

Sentinel-Times

COVERING SOUTH GIPPSLAND AND BASS COAST

Tuesday, March 3, 2026 | \$2.00



Prize pumpkin crowned

Budding garden gurus, the Dobson brothers earned the prize for heaviest pumpkin at the 2026 Foster Show.

See our coverage on pages 14 & 15.

MOTOGP OUT, MACCAS IN?

Petition nears 2000 signatures as Cowes fights back

McDONALD'S has confirmed it is exploring a Phillip Island site for a new restaurant but the proposal has drawn fierce community opposition with a change.org petition attracting more than 2000 signatures in less than a week.

The fast food giant told the Sentinel-Times it had recently identified the corner of Settlement Road and Thompson Avenue in Cowes adjoining the existing Mobil service station as a potential location for a restaurant including a McCafe.

Jonathan Yap, Head of Development at

By Rick Koenig

McDonald's Victoria, said the company had initiated meetings with both local business leaders and local government although plans remain in the early stages.

"While our plans are subject to council approval we've welcomed the opportunity to initiate early conversations with local council and community leaders," Mr Yap said.

"These discussions have focused on listening to local priorities and understand-

ing how McDonald's can make a positive contribution to the Cowes and Phillip Island community."

Mr Yap said the restaurant would be locally owned and operated and create up to 200 full-time and part-time jobs with training and development opportunities.

"We're also proud to support Phillip Island as a key tourism destination and to continue backing the Victorian agricultural industry by serving great-tasting food made with quality Aussie ingredients," he said.

Continued page 3



International Women's Day
Sunday, March 8, 2026

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Petition secures parliamentary debate on Victorian firearm laws

A FIELD and Game Australia petition backed by The Nationals' Member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath has secured a parliamentary debate on Victoria's firearm laws after surpassing 12,000 signatures.

The debate is scheduled for Wednesday April 1 in the Legislative Council.

The petition comes as the state government reviews Victoria's firearm laws with former Victoria Police Chief Commissioner Ken Lay appointed to lead a rapid review following the December 2025 Bondi Beach terrorist attack that killed 15 people.

The Victorian government committed at National Cabinet to strengthen gun laws and develop options to limit open-ended firearms licensing.

Signatories to the petition urged proper enforcement of existing laws and warned against rushed changes.

Ms Bath said community safety must remain the priority but cautioned against hurried legislative responses.

"Rushed and non-evidence-based changes have potential to impact responsible, law-abiding firearm owners without improving public safety or reducing the risk of terrorism or serious crime," she said.

"Victoria already has some of the strictest firearm laws in the country and measures like

firearm caps or shorter licence terms will not stop crime or improve community safety."

Ms Bath called on the government to guarantee genuine consultation with firearm owners and sporting and hunting organisations.

"The petition demands policy that targets behaviour, intent and criminal access instead of the number of firearms held by compliant citizens," she said.

"It calls for laws that are firm, fair and focused on the real risk, including tougher penalties for trafficking and theft.

"It is essential that intelligence-led processes and the right policy is adopted to keep firearms out of the hands of criminals and mitigate illegal activity, not unfairly target law-abiding Victorians."

Field and Game Australia has significant membership across Gippsland with local branches active throughout the region.

Victoria has more than 250,000 licensed firearm owners with a large proportion in regional areas where firearms are used for pest control, primary production and recreational shooting.

The Ken Lay review is expected to report in early 2026 and will inform Victoria's contribution to the renegotiated National Firearms Agreement.



Member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath with the petition calling for evidence-based firearm law reforms.

Petition nears 2000 signatures as Cowes fights back

From page 1

But the community response has been overwhelming with petition creator James Ahern saying the numbers speak for themselves.

"Over 2000 signatures and climbing? That tells me this isn't some loud minority, it's a groundswell," Mr Ahern said.

"It's not just locals. People from out of town and overseas have signed it too, the same tourists who come to Phillip Island for more than 100 years for the wildlife, the coastline, the character."

Mr Ahern said protecting the island's identity was his priority.

"Once you drop something like that into Phillip Island you chip away at what makes it different and before long we're just another deep outer suburb of Melbourne with the same drive-through, the

same signage, the same beige sprawl," he said.

"Why trade in something unique for something you can get off any highway anywhere?"

The petition says the fight is not about hating burgers but "protecting what makes this place globally significant and uniquely local" and urges Bass Coast Shire Council to protect Phillip Island from what it calls inappropriate development.

Signatories have raised concerns about the impact on local businesses, community health, increased traffic at the Thompson Avenue and Settlement Road intersection and the proximity of the proposed site to a primary school.

The debate comes at a particularly sensitive time with the MotoGP set to leave Phillip Island for Adelaide ending decades of international

exposure and tourist spending.

"The need for more food outlets is now clearly reduced as the MotoGP is going," one petition signatory wrote. "I think the race is a big loss. A Maccas is not a gain."

Mr Ahern said the two issues are linked.

"When local traders are already hurting the last thing they need is a multinational giant muscling in," he said.

"When an island economy takes a blow like that adding more corporate competition isn't progress, it's kicking them while they're down."

He rejected the jobs argument as well.

"The 200 jobs line is the oldest trick in the multinational playbook," he said. "Every single business creates jobs. We're not anti-business and

we're not anti-jobs. We're anti-McDonald's in this location."

A Facebook group titled No to Cowes McDonalds has also been established.

It is not the first time McDonald's has been proposed and opposed in Cowes with a 2011 proposal to include a McDonald's in a new Woolworths complex on Thompson Avenue drawing fierce opposition from traders. The proposal was ultimately abandoned.

No planning application has been lodged with Bass Coast Shire Council but McDonald's said one was expected in the near future.

"Once we receive a planning application we will follow the process in accordance with the planning scheme," a council spokesperson said. "Community will be able to submit objections at this point not before."

Cricket club condemns alleged arson attack on vice president's home

THE Korumburra Cricket Club has issued a statement condemning the alleged arson attack on the personal home of club vice president James Dunn.

A 25-year-old Korumburra man was charged by Bass Coast Crime Investigation Unit detectives last month following a house fire at the prominently located property on the corner of Bena Road and Jumbunna Road in the early hours of Sunday February 8.

The man was charged with criminal damage by fire, burglary, theft and criminal damage after detectives executed a search warrant at his address on Friday February 20.

He was remanded into custody to appear at the Korumburra Magistrates' Court.

In a statement released on February 25 the club said it "strongly condemns the alleged arson attack" and is providing "unequivocal support" to Mr Dunn and his family.

The club said it was taking immediate steps in accordance with its constitution to impose an interim suspension on any person charged in relation to the incident with any suspension to remain in place pending the outcome of the legal process.

"The club considers it critical for all parties to allow the appropriate legal process to proceed without interference," the statement signed by club president Glen Barrett said.

Three fire brigades attended the blaze with Korumburra Fire Brigade joined by Ruby Fire Brigade and a member from Loch CFA Fire and Rescue Unit.

No occupants were home at the time of the fire and no injuries were reported.

Experienced conservation leader joins Phillip Island Nature Parks

EXPERIENCED conservation leader Shael Martin has joined Phillip Island Nature Parks as the new General Manager Conservation.

Ms Martin brings more than two decades of environmental experience following a 23-year career with the Northern Territory Government and more recently with Parks Victoria in a statewide operational role.

Her career has combined conservation leadership, wildlife rehabilitation, tourism and community engagement.

Ms Martin said her first weeks on Phillip Island had reinforced the global significance of the Nature Parks work.

