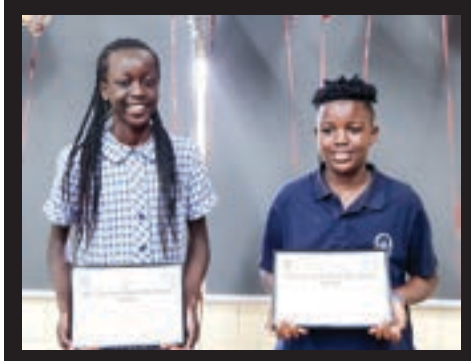
A wide range of awards was presented to recognise outstanding achievement in Academic Studies, Music, Sport, Values, Theatre and Drama, Design, Visual Arts, Technology, and Building and Construction. Year 11 students Aoife O'Connell and Isabel Mahon were awarded Dux for 2025, along with Aidan Kelly, announced as Dux for Year 10 and Zoe Arnott for Year 9.

Major award recipients included: Senior School Dux Awards to Zoe Arnott (Year 9), Aidan Kelly (Year 10), Isabel Mahon and Aoife O'Connell (Year 11); ADF Long Tan Youth Leadership and Teamwork Award to Zoe Paterson (Year 10); ADF Future Innovators Award to Aidan Kelly (Year 10); The Kwong Lee Dow Young Scholars Program to Mia Thompson (Year 10); Luke Bolding Memorial Award to Freya Berry (Year 11); St Vincent de Paul Society Frederic Ozanam Awards to Charlie Matthews and Sierra Phillips (Year 6); The Bendigo Bank Community Mindedness Awards to Hayden Hopkins, Yasmin Gloria, River Hume and Jack Hungerford (Year 9); Rotary Outstanding Community Service Award to Lucy Gojrzewski (Year 5) and Ned Scott (Year 8); Reverend John Leaver Award to Isabel Mahon (Year 11); Donald Cameron OAM Award to Manning de Gooyer (Year 10); Peter Reith AM Memorial Prize to Georgia Sanders (Year 9); and Duke of Edinburgh Awards where 13 students completed their Bronze Award with Silver awarded to Jasira Derham (Year 11).

The College community congratulates all 2025 award recipients. Newhaven College's commitment to nurturing students across sport, music, public speaking, academic pursuits and creative endeavours is reflected in the diverse range of awards presented on the night.

## Students graduate at St Joes Wonthaggi

St Joseph's Primary School, Wonthaggi, school captains Charlie, Patrick, Billie and Aayush lighting the advent candle at graduation on Friday night.



Christina and Chris received the Spirit of Mary MacKillop Award at St Joseph's Primary School's graduation.

The St Joseph's Spirit Award went to Billie and Jed at the Wonthaggi school's graduation on Friday.

Award recipients at St Joseph's Primary School's graduation were Lincoln (STEAM), and Archie (Performing Arts).

Award recipients at St Joseph's Primary School's graduation were Zaya (Physical Education) and Ruby (Italian).

**St Paul's Principal Cameron Herbert with the St Paul's 2025 Dux, Hanting (George) Huang, who received an ATAR of 99.35.**

## St Paul's celebrates Hanting's 99.35

THE 2025 Dux of St Paul's Anglican Grammar School is Hanting (George) Huang, from Morwell, who received an ATAR of 99.35. Hanting scored a perfect 50 in Literature, as well as study scores of 48 in English, 46 in Health and Human Development and 43 in Chemistry. Other impressive performers with an ATAR above 98 were Omkar Joshi of Traralgon, with an ATAR of 98.8; Thomas Prestidge of Warragul, with an ATAR of 98.65, including a perfect score of 50 in Legal Studies; and Estelle Dieu of Darnum, with an ATAR of 98.45.

Other very high achievers included: Philippa Steenholdt of Warragul with 97.6, Aru Korula of Traralgon with 96.1, Haridu Kahandawa Appuhamillage of Warragul with 94.2, Aaron Cromie of Poowong with 93.55, Anna Sterling of Ellinbank with 93.1, Troy Aitken of Churchill with 92.75, Riley Pyke of Moe with 92.5, Sydelle Isaacs of Warragul with 91.55, William Blackwood of Warragul with 91.55, Sarah Weeks of Warragul with 91.3, Lucia Trenton of Neerim East with 90.45, Dylan Wilson of Warragul with 90.2 and Giaan McConville Plant of Warragul with 90.2.

Year 11 student Husni Fahmi achieved a perfect score of 50 in Biology. Year 11 student Asmi Pathania also achieved a 50 in Biology, in addition to the 50 she achieved in General Mathematics in 2024.

Study scores of over 40 were achieved in Biology, Legal Studies, English, Literature, English Language, History Revolutions, Visual Communication and Design, Food Studies, Health and Human Development, Physics, Philosophy, Art Creative Practice, Product Design Hard Materials, General Mathematics, Chemistry, Psychology, VET Sport and Recreation, Maths Methods and Accounting.

"The School is incredibly proud of the way the Class of 2025 embraced every opportunity they were presented with both in and outside of the classroom. They have applied themselves to their studies in a dedicated and enthusiastic manner and balanced this with involvement in a wide array of co-curricular pursuits," the school stated.

"In all, 15 per cent of students achieved an ATAR over 90 and 35 per cent of the cohort achieved an ATAR over 80. The fact that St Paul's does not stream students out of Year 12, or offer a VM stream, means that these results are truly indicative of the quality environment of learning and teaching that St Paul's offers.

"This year's cohort have a variety of plans for the immediate future, from tertiary study in areas such as health, commerce and law, as well as employment opportunities such as apprenticeships and Australian Defence Force traineeships. We are pleased to note the increasing number of students who have already secured conditional places in tertiary institutions prior to the completion of Year 12. We are equally proud of the number of students who secured employment as soon as their studies concluded. We look forward to continuing to work with the Class of 2025 and helping them find a post-school pathway which allows them to pursue their potential.

"We are incredibly proud of the Class of 2025 and wish them the very best for the future."

# Milla earns dux of Bass Coast College

AFTER a turbulent start to her secondary education, Milla Laub ended her high school experience on an exciting note, becoming the 2025 dux of Bass Coast College.

Milla received a score of 95.2 on Thursday, December 11.

Bass Coast College's top 10 ATAR scores ranged from 95.2 into the high 80s.

"This year definitely had its ups and downs. There were good scores, bad scores and good memories, but I'm really proud of myself and super happy overall," she said.

"I didn't expect to get dux. I was really happy with my score, and dux was just the cherry on top."

Milla said she was thrilled to receive a score of 40 in chemistry this year, as well as a 47 in a Year 12 subject she completed last year.

She now has her sights set on Deakin University, where she wants to complete an undergraduate degree in nutrition and dietetics, before looking to go to medical school down the track.

Milla and her cohort started their secondary college experience during the COVID-19 lockdown, but the disruptions did not end there.

"The students went through COVID in years 7 and 8, and in Year 9 our new campus was built so they had to separate before coming back together in Year 10. It was a really disruptive time, but they've done really well," Wonthaggi campus principal Alison Gill said.

Milla said coming back from the COVID-19 lockdown was unsettling, but she was grateful for the normalcy through her final year.

**Back from left, Georgia Hamilton, Milla Laub, Sarah Seuren, Lyra Lockhart, front from left, Spencer Ferguson, Harvey Green and Judson Battye were among the students to receive the top 10 highest ATAR scores at Bass Coast College in 2025.** Tk01_5025

"Coming back into the school setting (after lockdown) was kind of scary and a little draining, but I think this year with everyone being in the same boat as me, it felt a little more comfortable. I knew whatever struggles I was facing, everyone around me was feeling the same way," she said.

Ms Gill said Bass Coast College is extremely proud of its class of 2025.

"They have been a really good group. They've faced some challenges during their secondary education, but they've been resilient and have shown some good learning habits this year. We're really proud of them," she said.

Milla has also been recognised as the inaugural recipient of the Universities Centre (CUC) Bass Coast Award, marking the first time this award has been presented in the Bass Coast community.

The award has been presented to one student from each of the seven secondary schools across the South Gippsland and Bass Coast region, recognising the efforts of students striving high to achieve their educational goals in their final year.

Milla receives a Certificate of Achievement and a $500 contribution to support her ongoing educational journey, including study-related expenses such as books, technology, or course fees.

"Launching the CUC Bass Coast Student Achievement Award is a really proud moment for us as we enter our fourth year of supporting local people engaged in higher education in our region," CUC Bass Coast Centre Manager Sarah Bourke said.

"It's about celebrating the determination and hard work of local students and shining a light on what's possible when young people are supported to pursue their goals.

"This award is already helping to raise the Centre's profile and to build aspiration in our community, showing students and families that you can live and study locally, and still achieve big."

# Newhaven College celebrates 2025 VCE results

DUX of Newhaven College, Lara Smyth, celebrated an exceptional ATAR of 99.15, placing her in the top one per cent of Victoria at the announcement of VCE results on Thursday. Lara was closely followed by Isaac Savona, who received the exceptional ATAR of 97.55.

Newhaven College Principal, Mr Tony Corr, congratulated all this year's VCE students on an incredible result. "We are proud to share that fourteen of our students (18.4 per cent) earned an ATAR (Australian Tertiary Entrance Rank) above 90, placing them among the top 10 per cent statewide. Additionally, more than 35 per cent of students attained an ATAR above 80, ranking in the top 20 per cent across Victoria. The College's median ATAR of 71.55 reflects the dedication of our students and the support of our hard-working staff.

"A special commendation goes to Lara Smyth, who has been named College Dux, having attained the remarkable ATAR of 99.15. This places Lara in the top one per cent of students in Victoria – a truly exceptional achievement. Congratulations also to our College Proxime, Isaac Savona, who achieved an impressive ATAR of 97.55. We also recognise the achievements of other students who scored above 90 in their ATAR: Ruben Jungwirth, Cecily de Gooyer, Abby Papas, Rosalie Spencer, Grace Howlett, Charlotte Derham, Mackenzie Cameron, Jazz Mau, Yianni Caffieri, Grace Morris and Gabriel Di Falco."

**Nine of the 14 high achievers from Newhaven College, who scored 90 or above. From left, Isaac Savona, Yianni Caffieri, Abby Papas, Grace Morris, Jazz Mau, Cecily de Gooyer, Lara Smyth, Mackenzie Cameron and Ruben Jungwirth.**

Students who received study scores of 40 or higher, placing them within the top eight per cent of the state, include: Art Creative Practice – Lola Afford, Abby Papas; Biology – Grace Howlett, Isabel Mahon*, Tilly Stecher*, Jasmine Ruffin*; Chemistry – Ruben Jungwirth, Isaac Savona, Lara Smyth; English – Miranda Zalunardo, Grace Howlett, Abby Papas, Gabriel Di Falco, Lara Smyth; Foundation Mathematics – Sienna Bell; General Mathematics – Harry Arceo*, Nissa Campbell Walker, Ayden Fawaz; Health and Human Development – Grace Morris; Legal Studies – Grace Morris; Music Contemporary Performance – Cecily de Gooyer, Isaac Savona, Archie Robson; Outdoor and Environmental Studies – Joey Thompson, River Henderson*, Bailey Leed; Physics – Mackenzie Cameron; Psychology – Marnie Banks, Jazz Mau, Finn O'Brien, Abby Papas; Systems Engineering – Ruben Jungwirth; Theatre Studies – Cecily de Gooyer; and VET Music Y2 - Aoife O'Connell*.

"The 2025 graduating cohort has been a wonderful presence within our school community. Their hard work, enthusiasm and consistently positive attitude have shone through every aspect of school life. These qualities are evident in the outstanding academic outcomes they have achieved. We are immensely proud of every member of our Year 12 class and sincerely thank them for the many ways they have enriched our school during their time at Newhaven College. As they embark on their future, we wish them every success and happiness in all that lies ahead," concluded Mr Corr.

* Denotes Year 11 students undertaking a Unit 3 and 4 subject.

# Local graduates shine across diverse pathways in a record-breaking year

LEONGATHA Secondary College on Thursday celebrated the end of Year 12 for the Class of 2025, a cohort that has secured outstanding academic and vocational results.

That includes exceptional ATAR outcomes, with an overall mean study score of 28.5, and 17 study scores above 40, along with an impressive number of VCE Vocational Major and SBAT (School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship) completions.

Chloe Le Page is the college's VCE Dux with an ATAR of 94.4, while Mackenna Anderson is the VCE VM Dux for 2025 for her excellent achievement, leadership, attendance, and commitment across all areas of the program, including her VCE VM studies, VET and SWL/SBAT programs.

Mackenna is excited to be the school's first VCE VM Dux, feeling the achievement sends an important message.

"It proves that VM is just as successful and hard as VCE," she said, stressing it is wrong to see the vocational stream as an easy option.

"You can get so much out of it," Mackenna said, noting she is moving into a full-time job with Ray White Real Estate in Leongatha as a result of taking the VM approach and her experience working at the business during Year 12.

"I feel it teaches you more skills for real life," she said of the VM, highlighting learning how to communicate with different people and develop leadership skills as among the benefits.

At Ray White, she has so far done mostly administrative work, but from next year will undertake a traineeship and her Certificate IV in Real Estate Practice, focusing on property management, sales, and sales administration, among other areas.

Mackenna also looks forward to future world travel.

Chloe was pleasantly surprised to be LSC's VCE Dux.

"I wasn't expecting it at all," she said, expressing pride in her hard work and saying she was consistent in her efforts throughout the year, being motivated to push herself to get a good score.

**Leongatha Secondary College VCE VM Dux Mackenna Anderson and VCE Dux Chloe Le Page at Thursday's Awards Assembly.** A47_5025

Chloe has set her sights on Monash University in Clayton, with interests in studying law, economics and politics and the likelihood of tackling a double degree, a career as a politician or in law being strong possibilities.

Principal Brad Hutchinson praised the overall results, expressing pride in the college's graduating students and wishing them well, whether their next step is going to uni, entering industry or undertaking further training.

"This group has embraced LSC's culture of striving for excellence, supporting one another, and leaning into challenges," he said.

"From the exceptional ATAR achievements to the outstanding VCE Vocational Major and SBAT completions, their collective outcomes and results reflect the ambition and resilience that define this cohort."

While vocational success continues to grow, academic pathways remain a cornerstone of student achievement at LSC, with 43 of the school's VCE and VCE VM students preparing to begin university studies in 2026, hoping to enter fields such as Health and Medical Science, Education, Engineering, Law and Social Justice, and Design and Commerce.

Multiple students have already been selected into Early Offers for universities.

VCE Dux Chloe (94.4) edged out Sage Deenan, who scored 93.8, with Melissa Diggerman recording an ATAR of 90.95.

The College also celebrated eight students with ATARs in the 80s.

LSC also continues to champion vocational education as a respected and celebrated pathway, and 53 VCE VM graduates will step directly into paid work, apprenticeships or further training, many with local employers ready to continue their mentorship into 2026.

"Our vocational students are stepping into skilled roles that strengthen our local community," VCE VM coordinator Lachie Wright said.

"They have had an exceptional year, embracing applied learning, workplace experiences, and practical projects."

Lachie noted the VCE VM Dux award was introduced this year, recognising a student who demonstrated outstanding achievement, leadership, attendance, and commitment across all areas of the program.

"We are incredibly proud of our VCE VM students and the pathways they are building, and wish them every success moving forward," he said.

The Class of 2025 leaves LSC with outstanding results, strengthened skills and a sense of community that has anchored their final year, with the college proud of their achievements and looking forward to seeing their future community contributions

## Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College delivers solid VCE results

MARY MacKillop Catholic Regional College is celebrating a strong set of VCE results, with every class of 2025 student successfully completing their exams and many set to enter their preferred post-school pathways.

Initial results show a median study score of 29, with 4.4 per cent of all study scores reaching 40 or above. ATAR results were encouraging, with 5.26 per cent of students achieving an ATAR above 90, 14.04 per cent above 80 and almost 30 per cent recording an ATAR of 70 or higher.

"Congratulations to the Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College class of 2025! We are very pleased and proud of our students' VCE results," principal John Freeman said.

"Fifty-seven [students] sat for VCE exams, and all have succeeded. The class of 2025 has done well. Most will gain entry to their first or second preference for University. There are lots of excited students and happy families. We are proud of them all."

The college's top-performing students were led by Dux Anna Rowe, who achieved an ATAR of 96.5. She was followed by Zoe Couper with 93.5, Maeve Sutherland on 90.15, Liam McNally with 87.2 and Amy Treacy achieving 84.6, rounding out a strong top five for the year.

"A huge thank-you to the teachers who have worked so well to get the most out of their students over the last six years. This stems from strong, effective teaching over several years," Mr Freeman continued.

"There are a number of classes where students have a study score of 40 or more – this only happens when the teacher really knows their business and has worked hard for their students.

"Our Vocational Major learners have also done very well. Fifteen students were pursuing applied pathways, and with notable success, of the 15:

- Two have secured places in their preferred TAFE courses
- Four have gained traineeship/apprenticeships
- Six have begun employment
- Three are seeking TAFE/Employment

"Congratulations to all students and our staff on the 2025 results. Mary MacKillop Catholic Regional College is proud of you and of your achievements."

**Anna Rowe was named Dux for Mary MacKillop Leongatha, achieving an ATAR of 96.5.**

**Year 12 Dux of Korumburra Secondary College, Holly Fowler, is looking forward to studying social work next year at RMIT.** B27_5025

## Holly Fowler Dux of Korumburra SC

WITH an impressive ATAR score of 85.9, Korumburra Secondary College Year 12 Dux Holly Fowler has her sights set on studying social work at RMIT.

After taking the lead role as the couch in this year's Korumburra S.C. school production of 'If This Couch Could Talk', Holly offered some simple advice for next year's Year 12 cohort.

"Put yourself out there and try your best, make it what you want it to be.

"Pick subjects that you enjoy and like."

If This Couch Could Talk took the audience on a nostalgic journey through the past 50 years, exploring how urban life has evolved, one decade at a time, through the eyes of unexpected hero Holly as the humble couch.

Holly was school captain in 2025 with Riley McIntosh, Kiera Witton and Marty Cook.

**Benjamin Watson's hard work has paid off, being Dux of Chairo Christian School's Leongatha campus.**

## Benjamin Watson Dux of Chairo

BENJAMIN Watson has been named Dux of Chairo Christian School's Leongatha campus with an ATAR of 97.65, capping the school's first ever Year 12 cohort.

Mr Watson studied English, Specialist Maths, Maths Methods and Physics this year, having already completed Units 3 and 4 of General Maths in Year 10 and Certificate III in Christian Ministry and Theology in Year 11.

Principal Amy Stork said the milestone reflected years of planning from staff, students and families.

"Over the course of completing his VCE, Benjamin has demonstrated a commitment to both academic excellence and spiritual growth," Ms Stork said.

"He set a high standard for academic excellence and character, and we couldn't be prouder of him and his peers."

Mr Watson said he was relieved to have his results and was looking forward to a restful summer.

He plans to study a Bachelor of Commerce and Actuarial Science at Monash University next year.

# Cranberry Sauce & Ham

**By Meg Viney**

SOME folk like cranberry sauce with turkey and/or ham.

**Ingredients**
- 1/2 cup of chopped almonds,
- 500g of cranberries
- 1/3 cup of orange marmalade
- Juice of one lemon
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup water

**Method**

In a saucepan, cook sugar and water until it is syrup, then add the cranberries and cook for five minutes.

Remove from the heat and add the marmalade and the lemon juice.

When it has cooled, add the slivered almonds.

**Ham**

We used to bake our ham, but most people buy it already baked. However, to keep it fresh, soak a tea towel in apple cider vinegar and keep the ham wrapped in the tea towel, kept in a big plastic bag or ham bag in the fridge.

**Stock**

To make soup, cook the bone with some carrots, 4 peppercorns and 3 or 4 litres of water for 24 hours. Strain and freeze in containers.

*See Meg's roast turkey recipe in next week's edition.*

# Magic Dirt mark milestone at Archies Creek

MAGIC Dirt will roar back into Bass Coast on Saturday, December 20 as they celebrate 25 years of their career defining anthem 'Dirty Jeans.' The outdoor show at Archies Creek is expected to be one of the venue's biggest rock nights of the year, with doors opening at 8pm before the band hits the stage at 8.30pm.

What began as a rough cassette demo in a Melbourne share house has become a song that refuses to fade. Adalita admitted she never imagined Dirty Jeans would amount to much when she first scribbled it down in 1999. She said it was almost lost among the band's noisy and chaotic jams. She added that at the time she had started to feel happier and was experimenting with more upbeat ideas. Out of that shift came Dirty Jeans, a bright pop leaning track that surprised everyone, including her.

"It is such an important song, and I cannot overstate it," she said.

"It was unexpected because it was just a scrap of a song and I even wanted to pass on it because I didn't think there was anything in it."

She said the late Dean Turner, the band's bass player, heard something special on the demo tape and convinced her to keep working on it.

"He was right. I was so surprised at the audience's reaction to that song. It was huge and it carried us for a long time."

**Magic Dirt will bring their 25-year celebration of Dirty Jeans to Archies Creek on Saturday, December 20, with fans promised a high energy night of rock and surprises.**

Dirty Jeans went on to reach number 12 in the Triple J Hottest 100, number 11 on the ARIA alternative chart and number 68 on the national chart. For a band known for grit and chaotic live energy, its success marked a turning point.

"To this day people love the song so much," Adalita said. "It is our biggest baby out of all our babies."

Adalita said the Archies Creek show would include "a little stage party when Dirty Jeans comes on," with fans invited up to help bring the moment to life.

"We have some other fun and cute surprises planned as well," she said.

Archies Creek owner Peter Foley said he jumped at the chance to bring the band back.

"Adalita is the ultimate Australian rock chick," he said.

"Magic Dirt just embody the true spirit of rock and roll. They are a Geelong band, and they fit our audience so well."

The band has played the venue once before and Foley expects this return to be even bigger.

He said the night will also showcase the venue's brand-new lighting system.

"It will be great to see that in action," he said. He added that the show will be "a standing rock and roll gig, in the Australian rock and roll tradition," and promised a high energy crowd from start to finish.

With nostalgia, surprises and a song that has endured for a quarter of a century, Magic Dirt's return promises to be full of life. For long-time fans and new listeners alike, it is set to be one of the summer's standout gigs. For tickets, please visit the Archies Creek Hotel website.

**Daisy, Grace, Abbie and Matilda playing Foosa in the WTG production of Madagascar.** B79_5025

**Penguins Stephan, Sage, Isla and Juliet during rehearsals for the WTG summer production of Madagascar at the State Coal Mine.** B73_5025

# Rehearsals underway for Madagascar

MADAGASCAR the musical is about to burst on stage at the Wonthaggi State Coal Mine.

With 30 young people in the cast, director Toni Osborne said the actors and dancers have come from primary and secondary schools at Inverloch, Wonthaggi and Cowes.

The show features all your favourite 'crack-a-lackin' friends, including Alex the Lion played by Ada, Marty the Zebra played by Alana, Lucian in the role of Melman the Giraffe, Clover as Gloria the Hippo, King Julien played by Luciano and the plotting penguins as they escape Central Park Zoo and find themselves in Madagascar, where they meet the Lemurs.

"It's very joyful," said Toni.

"A celebration with lots of singing and dancing, and the audience gets to join in the fun."

The costumes have all been recycled from previous WTG productions.

"Reduce, reuse, recycle is our motto," said Toni.

The set has been recycled as well.

Madagascar, A Musical Adventure Jnr will be performed in The Shed at the State Coal Mine in Wonthaggi from January 7 to January 11.

It is sure to have wide appeal, according to Toni Osborne, with family-priced tickets.

"The perfect show for first-time theatregoers from kindergarten kids to grandparents."

**Lucian as the giraffe Melman, and Luciano as King Julien in Madagascar, A Musical Adventure Jr.** B72_5025

**Rowan Taylor assists director Toni Osborne with rehearsals for the WTG production of Madagascar, A Musical Adventure Jr. to be performed at the State Coal Mine.** B78_5025

**Coco, Niamah and Rachael in costume for their role as limas in the WTG production of Madagascar, A Musical Adventure Jr.** B71_5025

**Jackson Carroll performs as Rick Springfield in Late, Late At Night, which comes to GPAC on January 10**

# Free Rick Springfield show set for Gippsland

**By Trent Westaway**

LOCAL audiences are in for something special next month when Late, Late at Night arrives at the Gippsland Performing Arts Centre. The show, which has been building a loyal following since its debut in 2022, will be performed in Traralgon on Saturday, January 10. Not much is free these days, though this performance will be, as a rare treat for the community.

Written by Melbourne playwright Kieran Carroll, the production steps deep into the life of Rick Springfield, the Australian American musician who became a global star in the 80s. Most people remember him for Jessie's Girl or for his time in the band Zoot, but the playwright says the real story stretches far beyond those familiar hits.

"The story is so much bigger, and I wanted to show this to Australian audiences. From going to the Vietnam War to 17 Top 40 US hits in the 80s, from mental health battles to films with Meryl Streep and collaborations with the Foo Fighters, Rick Springfield has had a huge life of ups and downs."

Gippsland has already embraced the show, he said, especially after a strong turnout in Warragul last year. Returning to the region for another performance felt like a natural step.

Late, Late at Night is presented as a one man show. It mirrors the structure of Springfield's own memoir and lets the audience sit closely with the character as he shifts between confidence and doubt. The simplicity of the format means there is nowhere for the performer to hide. Everything rests on him.

Fortunately, the production has found its ideal lead in 26-year-old Sydney performer Jackson Carroll. He sings, acts, plays guitar and piano and switches between accents with a natural ease that surprised even the playwright. Mr Kieran Carroll said it had taken a long time to find someone who could manage all of those demands and still look the part.

"I got very lucky finding Jackson. He really is world class and has a big future ahead."

Mr Jackson Carroll brings an emotional honesty to the performance that has become one of the strongest elements of the show. Audiences often walk away talking about him as much as they do Rick Springfield.

More than 20 Springfield songs are woven through the performance which gives the night both energy and nostalgia. Some of the biggest hits appear, although many people leave talking about the lesser-known tracks that reveal a different side of Springfield's work.

The playwright said making the Traralgon show free was important to him.

"I love the idea of theatre being accessible for everyone. Shows can be expensive, and I wanted to do a show in Gippsland at no cost to the audience and around Christmas time. GPAC happily obliged."

Late, Late at Night promises a warm and lively start to the new year at GPAC and gives local audiences the chance to rediscover one of Australia's most successful musical exports.

Newhaven College Year 4 students Emily Hardy, Venus Herath Mudiyanselage and Summer Humphris receive their Year 4 graduation certificates.

Newhaven College Year 5 student Lucy Gojrzewski and Year 8 student Ned Scott (not pictured) were awarded Rotary's Outstanding Community Service Award, presented by Rotary's Brian Holloway and Gary Simmons.

Newhaven College Year 11 student Freya Berry was awarded the Luke Bolding Memorial Award, presented by Robyn Bolding and Life Governor Greg Price of Alex Scott Real Estate.

The St Vincent de Paul Society Frederic Ozanam Awards were awarded to Year 6 students Sierra Phillips and Charlie Matthews, presented by Cath Huther on behalf of St Vincent de Paul secretary Linda Sparkes.

Julian Walker, Anne Davis and Alan Price from the Pound Creek Fire Brigade providing first aid at the Inverloch Christmas carols with volunteer fundraiser Rodney Buchannan. B56_5025

Susan, Luke and Shannon from Inverloch enjoying Carols in the Glade on a warm balmy night at Inverloch. B57_5025

# Snapped Out

Pictures of you and your friends at Inverloch Carols, Newhaven College Award Presentations and Inverloch shopping.

Newhaven College Year 9 student Georgia Sanders was awarded the Peter Reith AM Memorial Prize, presented by Kerrie Reith.

The Bendigo Bank Community Mindedness Awards were awarded to Newhaven College Year 9 students Yasmin Gloria (pictured), Hayden Hopkins (pictured), River Hume and Jack Hungerford (not pictured). Director Bruce Proctor awarded the student on stage.

Leanne from Inverloch celebrating Christmas at Carols in the Glade. B58_5025

Erin, Adrian, Logan and Ambor from Inverloch listening to Carols in the Glade at Inverloch. B60_5025

Newhaven College Year 10 student Manning de Gooyer was awarded the Donald Cameron OAM Award, pictured with Life Governor Pamela Cameron and Meryl Reid.

Mary Ellis of Inverloch, Jacob Patullo from Lang Lang and Kyan Holland from Cape Paterson drummer for the Central Churches Community Band at Carols in the Glade. B59_5025

Liza Chandler helping Margaret Griffin with her late night Christmas shopping at Bliss in Inverloch. B08_5025

**Sentinel-Times**

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Loretta Berton travelled from Wimbledon Heights to enjoy Christmas Carols in the Glade at Inverloch. B61_5025

Brodie James and Mycalie James from Wonthaggi in a festive mood for Carols in the Glade. B62_5025

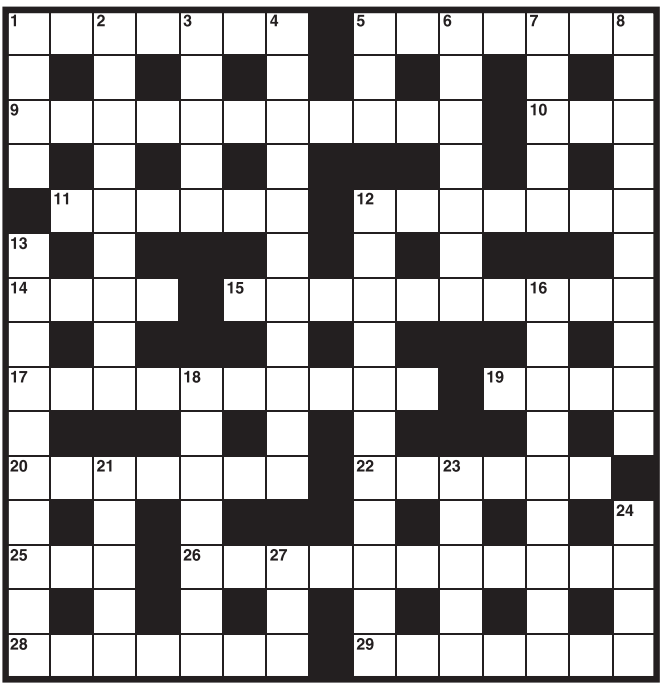
Lisa Frawley, Hazel Missen and Carole Livesey from Inverloch Lions serving hot food for the big crowd at Carols in the Glade. B70_5025

Alex McEntee all smiles shopping for Christmas at Red Cross in Inverloch. B18_5025

# Sentinel-Times Puzzles CHALLENGE

## CROSSWORD

No. 311



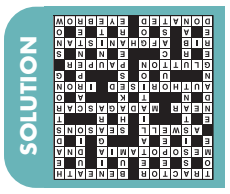
### ACROSS

**1** Agricultural aid (7)
**5** Under (7)
**9** Ancient Middle East (11)
**10** Biological blueprint (abbr) (1,1,1)
**11** Too (2,4)
**12** Times of the year (7)
**14** Close (4)
**15** Island nation east of Mozambique (10)
**17** Permitted (10)
**19** Stern (4)
**20** Chowhound (7)
**22** Very poor person (6)
**25** Chest bone (3)
**26** Mountainous Islamic country (11)
**28** Gave away (7)
**29** Hair above the eye (7)

### DOWN

**1** Volume (4)
**2** Helper (9)
**3** Conical tent (5)
**4** Revenge (11)
**5** Backside (3)
**6** Falls on the US-Canadian border (7)
**7** Of sound (5)
**8** Strong-willed (10)
**12** Great playwright (11)
**13** In peril (10)
**16** Tradesman (9)
**18** Pariah (7)
**21** Citified (5)
**23** Combine (5)
**24** Frozen flakes (4)
**27** Deity (3)

SOLUTION

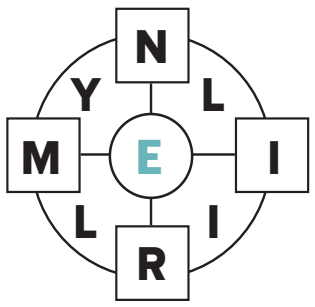


## 9-LETTER

No. 311

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural nouns ending in 's'.

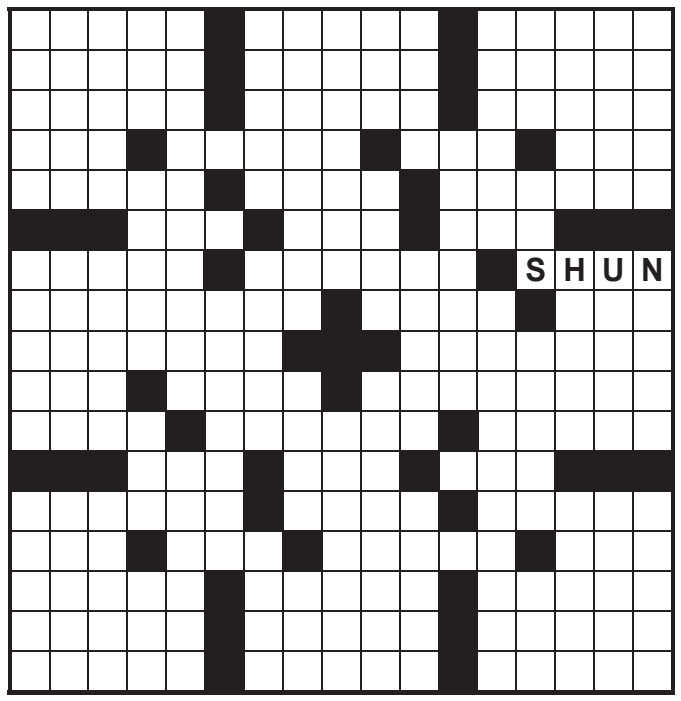
**Today's Aim:**
**12 words:** Good
**18 words:** Very good
**24 words:** Excellent




emir, lien, lime, limer, line, liner, lire, lyre, merlin, men, mile, miler, miller, milliner, MILLINERY, mine, miner, mire, myelin, rein, rely, rile, rime, yell

## WORDFIT

No. 220




**3 LETTERS**
ADD
ADS
ALE
APE
ASH
CHI
EAT
ELM
ERA
ERR
EVE
HEM
HOP
IRE
LIP
NOR
ORE
PAD
TAP
TEE
TUB
UTE

**4 LETTERS**
CAGE
COMA
EPIC
HIST
KEEL
LASS
~~SHUN~~
STEP
TALK
WENT

**5 LETTERS**
ACRES
ALIBI
ANNUL
APART
ATLAS
ATONE
BATHE
BESTS
CONES
COURT
ENROL
ESSAY
GAMUT
GAUNT
GORES
HAULS
ICIER
LARGE
LLAMA
MAUVE
METRE
MUCUS
NEEDY
NOBLE
OLDEN
PASTY
PENCE
POKED
RAINS
RARES
RILES
SCREW
SEEMS
SHORE
SICKO
SLEPT
SMOKO
SNARL
SNIPE
SPEED
TERSE
TINES
TITLE
TRIBE
TRIED
UNCLE
UNITE
UPSET

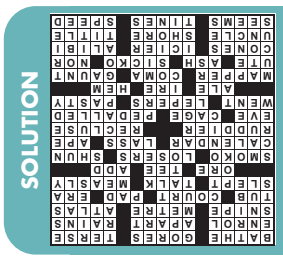
**6 LETTERS**
LEASES
LEPERS
LOSERS
MAPPER
MEASLY
TRADED

**7 LETTERS**
AMASSED
DEALERS
EROSION
RATTLES
RECLUSE
RUDDIER

**8 LETTERS**
CALENDAR
OPERATOR
PEDALLED
PREMIERE

**10 LETTERS**
ELECTRONIC
SCAPEGOATS

SOLUTION



## CODEWORD

No. 301

Each number corresponds to a letter of the alphabet. Two have been filled in for you, can you work out the rest?

| 5 | 25 N | 4 | 9 | 8 | 19 | 4 | | 16 | 24 | 18 | 3 | 19 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 15 | | 18 | | 25 N | | 16 | | 1 | | 26 L | | 26 L |
| 4 | 16 | 15 | 12 | 20 | | 17 | 9 | 5 | 23 | 12 | 19 | 5 |
| 9 | | 12 | | 16 | | 17 | | 9 | | 10 | | 12 |
| 18 | 20 | 20 | 16 | 23 | 17 | 26 L | 12 | 19 | 7 | 12 | 25 N | 13 |
| | | 18 | | 21 | | 5 | | 7 | | | | 7 |
| 10 | 18 | 10 | 16 | 16 | 25 N | | 23 | 18 | 11 | 16 | 9 | 19 |
| 26 L | | | | 9 | | 2 | | 2 | | 9 | | |
| 16 | 9 | 25 N | 12 | 4 | 7 | 16 | 26 L | 16 | 13 | 12 | 19 | 4 |
| 4 | | 12 | | 18 | | 6 | | 14 | | 13 | | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 25 N | 18 | 10 | 26 L | 5 | | 12 | 9 | 18 | 22 | 12 |
| 5 | | 5 | | 26 L | | 25 N | | 25 N | | 23 | | 25 N |
| 9 | 12 | 19 | 24 | 3 | | 19 | 18 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 25 N | 13 |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | 14 | |
| 2 | | 15 | |
| 3 | | 16 | |
| 4 | | 17 | |
| 5 | | 18 | |
| 6 | | 19 | |
| 7 | | 20 | |
| 8 | | 21 | |
| 9 | | 22 | |
| 10 | | 23 | |
| 11 | | 24 | |
| 12 | | 25 | N |
| 13 | | 26 | L |

## SUDOKU

No. 310

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every number from 1 to 9 must appear in: each of the nine vertical columns, each of the nine horizontal rows and each of the nine 3 x 3 boxes. Remember, no number can occur more than once in any row, column or box.

**EASY**

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

**MEDIUM**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | 4 | | 5 | | |
| | 5 | 9 | | | 2 | | | 7 |
| 3 | | | 5 | | | | | 2 |
| | | 1 | 2 | | | | 9 | |
| | | 3 | | 1 | | 6 | | |
| | 2 | | | | 6 | 4 | | |
| 6 | | | | | 7 | | | 3 |
| 7 | | | 1 | | | 2 | 6 | |
| | | 4 | | 3 | | | | |

### SOLUTIONS

**EASY**

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

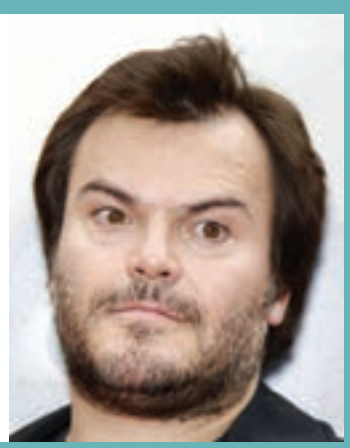
**MEDIUM**

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

**CODEWORD:** 1 = V, 2 = D, 3 = Y, 4 = T, 5 = E, 6 = Z, 7 = H, 8 = U, 9 = R, 10 = B, 11 = J, 12 = I, 13 = G, 14 = W, 15 = X, 16 = O, 17 = P, 18 = A, 19 = S, 20 = C, 21 = F, 22 = Q, 23 = M, 24 = K, 25 = N, 26 = L

## QUICK QUIZ

1. Which spice is derived from the flower of crocus sativus?
2. What is the northernmost capital city in the world?
3. Jack Black (pictured) plays which children's author in the Goosebumps series of films?
4. True or false: jelly babies were originally known as 'unclaimed babies'?
5. Which of the following is not a cut of beef: skirt, shirt or shank?
6. New Zealand was named after a province of which country?
7. What does the 'E' stand for in BASE jumping?
8. Mickey Mantle is best known for playing which sport?
9. What is the name of Linus' sister in the *Peanuts* comics?
10. Who wrote the novel *Crime and Punishment*?



**ANSWERS:** 1. Saffron 2. Reykjavik 3. R.L. Stine 4. True 5. Shirt 6. The Netherlands 7. Earth 8. Baseball 9. Lucy 10. Fyodor Dostoyevsky

## WORD SEARCH

No. 221

Can you find all the words listed? The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| AIRPORT | GETAWAY | PACK |
| AMUSEMENT | GUIDE | RELAX |
| BAGGAGE | HIATUS | RESTAURANT |
| BIKE | HIKE | SAIL |
| BOAT | HOSTEL | SCHEDULE |
| BUS | HOTEL | SEA |
| CABIN | INN | TENT |
| CAMP | ISLAND | TIP |
| COAST | ITINERARY | TOUR |
| DESTINATION | JET | TRAIN |
| EXPEDITION | LAKE | TRIP |
| FERRY | LEAVE | VISA |
| FLIGHT | LEISURE | WALK |
| FLY | MAP | YACHT |
| FOREIGN | MOTEL | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| T | A | D | D | D | E | S | T | I | N | A | T | I | O | N |
| S | U | B | D | N | A | L | S | I | T | P | L | Y | C | M |
| A | J | F | A | F | L | Y | T | E | R | E | A | A | S | O |
| O | T | E | S | N | N | I | I | T | A | A | M | C | T | T |
| C | N | R | T | M | N | B | P | V | I | P | H | H | K | E |
| P | E | R | T | E | O | O | E | Y | N | E | G | T | O | L |
| U | T | Y | R | A | E | X | P | E | D | I | T | I | O | N |
| H | I | A | T | U | S | R | P | U | L | A | K | E | E | Y |
| E | R | U | S | I | E | L | L | F | K | L | A | W | K | A |
| Y | A | G | U | I | D | E | A | H | O | T | E | L | I | W |
| S | T | N | A | R | U | A | T | S | E | R | R | S | H | A |
| A | I | R | P | O | R | T | R | B | I | K | E | I | L | T |
| P | T | N | E | M | E | S | U | M | A | V | L | I | P | E |
| B | A | G | G | A | G | E | O | N | I | B | A | C | G | G |
| O | P | A | M | H | O | S | T | E | L | S | X | R | T | N |

**SECRET MESSAGE:** Add a stamp to your passport

# Family home just out of town

THIS well-designed, large family home is perfectly located just out of the township of Foster.

Under five kilometres from town on a sealed road, this well-maintained four-bedroom, two-bathroom family home is set on approximately 66 acres, including 40 acres of fenced paddocks, each with its own dam, making this perfect grazing land. The rest is natural bushland with a tidal creek running through it that leads out to Corner Inlet. A blueberry orchard with approximately 500 blueberry plants is fully fenced and well set out to make picking easy.

A large 12x6.5m workshop with power, concrete floor and high roof sits next to the house.

The second large shed is of a similar size, also with power, and is located away from the house and would make an ideal machinery or hay shed.

Inside the house are four good-sized bedrooms, the master with an ensuite and carpet in all the bedrooms as well as built-in robes. The main living area has a tiled floor, a wood heater and a split system heater/cooler. The open plan kitchen includes Caesarstone stone bench tops, an island bench, dishwasher and heaps of storage. A second living area comes off the main area that can be closed off, perfect for a rumpus room or home office.

A large rear deck that joins to an undercover BBQ area looks over a dam with its own jetty, perfect for a swim or as a backdrop for entertaining. The dam is fully fenced for safety. The front of the house has well-established gardens, lawns and a carport.

Over 110,000 litres of water storage in five different tanks and two hot water services.

This has been the perfect home for this family for the past 25 years and their time has come to move on. This means it's time for a new family to move in and start making new memories.

For more information or to arrange a private inspection, please contact David County 0417 397 650 at Ray White Foster. Inspections strictly by appointment.

4 | 2 | 4 66 Acres*

360 Fullers Road,Foster
**For Sale:** $1,299,000
**Agent** Ray White Foster
David County 0417 397 650
**Approximately*

## Brooke Howard joins Ray White Leongatha

RAY White Leongatha is thrilled to announce the newest member of their sales team – Brooke Howard, a move set to strengthen the agency's market presence in and around the Korumburra area.

Born and raised in Korumburra, Brooke brings an authentic understanding of the town's character, its people and the unique appeal that continues to attract buyers from across South Gippsland and beyond. Her local knowledge is not just extensive, it's personal, and it positions her as a powerful advocate for both buyers and sellers seeking honest guidance in a competitive market.

Brooke's background in administration and property management has built a solid foundation for communication, organisation and client care. These experiences have shaped her ability to listen deeply, respond thoughtfully and deliver a consistently high level of service.

With 79 sales recorded this year and a strong median house price of $565,000, the Korumburra property market continues to show solid demand and steady growth. These figures highlight that the town's market is remaining strong and opportunities are continuing to grow, reinforcing confidence amongst both homeowners and investors.

Brooke is dedicated to being an approachable and attentive guide for her clients, offering clear communication and genuine support through every step of the sales process. She understands that buying or selling a home is often one of life's biggest decisions, and prides herself on helping clients navigate those challenging moments with confidence, clarity, and care.

Ray White is delighted to have Brooke on board. Whether you're buying, selling, or simply seeking guidance, Brooke Howard is ready to help you make your next move with confidence.

Brooke Howard 0400 206 605

**Ray White Leongatha**
**03 5662 5800**
**15 Bair Street, Leongatha**
**raywhiteleongatha.com.au**

**Ray White Foster & Sandy Point**
**03 5639 9202**
**17 Main Street, Foster**
**raywhitefoster.com.au**

Ray White.