"I was blown away by how tenacious and tough little penguins are and by the remarkable story of how the Summerland Peninsula was reclaimed for the species," she said.

"I am excited to help continue the outstanding conservation work already underway, enrich our relationship with the Bunurong people and contribute to a thriving visitor economy and meaningful engagement with the wider community," she said.

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6 Day Weather Forecast

SOUTH GIPPSLAND



TUE | Mar 3
Cloudy.
Wind AM: SW 15-20km/h
Wind PM: Light
13° **20°**



WED | Mar 4
Cloudy.
Wind AM: Light
Wind PM: SW 15-20km/h
13° **21°**



THUR | Mar 5
Cloud clearing.
Wind AM: Light
Wind PM: Light
11° **23°**



FRI | Mar 6
Cloudy.
Wind AM: Light
Wind PM: S-SW 15-20km/h
12° **21°**



SAT | Mar 7
Partly cloudy.
Wind AM: Light
Wind PM: S 15-20km/h
11° **21°**



SUN | Mar 8
Partly cloudy.
Wind AM: Light
Wind PM: S-SE 15-20km/h
11° **23°**

IN BRIEF

Gas and coal driving up power bills

A NEW report from the Climate Council has found gas corporations and ageing coal plants are the two biggest drivers of high power bills in Australia.

The Power Games report found fossil gas provides only about five per cent of electricity in Australia's main grid but sets the wholesale price up to 90 per cent of the time.

Climate Council CEO Amanda McKenzie said renewables had lowered average household electricity bills by up to \$417 in 2024 saving households a collective \$3.8 billion.

"The faster we get more renewables online, the more we'll all save," Ms McKenzie said.

The report also found about 2.5 million households are paying more than they should for electricity because they do not shop around for better deals.

Victorian households are paying \$269 more than necessary by staying with the same retailer.

South Australians face the highest loyalty fees at \$408 followed by NSW at \$303 and Queensland at \$213.

Jeetho Hall AGM

THE Jeetho Hall committee is calling on residents and interested locals to attend the hall's annual general meeting on Monday March 16 at 7pm.

The heritage-listed hall at 207 Jeetho Road was built in 1892 as the original Shire of Poowong and Jeetho offices and is the only surviving pre-1900 municipal headquarters in South Gippsland.

Secretary Lorraine Knox said the committee had a positive year with a new sound system purchased and a defibrillator installed for hall patrons.

The next priorities include purchasing quality outdoor chairs and completing the gazebo project.

All committee positions will be declared vacant at the AGM with nominations taken from the floor.

Membership is \$30 per year. Contact contact@jeethohall.com.au or phone president G. McGrath on 0427 675 435.

La Trobe leads data centre energy project

LA Trobe University will lead a \$1.1 million national project using quantum computing and artificial intelligence to cut energy use and emissions at Australia's data centres.

Funded under the federal government's National Critical Technologies Challenge Program the project will develop a prototype energy management system and test it inside an operational data centre run by NEXTDC.

The system combines quantum-inspired algorithms with machine learning to manage heating, ventilation and cooling systems more efficiently with cooling alone accounting for up to 30 per cent of a data centre's energy use.

La Trobe Vice-Chancellor Professor Theo Farrell said the project would move cutting-edge quantum and AI research from simulation into a live operational environment.

La Trobe is partnering with the University of Western Australia's Centre for Quantum Information Simulation and Algorithms along with industry partners NEXTDC, Fujitsu and AQ Intelligence.

Build more homes to fix housing crisis

THE Housing Industry Association has told a Senate committee that targeting property investors will do nothing to ease pressure on homeowners or renters.

HIA Managing Director Jocelyn Martin said housing supply is the core issue driving Australia's housing crisis.

"Whether you are concerned about home ownership, rental

affordability, government revenue or fairness between investors and owner occupiers, the answer is the same: build more homes," Ms Martin said.

The HIA submission included modelling showing that removing or restricting negative gearing or the capital gains tax discount would reduce dwelling starts, GDP and construction employment while increasing rents.

Ms Martin said investors finance between one third and 40 per cent of all new dwellings and each new home generates around \$200,000 in direct tax revenue.

"Restricting supply only locks in capital gains for existing owners and limits entry for those who come after," she said.

Record complaints to financial ombudsman

THE Australian Financial Complaints Authority received a record 111,373 complaints in 2025 a 14 per cent increase on the previous year.

Consumers and small business owners secured \$643 million in compensation and refunds which was a 120 per cent increase on the previous calendar year.

The increase was spread across all financial products including banking insurance investments and superannuation.

Large-scale collapses in the financial advice sector resulted in a 58 per cent increase in investment and advice complaints.

Chief Ombudsman David Locke said large-scale financial firm collapses can have a profound impact on people and their families.

Superannuation complaints rose 29 per cent to 7687 in 2025 largely driven by delays in handling claims and disputes over claim decisions.

Since it began operating AFCA has received more than 634,000 complaints helping to secure \$2.1 billion in compensation for consumers.

Owls club takes flight in Bass Coast

THE Inner Wheel Club of Wonthaggi Owls held its charter lunch on Saturday, February 28 marking the beginning of a new chapter for women in the Bass Coast community.

Inner Wheel is part of International Inner Wheel, a worldwide network of more than 120,000 women across 103 countries united by friendship and service.

The charter celebration will be attended by representatives from International Inner Wheel, Inner Wheel Australia and special guests from the local community.

The newly formed group is focused on community connection and practical help for those doing it tough in the Bass Coast region.

At the heart of the club's work is the Wonthaggi Owls Community Pantry, a place the group describes as one of dignity not judgement.

"A place where food becomes relief and relief becomes hope," the club said.

The club also aims to create welcoming spaces for women to meet and feel less isolated while supporting local causes.

"Inner Wheel is friendship with purpose and service with heart and we look forward to growing alongside our community one small meaningful act at a time," the group said.

The Inner Wheel Club of Wonthaggi Owls are the latest addition to the Bass Coast's network of community service organisations joining groups including Rotary, Lions and the CWA in providing volunteer support across the shire.

The club meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7.30pm at the Wonthaggi RSL on Graham Street.

New members of all ages are welcome. Contact iw.wonthaggiowls@gmail.com.



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Coles supermarket and Liquorland development confirmed for Grantville

By Trent Westaway

A BRAND new Coles supermarket is set to open in Grantville with the retail giant confirming it will anchor a new development along the Bass Highway.

The confirmation comes after a public notice appeared for a packaged liquor licence application by Liquorland at 1531 Bass Highway in Grantville.

While the initial notice only referenced Liquorland specifically Coles has now confirmed that a full supermarket will also be included in the project.

In a statement provided to the Sentinel-Times a Coles spokesperson said the company is looking forward to coming to the area.

"At Coles we are constantly evaluating our store network to ensure we are delivering the best shopping experience for customers," the spokesperson said.

"We are excited to be bringing a new Coles supermarket and Liquorland store to Grantville as part of this development."

Coles did not provide any further details regarding the construction timeline or the store's broader development noting that it is simply a tenant at the site.

The development site at 1531 Bass Highway has previously secured planning approval as part of the Bass Coast Village



A brand new Coles supermarket is set to be built at Grantville.

shopping centre project which features a Coles-anchored neighbourhood shopping centre with six specialty shops and a fuel pad site across a 1.71 hectare parcel of land.

The packaged liquor licence application for Liquorland was lodged with Liquor Control Victoria earlier this month.