20 Willow Grove, **Leongatha**

**PEACEFUL, LOW MAINTENANCE ESCAPE**
- Tucked away in a no-through setting
- Open plan layout
- Stylish kitchen, stainless steel appliances
- Inviting outdoor entertaining area

**Michael Hanily 0417 311 756**

**$645,000** 3 2 2

10 Scarlett Close, **Leongatha**

**ELEVATED LIVING, FUTURE PROMISE**
- A short walk to schools & town centre
- Ideal first home or renovation project
- Undercover outdoor patio
- Established low maintenance gardens

**David Trotman 0418 589 805**

**$575,000** 3 2 2

16 Bellingham Street, **Leongatha**

**PRIME TOWN CENTRE LIVING**
- A generous 1,248m² flat block
- Dual access
- Comfortable and well maintained home
- A short walk from local shops & cafés

**Michael Hanily 0417 311 756**

**$675,000** 3 1 1

21 Shingler Street, **Leongatha**

**SPACE, LOCATION & FUTURE POTENTIAL**
- A generous 975m² block
- Spacious living with scope to modernise
- Expansive yard with side access
- An easy stroll to everyday amenities

**Kasey Bowman 0439 207 196**

**$445,000** 3 1 2

23 Shingler Street, **Leongatha**

**A SMART START OR EASY INVESTMENT**
- Light filled living
- Thoughtfully updated
- Easy stroll to town centre
- Set on a 965m² block

**Kasey Bowman 0439 207 196**

**$460,000** 2 1 1

30 Bent Street, **Leongatha**

**SPACE, STYLE & SERENITY**
- Beautifully renovated throughout
- Large 1,151m2 block
- Spacious undercover outdoor entertaining
- Shedding options for storage and vehicles

**Kasey Bowman 0439 207 196**

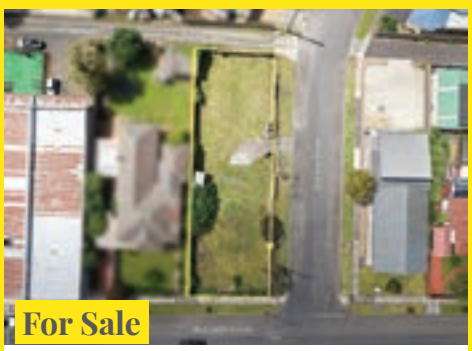
**$695,000** 3 1.5 4

325 Meeniyan-Promontory Rd, **Meeniyan**

**RURAL TRANQUILLITY**
- Set on an expansive 4.42 acres
- Vaulted ceilings and large windows
- Undercover decking overlooking gardens
- Great shedding for storage & vehicles

**Michael Hanily 0417 311 756**

**$765,000** 2 1 4




55 McCartin Street, **Leongatha**

**PRIME CORNER DEVELOPMENT**
- Rare commercial development site
- 783m² block (approx)
- Street frontage with rear lane access
- Cleared and ready for development

**Michael Hanily 0417 311 756**

**$495,000** Land

6 Blackwood Drive, **Foster**

**BEAUTIFULLY PRESENTED**
- Open plan kitchen lounge and dining
- Main BR at rear with ensuite and WIR
- Secure side access for caravan and boat
- Beautiful garden and close to town

**Wendy Gregson 0477 665 868**

**$699,000** 3 2 2

**Stony Creek**

**MAKE THIS COTTAGE YOUR OWN!**
- Partly renovated cottage
- Cleared 4.2 acres with rolling hill views
- 6x12m concrete floor shed
- Private setting

**Peter Bellingham 0439 178 653**

**$595,000** 2 1

135 Fullers Road, **Foster**

**LIFESTYLE ACREAGE CLOSE TO TOWN**
- 28 acre ideal hobby farm
- Low maintenance, updated, open plan
- 12x8 shed with concrete floor
- 4 dams, troughs and yards

**Peter Bellingham 0439 178 653**

**$1,100,000** 3 2 3

1/1 Victory Avenue, **Foster**

**FIRST HOME BUYERS/INVESTORS!**
- Short walk to the shops
- Open plan kitchen dining and living
- 2 generous bedrooms
- Currently tenanted returning $330pw

**Peter Bellingham 0439 178 653**

**$330,000** 2 1 1

**Devon North**

**GRAZING & LIFESTYLE PROPERTY**
- 123 acres with excellent infrastructure
- Extensively renovated home and grounds
- 15km from Yarram
- Located at end of laneway

**Peter Bellingham 0439 178 653**

**$1,200,000** 3 2 4

49 Beach Parade, **Sandy Point**

**GREAT LOCATION**
- Fully renovated, move in and enjoy
- Coveted front row location
- Low maintenance 616m² block
- Fully fenced and pet friendly

**Peter Bellingham 0439 178 653**

**$890,000** 3 2 2

9 Wattle Court, **Sandy Point**

**QUIET COURT LOCATION**
- Short walk to Ned Neal's Lookout & beach
- Well maintained double brick home
- Sleeps up to 10 people
- Low maintenance 637m² block

**Peter Bellingham 0439 178 653**

**$849,000** 3 1 2

12 The Boulevard, **Sandy Point**

**FIRST TIME OFFERED FOR SALE**
- Charming cottage
- Open plan kitchen, living and dining
- Undercover BBQ area
- Low maintenance 862m² approx. block

**Peter Bellingham 0439 178 653**

**$695,000** 2 1

HM12847-V6

2 | 1 | 3 882m²

14 Welshpool Road, **Toora**
**For Sale** $495,000
**Agent** SEJ Real Estate
Andrea Adams 0429 822 801

## Picture perfect period cottage and gardens

PACKED with features of the era and set on a corner block with side access for parking a boat or caravan, plus a charming barn with parking for two cars and space for extra storage, a workshop or studio and huge further potential for conversion to a games room or outdoor entertaining area, this home is a must for the inspection list.

The spacious living/dining room features the classic charm of high ceilings, ornate cornices and ceiling roses, picture rails and timber mantle around a wood heater, with the added convenience of RC/AC for comfort in every season. The light and bright country kitchen offers a huge amount of storage and preparation space, a gas hob and under-bench oven, and enjoys views out over the garden setting.

There are two large bedrooms, the master with built-in robes, plus a spacious rear sunroom or study ideal for working from home (NBN connected) or as further bedroom space if required. A central family bathroom, laundry with linen storage and separate WC.

Running costs are kept to a minimum with solar power and an efficient heat pump hot water system. Outside, the sheltered and private rear garden is a delight with a covered patio to sit and soak up the sunshine, surrounded by vegetable beds, fruit trees and colourful garden beds that have all been designed to be low maintenance.

Just a short stroll to the centre of town, medical centre and primary school as well as the wonderful recreational facilities including outdoor public heated pool, bowls club, football oval, Great Southern Rail Trail and town walking track, and of course just two kilometres to boat launching into the sheltered waters of Corner Inlet. Come and discover the delights of this picturesque regional area where the mountains meet the sea.

SEJ LIVESTOCK & REAL ESTATE
A NUTRIEN AG SOLUTIONS PARTNER

Your local
Real Estate &
Livestock Specialists
**www.sej.com.au**

ANDREA ADAMS
0429 822 801
aadams@sej.com.au
FOSTER
Ph 5682 2800

IRENE WALKER
0429 045 632
iwalker@sej.com.au
LEONGATHA
Ph 5662 4033

### FISH CREEK

- 3 bed 2 bath 1 car
- Walk to village & Rail Trail
- Open plan living / dining
- North facing covered deck
- Fenced garden & workshop

**$565,000**

Contact Andrea Adams 0429 822 801

The team at SEJ Livestock & Real Estate would like to wish everyone

*A Merry Christmas and a Safe & Prosperous 2026*

### SANDY POINT

- 3 bed 2 bath 2 car
- Modern low maint. design
- 5 mins walk to beach trail
- Wrap around deck, bush views
- Storage, and workshop

**$1,100,000**

Contact Andrea Adams 0429 822 801

### DUMBALK

- Loves Lane Grazing
- 87 ha / 217 acres
- Undulating to steep
- Ex. fencing, and water
- Ideal cattle & sheep

**Contact Agent**

Contact Irene Walker 0429 045 632

### LEONGATHA NORTH

- Lifestyle living at its best on 4.05ha / 10 flat acres with views
- Boasting an exceptionally built spacious home with cinema room
- Impressive shed 47m x 20m x 5m, offering opportunities here!
- Magnificent established orchard, over 80 trees with some undercover
- (3) paddocks, & yards, ideal for cattle, sheep & horses
- Offering income capacity, lifestyle living & convenience, close to town

**$1,730,000**

Contact Irene Walker 0429 045 632

### BUFFALO

- Prime Cattle grazing
- 112 ha / 276 acres
- Flat to undulating
- Ex. fencing & water
- Stock yards, hayshed

**$3,600,000**

Contact Irene Walker 0429 045 632

HM12729-V13

# Productive 257 acre holding across 3 titles

THIS well-balanced and productive property offers a superb mix of quality soils, reliable water, and excellent infrastructure, making it ideal for grazing pursuits or mixed farming. Comprising approximately 257 acres across three titles, the property features a renovated three-bedroom home, ample shedding, and a blend of hill, undulating and flat country. Held by the same family for over 60 years, this farm represents a rare opportunity to secure land in one of Boolarra South's most tightly held and productive districts.

The land presents a diverse soil profile, including heavy grey, sandy loam and red soils, all contributing to consistent year-round output. A strong water supply consists of approximately eight dams, some gravity-fed to troughs, along with frontage to O'Gradys Creek. The central laneway system provides efficient access across 21 paddocks plus two holding paddocks, supported by secure fencing throughout and complemented by two unused road leases currently utilised for additional grazing.

Farm infrastructure includes three hay sheds, a disused dairy, calf shed, machinery shed and separate storage shed, providing ample room for fodder and equipment. The cattle yards are well-appointed and include a heavy-duty crush.

The renovated three-bedroom home offers a warm and inviting living environment, ideal for families or those seeking comfort. The Caesarstone kitchen, complete with a 900mm gas cooktop and dishwasher, flows into the open-plan dining and living area, which is serviced by reverse-cycle heating and cooling plus a wood heater. The master bedroom features a walk-in robe and ensuite.

Outdoor living includes a large undercover entertaining area, perfect for gatherings in all weather. Additional accommodation is provided by a two-room guest bungalow. Solar power feeds back into the grid, supporting energy efficiency, and a carport adjoining the home adds further practicality.

Located just 15 minutes to Mirboo North, 32 minutes to Leongatha, 35 minutes to Traralgon and 2.5 hours to Melbourne CBD, this is a rare chance to secure a productive, well-balanced farming property in a sought-after South Gippsland location. Offering versatility, scale, and reliability, this property is perfectly suited to those looking to expand an existing operation or establish a new agricultural venture in a proven district.

For a Due Diligence Checklist go to: consumer.vic.gov.au/duediligencechecklist.

3 | 1 | 6 257 Acres

365 Limonite Road, **Boolarra South**
**For Sale** $2,780,000
**Agent** Elders
Katrina Griggs 0428 571 083
Sharon Turton 0447 604 796

Elders Real Estate

*In any market rely on Elders*

eldersrealestate.com.au

**Fish Creek** 189 Acres
**Former Fish Creek Dairy**
- 19 Paddocks of undulating land
- 8 dams & Cherokee Creek through back
- Multiple sheds with power

Web ID: 300P165986 **$2.28 Million**

**Foster** 2.67 Acres
**Hidden Luxury**
- 4-bed, 2-bath home with open plan living
- 2 Large, horse stables, 92k rainwater
- Est gardens, raised vegetables boxes

Web ID: 300P166521 **$1,375,000**

**Korumburra** 149 Acres
**Lifestyle & Grazing Opportunity**
- Undulating to rolling hill country
- 17 paddocks accessed via central laneway
- Solid 3-bedroom brick home

Web ID: 300P186087 **$2 Million**

**Mount Eccles** 7.5 Acres
**Marvellous Mt Eccles**
- 4-bedroom, 2-bathroom split level home
- 7.5 acres with stockyards
- Tank water, spring & seasonal creek

Web ID: 300P101511 **$680,000**

**BEN TOWNSEND**
Licensed Estate Agent
0400 594 487

**SHARON TURTON**
Sales Consultant
0447 604 796

**KATRINA GRIGGS**
Sales Consultant
0428 571 083

**HELEN ARESTIA**
Sales Support
03 5662 3523

**NATALIE RES**
Property Manager
0439 383 091

**Elders Korumburra**
11 Commercial Street
Ph 5658 1894

**Elders Leongatha**
37 Bair Street
Ph 5662 3523

JA23158-V13

# Your coastal lifestyle starts here

NESTLED on a level acre of land, this remarkable contemporary brick home in Ventnor is more than just a house; it's your very own botanical paradise. From the moment you arrive, you'll feel the peaceful embrace of a coastal lifestyle escape, where the hard work is done and all that's left is for you to relax and enjoy.

Step inside and discover a home designed with family and connection in mind. The generous floor plan flows effortlessly, offering two large living areas where laughter and conversation can fill the air. The open-plan kitchen and dining area serves as the heart of the home, perfect for everything from quick breakfasts to celebratory family gatherings.

This home comfortably accommodates a large family, with four bedrooms including a private master suite complete with a walk-in robe and ensuite. What truly sets this property apart is its ingenious design for visitors. A separate, self-contained zone offers a sanctuary for guests, featuring two double bedrooms, their own bathroom, a beautiful sunroom, and a private entrance. This thoughtful layout is ideal for hosting visiting family, or it could easily be transformed into a fantastic Airbnb, offering a unique opportunity to share this slice of paradise with others.

But the real magic happens outdoors. A magnificent north-facing veranda beckons, creating the ultimate indoor-outdoor dining and barbecue space. It's a place for long summer evenings, family gatherings, and lazy afternoons enjoying the sea air. The stunning garden is a true masterpiece – a park-like setting with over 20 established fruit and citrus trees, all protected in a special enclosure so you can enjoy your bounty without sharing with the local possums and birds. The established native garden provides a serene backdrop, creating a sanctuary of natural beauty. The home has a two-car garage with secure entry plus additional sheds with power, providing the perfect space for hobbies, a workshop, or extra storage. Other extras include a huge solar energy installation plus five connected water tanks providing more than 100,000 litres of water to your home and garden. Town water is also connected.

Located just a short, easy walk down Graydens Road to some of Phillip Island's most beautiful swimming beaches, this home offers both a private retreat and easy access to the best of coastal living. This isn't just a home; it's a legacy of peaceful, joyful living. All the hard work has been done, and it's now waiting for you to write its next chapter.

Call Alex Scott & Staff on 5952 2633 to arrange your private inspection or enquire about our next Open for Inspection. You will not be disappointed.

4 | 2 | 4 | 4000m²

71 Graydens Road, **Ventnor**
**For Sale** $1,490,000 - $1,590,000
**Agent** Alex Scott & Staff
Cowes Office 5952 2633

## Stunning two-storey coastal retreat

NESTLED in a tranquil position, this beautifully presented two-storey home at 4a Bonwick Court is just a short walk from Kilcunda's pristine beaches, the popular Rail Trail, the Killy Store, and the local Hotel.

Perfectly designed for both family living and holiday escapes, this property sits on a generous 632sqm block, offering ample space for relaxation and outdoor enjoyment.

The ground level features a light-filled open plan living area, perfect for entertaining. The modern kitchen is equipped with a gas cooktop, electric oven, double-drawer dishwasher, sleek cabinetry, and plenty of bench space.

Step outside to a large outdoor area with picturesque rural views, complemented by two generously sized bedrooms serviced by a stylish family bathroom and a separate laundry. For year-round comfort, enjoy the warmth of a woodfire and the convenience of split system heating and cooling.

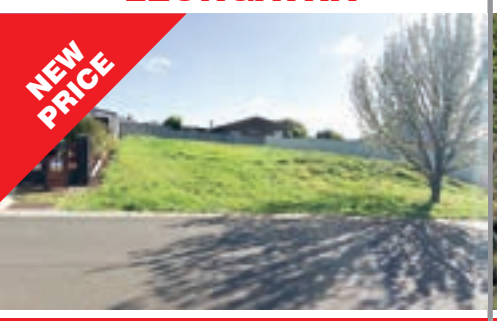
As you ascend the staircase to the upper level, you'll discover the master suite, complete with a spacious bedroom, walk-in robe, and a private ensuite. An additional open living area and another deck provide stunning views of the surrounding countryside and distant ocean.

The tranquil gardens feature a heated spa, perfect for couples to unwind or for kids to enjoy a splash. Currently operating as an Airbnb, this property has been producing attractive returns for the past two years. Further details are available upon request.

3 | 2 | 2 | 632m²

4A Bonwick Court, **Kilcunda**
**For Sale** $895,000
**Agent** Alex Scott & Staff
Mick Chambers 0418 349 783
Cal Nation 0439 334 163
Photos: Andrew Harrison Photography

## LEONGATHA




### 8 Ella Court

- Elevated block on top side of road
- 768m² block with 21m frontage
- Modern estate close to CBD

**$319,000**

Contact: Leongatha Office

## KORUMBURRA

### 3 Gordon Street

- Late 1800's Period home
- Huge 1,408m² flat block
- 3 bedroom / Open living

**$565,000**

Contact: Korumburra Office

## VENTNOR

### 17 The Esplanade

- Oceanfront property, uninterrupted views
- Double glazing, hardwood floors
- 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 4 cars

**$2,200,000**

Contact: Cowes Office

## NORTH WONTHAGGI

### 31 Kingston Road

- 3 bedroom hardiplank home
- Corner block with double garage
- Great project house

**SOLD**

Contact: Wonthaggi Office

## LEONGATHA

### 35 Edens Road

- 2 bedroom home (space for 3rd)
- Beautiful parcel of 2.5 acres
- Lock up shedding and so much more

**$790,000**

Contact: Leongatha Office

## KORUMBURRA

### 36 Queen Street

- 3 bed, 1 bath, California Bunglaow
- Garage / Garden shed
- Central location / Rear access

**$520,000**

Contact: Korumburra Office

## COWES

### 35 Settlement Road

- Large corner allotment
- Undercover outdoor area
- 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 2 car

**$830,000**

Contact: Cowes Office

## NORTH WONTHAGGI

### 2/36 White Road

- Sandstone brick unit
- 3 bedroom, 2 toilets
- Great location

**SOLD**

Contact: Wonthaggi Office

## LEONGATHA

### 97 Parr Street

- 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 3 living
- 2 car garage + shed and parking
- Great family home close to schools

**$850,000**

Contact: Leongatha Office

## KORUMBURRA

### 31 Mine Road

- Retail/Commercial Freehold
- Highway frontage
- Rear Access

**$395,000**

Contact: Korumburra Office

## RHYLL

### 11-13 Felicia Avenue

- Elevated double block of 1250m² (approx.)
- Fully self-contained cottage
- 5 bedroom, 4 bathroom, ample car parking

**Contact Agent**

Contact: Cowes Office

## WONTHAGGI

### 26 Broome Crescent

- Great ¼ acre development block
- Corner location
- 3 bedroom home

**SOLD**

Contact: Wonthaggi Office

## KOONWARRA

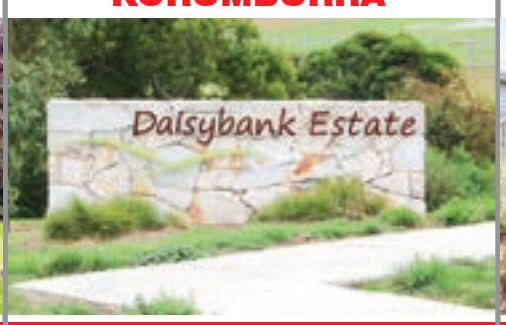
### 140 Johnsons Road

- 3 bedroom home on just under 2 acres
- Large shedding plus horse arenas/grazing
- Walk to rail trail and centre of Koonwarra

**$895,000**

Contact: Leongatha Office

## KORUMBURRA




### Daisy Bank Estate

- 15 Blocks
- All services available
- Titled and ready to build

**From $284,500**

Contact: Korumburra Office

## COWES

### 57 Goodwood Drive

- Well-appointed kitchen
- Situated opposite parkland
- 4 bedroom, 2 bathroom, 2 cars

**$760,000**

Contact: Cowes Office

## CAPE PATERSON

### 32 Anglers Road

- 3 Bedroom Fibro home
- 2 living, 2 toilets
- North facing outdoor area

**SOLD**

Contact: Wonthaggi Office

**LEONGATHA**
**5662 0922**
41 Bair Street
Andrew Newton 0402 940 320
Emily Hillberg 0422 622 299
Tony Giles 0407 528 192
Dan Huther 0418 334 801

**KORUMBURRA**
**5655 1133**
36 Bridge Street
Scott McKenzie 0427 552 898

**COWES**
**5952 2633**
113a Thompson Avenue
Greg Price 0419 337 441
Brian Silver 0407 347 509
Chase Waters 0423 272 819
George Grigg 0458 478 308

**WONTHAGGI**
**5672 1911**
Cnr Murray & Billson Streets
Cal Nation 0439 334 163
Mick Chambers 0418 349 783
Phil Hanley 0417 140 508

HM12575-V13

# Saleyard giant snaps up Leongatha

By Andrew Paloczi

AUSTRALIA'S largest saleyard operator has snapped up the Leongatha Saleyards in a rapid-fire transaction for an undisclosed sum.

Regional Livestock Exchanges (RLX) confirmed the purchase of the facility from the Victorian Livestock Exchange (VLE) on Friday, with the new owners taking charge when sales resume in January.

The Leongatha yards processed more than 273,000 head of cattle last financial year — the highest turnover in Victoria and second nationally only to Roma in Queensland.

VLE Managing Director Brian Paynter explained during ABC Radio's Country Hour that he will have no part in the managerial structure of RLX, but was full of praise for the new owner and what the business can deliver.

He described RLX as the industry leader, particularly on the Eastern Seaboard of Australia, and said the sale will be positive for all parties including users of the Leongatha Saleyards.

With Country Hour host Warwick Long noting some people are concerned about the "market dominance" of RLX, which now owns 11 saleyards, Mr Paynter was called on to outline the benefits of the new ownership arrangement.

His response indicated that RLX's ability to bring the Masterplan for Leongatha Saleyards to fruition is a key benefit.

With that Masterplan including a new set of holding pens, a roof for the outdoor yards, a new truck wash, and new agents' offices, Mr Paynter said "We're looking forward to RLX investing the funds that are required to see those projects into completion."

Brett Freer, RLX chief executive, refuted Mr Long's assertion of RLX market dominance in the saleyard industry when asked to quantify that in percentage terms, not addressing that statistical request.

**Leongatha VLE Managing Director Brian Paynter is looking forward to having more time to fine-tune his golf following the sale of the Leongatha Saleyards.** A49_5025

"We have some investments in regional infrastructure in key growing areas that are supported by good logistics, transport efficiency and long-term sustainability of the yards," Mr Freer said. "That's important in this industry that we can get some scale because these things are very expensive to run; they need ongoing maintenance and there's a lot of OHS that needs to come with it, and the corporate structure and access to capital that RLX can bring to them is a benefit to the longevity of these facilities."

He expressed confidence in the long-term viability of saleyards in the face of competition from direct sales.

"Saleyards will always be a critical part of the supply chain, but also a community meeting place," Mr Freer said.

Despite his best efforts, Mr Long was unable to extract the price the Leongatha Saleyards fetched.

"We're happy with the outcome," Mr Paynter said, but wouldn't be drawn on what that meant in financial terms.

While Mr Freer explained the price is confidential, he was happy to speak about the matter in general terms.

"We feel we've paid a reasonable price for the acquisition of the asset, which I think leaves the stakeholders, shareholders and us working collectively to make sure this is a smooth transition," he said.

While Mr Paynter conceded the sale of the Pakenham Saleyards, which he said was forced by state government land tax, was really the beginning of VLE exiting the industry, he stressed that wasn't the thought process at the time.

"We didn't plan the sale of the Leongatha Saleyards but if I look in hindsight, that's how it's transpired," he said.

"We've been the leader in some of the innovations in saleyards and we see it as a good time to move on; the board and the shareholders have been in the game for a long time now, so it's a good opportunity to hand it over to somebody that's going to be looking after the saleyard industry in the future."

President of the South Gippsland Livestock Agents Association Brian McCormack, also speaking on Country Hour, was positive about the development but certain that livestock agents using the Leongatha Saleyards are keen to learn more.

"We will have questions moving forward; it's all happened pretty quickly over the last couple of days for us," he said.

"I think it's a good thing moving forward," Mr McCormack remarked, noting the VLE has got to the age where it wants to move on and that "Now we've got to look to the future."

"I hope it's going to improve our area again; I think with what they've done with other saleyards that's the sort of thing they'll look at," he said of his hopes of RLX investment in the Leongatha Saleyards.

VLE was established in 1997, and has run the Leongatha Saleyards since 2006, with expectations the business will be wound up following its exit from the saleyard industry.

The 10 saleyards RLX already operates are:

- Central Tablelands Livestock Exchange (CTLX) at Carcoar, NSW
- Inverell Regional Livestock Exchange (IRLX) at Inverell, NSW
- Hunter Regional Livestock Exchange (HRLX) at Singleton, NSW
- Tamworth Regional Livestock Exchange (TRLX) at Tamworth, NSW
- South-eastern Livestock Exchange (SELX) at Yass, NSW
- Central Queensland Livestock Exchange (CQLX) at Gracemere, QLD
- Goulburn Valley Livestock Exchange (GVLX) at Shepparton
- Central Victorian Livestock Exchange (CVLX) at Ballarat
- Northern Victoria Livestock Exchange (NVLX) at Barnawartha
- Western Victoria Livestock Exchange (WVLX) at Mortlake

# MARKET REPORT

Brought to you by...

CLAAS Harvest Centre

## Stores firm

By SGSAA

AGENTS yarded 2300 head at last Thursday's VLE Leongatha store sale in good yarding which did include more Xbred types and a larger offering of cows and calves.

The heavy and medium-weighed steers generally sold at rates as seen around the state at other sales with local graziers securing most of the offering with some feedlot buyers not operating and others selective on their requirements.

Angus weaner steers sold at similar rates with most of the better end trading in the $5.20 to $5.70 price range but there are still some odd sales in excess of $6.00 for the right article to repeat buyers.

Heifers were a little easier with Xbreds and dairy types still attracting solid competition with rates varying with quality.

Cows and calves sold to strong competition in a good offering.

The final store sale for 2025 is this Thursday, December 18 and recommences on Thursday, January 8.