The notice states the proposed store would sell alcohol for consumption off the premises and trade from 9am to 11pm Monday to Saturday, 10am to 11pm on Sundays and from 12 noon to 11pm on Anzac Day.

With the objection period coming to a close residents have had 30 days to lodge any

complaints or objections with Liquor Control Victoria after the initial display date on Friday February 6.

The announcement has generated significant community reaction on social media with many residents welcoming the news after years of lobbying for a major supermarket in the area.

"Just build it already," one commenter wrote while another said it was "the worst kept secret in history."

Others raised concerns about the impact on independent operators with one resident saying "there goes the independent Foodworks" while another pointed out that independent retailers in Wonthaggi have continued to thrive alongside major chains.

Some residents called for similar developments in nearby towns including Korumburra and Leongatha while others on Phillip Island noted Grantville was still a 20-minute drive away.

The Grantville community has long called for a major supermarket with former Bass Coast Shire Deputy Mayor Cr Rochelle Halstead previously describing herself as "devastated" by earlier delays to the project.

A Foodworks supermarket opened across the road from the proposed Coles site in mid-2023 after years of the community going without a local supermarket option.

Phillip Island MotoGP move confirmed in earnings report

By Bruce Wardley

LIBERTY Media Corporation has confirmed the Australian MotoGP will move from Phillip Island to Adelaide from 2027 while reporting its fourth quarter and year-end financial results on Wednesday.

MotoGP revenue increased 14 per cent to \$US573 million in 2025 with operating income growing 86 per cent to \$US54 million.

Liberty Media said the new agreement for the Australian MotoGP to be held in Adelaide from 2027 to 2032 represented the first race to be held in a city centre.

Worldwide attendance for MotoGP events grew by 21 per cent to more than 3.66 million.

"2025 was an exceptional and productive year for Liberty, and we are excited about the opportunities ahead," said Derek Chang, Liberty Media president and chief executive.

"We delivered on our key strategic objectives, strengthening Formula 1's growth trajectory, completing the MotoGP acquisition and streamlining our structure following the Liberty Live split-off last December.

"This year, we remain focused on sustaining F1's momentum, positioning MotoGP for future growth and remaining disciplined, yet opportunistic with our capital to drive shareholder value."

MotoGP finished the year with record attendance and fan engagement and a 9 per cent growth in the global television audience.

"We continue investing in our commercial and marketing functions while working to elevate the race experience and diversify our race calendar," said MotoGP chief executive Carmelo Ezpeleta.

"Our second season launch event in February drew twice as many fans as the previous.

"We look forward to returning to Brazil this year, and we were thrilled to announce our first modern-era city-centre grand prix in Adelaide in 2027."

MotoGP revenue was derived from media rights fees (41.2 per cent), race promotion fees (33.7 per cent) and sponsorship fees (12.7 per cent).

Other revenue which included revenue from ancillary motorcycle racing championships, hospitality and licensing comprised 12.4 per cent of total MotoGP earnings.

Seaside sculpture up for auction

IF you have visited the Inverloch Community Hub recently, you may have noticed an amazing ceramic sculpture taking pride of place.

Designed and created by middle school students at Bass Coast Specialist School under the guidance of art teacher Trilby Parise, the sculpture was part of the school's Go and Grow program.

The sculpture consists of two standing pieces, each with three handmade raku sea creatures – inspired by the seaside towns many of the students call home.

The students donated their work for auction, which has already attracted bids of more than \$1,000.

"We want the students to be involved with the community, so it's been great to see the

support from members of the community," Ms Parise said.

The bidding is open until 4pm on March 10, with proceeds going back into the Go and Grow program.

Principal Rob Sands congratulated the students on the project.

"I was lucky enough to see the kids working on it, and the engagement was incredible," he said.

Bids can be made at Shipwreck Ceramics, via QR codes at the Inverloch Community Hub, or through the school's Facebook page.

RIGHT: This sculpture designed and created by middle school students at Bass Coast Specialist School is up for auction at the Inverloch Community Hub.



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Mayor's Message



Cr Rochelle Halstead



AT our February Council Meeting, Council unanimously endorsed five Tier One Advocacy Priorities – the big issues we'll be taking to State and Federal Government because they matter most to the future of Bass Coast.

One of those is the protection and long-term management of the Western Port Woodlands. If you've ever walked through the woodlands, you'll understand why this is so important.

It's a place many locals feel personally connected to. Families head there for walks, birdwatchers and nature lovers spend hours there, and for others it's simply somewhere quiet to clear your head. It's one of those landscapes that people don't just value – they genuinely love.

The Western Port Woodlands are the largest remnant of intact coastal woodlands in Victoria, stretching from Lang Lang through to Grantville along the eastern shoreline of Western Port Bay. That alone makes them incredibly important from a conservation perspective.

They also support flora and fauna that underpin the internationally recognised Western Port Biosphere Reserve.

The woodlands are home to rare orchid species, the endangered Southern Brown Bandicoot, Long-nosed Bandicoots and the Powerful Owl – the largest owl species in Australia. They also contain the critically endangered Tea-tree Fingers Fungus, the only endangered fungus species recorded in Victoria.

Importantly, the area supports the largest population of Strzelecki Gum in the state. This species is classified as critically endangered in Victoria, with an estimated 1,000 individual trees found within the woodlands.

Despite this significance, the landscape faces very real pressures.

Habitat fragmentation and competing land uses – including sand mining and development – pose direct threats to the long-term survival of the woodlands. That's why strong planning protections and coordinated management are so important.

That combination – strong environmental value and deep community connection – is exactly why Council has elevated this to a Tier One advocacy priority.

Our role now is to make sure the right protections and management frameworks are in place for the long term.

That means advocating to the State Government for stronger environmental protections, while also ensuring the woodlands continue to be managed in a way that respects cultural heritage and conservation needs.

We know this is something our community cares deeply about. Many people have given their time to conservation work in the area, and that local stewardship is something we want to support and build on.

Bass Coast is known for its natural beauty, and our community expects us to stand up for it.

Speculation surrounds Graham Street tree works

By Trent Westaway

CONTRACTORS digging around newly planted trees on Graham Street last week have reignited debate over one of Wonthaggi's most contentious projects.

The 13 crepe myrtles went in from September last year as part of the Wonthaggi Activity Centre Streetscapes project replacing 39 car parking spaces.

The project has drawn criticism from traders and residents ever since.

The Sentinel Times has received numerous enquiries about the latest round of works with speculation about everything from the size of the tree pits and drainage to the concrete used and problems with contractors.

Bass Coast Shire Council said the work is all part of the plan and no trees are being removed.

Contractors began a four-week program of night works on Monday February 23 to carry out rectification works around the tree pits.

The works form part of the Greening of Graham Street



Contractors began staged rectification works on Graham Street last week with heavy machinery on site.

stage of the \$2 million project funded through Regional Development Victoria and council's capital works budget.

They involve adjustments to the kerb and channel surrounding the crepe myrtles.

Sections of kerb will be shortened and reinstated with some asphalt required to properly finish the tree pit surrounds.

The broader project has delivered upgrades across the Wonthaggi town centre including a revamped Apex Park, improve-

ments to McBride Avenue and landscaping and safety works along Graham Street.

Council stressed the excavation work seen on site is part of scheduled rectification not any change to the project.

The works will be completed in four stages with each stage expected to take roughly five nights.

Works will occur overnight to minimise disruption to Graham Street traffic and retailers.

Car parking spaces adjacent to the trees will be temporarily unavailable while concrete cures.