**Leongatha Store Sale on Thursday, Dec. 11, 2025**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Steers** | | | |
| F Pendergast 11 Hereford | 701kg | $4.56 | $3200 |
| F Pendergast 13 Hereford | 635kg | $4.66 | $2960 |
| B & L Healy 13 Angus | 599kg | $5.24 | $3140 |
| Cattleman Shahin P/L 10 Ang | 598kg | $4.96 | $2970 |
| F Pendergast 10 Hereford | 592kg | $4.74 | $2810 |
| F Pendergast 14 Hereford | 588kg | $4.77 | $2810 |
| MW & JA Thompson 10 Angus | 587kg | $4.59 | $2700 |
| BJ & MK Wright 14 Angus | 576kg | $5.20 | $3000 |
| Fawlin Downs Past 12 Angus | 568kg | $4.43 | $2520 |
| V H Le 15 Ang 15 Angus | 529kg | $5.29 | $2800 |
| Wr Miller 13 Angus/BB | 524kg | $4.63 | $2430 |
| CD & RA Bills 11 Angus/BB | 493kg | $4.66 | $2300 |
| R Zelouf 14 Angus | 484kg | $4.85 | $2350 |
| M Williams 17 Angus | 454kg | $5.13 | $2330 |
| PM Nation 14 Angus | 434kg | $5.23 | $2270 |
| PM Nation 10 Angus | 428kg | $5.30 | $2270 |
| R Crooke 16 Angus | 426kg | $5.21 | $2220 |
| Eaglehawk Pastoral 13 Angus | 422kg | $4.57 | $1930 |
| NW Page 18 BB | 410kg | $4.97 | $2040 |
| M Williams 17 Angus | 398kg | $5.25 | $2090 |
| Glenshiel Past 20 Angus/BB | 394kg | $4.92 | $1940 |
| Cascade Park 12 Angus | 384kg | $4.94 | $1900 |
| KR & J Lyons 15 BB | 368kg | $5.13 | $1890 |
| Glenshiel Past 18 Angus/BB | 360kg | $4.91 | $1770 |
| T & K Barwick 11 Angus | 357kg | $5.09 | $1820 |
| Copperleaf P/L 21 Angus | 350kg | $6.11 | $2140 |
| JD & GM Christison 10 Angus | 349kg | $5.10 | $1780 |
| G & L Bennett 18 Angus | 349kg | $4.61 | $1610 |
| W Powell & Summit Farms P/L 10 Angus | 345kg | $4.89 | $1690 |
| Glenshiel Past 12 Angus X | 336kg | $4.79 | $1610 |
| Cascade Park 12 Angus | 332kg | $5.27 | $1750 |
| Pepperhill Trading Co 24 Angus | 314kg | $5.76 | $1810 |
| B Starvaggi 12 Char | 313kg | $4.98 | $1560 |
| Kariss P/L 10 Angus | 312kg | $5.03 | $1570 |
| C Scott 17 Angus | 302kg | $5.72 | $1730 |
| JD & GM Christison 10 Angus | 298kg | $5.53 | $1650 |
| Pepperhill Trading Co 10 BB | 292kg | $5.71 | $1670 |
| Copperleaf P/L 16 Angus | 291kg | $6.46 | $1880 |
| Pepperhill Trading Co 17 Hfd | 286kg | $6.08 | $1740 |
| Pepperhill Trading Co 22 Angus | 273kg | $6.55 | $1790 |
| Curtz P/L 11 Angus | 272kg | $6.21 | $1690 |
| C Scott 17 Angus | 258kg | $6.12 | $1580 |
| S Barwick 14 Angus/BB | 246kg | $6.91 | $1700 |
| Pepperhill Trading Co 21 Angus | 240kg | $7.12 | $1710 |
| **Heifers:** | | | |
| I Horbny 14 Angus | 514kg | $4.39 | $2260 |
| B Rinaldi 12 Angus | 387kg | $4.52 | $1750 |
| M Williams 15 Angus | 387kg | $4.49 | $1740 |
| G SAS & JA Robertson 12 Ang | 359kg | $4.45 | $1600 |
| Kr & J Lyons 15 BB | 339kg | $4.54 | $1540 |
| M Williams 11 Angus | 331kg | $4.38 | $1450 |
| JD & GM Christison 13 Angus | 323kg | $4.70 | $1520 |
| PA & AE Black 16 Angus | 322kg | $4.50 | $1450 |
| JM Mcilwaine 24 Angus | 310kg | $5.03 | $1560 |
| G SAS & JA Robertson 13 Ang | 307kg | $4.75 | $1460 |
| Leebrooke Livestock 18 Angus | 307kg | $4.72 | $1450 |
| D Boulton 18 Angus X | 303kg | $4.09 | $1240 |
| Ranceby Hill Pastoral 24 Angus | 289kg | $4.46 | $1290 |
| Pulman Bay P/L Red Angus | 286kg | $5.00 | $1430 |
| P Le Page 17 Angus | 283kg | $4.59 | $1300 |
| W Powell & Summit Farms P/L 10 Angus | 279kg | $4.12 | $1150 |
| J & D Robson P/L 12 Angus | 273kg | $4.79 | $1310 |
| Tibooburra Angus 11 Angus | 242kg | $4.79 | $1160 |
| Alira Rise 16 Angus | 236kg | $5.04 | $1190 |
| **Crossbreeds:** | | | |
| MS Durkin & PR Xuereb 13 Hereford X steers | 377kg | $4.45 | $1680 |
| Disisto Pastoral P/L 10 Angus X heifers | 350kg | $4.02 | $1410 |
| MS Durkin & PR Xuereb 12 Hereford X steers | 298kg | $4.46 | $1330 |

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www.alexscott.com.au

36 BRIDGE STREET, KORUMBURRA PH: 5655 1133 FAX: 5655 2480

Livestock Sales

KORUMBURRA
David Ryan 0408 311 895

LEONGATHA
Dane Perczyk - Livestock Manager 0408 176 063
Jack Curtis 0427 762 670

WARRAGUL
Neil Darby - Livestock Manager 0418 595 265
Terry Ahearn 0438 562 816
Jordan Sim 0448 058 435
Mark Malacarne 0418 654 590
Georgie Snell 0417 100 657

FOSTER
Dick Faulkner 0408 595 174
Brian Vuillermin 0429 436 040

WONTHAGGI
Rob Ould - Livestock Manager 0408 595 183
David Holden 0428 749 390
Alan Bolding 0419 723 255

PAKENHAM
David Setches - Livestock Manager 0409 443 473
Glenn Barwick 0408 975 476
Morgan Croucher 0457 001 877
Tim Gibson 0420 306 599
Imogen Price 0417 225 498

Real Estate Sales

KORUMBURRA
Scott McKenzie 0427 552 898

WONTHAGGI
Phillip Hanley 0417 140 508
Cal Nation 0439 334 163
Mick Chambers 0418 349 783

GRANTVILLE
Angus Hall 0466 326 487

INVERLOCH
Marni Lee Redmond 0403 525 413

BERWICK
Tom Gibson 0438 574 472

LEONGATHA
Andrew Newton 0402 940 320
Peter Dwyer 0428 855 244
Emily Hillberg 0422 622 299
Tony Giles 0407 528 192
Dan Huther 0418 334 801

WARRAGUL
Alan Steenholdt 0409 423 822

PAKENHAM
Tom Gibson 0438 574 472

LANG LANG
Scott McKenzie 0427 552 898

MELBOURNE LAND
Matt Koster 0474 781 711

COWES
Greg Price 0419 337 441
Brian Silver 0407 347 509
Chase Watters 0423 272 819

VENUS BAY
Daniel Lawrie 0417 631 252
Sue Lawrie 0419 885 489

KOO WEE RUP
Angus Hall 0466 326 487

JA21216

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David Phelan 0429 050 349

HM12728

# Wet and humid conditions brings increased risks

**By Bec Cameron, Dairy Industry Development Officer, Ellinbank**

DAIRY farmers are encouraged to take proactive steps to protect herd health as humid, wet conditions increase disease, affect growth rates of young cattle and decrease productivity.

**Infectious diseases**

The risk of infectious diseases increases in wetter conditions. The risk of mastitis rises when cows lie in muddy environments, allowing bacteria to enter the udder. Leptospirosis, a zoonotic disease, can spread through contaminated water, posing risks to both cattle and humans. Clostridial diseases such as blackleg and pulpy kidney may also emerge after flooding or soil disturbance.

Pinkeye in cattle is a common summer and autumn issue in Victoria, mainly caused by bacteria and spread by flies, dust and grass seeds. It leads to tearing, squinting, swollen eyelids and cloudy corneas that can progress to ulcers and blindness, reducing weight gain and milk production. Treatment includes antibiotic eye ointments or injections, and veterinarians can help identify the bacterial strain affecting the animal.

Controlling flies, slashing pastures to reduce seed heads, providing shade, vaccinating before fly season and maintaining good nutrition (vitamin A, copper and selenium) can help reduce the risk. Early detection and isolating affected animals help limit the spread and protect herd productivity.

**Facial eczema and liver disease**

Facial eczema is prevalent in humid weather conditions, alongside the liver disease caused by cattle ingesting spores. The spores thrive in dead pasture during warm, humid conditions. The toxin damages the liver and can lead to photosensitisation, reduced milk yield and weight loss. Subclinical cases may go unnoticed but still affect productivity. Prevention is essential and includes monitoring spore counts through your vet, supplementing with zinc in consultation with your nutritionist or feed company and managing grazing to reduce exposure.

**Hoof health**

Lameness caused by softened hooves from prolonged exposure to moisture can increase. Wet laneways and paddocks increase the risk of bruising, footrot and white-line injury. Preventative measures include maintaining dry walking surfaces, regular hoof checks and prompt treatment of injuries.

**Parasites**

Parasite burdens can increase during humid conditions, as worm larvae survive longer on pasture. Calves are especially vulnerable to gastrointestinal parasites like coccidia and cryptosporidium, which cause scours and dehydration. Flystrike may also affect cattle with open wounds or irritated skin. Regular faecal egg counts, strategic drenching and fly control are key management tools.

**Water quality**

Water quality may also decline due to contamination from floods, increasing the risk of algal blooms, meaning regular water testing and access to clean water are vital. Proactive management of troughs and water sources helps protect herd health and maintain productivity during challenging weather.

**Nutrition**

Wet conditions can reduce pasture quality through waterlogging and lower dry matter, affecting cattle nutrition, especially the energy and protein needed for milk production. Supplementing with silage or concentrates helps maintain dietary balance. Moisture also increases disease spread between farms, so limiting the movement of animals and equipment is important. Regular monitoring and record-keeping, including tracking hoof health, parasite treatments and water quality, supports early intervention and protects herd productivity.

**Anthony Delaney sells for Elders Delaney Livestock.** A14_5025

# Varied results at Leongatha Store Sale

THURSDAY'S Leongatha Store Sale was driven by local buyers, Anthony Delaney of Elders Delaney Livestock pleased with how things were going after selling steers.

"It was a very solid result, probably a bit better than expected with a general trend across all markets of being a little bit cheaper in the last couple of weeks, but it was fully firm on our sale two weeks ago," he said.

He noted competition was completely local, comprising South and West Gippsland buyers.

Anthony sold a yearly line of Copperleaf cattle from San Remo, achieving $6.10 a kilo, as well as a run of older steers from Omeo in the 600 to 700 kilo bracket that made between $4.50 and $4.80 per kilo.

Eddie Hams of Nutrien South Gippsland Livestock was one of a collection of agents busy buying cattle on behalf of local clients, estimating prices were about 20 cents a kilo down compared to the previous week's Leongatha Store Sale, that observation being prior to the sale of heifers.

Speaking a little after Eddie, Simon Henderson of Phelan & Henderson & Co put the reduction in prices from the previous sale at between 10 and 20 cents a kilo, having enjoyed success in buying cattle for clients to replace bullocks sold.

"You try and buy and sell on the same market and if you're buying cattle with a bit of weight, you try and buy them for less per kilo than what you've sold your bullocks for," Simon said.

While remarking that's not always achievable, he was able to accomplish it this time.

Simon observed that overall "the season is ticking along nicely," having been helped by impressive Spring rain, predicting things will get busy in the new year with cattle coming onto the market that have taken longer to fatten due to a dry Autumn and cold winter.

Knowing Simon's enthusiasm for a good conversation, a passerby quipped that this writer had better get "a longer pencil" for his notes, so perhaps Mr Squiggle is the ideal scribe.

There were approximately 2,200 head penned on Thursday, with MLA market reporter Brendan Fletcher describing quality as "more limited with fewer yearlings and a larger proportion of crossbred cattle".

He observed there were fewer feedlot operators present, with none operating.

"The market was generally firm with the exception of light weight weaner steers which ticked up a little and the heifer portion which saw a decline of up to $100 a head," Brendan reported.

**Jake Anthony and Simon Henderson of Phelan & Henderson & Co enjoy Thursday's Store Sale.** A15_5025

**Eddie Hams of Nutrien South Gippsland Livestock was busy buying cattle on behalf of local clients on Thursday.** A16_5025


ALL BREEDS FEMALE SALE
VLE – LEONGATHA
MONDAY JANUARY 5, 2026
Starting at 9am

**A/c Willawa Grazing, Foster (Annual Draft) (NUTRIEN)**
25X25 Angus/Friesian x heifer, 2½ yo with Limo calf at foot, not rejoined.
40 Angus/Friesian x heifers, 2 yo, PTIC to Stuf Limo bull to commence calving 30/1
Feature line of Vendor bred heifers. Quality outfits & proven vealer mothers. All Heifers by McIndoe & Hazelwood stud Angus bulls
**A/c B, D & M Calder, Dumbalk (Annual Draft) (NUTRIEN)**
23 Angus/Friesian x heifers, Unjoined, by Harris bulls
**A/c C & M Amor, Kardella (NUTRIEN)**
12 Angus/Friesian & Hereford/Friesian x heifers, 2-2 ½ yo
PTIC to Limo bull to commence calving 20/1
**A/c J & L Jenkin, Korumburra (NUTRIEN)**
10 Hereford/Friesian x heifer, 2 1/2yo
PTIC to Limo bull to commence calving 10/1
**A/c T & J Clark, Nerrena (NUTRIEN)**
15 Angus/Friesian x heifers, 15 mths, unjoined

THE HERD SEJ Nutrien 5662 4033 5662 2291
PHC ESB 0429 050 349 5997 1555
ALEX SCOTT 5655 1133 Elders 5658 1894 5941 4666
JA23706
SOUTH GIPPSLAND ASSOCIATED AGENTS


## Lardner Park Calf Market Report

**Monday, December 8, 2025**

| | |
|---|---|
| Jersey & Jersey x | $38 to $60 |
| Friesian Bulls | $47 to $126 |
| Friesian Heifers | $32 to $130 |
| Beef Bulls | $55 to $350 |
| Beef Heifers | $79 to $300 |

Number of Calves: **68**
Number purchased to rear: **55**

**Steer & Heifer Sale**

| | |
|---|---|
| Steers | $850 to $1370 |
| Heifers | $120 to $1060 |

Number of Calves: **119**


STORE SALE
VLE – LEONGATHA
800 CATTLE 800
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2025
Starting at 9am
PLEASE NOTE: 4PM WEDNESDAY CURFEW APPLIES

GROWN STEERS

**A/c Latrobe Park Angus, Morwell (NUTRIEN)**
25 Angus steers, 14-15 mths
**A/c Ponderosa Herefords, Meeniyan (NUTRIEN)**
20 Hereford steers, 14-15 mths, by Mountain Valley bull, JBS & NE accred, very quiet
15 Black Baldy steers, 14-15 mths, by Harris bulls, JBS & NE Accred, very quiet
**A/c R Jackson, Staceys Bridge (PHC)**
8 Speckle Park steers, 15-16 mths
**A/c D & T Gilheany, Buffalo (SEJ)**
7 Angus steers, 16 mths
**A/c Cheeky Chilli, Toora (SEJ)**
16 Angus steers, 16-18 mths
**A/c C & G White, Foster (SEJ)**
22 Angus steers, 15 mths
VB, GF & ABF, Banquet blood
**A/c MI & A Giardina, Thorpdale (ESB)**
15 Angus steers, 15-16 mths
**A/c G Virgona, Yarra Junction (ESB)**
17 Angus steers, 14-15 mths, Yea District bred,one mark

WEANERS

**A/c N & J Stringer, Foster (SEJ)**
12 Angus steers, 12-13 mths
12 Angus heifers, 12-13 mths
**A/c N Symmons, Fish Creek (SEJ)**
12 Hereford X heifers, 10 mths
**A/c Martin & Taylor, Fish Creek (SEJ)**
7 Angus steers, 8-9 mths
5 Angus heifers, 8-9 mths
**A/c Robinson & Hasthorpe, Yallourn North (ESB)**
50 Charolais X mixed sex calves
**A/c G & S Hasthorpe, Tanjil South (ESB)**
25 Charolais X mixed sex calves
**A/c W Robinson, Tanjil South (ESB)**
20 Charolais X mixed sex calves
**A/c J & S Kelly, Korumburra (NUTRIEN)**
16 Angus steers, 10-12 mths
**A/c Little River, Korumburra (NUTRIEN)**
50 Angus mixed sex, 10-12 mths
**A/c C & L Stewart, Poowong (NUTRIEN)**
25 Angus & Hereford X steers, 10-12 mths
**A/c P Calafiore F/T, Mirboo Nth (NUTRIEN)**
10 Angus steers, 10 mths
**A/c E & J Cox, French Island (NUTRIEN)**
18 Angus steers, 12 mths
**A/c C Zissis, Mardan (NUTRIEN)**
40 Angus mixed sex, 10-12 mths
**A/c Silverbrae Enterprises P/L, Outtrim (NUTRIEN)**
15 Charolais mixed sex weaners, 10-12 mths
**A/c K & G Hempel, Hiawatha (PHC)**
25 Hereford mixed sex weaners, Karoonda blood
**A/c J & S Giliam, Dumbalk (NUTRIEN)**
50 Danish Blue X steers, 5-6 mths, by AI Danish Blue sires
**A/c Nartanda, Binginwarri (SEJ)**
24 Angus mixed sex, 8-10 mths
VB & weaned
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**A/c TJ Johnston, Stony Creek (SEJ)**
15 Angus steers, 8-9 mths
10 Angus heifers, 8-9 mths
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**A/c B, R & S Knee, Toora (SEJ)**
30 Angus steers, 10 mths
VB, GF & ABF, NE Accred
**A/c Pendleside, Woori Yallock (ESB)**
22 Angus steers, 10-11 mths, weaned and VB
**A/c G Versace, Hoddles Creek (ESB)**
20 Charolais X mixed sex weaners

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# Virtual fencing technology is an absolute game-changer for farmers

**Minister for Agriculture, Ros Spence, during a demonstration of virtual fencing technology at Agriculture Victoria's Ellinbank SmartFarm in Gippsland.**

VICTORIAN livestock farmers are set to be boosted by huge productivity gains after the Minister for Agriculture, Ros Spence, announced the new regulations under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986, giving farmers access to virtual fencing and herding technology for use across Victorian farms.

The cutting-edge technology allows livestock farmers to guide and contain livestock without physical fences.

Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) president Brett Hosking said the long-awaited decision was set to transform farm management, animal welfare, and industry sustainability in one of Australia's largest livestock sectors.

"This is a huge step forward that will deliver real, on-farm productivity and welfare benefits for dairy and livestock farmers across Victoria.

"We've been working hard to get to this decision from the very beginning. Victoria's livestock and dairy sector is poised to see productivity gains in excess of tens of millions of dollars and is now ready to step into the future."

"This announcement is the culmination of years of behind-the-scenes work, and we thank Minister for Agriculture Ros Spence for backing this technology and working with us to get it done," Mr Hosking said.

United Dairy Farmers of Victoria president Bernie Free said the green-lighting of the technology will help ensure Victoria's dairy industry has the certainty it needs to innovate and remain globally competitive.

"Virtual fencing technology is an absolute game-changer for Victorian dairy farmers. It allows farmers to rotate pastures more efficiently, protect environmentally sensitive areas, improve animal health outcomes and provide a safer work environment.

"Victoria is already Australia's dairy industry powerhouse. This move is set to reinforce that mantle and set the platform for the potential of huge growth in our local sector.

"We have continually advocated for a regulatory framework that keeps pace with innovation, while maintaining strong animal welfare standards. The outcome announced on Wednesday, December 10, achieves exactly that, and it sets an exciting precedent for the years ahead," Mr Free said.

A demonstration of virtual fencing technology took place at Agriculture Victoria's Ellinbank SmartFarm in Gippsland between July 2024 and May 2025.

Dairy cattle were fitted with solar-powered smart collars that use audio, vibration and electronic cues to contain animals within a virtual fence and guide them to areas of the farm via a mobile phone app. The system also allowed farm staff to monitor the cows' location, health and reproductive status.

The trial demonstrated how virtual fencing technology can enhance livestock management, enabling farmers to monitor animal health and location in real time. Cows adapted well to the system.

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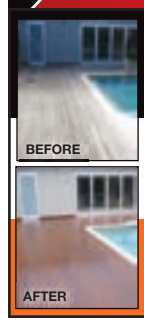


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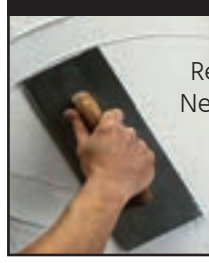

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## DEATHS

**BIRD, Linda Jane:**

24.04.1969 - 07.12.2025

Passed away peacefully at home in Broome WA.

Dearly loved partner of Adrian.

Loved daughter of John and Betty (dec.).

Fond stepdaughter of Ketha (dec.).

Much loved little sister and sister-in-law of Jill and Oon, Kim and Doug, Paul and Diana.

Adored aunty of Cassi and Ryan, Marni and Adam, Max, and Tom. Treasured great aunty of Rory, Pippa, Arlo and Solly.

Dear friend of Garry, Maxine and Paul.

Our beautiful Lindy Lou, you were a free spirit with a heart that longed to see the world. Though your journey here ended too soon, your spirit will forever wander the beautiful places you loved.

Privately cremated. A memorial service will be held for Linda at a later date.

---

**BIRD, Linda:**

Forever a part of the Mitchell Family.

John (dec.), Leslie, Michelle and Fiona.

---

**DAL LAGO, Adrian Charles:**

DOB 26.05.1955
Died unexpectedly on 09-12-2025.

Much loved husband of Susan.

Adored father and father-in-law of Luke and Katrina, Peter and Amanda, Marcus and Isabella.

Cherished 'Nonno' of Jack, Anna, Bonnie, Imogen, Isla, Angus and Billie.

Deeply sad, forever in our hearts.

For funeral details contact Rosebud. Funerals 5986 8491

---

**DAL LAGO, Adrian Charles:**

Dearly loved son of Gus and Kay (both dec.). Beloved older brother of Peter, Mary and Anna.

Special brother-in-law of Stephen and John. Much loved uncle to all his nieces and nephews.

My older brother Adrian, always there, true and honest. Never a bad word between us. Will miss you as I looked up to you. Broken as we are, but mended in your memory.

Love always, your little brother Peter.

**CLASSIFIED DEADLINE 12 NOON MONDAYS**

## DEATHS

**DAL LAGO, Adrian Charles:**

With deep sadness we say goodbye to our beloved brother, brother-in-law and uncle.

A true gift to all our lives.

No one so loved is ever lost. He will be deeply missed.

***Till we meet again.***

Love always, Mary and Stephen. Mairead, Cade, Lilah, Nyah, Louis and Kanoa. Justin, Jenna, Harry and Lacey. Calvin, Skye, Gus and Archie. Hannah, Josh, Albie and Lexi.

***Arrivederci***

With broken hearts we sadly farewell a most cherished brother, friend and uncle.

John, Anna, Ruby and Caitlin.

Treasured memories of all our special times together.

---

**DAL LAGO, Adrian Charles:**

Beloved son-in-law of Norm and Amy Davis (both dec.). Dearly loved by all the Davis family and clan.

---

**DAL LAGO, Adrian Charles:**

Loved cousin of Maureen and Peter. Cherished memories of a wonderful man.

---

**DAL LAGO, Adrian:**

We are shocked and devastated by the sudden passing of our great mate Adrian. Our thoughts go to Susan, the boys and their families. It will never be the same.

--- The Wonthaggi Crew

---

**DOBSON (nee Down/Graham), Leesa Maree:**

Sunrise: 16.04.1971
Sunset: 10.12.2025

Loved daughter of Sandra. Loving sister of Kelle.

Adored Mum to Jordane. Cherished Aunty to Ashleigh, Thomas, Jarrad and Steph.

A proud great aunty and dearly loved by all her family and friends.

Well behaved women rarely make history.

---

**DOBSON (nee Down/Graham), Leesa Maree:**

Sunrise: 16.04.1971
Sunset: 10.12.2025

Those we love don't go away, they walk beside us every day.

Unseen, unheard but always near.

Still loved, still missed and very dear.

We love you.

Mum (Sandy), Kelle and Paul, Ashleigh, Max, Cillian, Thomas and Casey.

## DEATHS

**HAYWOOD, Max Edward 'Nugget:'**

19.06.1938- 04.12.2025.

With great sadness we announce the peaceful passing of Max 'Nugget' Haywood at Bathurst Base Hospital.

Lovingly blessed husband of Wendy Haywood. Adored dad of Natalie Moase. Treasured uncle, loved brother-in-law, and long-standing wonderful friend to many.

***Forever in our hearts always.***

---

**HAYWOOD, Max (Nugget):**

Passed away at the Bathurst Hospital, December 4, 2025.

Treasured and dearly loved friend for 73 years.

Alan and Barbara (dec.) Sperling and family.

Innings well played Nugget.

---

**MILLER, Elaine:**

16.05.1936 - 07.12.2025.

A joyous presence, generous nature, her laughter heard from afar.

Loved by so many, loved many in return.

A warm embrace, if an embrace could be a person themselves.

Mum/Gran, you will be sorely missed, and we are so grateful to have had you so present in our lives.

With love always and forever, Alan, Janene, Ross and Claire.

---

**MILLER, Elaine:**

The committee and members of the Inverloch RSL extend their sincere sympathies to Jack and family on the passing of Elaine.

---

**MILLER, Elaine:**

The Committee and Members of the Inverloch Bowling Club are mourning the loss of Past President and long-time Member, Elaine Miller.

Rest in peace Elaine, knowing your enormous contribution was valued. We will all miss your smiling face and welcoming manner around the Club. Our condolences to Jack and the family.

**To place a notice on this page please call 5672 1888**

## DEATHS

**O'LOUGHLIN (nee Harvey), Shirley May:**

14.02.1939 - 04.12.2025

Much loved Mum of Shane and Donna, Peter and Michelle.

Dearly loved wife of John (dec.).

Treasured Granny to Tomi, Jesse and Samantha, Kate and Ellie.

Great Granny to Lani, Alby and Maggie.

As per Shirley's wishes, a private burial was held.

Shirley's family would like to thank the wonderful staff at Carinya Lodge for their care.

---

**QUEALE, Kevin Albert:**

Passed away peacefully on December 12, 2025.

Aged 88 years.

Loved husband of Judith.

Loving Dad and father-in-law of Kym and Bob, Karen, Rodney and Janna, Janelle and Mick, Shannyn and Paul.

Adored Poppy and Poppa Kev to all his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

***'Keep ya chin up.'***

A Celebration of Life service will be held in the New Year, details will be advised at a later date via our website, www.handleyandanderson funerals.com.au

## FUNERALS

**DOBSON:**

A Celebration for the Life of Leesa Maree Dobson will be held at Handley and Anderson Chapel, 3085 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Wonthaggi on Friday, December 19, 2025, commencing at 11:11am.

Privately Cremated.

For live-streaming go to www.handleyand andersonfunerals. com.au.

Handley & Anderson FUNERAL DIRECTORS Wonthaggi 5672 1074 Funerals Australia

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**HAYWOOD:**

We invite you to join us (wearing a touch of blue) to say goodbye to Mr. Max Haywood at a Requiem Mass at the Cathedral of St Michael and St John, Bathurst on Friday, December 19, 2025, at 11:30am.

Live Streaming link can be accessed via www. renshawsfunerals. com.au.

RENSHAW'S 6331 4265

## BEREAVEMENT THANKS

**HANKS, Len:**

On behalf of the Hanks family, we wish to extend our thanks to everyone for their phone calls, visits, flowers and food, thoughtful gestures on the occasion of Len's passing.

We are grateful to all who attended and those who shared their stories, memories and tributes plus the Fergie tractors. We believe he could not have had a better send off. Special thanks to the celebrant Wendy Rutjens.

Dad to Pam, (Elizabeth and Shiela dec.), Trevor, Susan, (Dianne dec.), Karen, Linda, Douglas and partners and families.

We will meet again, I don't know when, but I do know where.

Miss you heaps, your wife of 66 years, Ethel xx.

## FOR SALE

**GOLF CLUBS:**
Set of golf clubs R.H. Brosnan brand, good condition. Comes with caddy. $150, Ph. 0408 325 997

## USED CARS TRUCKS & TRACTORS

**BASS COAST CAR REMOVALS**

**We pay you for your unwanted cars, 4x4's & trucks**

We can remove farm scrap metal for free. Towing now available.

**Call Shane 7 days a week 5678 2002 or 0407 599 616**

JENC5058

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Advertisements offering a used motor car for sale must include in the advertisement:
(a) The cash price of the motor car; and
(b) Whichever of the following is applicable...
- If the motor car is registered, the registration number; or
- If the motor car is unregistered, the engine number of the vehicle.

HMC14139

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**WANTED ANTIQUES, COLLECTABLES, ESTATE LOTS, JEWELLERY AND SHED ITEMS:**
Cash paid.
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## PUBLIC NOTICES

**BASS MARKET**

***Christmas Gifts for everyone!***

Community Market, Hade Ave,

**Saturday December 20, 8am – 1pm**

All enquiries to 0490 852 753

AFC0137-V4

Lifeline

**HELP IS AS CLOSE AS THE TELEPHONE**

**13 11 14**

HMC14134

**RAFFLE WINNERS:**

Fish Creek & District Fire Brigade Christmas raffle winners:

**1st - Geoff Hall**
**2nd - Nadia Stefani**
**3rd - Ross Jarred**

Thank you to everyone who supported our raffle.

Thank you to our prize donors -
Total Tools - Wonthaggi
Capeview Mitre 10 - Leongatha
Browns Stock Feed - Leongatha
Marriott Motorcycles - Leongatha
ACE Industrial - Leongatha
Haymes Paints - Leongatha
Repco - Leongatha
Autopro - Leongatha
Home Hardware - Leongatha
Ag Warehouse - Leongatha
Brown/Wigg - Meeniyan

**ROADWORKS:**

Roadworks will take place on Bass Highway at Wonthaggi, just north of the intersection with Korumburra Road.

The works will commence on Tuesday, December 9, 2025, and aim to be completed by Wednesday, December 17, 2025.

The works involve an extension to the Centre Island.

During this time a 40km work zone speed limit will be in place.

## SITUATIONS VACANT

**Labourer/ Handyman**

Two part-time jobs at Yanakie, travel time and good wages paid. Suit willing candidates able to start asap.

**David 0409 080 610**

JA23687

# Sentinel-Times Classifieds

## SITUATIONS VACANT

### ADVERTISERS PLEASE NOTE:

Much hardship and difficulty is caused to jobseekers by misleading advertisements placed in the employment columns.

Our Positions Vacant / Situations Vacant columns are reserved for advertisements which carry a specific and genuine offer of employment.

Ads for 'Business Opportunities', 'Commission Only/Sales,' training courses and employment services should be submitted under those headings.

Placing misleading job ads is an offence against the ACL and all advertisements are subject to the publisher's approval. For further advice contact the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission on 1300 302 502 or Consumer Affairs Victoria.

BAIRS HOTEL
EST. 1890

**Chef**

**Bairs Hotel Leongatha** is seeking an experienced and motivated Chef to join our busy kitchen team. Full-time or part-time hours available, above award wages, Applicants must be reliable, organised, and confident working in a fast-paced pub environment.

Start date-mid January 2026

Short term accommodation available for the successful applicant.

**To Apply: Please forward CV to bairshotel@hotmail.com or phone 5662 2017**

AF0092

**McRae Engineering**
**Is currently seeking a**

**SALESMAN / YARD MANAGER**

**To work in its sales division selling roofing and steel supplies.**

This is a full time permanent position for immediate start and is an ideal opportunity for a hard working person to work as both part of team and individually in our steel and roofing sales division in Meeniyan.

**Skills and Experiences that are of an advantage:**
Experience in the plumbing and steel industries,
Sales experience,
Good customer relation skills,
Car / Forklift / Truck Licences.

Work hours start from 7:30am Monday to Friday.
Wages negotiable.

ME0801

**To apply please email Shaun at shaun@mcraeengineering.net.au to arrange a time to meet and discuss further or to drop off a resumé.**

## PUBLIC NOTICES

bass coast community foundation

**Making a real difference in the lives of people across Bass Coast.**

If you can give, please give where you live.

**www.bccf.org.au**

## DEADLINES

**Classified single column**
Mondays 12.00 noon

**Classified double column**
Fridays 3.00pm

Please note that double column advertisements requiring a proof must be received at least two hours prior to deadline and proofs will not be provided for single column advertisements.

## TO ADVERTISE

Phone:
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Email:
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Mail:
**47 McBride Ave, Wonthaggi**

**Office Hours:**
9am-5pm Monday to Friday

**Payments accepted:**

eftpos MasterCard VISA

### Advertising conditions:

Full name and address of advertiser must be supplied even though not necessarily included in advertisement.

The publishers reserve the right to omit and alter any advertisement. Please check your ad is correct the first day it appears. While every care is taken to ensure your ad is correct, errors can occur. We regret that we cannot be responsible for any errors beyond the first day if you fail to bring it to our attention.

All advertisements must be prepaid unless client has an existing credit facility. Accounts are due and payable on the due date as shown on the account.

**The Motor Car Traders Regulations:**

States that from July 1, 1998 all advertisements for used vehicles including motorcycles must include the cash price of vehicle and registration number or engine number if not registered.

Sentinel-Times

# Kay Abude to lead women in new art commission

**Kaye Abude will be working with local residents to create a new, exciting public art commission that will be positioned outside at the top of The Union Theatre, celebrating Wonthaggi's Miners' Women's Auxiliary.** C101_5025

CELEBRATED contemporary Melbourne artist Kay Abude has been announced as the lead for the new Public Art Commission at The Union Theatre in Wonthaggi, as the theatre closes out an astounding year celebrating 100 years.

Announced earlier this year on International Women's Day, Bass Coast Shire Council was successful in their application as part of the Victorian Women's Public Art Fund to develop a public artwork titled 'Pennies in the Petties', celebrating our local trailblazing Wonthaggi Miners' Women's Auxiliary.

The women's activism, leadership and community strength shaped Wonthaggi's identity and played a nationally significant role in advocacy for workers' rights, gender equality and social reform.

Following a competitive selection process, Abude was chosen for her deeply considered, community-led approach and her strong commitment to honouring local history.

Working in collaboration with Tilt Industrial Design, her proposal includes a series of community workshops, storytelling forums and collaborative design sessions, culminating in a major public artwork for the front of The Union Theatre.

Drawing from the "hem" metaphor, a second artwork will also be included inside the theatre.

Abude has been consulting with the Wonthaggi and District Historical Society and local residents, whose grandparents and families were involved, not only in the mines at the time, but particularly the Women's Auxiliary.

The design process will use archival photographs, historic texts, oral histories and community-generated concepts, creating artwork that is collectively made with the community, not simply for it.

Bass Coast Mayor, Cr Rochelle Halstead, said the project represents a powerful and timely moment for Wonthaggi.

"We are incredibly proud to welcome Kay Abude to this important project. It is so meaningful to honour the extraordinary women who shaped the town's story. What excites me most is Kay's commitment to working hand-in-hand with our community – listening to stories, weaving our history into the design, and creating a piece that truly belongs to Wonthaggi."

Abude is thrilled to be collaborating with local residents in bringing the artwork to life.

"I'm really excited to be learning about the history of the auxiliary and finding elements that resonate with the community," Abude said.

"There's so much history, and I look forward to working with the community."

The artwork will be developed in early 2026, with community engagement at the heart of each stage. Workshops will invite local families, historical groups and descendants of the Women's Auxiliary to participate directly in the creative process.

**Football and former school friends of Troy Sinclair have the last laugh, all dressed in North Melbourne jumpers, as they send their mate off ahead of his wedding early next year.**

# Footy theme for Troy's bucks' party

**By Michael Giles**

A DAY at the picnic races, a round of golf or a pub crawl are classic options for sending a mate off before he gets married.

But in the absence of a local race meeting, footy friends and former school mates of Leongatha's Troy Sinclair picked a bus tour to some popular local drinking holes as the ideal activity on a pleasant Saturday afternoon.

But they couldn't resist a dig at their mate's tragic choice of football teams, all decking themselves out in any bought or borrowed North Melbourne guernsey they could find, with a blaze of blue and white emerging from the Burge's bus each time they pulled up at the next venue.

"Where did you get all those North Melbourne jumpers?"

"From everyone we know," they said.

Mr Sinclair acknowledged the joke but is well used to the banter. He gets married to fiancée Bree Newton on January 23.

**W&DNA section one, winners Sapphires: from left, back, Deb Griffin, Jessica Mersin, Kate McCracken, Emma Ton, Milly Jobe, Lee Storti (capt), Sally Wells, Ellie Bates, Joanne Smith and Jackie Kent. Runners-up Scrambled Legs: front, Abbey McCaughan, Clare Peterson, Casey Tumino, Georgia Slidders, Oona Shepherd, Nicole Creaser and Katrina Slidders (capt). Absent: Mackenzie Slidders.**

# Sapphires shine and Jaguars surge

**Social netball winners, The Goal Diggers, back from left, Kimberly Carter-Weston, Ashlin Stewart, Bec Woods, Ro Grayson and Kim Pike. Front, Cassey Jordan-Lelliott, Maddy Egglestone(Capt) and Eden McInnes.**

WONTHAGGI and District Netball Association Indoor Night Netball held its Grand Finals last Tuesday, December 9.

W&DNA would like to thank all their fabulous umpires and especially the 16 teams for entering, and the elves who help with setting up every week. We all love playing in the new stadium.

It was great to see new players join in and mums playing with their daughters and sisters. Also, the improvement and growth of many teams and players. Just playing and having fun is what really counts.

This year's overall best, fairest and impressive players of the season went to Ellie Bates of the Sapphires, runner-up Olivia Watson (Net Chicks) and in third place Holly Forysth (Spice Goals). Emma Ton (Sapphires) finished a close fourth but was the goaler of the season with over 300 goals thrown. Congratulations, you all had a great season, and it was well deserved.

## Section one

Section one saw the Sapphires play Scrambled Legs. This was a very contested game with lots of intercepts and action happening. Both teams had to work hard; there was a lot of pressure all over the court. Sapphires were up by four at the first break, then Scrambled Legs got within one goal, but Sapphires held the lead by three at half-time, then five at three-quarter time. The goals being thrown from afar were impressive, clean bombs and amazing to watch. Congratulations to both teams on a great Grand Final game. Well done, Sapphires, on a great season. The final score was 43 to 32.

Congratulations to the Spice Girls and Opals for making section one, great effort, but unfortunately were eliminated the previous week.

## Section two

Well done to Hot Shots and Out of the Blue on making the section two finals; however, it was the High Flyers and Jaguars who made it through to the grand final match-up. High Flyers were up by one at first break, then Jaguars were up by one at half-time. Jaguars tore away in the third quarter by 12, but credit to High Flyers, who fought back and had a very close last quarter. Congratulations to both teams on a terrific game, Jaguars 39 to High Flyers 26.

## Social

Our Social Netball Section was awarded to The Goal Diggers. They won their elimination final 54 to 35, finding their form and players late in the season. Well done, girls.

W&DNA would like to wish everybody a safe and Happy Christmas. Enjoy the break. Hopefully, we will see you for the Indoor Night Summer Competition starting in February 2026.

Visit our new website, soon to be launched. Huge thanks to our new, truly amazing working group who will be restarting Junior Winter Saturday morning netball in 2026. Stay tuned, it's coming.

**Wonthaggi & District Netball Association Indoor Night competition best and fairest runner-up Olivia Watson (Net Chicks), winner Ellie Bates (Sapphires), and third Holly Forysth (Spice Goals).**

**W&DNA section two, winners Jaguars: from left, back, Lani Birkett (coach), Jya Donohue, Jo Duscher, Alyce Tack, Brigette Tack, Claire Satchwell, Abbey Beveridge, Melissa Beveridge and Zoe Lowe. Absent: Sharlotte Hogan and Vivienne Carfrae. With runners-up High Flyers, front, Felicity Tack, Elisa Wintle, Georgia Wintle, Imogen Lockhart, Jaycee Trewavis (capt), Zoe Ruter and Ruby McGillivray. Not pictured: Louise Strickland.**

**Under 13s winners the Flamingos, back from left, Elanor Hullick, Ruby Pedersen, Alice Martindale, Skylar Garrick, Bella Oudshoom, Leah Williams, Ivy Addison, Eivie Kimber and Mila Wylie. Runners-up the Coastal Queens, front, Eva Bell, Dae Anderson, Zaya Cole, Olive Callis, Milla Cantwell, Marlee Hecker, Elsie Williams and Milla Hughes.**

# WDNA wraps up junior competition

WONTHAGGI and District Netball Association Wednesday Junior Spring Twilight Mixed Competition wrapped up with the Grand Final on November 26 with 24 teams participating over the season.

Overall, eleven Under 11 teams, eight Under 13 teams and five Under 15 teams participated.

In the Under 13s Grand Final the Flamingos defeated Coastal Queens 20-14, whilst the Under 15 Hot Shots defeated Caramel Slice 24-21.

W&DNA would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved but especially Angela and Chris for organising this wonderful competition.

It was delightful to see the courts full and everyone enjoying netball on Wednesday afternoons.

Also welcome to the new working group who are organising the 2026 Saturday Morning Winter Competition. Stay tuned. New Website. New Energy so exciting.

W&DNA welcomes all young children in the area to come along and learn to play this great team sport. Teams and individuals welcomed.

**Under 15 winners the Hot Shots, back from left, Abi Derham, Kate Mcausland, Eliza Poll, Piper Micolaci, Macy Piera, Frankie Jess, Ella Solohub and Sera Szymanski. Runners-up the Caramel Slice, front, Indianna Matthews, Alice Hicks, Sass Martin, Isla Curtin, Harlow Reed, Harriette Burness, Lilly Miles, Maggie Fisher, Daisy Miles and Ruby Friswell.**

## RIVERSIDE TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Section 1 Doubles:

Drouin Maroon 5–40 def Moe 4–40

Warragul 4–37 def by Drouin Gold 5–40. Neerim District – Bye

Section 1/2 Singles:

Moe White 2–36 def by Trafalgar Red 4–48. Trafalgar White 4–36 def Drouin Maroon 2–24. Drouin Gold 1–18 def by Warragul 5–45. Moe Blue - BYE

Section 2 Doubles

Trafalgar 7–47 def Poowong 2–34. Warragul 5–45 def Hallora 4– 38. Neerim District 2–29 def by Drouin 7–53

## PHILLIP ISLAND BRIDGE CLUB

THIS week at Monday's session, Anne Hodgson and Caroline Shaw on 64.33 per cent won narrowly from Jean Barbour and Greg Nicholson on 64 per cent.

Six tables competed.

On Wednesday, Shirley Stewart and Jill Short won with 62.5 per cent.

Five and a half tables competed.

## SOUTH GIPPSLAND BRIDGE CLUB

ON DECEMBER 8, Sean Munley and Bruce Higgs carried the field with a resounding 66.5, followed by Lois Dwyer and Anne Gibson with 58, Mary Brewis and Neville Chapman (63.5) and Anne Speakman and Peter Campbell (52.5) playing E/W.

Tuesday's Nationwides in Wonthaggi saw Ruth Harvey and Sue Edwards score 59.33 playing N/S. Then Lois Dwyer and Alan Johnston (58.33), Ann Rinder and Neville Chapman (54.81), Matti Shub and John Quayle (52.98). E/W, Hannah Martin and Maureen Stiles (58.98), Julie Perriam and Anne Gibson (53.32), Bron Sund and Mike Dooley (52.83).

Alan Johnston and Clive Hope ruled N/S decisively on Friday (65.76), followed by Matti Shub and John Quayle (61.65), Sean Munley and Bruce Higgs (60.84), Julie Perriam and Anne Gibson (56.38), Hannah Martin and Ruth Stevenson (47.79). E/W, Penny Lanser and Doug McIntosh also got an impressive score of 65.16. Then Faye Rowlands and Bron Sund (60.27), Lois Dwyer and Robyn Egan (56.25), Marie Sands and Maureen Stiles (53.82).

All figures are percentages of total points available. Anyone wanting to learn the game or join the Club please contact president Mary on 0427 338 598 or secretary Kathy on 0438 859 561.

## TIDE GUIDE

TIDAL PREDICTIONS FROM **PORT PHILLIP HEADS**

Approx. Tide Variations: Seal Rocks, Venus Bay, Waratah Bay and Cape Woolamai (Same), Tooradin +2hrs 45, Cowes Pier +50, Stony Point +40

| TUESDAY December 16 | WEDNESDAY December 17 | THURSDAY December 18 | FRIDAY December 19 | SATURDAY December 20 | SUNDAY December 21 | MONDAY December 22 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2.24am 0.81m | 3.24am 0.89m | 4.35am 0.94m | 12.33am 1.46m | 1.20am 1.51m | 2.01am 1.56m | 2.39am 1.60m |
| 9.03am 1.33m | 9.49am 1.28m | 10.41am 1.25m | 5.48am 0.93m | 6.47am 0.89m | 7.35am 0.84m | 8.16am 0.79m |
| 3.14pm 0.48m | 4.10pm 0.46m | 5.07pm 0.44m | 11.35am 1.25m | 12.28pm 1.26m | 1.17pm 1.29m | 2.04pm 1.32m |
| 10.41pm 1.35m | 11.39pm 1.40m | | 6.01pm 0.40m | 6.50pm 0.36m | 7.35pm 0.33m | 8.15pm 0.30m |

Email us your fishing photos
news@sgst.com.au

**Lockcocks, Alana, Greg and Dale were the Section B premiers in Foster Bowls Club's Jack Attack competition.**

**Best one game winners for the South West Gippsland Midweek Bowls Group were Pat Kennedy (S), John Kappler (L), David Talbot (3) and Max Williams (2).**

**Friday's winners at Wonthaggi Senior Indoor Bowls were Pat Smith, Jeannie Slocombe, Maggie Scapin and Pam Russell.**

**Phil Price, Joy Brown (skip), John Cook and Doug Muir won Thursday's social bowls at the Inverloch Bowls Club.**

**Wonthaggi Bowls Club's Thursday social bowls winners Mary McBain and Paul Holmes.**

**Wonthaggi Bowls Club's Singles Champion Kyle Birt with runner up Rob Aitken.**

## BREAKAWAY

ONE day closer to Christmas and another great day of bowls.

The winners on Monday were Linda Newman, Pete Novak and Marj Ford.

They finished with +7.

Well done to all who enjoyed the day.

The winners on Friday were Marj Ford, Ken Webb and Helen Gladstone.

They finished on +12, well done.

Another year comes to a close, and the intrepid members met at the Cape Tavern to enjoy each other's company during the Breakaway Bowls Christmas breakup.

Friday was the last day for the year, but the club will return on Monday, January 12.

Hope to see you then, have a great Christmas and New Year.

## FISH CREEK

IT was another big week in bowls for the Fishy club.

The new undercover deck area has been completed and looks fantastic.

It is a great area to watch the action from.

The club had its sit-down Christmas dinner on Friday and it was extremely well attended with a full house.