Each section will be reinstated before contractors move to the next stage.

Council has advised businesses and residents to expect some noise along with dust vibration and an increased presence of machinery and construction crews.

Emergency access will remain available at all times.

Local councils caught in a rate cap cash squeeze

RETIRING former Bass Coast chief financial officer and more recently general manager of innovation and engagement David Filmalter has hit out at the low rate cap imposed on local government.

Nominating the Berninnet cultural centre in Cowes as one of his proudest achievements Mr Filmalter said he was pleased to have delivered on Bass Coast's ambitious capital works program despite escalating material costs.

Formerly working for Boroondara and Port Phillip City Councils Mr Filmalter joined Bass Coast Shire Council in 2018 as finance manager and chief financial officer.

"Every year there's a regular cycle of working with councillors and stakeholders on preparing a good budget that delivers on capital works and council priorities," he said.

Acknowledging that red tape was part of the job Mr Filmalter nonetheless reflected on the time taken every year to comply with the state government

By Bruce Wardley

imposed rate cap and preparing returns for the Federal Grants Commission.

"There's also procurement and major contract tenders," Mr Filmalter said.

Bass Coast Shire Council's capital works program has grown dramatically.

"Three to four fold at minimum cost to ratepayers," he said.

Mr Filmalter said he was quite proud of Berninnet which was made possible by working closely with the state government.

"We tried to deliver a capital works program that delivered infrastructure that the community could access, we always tried to keep costs low," he said.

Questioned about a noticeable recent reduction in carryover funds and available revenue for Bass Coast Shire Council Mr Filmalter explained that grant funds and developer contributions were often

carried over from year to year for incomplete projects.

"At one stage we were only delivering 50 to 60 per cent of our capital works projects in any given year, in recent times that has been increased to 80 per cent," Mr Filmalter said.

Mr Filmalter said there was no question the rate cap introduced by the Victorian government in 2016 was set well below the rate of inflation.

"The rate cap next year will be 2.75 per cent with inflation forecast to be 3.6 per cent."

Council costs have been rising faster than the inflation rate according to Mr Filmalter.

"There were tremendous supply chain pressures of up to 30 and 40 per cent for some materials after COVID and more recently five to 10 per cent."

Settling into retirement this week Mr Filmalter said he gained most satisfaction from seeing the development of council's finance team.

"I'm really proud of the landmark projects that have come

to fulfilment. Our capital works have been delivered on time and on budget," Mr Filmalter said.

"We have managed the balance sheet well," he said.

"Getting the right balance between borrowings and investment."

The Emergency Services levy had taken a significant amount from the community according to Mr Filmalter and looking forward he warned there could be sub-optimal rate outcomes.

"Local government is highly regulated and sometimes the community doesn't understand the things that are out of local government control."

Roads and potholes are often a VicRoads responsibility according to Mr Filmalter.

"There's a lack of equity and disparity in local government between big metropolitan councils that are well funded by fines and fees and regional councils."

According to Mr Filmalter local rates are still cheaper than rates in the big cities.



Additional Council Meeting

Bass Coast Shire Council will be holding an additional Council Meeting on Wednesday, 4 March.

The meeting will commence at 10.15am and will be livestreamed.

The purpose of the Meeting is for Council to consider the tender award for Stewart Road Bridge, Kernot.

The agenda is currently available on Council's website at: www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/meetings.

DEADLINE CHANGES

Due to the Labour Day long weekend the deadlines for the next issue of the South Gippsland Sentinel-Times, to be printed Wednesday, March 11 will be as follows:

DISPLAY ADVERTISING

Deadline: 3pm • Friday, March 6

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Deadline: 12 noon • Tuesday, March 10

Please note our office will be closed on Monday, March 9

Sentinel-Times
COVERING SOUTH GIPPSLAND AND BASS COAST



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Displaced doctors to open new bulk-billing clinic at Leongatha hospital

By Rick Koenig

DOCTORS from the former Leongatha Healthcare clinic will open a new bulk-billing practice at Leongatha hospital in the first week of March.

Rail Trail Medical will operate from 64 Koonwarra Road within the Leongatha hospital precinct more than six weeks after the shock closure of the town's main medical centre left about 8000 patients without a GP.

The clinic's website says it has been established so patients can "continue seeing their familiar doctors" and describes the GPs as "the same GPs patients have known and trusted, who have served the local community for many years."

"As a doctor-led, community-focused clinic, Rail Trail Medical provides a stable and supportive hub for local GPs to continue practising and caring for the community," the website said.

The clinic will be open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 5.30pm with a Saturday clinic planned from April from 9am to 1pm.

Services will include women's and men's health, antenatal care, mental health care, immunisations, chronic disease management, skin clinic, iron infusions, WorkCover and pre-employment medicals and minor procedures.

The clinic will bulk bill all Medicare-eligible patients though some procedures and specialised services may attract



The Leongatha Healthcare clinic has been closed since Friday January 16 leaving about 8000 patients without a doctor.

an out-of-pocket fee.

Bayside Health Regional Care Group chief executive Louise Sparkes said the health service was pleased to support the new clinic.

"GP clinics are an essential part of our local community," Ms Sparkes said.

"We look forward to building relationships with the new team at Rail Trail Medical, as we do with other local clinics."

Ms Sparkes thanked Leongatha hospital staff who provided extra support through the Urgent Care Centre after the closure.

"My thanks go to our dedicated staff for their extra work and commitment during this time," she said.

"Every day they demonstrate that their priority is the health and wellbeing of our community."

Nationals member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath urged the community to support the new clinic.

"Over recent weeks local GPs have worked tirelessly through challenging and uncertain conditions to ensure essential health services continued," Ms Bath said.

"Let us approach this new chapter with kindness as these dedicated doctors begin delivering high-quality patient care for Leongatha and South Gippsland."

Ms Bath thanked the GPs, practice staff, Leongatha hospital staff and other clinics and professionals for their efforts since the closure.

Leongatha Healthcare closed without warning on Friday January 16 after owner Dr Chris Webster cited financial pressures linked to sanctions

imposed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.

AHPRA sanctioned Dr Webster over comments he made about Erin Patterson after her conviction for the murder of her former in-laws Don and Gail Patterson and Gail's sister Heather Wilkinson.

Dr Webster had flagged plans to reopen a smaller "boutique" practice but has not provided details.

Federal Monash MP Mary Aldred raised the impact of the closure in federal parliament earlier this month describing the clinic as "the backbone of primary health care" in the region.

The story attracted close to 400 reactions on the Sentinel-Times Facebook page with the community overwhelmingly welcoming the announcement.

One resident questioned whether patient medical records would be made available to the new clinic describing the situation as "beyond outrageous" while others raised concerns about Dr Webster's earlier announcement of a boutique practice.

"Must admit you would have to be pretty silly to trust any clinic Dr Webster opens after all this disruption," one commenter wrote.

Others were simply relieved with comments including "just great news" and "fantastic news, well done to all involved."

Rail Trail Medical can be contacted on 03 5643 3311 or at reception@rtmedical.com.au with more information at railtrail-medical.com.au.

See you at the Loch 150 celebrations this weekend

By Michael Giles

THE Loch 150 celebration weekend is nearly here and the welcome mat is already out ahead of the start to festivities on Friday night March 6 to anyone interested but especially past and present Loch families.

There are three main events, the book launch on the Friday night together with a sausage sizzle at Sunnyside Park Victoria Street, or the Loch Public Hall if the weather is inclement.

There's the unveiling of the memorial seat and Loch Primary School 'Tree of Life' project on Saturday morning in Centennial Park.

And the cutting of the 150th celebration cake on the Saturday night at the Loch Public Hall in Smith Street.

But there will be a lot more besides.

The memorial reserve will host a great day on Saturday, Loch Market will be on the Sunday, an ecumenical church service on Monday morning with a school catch up on the Monday afternoon.

Many Loch venues and clubs and eateries will be open during the weekend and there will be lots of opportunity for catching up with old acquaintances as you walk around Loch and reminisce.

Please be aware that the weekend is BYO drinks.

The program has been widely dispersed but feel free to ring Paul Knox on 0428 592248 if you have any further queries.

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Industry group joins calls for offshore wind rethink

THE Australian Industry Group representing more than 60,000 businesses has urged the Victorian government to conduct a rapid and thorough review of its offshore wind rollout warning the plan may not be cost-effective compared to alternatives.

In a policy manifesto released ahead of the November state election the peak industry body said rising costs had cast doubts over the short-term benefits of offshore wind to the state.

"It is important to be certain the offshore wind target is viable and cost-effective compared to alternatives," the Ai Group said.

The group said the only coherent alternative appeared to be substantially increasing the capacity of onshore renewable energy zones arguing that even with more onshore infrastructure needed to match the output of steadier offshore wind it may still prove cheaper.

Ai Group climate and energy policy director Tennant Reed said a new assessment of Victoria's least-cost energy options was needed before the state locked itself into a particular pathway.

"Every Victorian will pay for the energy system we end up with," Mr Reed said. "If we go with a more expensive option to avoid social licence concerns that is a price all Victorians will pay."

"We really want to be confident that we are making the best



An offshore wind farm. The viability of proposed offshore wind projects off the Gippsland coast is being questioned by industry and community groups.

choice that we can."

The industry concerns have been welcomed by grassroots group No Offshore Turbines Ninety Mile Beach which said the Ai Group's position confirmed feasibility concerns were now being raised not only by regional communities but by businesses across the national economy.

"Gippsland communities have consistently raised concerns regarding the scale complexity and long-term deliverability of offshore wind infrastructure planned for the Gippsland coast including the significant on-land transmission corridors and associated grid infrastructure required to service these offshore projects," the group said.

The group is calling for full economic transparency and independent scrutiny before what it described as irreversible offshore industrial infrastructure proceeds off the Gippsland coastline.

The concerns come as Victoria prepares to open Australia's first offshore wind tender in August for an initial two gigawatts of capacity after the state government postponed the process from its original September 2025 timeline citing setbacks in feasibility licence approvals and broader global uncertainty.

Three Gippsland offshore wind projects were abandoned in 2025 raising questions about the commercial viability of the

sector.

A fourth project the 1.5 gigawatt Navigator North proposal backed by Origin Energy and RES Australia was put on hold in September after key staff were laid off.

Victoria's auditor general Andrew Greaves warned in December that the Allan government had not adequately planned for the state's renewable transition and could not guarantee energy reliability finding the state would not meet its legislated offshore wind target of two gigawatts by 2032.

A spokeswoman for Energy and Resources Minister Lily D'Ambrosio said Victoria had some of the best offshore wind conditions in the world.

"We are always analysing demand forecasts and the best technology to meet that and offshore wind remains essential," she said.

Star of the South backed by Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners remains the most advanced project in the Gippsland zone having lodged its environmental impact statement in late 2025 and purchased land for its cable shore crossing.

South Gippsland Shire Council has maintained in-principle support for offshore wind with caveats including that the coastal and marine environment must be protected and community benefits must be clearly demonstrated.

Seismic surveys by Marinus Link at Sandy Point

MARINUS Link is planning further survey work near Sandy Point and Waratah Bay Beach on private land ahead of major construction works to start later this year.

Contractors will undertake seismic surveys without digging to better understand the soil profile and inform their shore crossing drilling methodology. The seismic works are expected to commence and be completed within two weeks.

The survey area on Waratah Bay Beach will remain open during the activities.

Seismic surveys involve the positioning of noise receptor units known as geophones connected by cables to a recording unit which monitors seismic waves when a metal plate on the ground is hit with a large hammer.

The surveys form part of preparatory works for the \$2.2 billion undersea and underground electricity interconnector between Tasmania and the Latrobe Valley in Victoria. The project includes 255 kilometres of undersea cables across Bass Strait and 90 kilometres of underground cables through Gippsland with a communications station to be built at Sandy Point.

Stage one construction is expected to begin in 2026 and be completed by 2030 with the first stage delivering 750 megawatts of capacity. A \$994 million contract was awarded late last year to a joint venture between DT Infrastructure and Samsung C&T Corporation for converter stations and land cable civil works.

Marinus Link teams have measures in place to minimise the impact on the local community, marine and land environment, businesses and local road users.

STAY SAFE IN BASS COAST

As we enjoy more beautiful weather, the Bass Coast region is calling all beachgoers to come and enjoy the sandy shores safely.

To help you stay safe, we encourage everyone to **download the Surf Life Saving Australia, Beachsafe app** and access important information available on the Life Saving Victoria website (lsv.com.au) and throughout the Visitor Information Centres.



beachsafe.org.au

Always swim at patrolled locations whenever possible, and in hot weather, take steps to protect yourself and others by keeping cool, staying hydrated, planning ahead and checking in with others.

We want everyone to keep safe when exploring the amazing coastline of Bass Coast.





South Gippsland
Shire Council

South Gippsland Shire Council News

Jobs Expo 2026

With a wide range of job opportunities available from diverse industries, the Jobs Expo is your chance to connect with local employers face-to-face and explore the exciting career paths on offer in South Gippsland.

It's a great opportunity for people at all stages of their career journey to come along and discover new options. Information about traineeships, apprenticeships, TAFE and university courses will be available on the day, as well as representatives from regional employment networks.

There will be interviews at the Expo so be sure to bring your up-to-date resume. If you need assistance with writing your resume or cover letter, we have industry professionals ready to help on the day with laptops and a printer.

Industries represented will include:

- Hospitality.
- Manufacturing.

- Logistics and Transport.
- Trades.
- Health.
- Defence Force.
- Emergency Services.
- Professional Services including legal, accounting, property valuers and real estate agents.
- Local and State Government.
- Agriculture.
- Digital Marketing.

DETAILS

Where: Memorial Hall, Leongatha.

When: Thursday 19 March 2026.

Time: 10.00am to 1.00pm.

Free sausage sizzle and coffee voucher available.

For more information, visit:
www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/jobsexpo

Meet the Mayor



Would you like an opportunity to discuss an idea or issue that's important to you with the mayor?

Appointments with Mayor Hersey are available on the second Tuesday of every month between 9.00am and 11.00am. They are held in person at Council's Main Office or virtually upon request (using Microsoft Teams).

The meetings will be arranged for a maximum of 30 minutes. An application form must be completed prior to arranging an appointment.

For more information, and to apply for a meeting, visit:

www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/meetthemayor

COUNCIL MEETINGS

The next Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 March 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

SUBSCRIBE TO IN THE KNOW

Sign up to Council's fortnightly newsletter to stay up to date with the latest news, events, community consultations, Council employment vacancies and grants.

To subscribe, visit:
www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/intheknow

COUNCILLOR DROP-IN SESSION

Call in and have a chat with Councillors.

Where: Venus Bay Community Centre.

When: Wednesday 4 March, 1.00pm - 2.00pm.