Brent Sinclair Catering provided a lovely meal, and a terrific night was had by all.

Mark, Bronwyn and Linda did a great job of the raffle with many prizes on offer.

The men's and ladies' Singles Championship was played on Sunday and saw Bill Symmons defeat Paul Kerr.

Paul got off to a good start, but Bill was able to peg him back to win his second title.

Wendy Watkins was successful over Louise Vuillermin in the ladies'.

Wendy also got a good start but was able to hold onto her early lead despite Louise coming back late.

Thanks to Greg Welshford from MJA Wealth for their kind sponsorship.

The monthly Turkey Triples event has been moved forward to Monday, December 22, due to Christmas, so anyone requiring a game please contact Graham Hoskin.

This event is sponsored by Handley Funeral Services.

Results for Tuesday pennant saw Division 2 have a good win over Meeniyan with scores 68/14 to 44/2.

Special thanks to all the fill-ins over the last couple of weeks.

Division 4 ventured to Corinella and went down in a close one 30/2 to 40/8.

Saturday saw all three teams at home.

Division 2 had a resounding win over San Remo by 85/16 to 37/0 and remain on top of the ladder.

Division 4 also had a very important win over Phillip Island to keep their final hopes alive by winning 55/14 to 48/2.

Once again, the Heywood/Mark Angwin rink held the team together.

Division 6 didn't have its best day and lost to Korumburra 23/0 to 56/10.

The club is still in third spot but need to get back into the winning circle.

All three sides are at Inverloch this Saturday.

The Barefoot Bowls starts on Tuesday, January 13, and the club needs teams into Rob McLaughlin on 0476 891 161 as soon as possible as spots are filling fast.

The club's renowned annual tournament is on January 3 and 4.

Saturday, January 3, is the fully catered Invitational fours and sponsored by Fish Creek Quarries and Foster Garden and Gravel.

Sunday, January 4, is an Invitational Triples and thanks to sponsors Edneys of Leongatha.

Please see Bill or Hocko for teams.

Good bowling.

## FOSTER

PRESENTATION night for the Jack Attack competition was on Wednesday.

With an almost full house, the night was a big hit.

Everyone was having a great time.

Winners for the evening's games were Low Rollers, Ben, Nicole and Tania.

Runners-up were DRK, Rachael, Diana and Kaleb.

There were quite a few dress-ups for Christmas, which was great and several prizes were handed out.

An extra big thank you to Roosters Plumbing and Earthmoving for their very generous sponsorship for the whole season.

Also, mustn't forget Promontory Kitchens and Cellarbrations also for their awesome sponsorship.

The club also must thank Ray and Judy Prain who have had made and donated a perpetual trophy to record the Jack Attack results on.

All final results of ladder positions will be on the Facebook page.

Premiers for Section A were BMF, Dion, Jen and Stu.

Runners-up were the Fat Old Bastards, Matt, Justin and Benny.

Alan and Baden were absent.

Wooden Spooners were RAM, Roxy, Jasmine and Adam.

Absent was Michelle.

Premiers for Section B were Lockcocks, Greg, Dale and Alana.

Runners-up were the Robblecocks, Chelsea, Leigh and Rod.

Wooden Spooners were DRK, Rachael, Diana Kaleb.

Absent was Kate.

A special mention also goes to Des for turning up each week and slipping in where needed.

The club will be back in the new year, with the new competition starting around January 14.

## INVERLOCH

THE Summer Bowls Program will be running from December 27 to January 7 with the exception of New Year's Day on January 1.

Visitors, friends and family are welcome to participate.

Two sessions are available: 5pm to 6.30pm and 7pm to 8.30pm.

No bookings are required.

Gates open at 4.45pm for first session and 6.45pm for second session.

The cost is $12 per person.

EFTPOS is available.

Flat sole shoes or barefoot, your choice.

Basic training is available.

Phil Price, Joy Brown (skip), John Cook and Doug Muir were the winners at Thursday's social bowls.

Bill Munro, Anne Laviolette, and John Johnston (skip) were the runners-up.

## KORUMBURRA

THIS week started with the finals of the Club Championships.

In the men's final, Shane O'Loughlin and Robin Provan had an epic battle with Shane coming out victor once again, winning 25 to 22.

In the women's final, Dianne Ashton and Vera Sund also had a good battle with Vera winning 25 to 22.

Congratulations to all concerned.

In Midweek Pennant, Korumburra hosted Leongatha in Division 1 with only Ben Peachey getting close, having a 16 all draw.

Grumpy went down 21 shots to 18 and Katrina Evans lost 24 shots to 15.

In Division 2, Korumburra hosted Phillip Island.

Cheryl Moore won 24 shots to 18, Peter Hearn won 22 shots to 13 and Jim Garnham lost 14 shots to 20, still a good win.

In weekend Pennant, Division 1 travelled to Mirboo North with only Charlie Edgarton being successful getting up 26 shots to 11.

Rob Cosson lost 30 shots to five and Robin Provan lost 23 shots to 17.

In Division 3, Korumburra hosted Loch.

Grumpy had a good win getting up 30 shots to 10.

Rob Sund won 21 shots to 13 and Gary Dorling lost 15 shots to 18, a good win overall.

Division 4 hosted Wonthaggi.

Peter Hearn won 17 shots to 14, Allan Cherrett won 18 shots to 15, unfortunately Andy Robertson lost 11 shots to 37.

Division 6 travelled to Fish Creek and came home victors. Ken Parkinson won 33 shots to 13 and Jo Lomagno won 23 to 10. Well done to all.

## LEONGATHA

WOW, what a ripper of a night. The traders' last game was a fun packed afternoon.

The weather was perfect for bowling, and all were in good spirits.

Leongatha's competitions during the season saw BJ Earthmovers with 77 points win over the Dumpsters with 70 points.

The second team of S... and Bricks had a win over Suck It Up.

S.... and Bricks won the season's Overall Championship.

The booby prize went to the wonderful SES team.

Congratulations to all.

The night's sponsor was EZT Bricklaying.

To Zack Trease, a big thank you for supporting the club.

A great night was had by all, and the club starts up again on January 20, so get your teams ready.

Hope to see you all again next year.

Social day saw 12 bowlers with the winners being Ollie, Michael and Les.

**Continued page 61**

From page 60

Runners-up were Ken, Lloyd and Janis.

At this stage, Monthly Triples will be held on December 17.

Get a team together and enjoy the last one before Christmas.

Tuesday Pennant: Division 1 won 61 to 49; Division 4 had a close encounter with Mirboo North, winning 46 to Leongatha 43.

Saturday Pennant: Division 1 lost 55 to 62; Division 2 won 64 to 54; Division 5 also lost to Meeniyan 72 to 59.

The last pennant dates are December 16 and 20 before the big break.

With both teams being at home hosting both Inverloch sides during Tuesday Pennant this week, the club asks if you could please bring a plate to share for the last game of the season.

The club's Christmas dinner went off without a hitch.

The food was delicious thanks to Brett Sinclair and the atmosphere was very merry.

Quite a few people turned up this year.

Bowlers and non-bowlers attended, which is great to see so many supporting Leongatha.

Keep up the good work.

## MIDWEEK

IT was another marvellous day on Thursday.

The weather was beautiful in the mid-20s.

There were great friends to play with and against, and a wonderful green to play on.

Forty-seven of the family of bowlers turned up at Loch and District Bowls Club for the weekly challenge.

They were signed in by Bev and John while Vern arranged the teams for the day.

Once the bowlers were told their teams and went onto the green, the fun started.

As usual, there was lots of laughter and plenty of friendly banter as friend challenged friend for superiority on the green.

There were a few wrong bias bowls, which are always welcomed by the Royal Children's Hospital.

There was some great bowling across all the greens along with a few wild shots, but lots of laughter from all quarters.

As usual, not all the wonderful bowlers can win each week, and this week is no different.

The winners on a great score of 39 were Margaret Hoy (3), Peter Taylor (2), Beb Hyslop (L) and Bill Sherriff (S).

Runners-up on a score of 36 were Peter Gratton (S), Neil Andreatta (3), Derek Fenn (2) and Steve Banks (L).

Best one game on a score of 18 was won by Pat Kennedy (S), John Kappler (L), David Talbot (3) and Max Williams (2).

A special congratulation to the team consisting of Trevor Loughridge (S), Raff Merante (3), Peter McWilliams (2) and Frank Verco (L).

Doesn't happen too often, but these wonderful bowlers managed to score an eight against their opponents on one end.

Great job, boys.

A big thank you to the Loch members for all their hard work, especially to Trevor who does so much for the group as well as Alex and Paul who cleaned up after the game.

It was very much appreciated by everyone.

Next week, the group will be meeting at Corinella Bowls Club to once again fight it out for team of the week.

Please be on site by 10am to allow time to prepare the teams.

Next week will be the final week for 2025 so please, make it a memorable week for all.

Unfortunately, with numbers generally reaching capacity, the club will have to be strict on a 10am cut off time.

Meanwhile till then, have fun and stay safe.

## WONTHAGGI

IT was another good but busy week.

Tuesday saw Division 1 play host to Tarwin at Wonthaggi on a fine day.

All rinks played well to record a solid victory.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 83 Tarwin 34.

Division 2 travelled to San Remo looking for a win against the top team.

One rink was able to get a win, with the other two going down.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 51 San Remo 70.

Division 3 played host to Tarwin at Wonthaggi.

All rinks played well to record a good win.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 64 Tarwin 51.

Tuesday night was a success, with fine weather being the key.

Next week will be the last for the year and will have a Christmas flavour.

Thursday saw a fine, mild morning greet the 9.30am bowlers.

A good number enjoyed a pleasant morning.

The 1pm numbers were down, with Triples at Phillip Island.

Pairs were the order of the day, with Mary McBain and Paul Holmes the winners.

Friday morning saw the final of the Men's Singles Championship between Rob Aitken, the reigning champion, and Kyle Birt.

The match was played in perfect conditions, with both bowlers able to showcase their skills.

As always, every match has its moments, with Kyle getting a break and being able to go on to win the title.

Played before a large number of members and family, both bowlers put on a great display of bowls.

Friday night was a success, with a very good number there for the members draw.

The jackpot didn't go off, with Frank Tagell's name being called out, so next week it will be worth $80.

Paul was a happy meat tray winner, with Jeannie taking home the chicken tray.

Iris and Paul each won a brekky pack.

Other winners were Caroline, Steve and Glen.

Saturday saw Division 1 play host to Leongatha at Wonthaggi on a fine, sunny day.

After a tight battle all day, Wonthaggi were able to claim the points.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 62 Leongatha 55.

Division 2 ventured to Meeniyan looking for another win to keep their season on track.

After a tense battle all day, Wonthaggi were able to claim a valuable win.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 59 Meeniyan 57.

Division 4 (3) played host to Inverloch at Wonthaggi.

The less said about the match, the better - a time to reset and start again.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 39 Inverloch 80.

Division 4 (4) ventured to Korumburra looking for another win to keep their season on track.

All rinks played well to record a good win.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 66 Korumburra 46.

Division 6 travelled to Mirboo North once again looking for a win.

Both rinks played well to record a good win.

The final scores were Wonthaggi 44 Mirboo North 29.

Bowls this week:

Tuesday: Pennant.

Tuesday evening: Barefoot Bowls.

Thursday: Social bowls at 9.30am and 1pm.

Friday: Coaching at 10am.

Saturday: Pennant.

Don't forget the Friday members draw, with doors open at 4pm and the draw at 6pm.

The jackpot this week stands at $80, plus meat trays and other prizes.

Have a good week and good bowling.

## Indoor

TUESDAY'S winners were Maggie Scapin, John Postlethwaite and Pam Russell +18 (two games).

Runners-up were Paul Holmes, Philip Fowler, Glenda Binch and Ed Henry +6 (two games).

On Friday, after a very enjoyable barbecue, the bowlers played with the winners being Pat Smith, Jeannie Slocombe, Maggie Scapin and Pam Russell +12 (two games).

Runners-up were Ed Henry, Josephine McIntyre, Sylvia Mattock and John Ferguson +4 (one game).

The club will return to bowling on Tuesday, January 6.

**The dress-up winners at the Foster Bowls Club.**

**The Section A premiers in Foster Bowls Club's Jack Attack competition were BMF, Dion, Jen and Stu.**

**South West Gippsland Midweek Bowls Group's winners on Thursday were Margaret Hoy (3), Peter Taylor (2), Beb Hyslop (L) and Bill Sherriff (S).**

**Maggie Scapin, John Postlethwaite and Pam Russell were the Tuesday winners at Wonthaggi Senior Indoor Bowls.**

**Foster Bowls Club's Section A Jack Attack runners-up were Fat Old Bastards, Matt, Justin and Benny.**

A Grade winner Jason King with Roy Fleming at the Korumburra Golf Club.

The winners at Wonthaggi Golf Club's Christmas Breakup Festive Day were Marg Johnson, Lisa Brusamarello, Kaylene Hodgetts, Carole Sartori, Layla Robertson and Patsy Britt.

Leongatha Golf Club's Monthly Medal winner and runner-up Sue Bowler and Shirley Welsford.

Winners of Leongatha's Tom Welsford 4BBB Board event Delia Perry and Leanne Costello with sponsor Greg Welsford.

## KORUMBURRA

RESULTS: Tuesday, December 9.

Stableford: 13 players.

Winner: Robert Litchfield 38 points.

NTPs: first Don Hislop and 13th Peter McMaster.

Saturday, December 13:

Sponsor: MJA.

Stroke: 43 players.

A Grade winner: Jason King 42 c/b.

B Grade winner: Chris Corr 42 c/b.

NTPs: first Mick Belvedere, 10th David Marshall and 13th Josh Rudolph.

## LEONGATHA

TUESDAY, December 9: Stableford.

Tuesday was another great day on course for players resulting in some excellent scoring.

This was a Stableford round with a field of 66 members/guests entering the competition.

Overall winner: Harvey Sorensen (44) with the high score of the day of 44 points.

A Grade winner: Craig Hams (9) with 40 points.

A Grade runner-up: Malcolm Gin (10) with 34 points on a countback.

B Grade winner: Matthew Pearce (20) with 40 points.

B Grade runner-up: Timothy McCarthy (20) with 38 points.

C Grade winner: Harvey Sorensen (44) with 44 points.

C Grade runner-up: Jack Hogan (29) with 42 points.

Great score for Michael West with an eagle two on the third hole.

NTP fifth second shot: Craig Hams (9) at 1.39m.

NTP 14th: Matthew Pearce (20) at 0.52m.

NTP 16th: Colin Bear (16) at 2.34m.

Thursday, December 11: Stableford.

Thursday had an excellent field of 84 members/guests hitting off with a shotgun start and playing a Stableford round of golf.

Overall winner: Fraser Oliver (32) with high score of the day with 42 points.

A Grade winner: Alan Starkey (10) with 36 points.

A Grade runner-up: Timothy Danks (11) with 35 points.

B Grade winner: Dave Brownett (15) with 38 points on a countback.

B Grade runner-up: Renato Monacella (14) with 38.

C Grade winner: Timothy McCarthy (19) with 38 points.

C Grade runner-up: Russell Pentland (20) from the Mirboo North Golf Club with 37 points.

D Grade winner: Fraser Oliver (32) with 42 points.

D Grade runner-up: Harvey Sorensen (39) with 39 points.

NTP fifth second shot: John Ryan (10) at 0.10m.

NTP 14th: Robert Litchfield (12) at 1.92m.

NTP 16th: Peter Walsh (15) at 1.86m.

Saturday, December 13: Tom Welsford 4BBB Stableford Event.

Saturday saw a field of 106 members/guests take to the course in superb weather playing a team's event 4BBB Stableford with shotgun start.

Again, a sincere thank you for the sponsorship of this Tom Welsford event.

Overall winners:

1. Delia Perry (38) and Leanne Costello (38) with 47 points on a countback.

2. David Barrack (23) and Gary Sharrock (26) with 47 points.

3. Scott Blencowe (24) and Ian Blencowe (19) with 46 points on a countback.

NTP fifth second shot: Daniel Carcour (8) at 0.79m.

NTP 14th: Nicholas Byrne (12) at 7.50m.

NTP 16th: Rebecca Brown (8) at 1.28m.

### Ladies

TWENTY-EIGHT women opted for the Monthly Medal event on Wednesday and 10 elected to play Stableford.

The greens and fairways, apart from a few aeration holes, were in excellent condition and just a tad slicker than last week.

Sue Bowler claimed victory in the December Monthly Medal with an impressive score of 92/24/68.

She has been enjoying a string of successes lately.

Shirley Welsford was the runner-up with another great score, 71 net.

Karen Orford won the Stableford event with 34 points.

Down the line balls went to 74 net: Delia Perry, Lynda Bassett, Leanne Costello, Jo McNaughton, Maryanne Gartner and Robin Smith.

Nearest the pin on the fifth was Colleen Touzel, Bronwyn Debenham was closest on the 14th and Sue Bowler on the 16th.

The nine-hole competition was won by Chris Lay with 18 points and Helen Mackenzie won a ball down the line with 17 points.

On Saturday, the women's vice-captain Delia Perry, together with one of the newer members Leanne Costello, won the prestigious Tom Welsford 4BBB Stableford Board event.

They won on countback from David Barrack and Gary Sharrock with 47 points.

## MEENIYAN

### Ladies

THE golfers finally had a sunny Wednesday and played the December Medal and the Star Medal playoff.

Andrea Thorson won the medal with a fine 72 net, also taking out the putting with 26.

The runner-up was Dot Christie with 74 net and she was the Star medallist.

Down the line balls to Irene Holm 75 net and Susan Straw 75 net.

## MIRBOO NORTH

SATURDAY, December 13: Stableford.

A Grade: P. Draper (11) 42 points

B Grade: N. Bracecamp (19) 41 points.

DTL: S. Mills, S. Woodall 39, S. Hill-Smith 38, G. Shandley and J. Gunn 37 c/b.

NTP: fourth R. Gallagher, sixth N. Whichello, 13th (Mirboo North Pub voucher) G. Shandley and 16th M. Payne.

Birdies: fourth T. Whitelaw, sixth N. Whichello and 13th M. Payne.

## WONTHAGGI

RESULTS: December 11.

Competition: Stableford 18-hole.

Overall winner: Adrian Nixon 40.

A Grade winner: Rod McBride 36.

A Grade runner-up: Stephen Kane 34.

B Grade winner: Adrian Nixon 40.

B Grade runner-up: Dio Apostolopoulos 39.

Balls DTL to 32: Warren Dummett 35, Ian McNish 34, Garry O'Connor 34, Graeme Campbell 33, Craig Charles 33, Gino Hennequin 33, Warwick Judkins 33, Tony Schipano 33 and Jonathan Wade 32.

NTPs: Warren Dummett second, Paul Jackson fourth, Jonathan Wade eighth, Frank Huber 13th and Keith Ridout 17th.

Results: December 11.

Competition: Stableford front nine-hole.

Winner: Mark Nicholson 19.

Ball DTL: Kevin Bayley 18 and Secondo Tiziani 18.

Results: December 13.

Competition: Stableford.

Overall winner: Caleb Kilgour 44.

A Grade: Stephen Kane 41.

Runner-up: Leigh Clifford 41.

B Grade: Jarvis Harvey 44.

Runner-up: Geoff Huther 36.

C Grade: Caleb Kilgour 44.

Runner-up: Graeme Rodgers 42.

BDTL: Graeme Campbell 42, Kevin Loughran 40, Mark Nicholson 40, Mark Casey 38, Gary Youlton 38, Jarvis Kilgour 38, Peter Handley 37, Ray Hender 37, Alan Cubbon 36, Joshua Kilgour 36, Jim McEachern 35, Inoke Baudromo 35, Graham Ryan 35, Steven Laing 35, John Walsh 35, Glen Rielly 35 and Wily Williams 35.

NTP: Steven Brann 17th.

### Ladies

WEDNESDAY was the Christmas Breakup Festive Day generously sponsored by The Cape Tavern at Cape Paterson with fabulous venue vouchers.

There were 32 players for a round of Stableford with a twist as there was a draw for partners at the end of the round.

The Clubhouse, players and guests entered into the festive spirit and enjoyed a wonderful lunch with all the trimmings.

The scores on the day were fantastic with seven rounds under par.

A Grade winner: Kaylene Hodgetts (23) 43 points.

A Grade runner-up: Lisa Brusamarello (24) 40 points.

B Grade winner with the round of the day: Carole Sartori (44) 44 points.

B Grade runner-up: Layla Robertson (31) 39 points.

Mystery Partner Draw:

Winners: Carole Sartori (44) and Marg Johnson (36) total 80 points.

Runners-up: Layla Robertson (39) and Patsy Britt (38) total 77 points.

NTP: second Donna Brosnan, fourth Kaylene Hodgetts, eighth Marg Johnson, 13th Layla Robertson and 17th Kathy Geyer.

BDL: Jenny McRae 40, Patsy Britt 38, Kathy Geyer 38, Marg Johnson 36, Pam Hanley 36, Robyn Wilkinson 36, Sharon Patullo 36 and Marg Ryan 35.

# Korumburra karate juniors compete against Japan's best

A 10-YEAR-OLD karate novice from the Loong Fu Pai Martial Arts club in Korumburra has returned home from the Okinawa Rookies Cup in Japan with a win in her division.

Annika and her brother Oscar from St Joseph's Primary School competed against some of the best young competitors from Japan and the Asia Pacific.

Annika topped the Grade 4 female division competing against two Japanese rivals.

Competing in the Year 7 male division Annika's brother Oscar narrowly missed out on a podium finish after fierce competition from some of Japan's best young karate juniors.

Travelling with the Casey Elite Martial Arts Team Shorin Kempo, Annika and Oscar were assisted with part-sponsorship from the Korumburra based Martin Carlson Foundation.

"We are so proud of these young people which proves that anything is possible and dreams can come true," said Foundation Trustee Gary Brittle.

"Think of the skills and experience that this brings back to our community and inspiration moving forward."

**Annika and Oscar from the Loong Fu Pai Martial Arts club and Casey Elite Martial Arts Team Shorin Kempo back home with their dog Doohan after successfully competing in the Karate Rookies Cup in Okinawa.** B32_5025

Annika also took first place at the recent MKA National Championships in Sydney with teammates Ankitha, Nehaal, Josh and Nate all finishing in the top five.

Proud mother Steph said the Rookies Cup was the first step towards international competition. Father Trevor is a third dan black belt and runs the Loong Fu Pai Martial Arts in Korumburra while business partner Jack has the Longwarry group.

"Oscar and Annika both compete on a national level," Steph said.

"They had to qualify in national competition to represent Australia in the Rookies Cup."

Oscar came first in club competition at Casey Elite Martial Arts in Cranbourne and won bronze in a national competition on the Gold Coast.

Annika and Oscar both compete regularly in Melbourne and across Gippsland.

"The best thing is the friends you make," said Annika.

Annika already has friends from China and is learning Japanese.

Acknowledging the assistance of the Martin Carlson Foundation Steph said the $4,000 part-sponsorship made a big difference for the team and they were very grateful.

"Karate is becoming more popular as it becomes more available," Steph said.

"The skill level is increasing.

"Although being able to travel to compete in the sport from the country is difficult."

Annika has now qualified for JAC (Japan Athletes Cup) which will be held in March.

Oscar and Annika also hope to attend a martial arts training camp in Thailand.

**Convenor of the Bass Coast Ping Pong for Parkinson's group Peter Abraham welcomes new members to their regular monthly competition.** B25_5025

**Ping Pong for Parkinson's can be played at a slower pace with larger paddles or softer balls and modified rules to suit mobility and coordination needs.** B33_5025

# Ping Pong for Parkinson's boosts health in Wonthaggi

STAY active with Parkinson's by playing table tennis or ping pong as it is known.

The Bass Coast Ping Pong for Parkinson's group regularly meets every couple of weeks at the Korumburra Road Table Tennis clubrooms in Wonthaggi.

Ping pong is a fun way to exercise and socialise with heaps of additional benefits.