IMMUNISATION SESSIONS

Foster

Where: Prom Coast Centre for Children, 30-32 Pioneer Street.

When: Thursday 5 March, 2.00pm - 3.30pm.

Nyora

Where: Maternal and Child Health Service at Nyora Primary School, 27 Grundy Avenue.

When: Thursday 12 March, 9.00am - 10.00am.

For more information and to book your session, visit:

www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/immunisation

REQUEST FOR TENDER

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

RFT/449 Construction of Nyora Public Toilet Facility

Tenders close at 2.00pm AEDT on Tuesday 10 March 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

Calls for new members to help drive community initiatives

KORUMBURRA Round Table is seeking new members, particularly representatives from community groups.

Individuals with expertise that may benefit the round table and the community are encouraged to get in touch.

Vacancies also exist for representatives from sectors such as education, churches and health services.

The group recently held its first meeting for 2026 with discussion about the year ahead and advocacy for improvements to benefit the local community.

The round table has been an active voice for Korumburra in recent years, notably leading the campaign to save the town's last remaining bank branch when Bendigo Bank announced its closure in 2025. Members formed the Save Our Bank working group alongside the Korumburra Community Development Association and successfully advocated for continued banking services in the town.

Several matters were raised for South Gippsland Shire Council representative Sophie Dixon to follow up, including the need for installation of picnic tables and seating within the relocated rotunda at the railway precinct.

The rotunda was relocated to make way for the new picnic shelter near the public toilets but currently lacks furniture.

Another matter raised was the delayed implementation of the permanent 60km/h speed limit past Korumburra Secondary College. Although the speed reduction was approved last year it has yet to be enacted by VicRoads.

The round table will assist in convening a meeting of Korumburra businesses in March to gauge interest in re-establishing a business association.

The Korumburra Business Association is dormant and reviving it could bring benefits including networking opportunities, shared support, increased visibility and stronger advocacy for the local business sector. Further details of the meeting will be advertised shortly.

Email korumburroundtable@gmail.com to express interest in joining.

Answers sought on Limeburners Walk closure at Walkerville

THE Nationals Member for Gippsland South Danny O'Brien has sought answers from the state government over the continued closure of the southern section of Limeburners Walk at Walkerville.

Mr O'Brien raised the issue in state parliament after being contacted by concerned residents about the future of the track which links Walkerville North and Walkerville South.

"I have been approached by members of the Walkerville community who are understandably concerned about the ongoing closure of this important coastal link," Mr O'Brien said.

"Limeburners Walk has long provided practical access between the two beaches particularly for families seeking a safer swimming option."

In response the Minister for Environment confirmed the section will remain closed on safety grounds.

Mr O'Brien said while the response is disappointing for residents and visitors safety considerations must be taken seriously.

"The Minister has advised that geo-technical investigations identified ongoing and significant landslip and erosion risks," he said.

"No one wants to see public access reduced but decisions about coastal infrastructure must ultimately prioritise community safety."

The northern section of Limeburners Walk remains open and includes improved access following the installation of a new pedestrian bridge in November 2025.

Access to the lime kilns lookout remains available from the Walkerville South end and between the beaches at low tide along the shore.



The Meeniyah Community Hub was officially opened last August and will soon be run by the community with support from South Gippsland Shire Council. ob08_3425

Meeniyah community to take charge of town's Hub

MEENIYAH community members will soon run the still-new Meeniyah Hub after an Asset Committee was approved for that purpose with council staff having been in charge of the facility since its 2025 opening.

Councillors recently backed a recommendation to approve the committee's creation.

Council will grant seed funding of \$6000 to the Meeniyah Hub Community Asset Committee to support facility expenses.

Meeniyah Progress Association secretary Fay Sinclair is one of the community members who has put up her hand to join the Asset Committee when it is formed.

"It should be run by the community because it's for the community, the building," she said noting that would be with the support of the shire.

By Andrew Palocz

The Hub contains a community meeting space with bookings currently managed by council staff.

Once established the Asset Committee will have the power to enter contracts and incur expenditure under \$5000 with council approval required for contracts over that value.

Negotiating with Hub user groups, setting fees and approval of programs operating there are other committee responsibilities as is applying income received to the ongoing operation and management of the asset.

During the February council meeting Cr John Schelling highlighted the strength of the Meeniyah Progress Association.

"They were rewarded with a Hub, and now we're going to reward them with the right

people to run that Hub," he said.

Cr Sarah Gilligan backed up Cr Schelling's sentiment noting those in the Meeniyah Progress Association get things done for the town adding she is pleased seed funding will be provided to assist the soon-to-be-formed committee.

"I'm looking forward to seeing how this new community asset is going to be used and who is going to use it," Cr Gilligan said hopeful the building will prove popular with a variety of local groups and individuals.

Saying Meeniyah punches well above its weight for a small town Cr John Kennedy labelled the Hub and its new management structure as "well deserved".

All councillors voted in favour of establishing the Asset Committee.

Petition launched against Wind Farm bailout

A PARLIAMENTARY petition has been launched against the state government's decision to use the SEC to acquire the Delburn Wind Farm after commercial operators abandoned the project citing financial unviability.

The Nationals Member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath is sponsoring the petition which invites residents to express their views on the controversial project in the Strzelecki Ranges.

The SEC acquired 100 per cent ownership of the Delburn Wind Farm in December 2025 after previous operators OSMI Australia and Cubico Sustainable Investments pulled out.

The 205-megawatt project would involve 33 turbines across a pine plantation between Thorpdale and Mirboo North.

Ms Bath said community members are deeply opposed to the wind farm warning of heightened fire risk in the pine plantation and serious noise and visual impacts.

"Labor has committed more than \$650 million of taxpayer funds to

revive a project abandoned by commercial operators with an original budget of approximately \$320 million," Ms Bath said.

"Labor's inability to manage money and major projects is well documented.

"Victorians have seen time and again what begins in the millions can end in the billions."

Ms Bath said the wind farm will have a profound impact on Gippslanders living close to it.

"With 1600 homes in the vicinity the potential for a bushfire event remains a major concern for the community and their anxiety is completely understandable," she said.

"Submissions to the Delburn Wind Farm Planning Report noted that turbines in a pine plantation could face fast-moving high-intensity fires that are difficult to control and challenging for emergency services."

The project has been a contentious issue across the Strzelecki Ranges for several years with the Strzelecki Community Alliance among vocal

opponents raising concerns about the impact on local residents and the environment.

The project area sits between the Gippsland towns of Thorpdale, Mirboo North and Boolarra with residents in surrounding communities expressing ongoing concern about the impact on their daily lives.

Ms Bath criticised the government's handling of the state's renewable energy transition.

"The SEC has been a complete sham," she said.

"For over a decade the government has bungled the state's renewable energy transition promising bills will go down when prices climbed higher.

"The petition invites residents to express their views and send their voice to Spring Street something I honour and respect."

The Sentinel-Times has previously reported on community opposition to the Delburn Wind Farm including concerns about fire risk, noise and the impact on property values in the region.

Mayor's Message



South Gippsland Shire Council

Cr Nathan Hersey



SOUTH Gippsland Shire Council is working to improve our local economic opportunities and to support businesses that enhance our local area. As part of this, we are working on our Economic Development Strategy, to help guide Council in the future.