Table tennis offers physical, cognitive, and emotional benefits that can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life for those living with Parkinson's.

According to the convenor of the Bass Coast Ping Pong for Parkinson's group Peter Abraham ping pong can help with movement, thinking skills and memory.

"Table tennis boosts mental wellbeing by reducing stress and helping people feel more connected and confident through social play and enjoyment," Mr Abraham said.

Ping Pong Parkinson (PPP) is an international movement that has reached 30 countries.

The first session in Wonthaggi started with nine players in 2015 and regular competitions are now held every couple of weeks.

Ping pong has been shown to have a positive impact on the progression of the disease and in a way that the medication alone is not doing. While all forms of exercise are beneficial, the thing that makes ping pong unique is that it incorporates a focus on balance, hand-eye coordination, and the rhythm or pace of reciprocal play.

Diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2021 Mr Abraham said it's about getting moving in a safe environment and helping to improve the dexterity of people with Parkinson's.

"Everyone has their own battles with daily life and sport and activities.

"It's a family that you never had before your diagnosis.

"At Ping Pong for Parkinson's people see you for who you are, not only with an understanding of the day-to-day challenges that your diagnosis presents, but also beyond the diagnosis to the potential that you have."

Parkinson's-friendly programs offer seated table tennis options. Players can remain in their wheelchairs or sit in chairs while playing. Facilitators may also be available to help guide players to the table or help retrieve ping pong balls.

"I started to feel better after playing my first game," Mr Abraham said.

"The benefits are terrific, it's wonderful to see the smiles on people's faces."

Mr Abraham said increased freedom of movement lasts for days afterwards.

"Some members have never played table tennis before.

"We encourage them to have a shot.

"The initial effect is a vast improvement each time you attend."

Before starting any new activity, check with your GP, neurologist, or physiotherapist to help you decide if ping pong is right for your current symptoms and fitness level.

For more information go to pingpongparkinson.com.au or email peterabraham1@gmail.com or phone 0421 452 808.

## INVERLOCH TENNIS CLUB

WITH the fire pit burning and the early summer sun dropping behind the trees of Thompson's Reserve, Inverloch Tennis Club wrapped up another successful year with the grand final of its spring night doubles competition on Wednesday evening.

John Richardson's Team 6 had ridden a late charge all the way to the final night of the season, pulling off a string of close victories over quality opposition.

They now faced Aaron Coyle's Team 11 who had survived a nail-biting quarter final two weeks before, ably supported by Mitch Oliver in the number four role.

In the first sets – played to eight games – the consistency of Team 11's Martin Stone and Fraser Oliver was too strong for the Team 6 combination of Kristy Loenen and Noah Humphrey, who on the night fell to an eight to one loss that didn't reflect their recent form.

While on the adjacent court, John Richardson and Sebastian Toomey jumped Team 6 out to a strong lead over Aaron Coyle and Patrick McGrath, only to see their opponents claw their way back to a one game lead late in the set.

Then Richardson and Toomey took control of the final games to run out to an eight to six victory.

In the second sets, McGrath and Oliver established an early lead before Toomey and Humphrey got back on serve, putting the whole thing in the balance as Richardson and Loenen led Coyle and Stone four to one on the other court.

However, McGrath and Oliver stepped up to take a commanding lead before Oliver flawlessly served out what proved to be the championship game, winning the set eight to three to establish an unbeatable lead despite Richardson and Loenen eventually taking out the adjacent set eight to five.

Team 11 – Coyle, McGrath and Stone with Mitch and Fraser Oliver filling the shared number four spot – went home with the coveted coffee mugs, while Team 6 contented themselves with the chocolates.

Final scores were Team 11 (two sets, 27 games) defeating Team 6 (two sets, 20 games).

Anyone wishing to join this fun competition for the next season can contact the club on 0418 583 090.

## ALLAMBEE MIRBOO AND DISTRICT TENNIS ASSOCIATION

RESULTS:

Section 1: Westernport Red 4.43 defeated Westernport White 4.37; Leongatha 6.44 defeated Korumburra 2.22; Koonwarra 6.43 defeated Outtrim 2.25.

Ladder: Leongatha 71; Koonwarra 48; Westernport White 46; Westernport Red 41; Korumburra 39; Outtrim 25.

Section 2 results: Outtrim 6.41 defeated Korumburra 2.34; Leongatha 6.45 defeated Baromi 2.31.

Ladder: Leongatha 53; Baromi 47; Outtrim 42; Korumburra 38.

Westernport played its derby this week and it just so happened to be the match of the round, with just six games the difference.

Every other match was played in Leongatha for what has become known as the Gatha Round.

Well done to James Sage and Rachel Carlisle for winning their mixed set against Pocko and Sophie.

This was Pocko's first loss for the season.

In Section 2, both matches were 6/2 and just a few games in each match.

There are a number of players who have been family players throughout the season in this section, which is great to see the generations playing together.

The association now goes into the break for Christmas and the New Year.

Enjoy the time with family and friends.

The next match will be played on January 17 at Leongatha for another Gatha Round.

Let's start the New Year with a good, social afternoon.

## LDCA defeat Warragul CA

THE U15 and U13 LDCA teams travelled to Drouin to take on Warragul CA in GCL matches on Sunday, December 14.

Warragul U15s batted first and compiled a good total on the Bellbird Park Turf; all the LDCA boys bowled well, although a few too many wides, an area they will need to work on. Archie Dynes was tidy with the gloves, a pretty good all-round performance in the field.

Setting out after the total, the loss of Nate Miller early saw a steady partnership between Reggie Read and Jed Caddy of 40. The loss of Read saw skipper Max Johnston join Caddy at the crease, and they batted beautifully, adding another 40 odd before the loss of Caddy triggered a middle order collapse with the boys showing a bit of turf cricket inexperience, playing across the line and off the back foot too much, leading to their dismissals.

Through the mayhem, Max showed his undeniable class, the left-hander striking the ball beautifully off the front foot with eight boundaries in his 51. His dismissal kept the game very much in the balance, and with nine wickets down and two runs to get, Noah McMillan and Raidyn Harrison held their nerves to get the LDCA over the line. Well done to both teams, it was a great game of cricket.

Warragul CA 5/144 def by LDCA 9/155

The U15S now take on Latrobe Valley on Sunday, December 21, at the Korumburra Turf.

### Under 13s

The LDCA boys battled hard against a very good Warragul team. The batting innings really struggled to get going. Clancee Salmon showed his talent, hitting the ball hard.

Dihen Yuthmika battled patiently against the tight bowling, and Jaxon Eddy played some nice shots, the boys learning some valuable lessons about the importance of playing straight and keeping the ball along the ground.

The boys stuck to their guns in the field for the full 40 overs, Hunter Bettles, Liam Meyer and August Lidstone showing the way by bowling full at the stumps and getting the reward, young Lenny Barake for Warragul is a really accomplished player making a very nice 50 and I'm sure the boys watched the way he went about his innings and took note.

Thanks to Warragul CA and the Drouin CC for hosting a great day of cricket.

Thanks to LDCA Junior Sponsors Wonthaggi Toyota, Manders Plumbing and Gas Fitting, and MJA Accounting for their continued support.

LDCA 85 defeated by Warragul CA 4/173

## Korumburra Junior Cricket

### Under 17s

DAY two had the team in the field defending a good score and the game went right to the end with Leongatha Combine just getting over the line with a few balls to spare.

Billy Douley 2/7, Toby Nicholas 2/16, Owen Maskell 2/32, Levi Gooch 1/12 and Tyler Dole 1/6 all picked up wickets.

### Under 15s

A big win from the U15s, posting their score of the year of 7/191.

Elijah Le Serve 43 ret., Oliver Cranston 37 ret., James McDonald 24, Mason Miller 16* and Luke MacDonald 10* were the pick of the bats, followed on by a great team bowling performance, bowling out Foster for 54.

Le Serve 4/8 and MacDonald 4/6 led the way.

# Celebrations for Kookaburras cricketer Pieter Loos

ON WEDNESDAY, December 10, Gippsland Goannas hosted South Gippsland Kookaburras in a rescheduled Over 70s cricket match at Yinnar Reserve.

Kookaburras captain Rob Francis won the toss, and they batted first on a synthetic wicket amid a well grassed oval.

Keith Houghton (28 runs) and Peter Little (26) were both not out after facing 30 balls, setting up a good platform for the other batters such as Alex Miller (30), Pieter Loos (27) and Geoff Birnie (15 not out). After 40 overs the Kookaburras had a competitive total of 176 runs. The Goannas principal wicket takers were Gordon Cowling (3/29) and Neil Meredith (2/32).

After a fine lunch supplied by Goannas players and partners, batters Don Cameron (15), Ian Gibson (26) and Barry Nunn (14) were all not out, with the rest dismissed for less than 16 runs each. Kookaburra Geoff Birnie opened the bowling and finished with only 12 runs off eight overs, helping make the Goannas task difficult to get their run rate up to reach the target. Six other bowlers were successful in taking wickets with Neil White (2/22) and Keith Houghton (2/13) in particular. Goannas batted out their 40 overs, scoring 121 runs.

And there was plenty to celebrate for the Kookaburras, not only the win but Pieter Loos was the first Kookaburra to play 100 games. Congratulations Pieter!

Over 70s South, West and Central Gippsland players participate in three teams this season, and they all enjoy the camaraderie stimulated by their "Derby" games.

**Ray Smith drives for the Gippsland Goannas.**

### Goannas triumph at Maribyrnong Reserve

THE Gippsland Goannas Over 60 cricket team travelled to Maribyrnong Reserve on the west side of Melbourne to take on the Barkly St Dragons.

Losing the toss, the Goannas were asked to bat first and certainly made the most of their opportunities amassing 283 runs for the loss of five wickets from their 40 overs.

Graeme Ingle 34, Ray Floyd 25, Ray Smith 29, Adrian Quirk 42 and Bob Penrose 13, all retired, while Bernie Symons 28, Rob Bacchetti 25, Keith Orchard 28 and Neil Meredith 29 not out were the best of the other batsmen.

In reply, the Dragons were dismissed in the 32nd over for 66 runs.

Quirk, 1/8, Orchard 5/8, Meredith 1/3 and Smith 3/8 were the wicket taking bowlers, with Symons, Bacchetti, Smith and Quirk all taking catches.

The Goannas 60s will play again next Sunday, with a home game against the East Doncaster Over 60 team.

The Goannas Over 50s next game is scheduled to be on January 18 away to the Ballarat team, while the Over 70 team will next play the Ringwood Over 70 team at Toongabbie on January 4.

**Barrie Nunn cuts in the Goannas' Over 70s cricket match in Yinnar.**

**Leongatha's Scorpion Park hosted two women's matches on Sunday: Koonwarra L/RSL v Glen Alvie and Leongatha Town v Glen Alvie.**

## Leongatha Town host women's cricket double header

THERE was a great buzz around the club on Sunday as the women's Scorps took to the field for their first home game of the season.

Winning the toss, Town elected to bat and produced several impressive performances at the crease.

Nat Challis led the way with a solid 24, with good support from Kath Stewart (12) and Kate Oates (12).

While Town built the runs up steadily, a higher number of fallen wickets proved costly, with Glen Alvie coming out to bat with 30 runs on the board.

In the field Town showed great energy, with Alyssa Edwards taking a wicket and the team combining for three run-outs. Despite these efforts, Glen Alvie reached the target, finishing on 131 in a competitive and closely fought contest.

## INVERLOCH

INVERLOCH had a good win against Leongatha Town to secure the fourth spot on the ladder.

Strong winds impacted the game at Leongatha's Scorpion Park, and playing on a soft pitch allowed Inverloch to bowl out Town for 111.

Ron Abeysinghe was the pick of Inverloch's bowlers, taking 4/6 against his former club.

With the bat, Riley Harris opened well and made 39 runs and 21* to Walter Taberner had Inverloch on the road to victory.

"We're definitely heading in the right direction at fourth on the ladder. We've got a tough game next week as we'll be going up against the top of the ladder in the T20 match," Inverloch senior coach Dylan Clark said.

"If we can pinch a win there, it will give us the momentum to win a few more games in the new year."

**Foster pace bowler Andrew Pattie during play against Kilcunda Bass at Bass Recreation Reserve.** B44_5025

## KILCUNDA BASS

KILCUNDA Bass A2 delivered an all-round performance to comfortably defeat Foster by 101 runs.

Batting first, Kilcunda Bass posted a strong 7/250 from 40 overs.

Opener Robert Wallace (28) started well whilst Matthew Grayson anchored the innings with 93 off 79 balls, striking 14 boundaries.

Valuable contributions from Gregory Miller (35) and a run-a-ball 41 from Steven Oates ensured the scoreboard kept ticking along as the pressure stayed firmly on the visitors.

In reply, Foster never truly recovered from early setbacks and was restricted to 8/149.

Mitchell Jones (62) led their innings and had great support from young gun Max Johnston (27).

Ryan Brown led the attack superbly with 2/17 off eight overs, while Matthew Grayson backed up his batting effort with 2/17 of his own.

Regular wickets prevented any sustained partnerships, and Foster's innings fell short of the target.

Kilcunda Bass will be on the road next week, facing Korumburra and will look to take another win heading into the Christmas break.

Kilcunda Bass went down to Nyora by eight wickets after making 6/130 batting first in B Grade.

Alister McBride top-scored with 42, with contributions from Brett Joseph (17) and Vijai Kumar Gopal (19), but the innings lacked a strong finish.

A great catch from James Papworth and strong fielding efforts from young gun Cruz Bettles couldn't stem the flow of runs with Nyora chasing down the target after 28 overs.

Bass will look to regroup and get back to winning ways in next week's T20 against Glen Alvie at home.

## KOONWARRA L/RSL

TWO undefeated teams went head-to-head in A2 on Saturday, but Nyora was the one to come out on top.

Playing in a one-day match at the Nyora Recreation Reserve, the Cougars won the toss and chose to bat.

After a few wickets were lost at the hands of Nyora bowler Reece Cordeux, Tanuj Namalge and captain Kayden Scrimshaw combined well to make 35 and 21 runs respectively.

Captain Callum Buckland made 23 runs, and tailenders James Rushton and Jason Kennedy each added 32 runs.

Nick Arnup finished off the innings with 22*.

For Nyora, the top bowler was Aaron Thompson, who took 3/21.

Koonwarra L/RSL was tasked with defending 10/198.

Nyora was off to a slow start as Arnup dismissed the openers, but Myles Cordeux (22) and Jy Hull (48) kept Nyora in the game.

Aaron Kaddatz ensured a victory for Nyora with 46 runs.

For Koonwarra L/RSL, Arnup and Kennedy were the best bowlers with two wickets each.

Nyora won with a score of 8/201.

This was Koonwarra L/RSL's last game before the Christmas break, as A2 will have the bye this week.

B Grade will play MDU and C2 will play OMK.

## KORUMBURRA

WITH last week losing most of the day with rain, day two kicked off with Glen Alvie starting at 2/39 in the A2 match.

Tight bowling from the Cobras kept the runs in check with Glen Alvie finishing its innings at the agreed overs nine down. Skipper Harry McNeill 4/32 of 15, Jacob Whiteside 3/51 of 21, Rueben Foster 1/17 of 10 and Levi Gooch 1/16 off four did the damage with the ball.

The Cobras' innings kicked off with a rocky start before Rumesh Rangana 60 off 53 with 10 fours and a six, and Jacob Whiteside 38* of 85 in an outstanding all-round game settled in to guide them towards the win.

Late cameos from Jason Richards 13 off 36 balls and Harry McNeill 13* of 20 balls brought the win home.

In B Grade, Town batted first in a one-day game due to last week's washout to post the big total of 187, with wickets hard to come by.

Aaron Damon, Liam Dole, Owen Maskell and Tyler Dole each picking up a wicket, having some good tight periods with the ball.

Following the break, the Cobras kicked off the run chase but lost three early wickets before Damon 33 with three fours and a six and Tyler Dole 28 with three fours steadied the ship with solid partnership with Maskell 14* seeing the innings through to the close.

Korumburra batted first in C Grade with Trevor, Matt and Nathan Allen all taking the field together for the first time in the side.

The top order all had starts but no one went on to post a big score before Tim Morrison in career best form took control through the middle order with 28 off 36 balls and four fours with great support from Tom Sorrell 25 of 35 and two fours and Troy Shepherdson channelling some inner bazball, finishing the innings off with 28 off 19 balls and three fours to complete the innings with a big total to defend.

MDU's innings was never able to get momentum with the Cobras bowling attack well in control.

Sorrell 2/10 from 7, Pat Beadel 2/14 from 5, Nathan Allen 1/9 from 7, Charlie Carew 1/7 from five and Troy Shepherdson 1/5 from four all bowling tight with great effect, bowling the side to victory.

## LEONGATHA TOWN

SEVERAL Town players made solid starts, but a steady fall of wickets prevented the innings from building momentum in A1.

The side was eventually dismissed for 111 off 24 overs.

Jack Hume top-scored with a composed 30, well supported by Rory Gilliatte (28) and Seb Kyle (22).

With the ball, Town made a positive start, claiming early wickets to put Inverloch under pressure.

However, Inverloch consolidated and went on to chase down the target in 27 overs.

Archie Fixter led the attack with 2/15, while Jack Hume (2/42) and Madura Madusanka (1/9) also contributed.

Town travelled to Korumburra to come away with a strong first win of the season, built on solid contributions from the club's senior players in B Grade.

At the top of the order, Mark Hardy set the tone with a composed 36, while support came from Pandu Jayasinghe (34), Luke Bowman (26), Matt Davies (15) and Alex Aeschlimann (24).

Captain Col Bruce anchored the innings with an excellent unbeaten 40.

Town posted a competitive total built on depth and consistency.

With the ball, the workload was shared evenly across the attack, keeping Korumburra under pressure throughout the innings. Hugh Livingstone led the way with 2/13, while Matt Davies (2/16) backed up his batting effort with the ball, including a sharp caught-and-bowled from his eight overs.

Lachy Gill (1/10) and Pandu Jayasinghe (1/16) also chipped in as Town secured a well-rounded team victory.

Batting first, Town opened with Karl Aeschlimann and Harvey Aeschlimann in C Grade.

The early loss of Harvey brought Jack Aeschlimann to the crease, and the pair combined for a strong partnership that set the tone for the innings.

Karl produced an excellent knock of 66, while Jack went on to top-score with a superb 85.

Further contributions came from Melvin Kezhuvanthanam (18) and Ray Edwards (11), as Town posted a competitive total of 207, all out off 30 overs.

With the ball, Town made an encouraging start by claiming two early wickets, but Glen Alvie responded strongly and kept pace with the required run rate. Poly Joseph (3/28 off seven overs) and Melvin Kezhuvanthanam (3/27 off seven) led the bowling effort and kept Town in the contest right to the end.

In a thrilling finish, the match came down to the final over, with Glen Alvie narrowly snatching victory to finish 8/215 off 35 overs.

## MDU

MDU was defeated by the Imperials in a one-day match in B2 on Saturday.

Playing at Leongatha's East Campus, MDU won the toss and chose to bowl.

Steve Arnup took 4/12 off three, Scott Browne took 2/19 off eight, and Alex Battersby took 1/22 off five.

The Imperials had MDU chasing 9/156.

In reply, MDU fell short, being bowled out for 121.

Callum McCaughan was the pick off the batsmen, making 40* off 45, Max Murray made 31 off 41, and Browne made 27 off four.

With one round to go before the Christmas break, MDU's B Grade side will be Koonwarra L/RSL in a T20 match.

On the ladder, Koonwarra L/RSL and MDU are sitting third and fourth on the ladder, respectively, so it is set to be a competitive match-up.

## NERRENA

OMK was unable to get the runs it needed to defeat Nerrena in A1 on Saturday.

Picking up from last week, Nerrena went into face 34 overs with Mitchell Clark and Tadgh Gannon still at the crease.

Tadgh went out cheaply and captain Tom Cameron went into bat with Clark, putting on 50.

Cameron added 30 runs to the score before he was dismissed, which saw Eamon Berryman at the crease in his debut A Grade match.

Clark stayed in until he reached 108, and tailenders Jarrod Hoy and Tim Wightman combined to put on 70.

OMK was chasing 278 and needed to do it in 42 overs.

The Diggers lost a wicket early when Archie Gannon bowled Clayton Quaife in the first over.

It was looking like OMK might make it over the line with Jugraj Singh, Ethan Lamers, captain Koby Brann and Paul Fermanis making 23, 73, 67 and 68 runs respectively.

Gannon resumed for another spell and bowled Brann at 4/214.

Hoy also bowled again, taking out a couple of wickets to slow the run rate.

In C Grade, Nerrena played Kilcunda-Bass and secured the win.

The Red Caps were unable to get their first wicket until Kilcunda-Bass had already reached 65.

Christos Marinou then took two wickets, and the Sharks were 2/85.

Adam Miller and Joel Huckett had a good partnership to keep Kilcunda-Bass in it, and the Sharks reached 4/172.

Nerrena was in strife early but managed to steady the ship after the score had reached 4/37.

Rohan Baudinette and Ben Croatto put on 50 and after Baudinette was dismissed, Nick Tucker added 34 runs.

Croatto made 102*, getting Nerrena over the line.

Nerrena is sitting comfortably on the ladders across the board heading into the Christmas break.

"A Grade is equal second, B Grade is third and C Grade is sitting fourth as we head into the last T20 match before Christmas. Everyone is looking good, and we are hoping to see more numbers after Christmas," Nerrena president Zack Trease said.

Nerrena will play in a double header at Leongatha's Scorpion Park this Saturday.

A Grade will play first against Town, after which Town's B Grade will play Inverloch.

## NYORA

NYORA remains undefeated after coming up against second-placed Koonwarra L/RSL on Saturday.

Playing in a one-day match after last week's washout, the heavy hitters of A Grade faced off to see which team would continue its winning streak.

"It was a pretty good game of cricket, and we won with four overs to spare," Nyora's Adam White said.

The pick of Nyora's bowlers was Aaron Thompson, taking 3/21, and Jy Hull was the top batsman with 48 runs.

Tailender Aaron Kaddatz ensured Nyora got the runs it needed, finishing the game with 46*.

"We still have a T20 to play in Meeniyan, but we will be looking to go into the Christmas break undefeated. You can't ask for more," White said.

"Hopefully we can keep it up through the second half."

B Grade had a good win over Kilcunda Bass in another top-of-the-table clash.

"B Grade played very well. It was the best game they've played all year," White said.

"They kept Kilcunda Bass to 130 and managed to pass that score with only two down in just 28 overs. We hope to see this form with the bat and the ball continue in the new year."

Nyora is looking forward to its Christmas break up this Saturday after the T20 and, looking ahead into 2026, is planning for its Pink Stumps Day on February 14.