On a practical level right now, Council has partnered with NEX to offer local business owners mentoring services to offer free, confidential one-on-one mentoring sessions for local businesses. Bookings can be made via www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/businessmentoring

Future Ready Workshop

On Wednesday, Councillors and industry representatives participated in a workshop to consider the economic future of South Gippsland. Together we explored the trends shaping our nation and the likely impacts on our region. This was also a great session to hear directly from industry leaders and stakeholders about what matters most to them.

South Gippsland is well placed for a strong future, with many opportunities around us to leverage. We have key industries where we naturally excel, and this workshop looked at how we can continue to support those strengths while also embracing new industries where our region has the potential to grow.

The decisions we make now help set us up for the future, so having dedicated time and space to think carefully about these opportunities is invaluable. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the day and helped make the workshop such a success.

I want to genuinely thank those who gave of their time and offered their expertise to help Council to realise the opportunities ahead in Gippsland. Thank you to Simon Johnson CEO of Food & Fibre Gippsland, Terry Robinson CEO of Destination Gippsland, Paul Greenhalgh CEO of South Gippsland Hospital, Marty Reidy of Yellow Brick Road and Leongatha Business Association, Michelle Anderson of Federation University, Leatrice Treharne of Qube Ports, Jon McNaught Director ViPlus Dairy, and Paul Johnston of Southerly 10.

Foster Agricultural Show

If you were looking for a day filled with some unique events, the Foster Ag Show definitely delivered! From the dog high jump to the spouse shout, there was really something for everyone.

I was pleased to play a small part in the day by undertaking some judging at the pet parade, with some fantastic pets coming. Having events like this that celebrate all that is great about farming is vital and I am proud that we hold these Agricultural Shows in South Gippsland. Our farming sector punches well above its weight for our economy and these roots run deep. Ag Shows not only support our farmers, but they help our entire community understand what it takes to be a farmer. Thank you to the Show committee for having me along.

Loch Celebrates 150 Years

Don't forget that Loch is celebrating 150 years since settlement. There's a full weekend of events and celebrations in Loch to mark the occasion. March 6-9 has plenty to see and do including displays, Devonshire tea, a free community bbq, heritage presentations and more! For more details and the agenda, visit the Loch and District 150 years celebration Facebook page.

Garlic festival draws huge crowd to Korumburra



The crowd watches on as Michael Clark from Messmates Dining speaks about the great tasting partnership of garlic and anchovies at the festival kitchen. W07_0926

By Trent Westaway

THE unmistakable scent of garlic filled the air on Saturday, February 28 at the Korumburra Showgrounds, as hundreds of people poured in for the annual South Gippsland Garlic Festival.

Formerly the Meeniyon Garlic Festival, the event ran from 9am until 6pm and delivered more than just garlic, with a day packed with food, cooking education and live entertainment among other things.

The sun was out all day, providing the perfect forecast for the annual event.

Put quite simply, the event was packed. Organisers were ecstatic with the turnout. Families, kids and dogs gathered to line up for food or check out the market area, while garlic lovers were in heaven at the garlic precinct.

There were more than 70 stallholders this year, transforming the showgrounds into a bustling marketplace that had something for everyone.

Handmade goods sat beside flowers and homewares, while sauces, spices and snacks all competed for the taste buds of attendees. Popsicles offered some much-needed relief from the heat and macarons added a splash of colour to the event, and all of that without even mentioning the main attraction, the garlic.

Julianne Bakogiannis from the highly respected local olive farm 'Olive Twist' was busy selling their famous olive oil all day. Rather appropriately, she said that her garlic oil was hot on the day.

"Garlic oil has been the most popular product today," she said.

She was also willing to share some tricks of the trade with passers-by.

"We've got the only stone mill press left in Australia working. It produces a nicer and more delicate oil. Also, you should pick and press the olives within 24 hours."

The food and produce precinct had more than 50 stalls alone. Alongside garlic inspired dishes were twisted spuds, Thai food, chicken wings, sausages and even German cuisine, drawing a consistent crowd throughout the event. Ice cream vans also had a very successful day as temperatures continued to climb.

Even with such variety, garlic remained the main attraction.

"I've come to see the garlic and to get some to plant," said Inverloch resident Tim Holt.

At the heart of the festival was the Garlic University, an educational hub that brought some of the topic's leading experts together. Gardening author and organic advocate Penny Woodward shared her knowledge alongside industry leaders like John Olliff from the Australian Garlic Industry Association, Mornington Peninsula producer Nick Young and local grower Jackson Malley just to name a few.

The garlic precinct showcased what the festival describes as the widest range of garlic in one place in Victoria. From local growers to those across Victoria and New South Wales, all were showcasing their produce.

The festival kitchen shifted the focus back to the plate.

Hosted by food writer and presenter Richard Cornish, the festival saw talented chefs showcase their skills and knowledge through live demonstrations. These included Atsu Tanaka-Morrison from Tsuko Japan in Korumburra, Trevor Perkins of Hogget Kitchen, Michael Clark and Jodie Odrowaz from Messmates Dining, Francesco Laera and Gippsland Food and Wine Ambassador Alejandro Saravia. They all showed just how versatile garlic can be when cooking.

More than a few notes were taken in the crowd for future dinner parties.

Live music was also a feature of the event, with a stage set up on the oval for performers.

Kids were not left out either, with face painting, energetic performances by the Mik Maks, and even though dogs should not eat garlic, Australian animated icon Bluey even made an appearance on the day, wandering the stalls and keeping the kids entertained.

The annual festival continues to grow, offering a wide variety of entertainment while staying true to its core: celebrating Australian garlic and the growers behind it.

Did you know?



Australian Government



Did you know your medication may be illegal where you're going?



Did you know there are ways to prevent pickpockets?

Did you know drinking can affect your travel insurance?



With official advice, essential warnings and important tips, make your trip memorable for the right reasons.

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know before you go

Guided tours at Newhaven College open morning

NEWHAVEN College is inviting future and prospective students and their families to explore the campus at its open morning on Saturday, March 14 from 9am until midday.

Current families and friends are also welcome to experience the daily life of the children in their lives.

College staff and student leaders will offer visitors guided tours of the college grounds and facilities, with activities across the junior and middle schools and specialty wings.

Visitors can enjoy science demonstrations, music performances, art displays and hands-on experiences in the trade centre.

As the leading independent co-educational school in the Bass Coast region, catering for prep to year 12, Newhaven offers a values-driven, evidence-based education.

Alongside academic excellence, students benefit from strong pastoral care and wellbeing support through the house system, fostering connection and belonging.

Beyond the classroom, students enjoy a broad range of co-curricular and extra-curricular opportunities including camps and outdoor education, visual and performing arts, sport and specialised academies in tennis, surfing, equestrian and



Sooji and Matthew Chaseling with 2026 prep student Ria met with principal Tony Corr at the 2025 Newhaven College open day.

mountain biking. Many of these activities will be on display at the open morning.

The college is made up of junior, middle and senior schools, plus the popular year nine environmental centre.

Each sub-school nurtures a strong sense of community, with leadership opportunities and a unique year nine program focused on environmental stewardship.

Newhaven College students and staff look forward to welcoming visitors on open day.

Those unable to attend who would like to arrange a private tour can contact the

admissions team on 5956 7505 or admissions@newhavencol.vic.edu.au.

Alumni reunions

Newhaven students who graduated in 1986, 1996, 2006 and 2016 are warmly invited to attend their alumni reunion from 10am to midday on Saturday, March 14.

The event will start with a complementary morning tea and social catch-up, followed by a guided tour of the campus with director of learning Karen Milkins-Hendry.

Bookings can be made through the college website www.newhavencol.vic.edu.au.