Hartley Wells
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Phone: 5662 2930

## LEONGATHA & DISTRICT CRICKET ASSOCIATION

**A1:** Mitchell Clark (Nerrena) **108** ; Ron Abeysinghe (Inverloch) 4/6

**A2:** Matthew Grayson (K-Bass) **93** ; Archie Luke (Glen Alvie) **4/28**

**B1:** David Britt (Club) **124** ; Drew Herbert (Club) **6/36**

**B2:** Jaxon Hayes (Imperials) **68** ; Steve Arnup (MDU) **4/12**

**C1:** Ben Croatto (Nerrena) **102*** ; Kooper Foote (MDU) **4/29**

**C2:** Jack Aeschlimann (Town) **85** ; Pieter Loos (Glen Alvie) **4/34**

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## LADDERS — RD 7

| Team | Points | % |
|---|---|---|
| **A GRADE, Division 1** | | |
| **OMK** | **66** | **1.148** |
| **Club** | **48** | **1.534** |
| **Nerrena** | **48** | **1.358** |
| **Inverloch** | **36** | **1.045** |
| Phillip Island | 36 | 1.032 |
| Town | 1 | 0.642 |
| Imperials | 6 | 0.577 |

| Team | Points | % |
|---|---|---|
| **A GRADE, Division 2** | | |
| **Nyora** | **72** | **1.377** |
| **Koonwarra L/RSL** | **54** | **1.656** |
| **Kilcunda Bass** | **54** | **1.580** |
| **Korumburra** | **36** | **0.993** |
| Glen Alvie | 24 | 0.848 |
| MDU | 12 | 0.877 |
| Foster | 0 | 0.293 |

| Team | Points | % |
|---|---|---|
| **B GRADE, Division 1** | | |
| **Club** | **74** | **3.610** |
| **OMK** | **66** | **4.063** |
| **Nerrena** | **42** | **1.465** |
| **Inverloch** | **36** | **1.058** |
| Phillip Island | 18 | 0.543 |
| Town | 18 | 0.335 |
| Korumburra | 6 | 0.211 |

| Team | Points | % |
|---|---|---|
| **B GRADE, Division 2** | | |
| **Nyora** | **60** | **1.495** |
| **Kilcunda Bass** | **54** | **1.050** |
| **Koonwarra L/RSL** | **48** | **1.252** |
| **MDU** | **42** | **0.674** |
| Glen Alvie | 30 | 1.207 |
| Imperials | 18 | 0.703 |

## LADDERS — RD 10

| Team | Points | % |
|---|---|---|
| **C GRADE, Division 1** | | |
| **OMK** | **72** | **1.106** |
| **Club** | **66** | **2.029** |
| **Phillip Island** | **60** | **0.894** |
| **Nerrena** | **54** | **0.911** |
| MDU | 42 | 1.068 |
| Kilcunda Bass | 36 | 0.790 |
| Korumburra | 30 | 0.8480 |

| Team | Points | % |
|---|---|---|
| **C GRADE, Division 2** | | |
| **Club** | **90** | **2.750** |
| **Glen Alvie** | **72** | **0.912** |
| **Inverloch** | **60** | **1.115** |
| **Koonwarra L/RSL** | **48** | **1.607** |
| Town | 36 | 0.620 |
| Nyora | 36 | 0.583 |
| OMK | 18 | 0.431 |

## NEXT WEEKEND'S GAMES & UMPIRE APPOINTMENTS

### ROUND 8 - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20 - T20 GAMES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **A GRADE, Division 1** | | |
| **Club v Phillip Island** | 1pm - Won. Turf | Michael Thomas |
| **Nerrena v Town** | 11am - Leon.Turf | Ken Scrimshaw |
| **Inverloch v OMK** | 1pm - Inv. Turf | Ashleigh Stride |
| **Imperials - BYE** | | |
| **A Grade, Division 2** | | |
| **MDU v Nyora** | 1pm - Meeniyan | Ian Salmon |
| **Korumburra v K-Bass** | 2pm - Korumburra | John Schelling |
| **Foster v Glen Alvie** | 11am - Foster GC | Les White |
| **Koonwarra L/RSL - BYE** | | |
| **B GRADE, Division 1** | | |
| **OMK v Korumburra** | 12pm - Outtrim | Geoff Birnie |
| **Town v Inverloch** | 1pm - Scorp. Pk 1 | Ken Scrimshaw |
| **P-Island v Nerrena** | 1pm - Rhyll | Steve Williamson |
| **Club - BYE** | | |
| **B GRADE, Division 2** | | |
| **K-Bass v Glen Alvie** | 1pm - Bass 1 | Geoffrey Parkinson |
| **Koon L/RSL v MDU** | 10am - Koonwarra | Graham Wightman |
| **Nyora v Imperials** | 1pm - Nyora | TBC |

### ROUND 11 - SATURDAY, DECEMBER 20 - T20 GAMES

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **C GRADE, Division 1** | | |
| **MDU v Kilcunda Bass** | 1pm - Dumbalk | TBC |
| **Nerrena v OMK** | 1pm - Nerrena | TBC |
| **Phillip Island v Club** | 10am - Rhyll | Steve Williamson |
| **Korumburra - BYE** | | |
| **C GRADE, Division 2** | | |
| **OMK v Koon L/RSL** | 1pm - Digger Park | TBC |
| **Inverloch v Town** | 11am - Inverloch | Ashleigh Stride |
| **Glen Alvie v Nyora** | 1pm - Glen Alvie | TBC |
| **Club - Bye** | | |

**Subject to Confirmation.**
**Any prospective umpires can contact**
**Ash Stride 0432 350 944 or Ken Scrimshaw 0433 297 421**

# First win of season for Wonthaggi Club in women's cricket double header

THE Wonthaggi women's team enjoyed a well-earned breakthrough on Sunday, recording its first win of the 2025/26 season with a complete team performance, setting up the 25-run victory over Kilcunda Bass Great Whites at Bass Recreation Reserve.

After winning the toss, Wonthaggi chose to bat, producing a composed and structured innings, having a focus on rotating the batting order and building confidence across the lineup, Club posting a competitive 113 off its 20 overs.

Captain Elizabeth Crump set the tone early, making 12 runs from nine balls, with all batters contributing, Carmel Mitchell top scoring with 15, Breeanna Pentland making 13, Amanda Goodsell 12 and Hayley Richards 11.

Wonthaggi's total included 32 extras.

Kilcunda Bass skipper Joanne Huckett was tidy with the ball, conceding just 16 runs from her four overs.

Defending 113, Wonthaggi produced its most disciplined bowling and fielding effort of the season, the bowlers working patiently, keeping tight lines and limiting scoring opportunities, which prevented the Great Whites from building momentum throughout the innings.

Sophie Barnes led the Wonthaggi attack with an outstanding spell of four overs for just 11 runs, helping Club make a positive start with the ball.

Bianca Beaumont captured a wicket and conceded just eight runs in her three overs, and along with Imogen Beaumont's two overs for five runs, applied further pressure to the Kilcunda Bass batters.

Hayley Richards took a wicket and bowled a maiden during her three overs.

Kilcunda Bass fought hard, Kate Thompson top scoring with 24 from 16 balls, but consistent pressure and sharp fielding saw Wonthaggi restrict the Great Whites to a total of 88 runs.

"Each week we get better and better," said Wonthaggi Club Coach Brian Osborne, the side tackling its second season, having finished well down the ladder in its inaugural campaign.

**Jan Hodgson scored three off 18 balls, retiring with Jess Abrahams, who scored five off 11.** B85_5025

While modified rules for women's cricket locally may have the purists calling for the third umpire, there is no doubt that women's cricket is here to stay and growing fast.

The main difference in women's cricket is that the women bat in pairs, facing four overs, and each time a player loses a wicket, three runs are taken off their score.

Every game is in the 20/20 format, with a minimum of eight players in each team.

The winning side is the one with the most runs after three runs are deducted for each lost wicket, with each side getting to face its full 20 overs.

The Leongatha and District Cricket Association currently has eight teams in the women's competition with Leongatha Town at the top of the ladder, followed by Inverloch and Koonwarra.

Games are played every second week with seven rounds, a semi-final and a grand final.

On Sunday, Phillip Island prevailed by 20 runs in the other match of a double header at Bass Recreation Reserve.

# Wonthaggi Club young guns shine in weekend cricket

NEVER has it been more certain that cricket is stronger than ever in the younger ranks with three under-15s making their mark in weekend cricket. Blake Ton scored his third consecutive half-century for the Wonthaggi Cricket Club reaching 59 not out against OMK at Dalyston. Jed Caddy moved up from C1 to play his first game in B Grade for Wonthaggi Club at McMahon Reserve and making his mark for Foster in A2 was Max Johnston scoring 27 runs against Kilcunda Bass and taking a handy wicket.

**Jed Caddy, 14, moved up from C1 to play his first game in B Grade for Wonthaggi Club at McMahon Reserve. B**40_5025

**Blake Ton, 14, scored his third consecutive half-century for the Wonthaggi Cricket Club.** B53_5025

# Club polish off Imps with aplomb

WONTHAGGI Club's A1 side delivered a comprehensive performance across both disciplines to record a dominant victory over Imperials in round seven.

After Imperials won the toss and chose to bat, Wonthaggi's bowlers took control from the outset, applying relentless pressure on a good turf wicket.

Imperials were restricted to 9/143 from 68.5 overs, with run-scoring extremely difficult throughout the innings.

Captain Joel Brann led superbly with the ball, finishing with 3/40 from 18 overs, while excellent support came from Jakeb Thomas (2/19), Ryan Thomas (2/14) and Fraser West (2/27).

The attack was backed by sharp fielding and disciplined lines, reflected in the low economy rates across the board.

Chasing 144 for victory, Wonthaggi were calm and clinical.

Mitch Thomas anchored the innings with a composed 50 from 91 balls, setting a strong platform at the top of the order.

He was well supported by Alexander Geyer, who produced an outstanding innings, finishing 62 from 83 balls*, striking four fours and two sixes to guide the chase home.

After the sole wicket fell at 114, Harry West (16)* joined Geyer to see the innings through without further loss, as Wonthaggi reached 1/147 in 33.3 overs, sealing the win comfortably.

It was a complete team performance from Wonthaggi – disciplined bowling, sharp fielding and composed batting – resulting in a convincing and well-earned Division 1 victory.

In B Grade, Wonthaggi produced a dominant all-round performance at McMahon Reserve, posting a commanding 8/316 before bowling Phillip Island out for 233 in 36.4 overs.

After winning the toss and electing to bat, Wonthaggi's innings was built around two outstanding centuries.

David Britt was in sublime touch, retiring out on a superb 124, anchoring the innings with authority.

**Dave Britt survived multiple unsuccessful appeals for LBW to retire n/o 124.** B34_5025

He was well supported by Lochlan McLean, who compiled a classy 100, combining patience with well-timed aggression. The pair laid the foundation for a big total, pushing the score past 200 with plenty of overs in hand.

Contributions from Gavin Britt (34) and Drew Herbert (25 not out)* ensured Wonthaggi finished strongly, reaching 316 from their 40 overs.

For Phillip Island, Sarith Angelo was the standout with the ball, claiming 4/30 in an excellent spell that prevented an even larger total.

In reply, Phillip Island showed early intent but struggled to build sustained partnerships.

Thomas Blackwell fought hard with an impressive 86, while Aidan Williams (48) and David Ivey (32) added resistance through the middle order.

However, the day belonged to Drew Herbert, who delivered a match-winning bowling performance.

Herbert tore through the Phillip Island batting line-up, finishing with remarkable figures of 6/36 from 7.4 overs, consistently breaking partnerships and swinging momentum firmly Wonthaggi's way.

Support came from Sean Roche (1/22) and Bryce Evans (1/38), while the fielding effort was sharp, highlighted by multiple catches from Ian Hughes.

Phillip Island was eventually dismissed for 233, sealing an 83-run victory for Wonthaggi and a comprehensive performance with both bat and ball.

C2 produced a dominant all-round performance to cruise to a comprehensive victory over OMK, with Brian Osborne and Blake Ton the standout contributors with the bat.

After winning the toss and electing to bat, Wonthaggi recovered from an early wobble to post 3/169 from 35 overs.

The innings was anchored superbly by Brian Osborne, who played with confidence and control to compile a polished 69 off 79 balls, striking seven boundaries and keeping the scoreboard ticking.

Osborne's knock provided the backbone of the innings and took the game away from the visitors.

At the other end, Blake Ton delivered a calm and mature innings, finishing 59 not out from 98 balls.

Blake showed great patience and composure, rotating the strike well and capitalising on loose deliveries to ensure Wonthaggi built a competitive total.

The unbroken partnership between Osborne and Ton was the decisive phase of the match, turning a modest start into a commanding position.

With the ball, Wonthaggi were relentless.

The bowlers applied constant pressure, backed up by sharp fielding, to restrict OMK to just 66 runs.

The tight lines and disciplined bowling effort ensured the opposition never threatened the target.

It was a complete team performance, but the match will rightly be remembered for the batting class of Brian Osborne and the resilience and composure shown by Blake Ton, whose innings set up a convincing and well-earned Wonthaggi victory.

## AROUND THE GROUNDS...

### FOSTER

FOSTER was defeated by Kilcunda-Bass in a one-day match in A1 on Saturday.

Playing at the Bass Recreation Reserve, the home side won the toss and chose to bat.

After losing Jaydan Tregear early at the hands of Foster bowler Luke Rooker, Bass dominated at the crease with Robert Wallace making 28 runs, Gregory Miller 35 and Steven Oates 41.

The pick of the batsmen for the day was Bass captain Matthew Grayson with 93 runs.

Mitchell Allott was Foster's star bowler with two wickets, and the remaining wickets were shared between Rooker, Max Johnston, Andrew Pattie, Khy Davy and Brad Cripps.

Kilcunda-Bass was set to defend 7/250.

Mitchell Jones had Foster off to a strong start with 62 runs, but the team lost a few early wickets at the hands of Bass bowlers Ryan Brown and Jackson Baker.

Sixty-two was the top score for Foster, but Johnston also added 27 runs. Foster conceded defeat with 8/149.

Foster is now set to play Glen Alvie in the T20 match before the Christmas break.

### GLEN ALVIE

GLEN Alvie's C2 division secured a victory over Leongatha Town at Scorpion Park on Saturday.

Glen Alvie won the toss and chose to bowl.

Karl Aeschlimann opened for Town and delivered a great performance with 66 runs.

He had a successful partnership with top scorer Jack Aeschlimann, who added 85 runs to the tally.

However, Town ran into trouble through the bottom half of the order, as three ducks were taken by Glen Alvie bowlers Charlie Andersen and Nate Luff.

Pieter Loos was the pick of Glen Alvie's bowlers, taking 4/34.

Glen Alvie was chasing 10/207.

Kent and Charlie Andersen opened for Glen Alvie, but were both bowled for ducks by Poly Joseph Kallookkaran and Jack Aeschlimann, respectively.

Darcy Tiziani steadied the ship with 74 runs, and captain Ian Thorn and Owen Luff added 25 and 36 runs respectively.

For Town, Kallookkaran and Melvin Mathew Kezhuvanthanam took three wickets each.

Glen Alvie won the day with a score of 8/215.

Glen Alvie will take on Nyora in next week's T20 match.

### THE IMPERIALS

THE Imperials made it onto the board with a win against MDU in B2.

After losing the toss, the Imperials were sent into bat first and managed to post a score of 156.

Jaxon Hayes, in his first game for the season, made the biggest impact on the scoreboard with 68 runs.

Andrew Meyer made 25 runs, and Cameron Bruce and captain Sam Vagg contributed 20 each.

The Imperials fell away towards the end, losing wickets to MDU bowler Steve Arnup.

"It was looking like we were heading towards 180, but the MDU bowlers did well to keep us to 156," Imps president Kristina Gray said.

"Cameron Bruce opened our bowling and answered with some early wickets."

Bruce dismissed the top three bats for MDU. A partnership got going between Max Murray and captain Scott Browne, but by the halfway mark, five of MDU's wickets had been claimed.

Callum McCaughan stepped up late in the game and was aggressive with the bat, top scoring with 40*.

However, James Jeffery, Isaac Bolge in his first game after injury, and last-minute inclusion Martin Reidy bowled well to get the Imperials over the line.

"It was a much-needed win. We bowled well and were lucky to get the last four wickets or so fairly cheaply," Gray said.

B2 will play a T20 match against Koonwarra/LRSL this Saturday.

The Imperials will be looking to go into this match with a bit of momentum and confidence in hopes of securing another win before the break.

A1 will have the bye.

## LDCA - DECEMBER 13 HIGHLIGHTS

### A GRADE, DIVISION 1

**Club 1/147 d Imperials 9/143**
**Imp. Batting**: A Williams 46, J Cochrane 24
**Imp. Bowling**: J Ginnane 1/17, L Anderson 0/14
**Club Batting**: A Geyer 62*, M Thomas 50,
**Club Bowling**: J Brann 3/40, R Thomas 2/14

**Nerrena 7/278 d OMK 8/270**
**Nerrena Batting**: M Clarke 108, T Gannon 49
**Nerrena Bowling**: A Gannon 4/69, J Hoy 2/52
**OMK Batting**: E Lamers 73, P Fermanis 68
**ONK Bowling**: J Lamers 3/92, T Pickering 2/24

**Inverloch 5/112 d Town 111**
**Inv. Batting**: R Harris 39, W Taberner 21*
**Inv. Bowling**: R Abeysinghe 4/6, C Newman 2/15
**Town Batting**: J Hume 30, R Gilliatte 28
**Town Bowling**: J Hume 2/41, A Fixter 2/15

**Phillip Island – BYE**

### A GRADE, DIVISION 2

**Nyora 8/201 d Koon L/RSL 198**
**Koon. Batting**: T Namalge 35, J Rushton 32
**Koon. Bowling**: N Arnup 2/23, J Kennedy 2/26
**Nyora Batting**: J Hull 48, Fill-in 46*
**Nyora Bowling**: A Thompson 3/21, A Simmons 2/26

**Korumburra 6/145 d Glen Alvie 9/121**
**Glen Alvie Batting**: M Donohue 37, W Luke 21
**Glen Alvie Bowling**: A Luke 4/28, B McRae 1/40
**K'burra Batting**: R Rangana 60, J Whiteside 38*
**K'burra Bowling**: H McNeil 4/32, J Whiteside 3/51

**Kilcunda Bass 7/250 d Foster 8/149**
**K-Bass Batting**: M Grayson 93, S Oates 41
**K-Bass Bowling**: R Brown 2/17, M Grayson 2/17
**Foster Batting**: M Jones 62, M Johnston 27
**Foster Bowling**: M Allott 2/45, B Cripps 1/13

**MDU – BYE**

### B GRADE, DIVISION 1

**OMK 1/160 d Inverloch 7/159**
**Inverloch Batting**: J Dennerley 37, B Poll 34
**Inverloch Bowling**: J Dennerley 1/30, B Poll 0/15
**OMK Batting**: A Busana 80, K Kerr 44*
**OMK Bowling**: K Kerr 2/25, T Nicholas 1/6

**Town 5/187 d Korumburra 7/113**
**Town Batting**: C Bruce 40*, M Hardy 36
**Town Bowling**: H Livingstone 2/13, M Davies 2/16
**K'burra Batting**: A Damon 33, T Dole 28
**K'burra Bowling**: T Dole 1/10, A Damon 1/26

**Club 3/316 d Phillip Island 231**
**Club Batting**: D Britt 124, L McLean 100
**Club Bowling**: D Herbert 6/36, Sean Roche 1/22
**P-Island Batting**: T Blackwell 86, A Williams 48
**P-Island Bowling**: T Blackwell 1/21, J Allan 1/44

**Nerrena – BYE**

### B GRADE, DIVISION 2

**Imperials 9/156 d MDU 121**
**Imp. Batting**: J Hayes 68, A Meyer 25
**Imp. Bowling**: C Bruce 4/35, I Bolge & M Reidy 2/19
**MDU Batting**: C McCaughan 40*, M Murray 31
**MDU Bowling**: S Arnup 4/12, S Browne 2/19

**Koon L/RSL 4/120 d Glen Alvie116**
**Glen Alvie Batting**: Z Scholz 35, L Ton 30
**Glen Alvie Bowling**: Z Scholz 2/18, L Ton 1/6
**Koon L/RSL Batting**: B Pedlow 58, B Heppell 24*
**Koon L/RSL Bowling**: B Davison 3/10, L Read 2/15

**Nyora 2/133 d Kilcunda Bass 6/130**
**K-Bass Batting**: A McBride 42, V J, Gopal 18
**K-Bass Bowling**: J Dickson 1/9, A McBride 1/36
**Nyora Batting**: C Knox 46, J Knox 42*
**Nyora Bowling**: D Blackney 2/22, M Lynch 1/20

### C GRADE, DIVISION 1

**Korumburra 9/174 d MDU 7/64**
**K'burra Batting**: Fill-in 28*, T Morrison 28
**K'burra Bowling**: T Sorrell 2/10, P Beadel 2/14
**MDU Batting**: Z Bright 11, J Allen 11
**MDU Bowling**: K Foote 4/29, Z Bright 2/18

**Nerrena 6/173 d Kilcunda Bass 4/172**
**K-Bass Batting**: A Miller 36, P Miller 35
**K-Bass Bowling**: H Bettles 2/34, O Leighton 1/7
**Nerrena Batting**: B Croatto 102*, N Tucker 34
**Nerrena Bowling**: C Marinou 2/17, D Whelan 1/36

**OMK 8/199 d Phillip Island 131**
**OMK Batting**: R White 80, A Fisher 46
**OMK Bowling**: B Wyatt 3/7, L Walker, B Loader 1/7
**P-Island Batting**: M Cleary 31, S Lock 18
**P-Island Bowling**: M Cleary 2/32, D Mani 2/50

**Club – BYE**

### C GRADE, DIVISION 2

**Glen Alvie 8/215 d Town 207**
**Town Batting**: J Aeschlimann 85, K Aeschlimann 66
**Town Bowling**: MM Kezhuvanthanam 3/27, P J Kallookkaran 3/28
**Glen Alvie Batting**: D Tiziani 74, O Luff 36
**Glen Alvie Bowling**: P Loos 4/34, C Andersen 3/25

**Inverloch 7/183 Koonwarra L/RSL 3/122**
**Inverloch Batting**: D Tessari 56, D Cashin 48
**Inverloch Bowling**: J Foote 1/14, H Williams 1/45
**Koon. Batting**: G Boxall 32*, G Matthies 29
**Koon. Bowling**: S Paterson 3/31, M Boswell 2/24

**Club 3/169 d OMK 6/66**
**Club Batting**: B Osborne 69, B Ton 59*
**Club Bowling**: L Borne 2/5, A Benetti, H Crump 1/5
**OMK Batting**: G Grey 13, Matt Whiteside 10
**OMK Bowling**: M Whiteside 2/28, D Wylie 1/24

**Nyora – BYE**

Sentinel-Times SPORT
Email your reports to news@sgst.com.au
ISSN 1834-7932

Newhaven College Junior School were thrilled to welcome St Kilda AFL FC players Tom De Koning, Tobie Travaglia, Daniel Butler, Patrick Said and Paddy Dow on their last day of school. Pictured with principal Tony Corr, head of junior school Cath Huther and PE/sports teacher Jaclyn Clark.

# Saints kick off Community Camp

ST KILDA Football Club headed to South Gippsland last week for its 2025 AFL Community Camp, spending two days engaging with locals through clinics, school visits and junior football clubs across the region.

The tour began on Monday afternoon at Leongatha Recreation Reserve, where players hosted an AFL Auskick Super Clinic. More than 150 young footballers travelled from across South Gippsland to take part, with Saints players running skills sessions, drills and games for all in attendance.

Players also visited several junior football clubs, including Wonthaggi and Inverloch-Kongwak, connecting with the next generation of local talent and the volunteers who support their development.

Tuesday saw the group spread right across the region to meet students from a wide range of schools, delivering Q&A sessions and signing opportunities. Schools included Wonthaggi North, St Joseph's Korumburra, Tarwin Lower, Bass Coast Specialist (Wonthaggi), Powlett River, Loch, Fish Creek and District, Bass Valley, Bass Coast College Wonthaggi, Poowong, St Laurence O'Toole, Leongatha, Toora, Foster, Newhaven, Cowes and San Remo.

The visit was part of the AFL's ongoing commitment to strengthening ties with regional communities, while acknowledging the vital role local clubs, schools and families play in growing the game.

Saints midfielder and proud Gippsland product Sam Flanders said it was special to return to the area he grew up in. "I'm really proud to be from Gippsland and very grateful to be part of bringing AFL football out to the region," Mr Flanders said.

"I know how much an AFL player visit can mean to kids in country areas. Now, being on the other side of it, that responsibility isn't lost on me.

"I hope these visits inspire kids to keep chasing their footy dreams and help more talent from the region make it to the elite level."

Newhaven College principal Tony Corr got involved, as he has been a member of the St Kilda Football Club for 40 years. He said it was an unforgettable day, thanks to the amazing players Tom De Koning, Tobie Travaglia, Daniel Butler, Patrick Said and Paddy Dow for visiting Newhaven College on Tuesday, December 9.

The students had an incredible time engaging with the players, asking questions and getting their St Kilda merchandise signed. The players shared their insights and experiences, making this a day the students will never forget. It was fantastic to see everyone so excited and involved.

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