Students are now benefitting from modern and spacious learning areas and breakout spaces.

New facilities mark next chapter for Chairo

CHAIRO Christian School Leongatha is entering a new era after completing construction of purpose-built senior secondary facilities.

Students and staff members are now benefitting from modern and spacious learning areas and breakout spaces on the campus which offers education from kindergarten through to VCE.

Principal Amy Stork said the school prioritised building positive and productive partnerships with families.

"Chairo Leongatha encompasses what I deeply value about learning: fostering a supportive and inclusive environment where students can grow in their capability, character and commitment," Ms Stork said.

With the Australian Curriculum delivered from a biblical worldview perspective the school provides a distinctly Christian education and is constantly expanding its programs and increasing enrolment numbers.

Deputy Principal Nick McLean said the VCE subjects were designed to support the further study and career pathways of students.

"With a range of subjects on offer from

Maths Methods and Physics to Product Design and Outdoor and Environmental Studies, student interests and prerequisites are being met in a flexible program," Mr McLean said.

The Leongatha campus has a long history of Christian education in South Gippsland dating back to 1978 when it operated as South Coast Christian College before joining the Chairo family in 2014.

All members of the school community are valued as uniquely created individuals with specific gifts, talents, interests and personalities.

Chairo Kinder is an integral part of the campus with children having access to specialist school facilities.

The educators seek to prepare kindergarten students for a smooth progression into school and equip them to apply themselves in responsible and capable ways throughout life.

Parents interested in finding out more about Chairo Leongatha are encouraged to visit the school website, complete an online enquiry or call 5662 4355.

The next Discover Chairo Day is on Saturday, March 28.



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Retirement Savings:

How long will it last?

By David Caporale,
Chief Investment Officer of RELCapital

When people retire, one of the first questions they ask is, "How much retirement savings do I have?"

A more important though less commonly asked question is, "How long will it last?"

Retirement today can span 25 or even 30 years. Many Australians who retire at 65 can expect to live into their late 80s, and a growing number into their 90s. That's wonderful news. But it also means your retirement savings may need to support you for decades, not just a handful of years.

The good news is that with some awareness and sensible planning, it's entirely possible to enjoy retirement while making your savings last.

It's About Pace, Not Just Balance

Think of your retirement savings like a water tank. The amount in the tank matters, but so does how quickly you turn on the tap.

Every year, retirees draw income from their retirement savings to cover living costs. The percentage you withdraw makes a big difference over time. For example, withdrawing 4 per cent per year from your balance will generally stretch further than withdrawing 7 per cent. The higher the drawdown, the faster the tank empties.

That doesn't mean you should live frugally or deny yourself experiences. It simply means understanding the pace of withdrawals can help you strike the right balance between living well now and feeling secure later.

Thinking in Three Buckets

One simple way to think about managing retirement savings is the three-bucket approach.

Short-term bucket: Money for the next one to three years, usually kept in stable investments or cash to fund everyday spending. It covers everyday expenses and regular withdrawals.

Medium-term bucket: Funds for the next few years that can absorb some movement in the market while aiming for steady growth.

Long-term bucket: Money invested for later years. This portion is often invested for growth, allowing it time to ride

investment market ups and downs.

This structure helps separate today's spending from tomorrow's growth. Your short-term bucket keeps income steady, while the longer-term bucket has time to recover from market dips.

It's not about predicting markets, it's about creating flexibility and reducing pressure on your retirement savings.

The Role of the Age Pension

Some retirees assume that if their retirement savings reduces over time, the Age Pension will step in fully. In reality, many Australians receive a part pension as their assets change. The system is designed as a safety net, but not necessarily to fund every aspect of lifestyle.

Understanding how retirement savings and the Age Pension work together can provide reassurance about the long-term picture.

Enjoy Today, Plan for Tomorrow

It's natural to spend more in the early years of retirement on travel, hobbies as well as time with family often taking priority. Spending may ease later on, but retirement rarely follows a perfectly straight line.

The key isn't to restrict yourself unnecessarily, but to periodically check:

- How much you're withdrawing
- Whether that level feels sustainable
- Whether your investment mix still suits your stage of life
- How rising living costs may affect future spending

Even reviewing your position once a year can make a meaningful difference.

A Long Retirement Is a Gift

Retirement is no longer a brief pause at the end of working life. It's a significant stage of life in its own right.

Your retirement savings was built to support that stage. By understanding withdrawal pace and structuring your retirement savings thoughtfully, you can enjoy today while protecting tomorrow.

It's not about hoarding money. It's about using it wisely so it supports the life you want, for as long as you need it.

The information above does not constitute financial or other professional advice and is general in nature. It does not take into account your specific circumstances and should not be acted on without a full understanding of your current situation and future goals and objectives by a fully qualified financial advisor. Before you make any decision about whether to acquire a certain financial product, you should obtain and read the relevant product disclosure statement.

FOSTER SHOW



Kelpie 'Cheque' enjoys 'backing' to encourage the recalcitrant sheep to leave the pen, working closely with Brad Gavenlock. A41_0926

Yard dog action in Foster

YARD dog trials remain a popular form of entertainment at Foster Show. Sentinel Times capturing kelpie 'Cheque' in action, working in partnership with owner and handler Brad Gavenlock of Tallygaroopna.

Brad enjoys the challenge, saying it takes about two years of training to get from the puppy stage to being able to compete, and

By Andrew Paloczi

loves working closely with his dogs.

At Foster he entered three dogs in the yard trials.

While Brad is a farmer, he runs dairy and beef cattle, keeping sheep purely for dog training.

He explained the reason Cheque climbed onto the backs of penned sheep, a

strategy known as 'backing', the move encouraging the sheep to leave the pen through the open gate at the front after their initial reluctance.

Brad travels to shows around Australia, with his dogs set to feature in the Australian Yard Dog Championship in South Australia's Lucindale this month.



Glen Gillam destroys his log at the Foster Show. A40_0926

Woodchopping excellence in Foster

FOSTER showgoers were treated to high-class woodchopping. Toongabie's Glen Gillam making light work of his log while Sentinel Times watched, severing it in just 14 blows to comfortably win, his competitors needing more than 20.

He has won various woodchopping titles at every Royal Show in Australia, having started in the

By Andrew Paloczi

sport soon after he began walking.

Gillam travels Australia and internationally, competing, coaching and training and loving the people he meets and the places he visits, with coaching in China among the highlights, those he trains there being passionate and proud of their culture.

At some Australian Royal Shows, he competes in up to 24 different events, tackling anything up to 100 pieces of timber ranging in diameter from 10 to 15 inches, requiring a lot of stamina and strength.

"We pay a premium to keep our sport alive," Gillam said of the need to bring in Tasmanian timber, which was in use at the Foster Show.



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FOSTER SHOW

Foster Show delights over too soon

By Andrew Paloczi

SATURDAY'S action-packed Foster Show was a whirlwind of family fun, with horse events, wood-chopping, sheaf tossing, CWA baking demonstrations, cat judging, ferret racing, sheep dogs, and shearing.

It showcased interesting exhibits including art, photography, craft, produce and cookery, as well as the marathon-like effort two teams put into the Back to Back Wool Challenge.

Young sisters Delilah and Hazel Bright impressed the judges, Sentinel Times seeing their work on display, with Delilah getting second prize in the children's creative art section and Hazel's 'Buzz Buzz Buzz' bee photo second in its category.

Hazel also took out first prize for her frog pond in the junior garden competition judged ahead of the Show, enjoying creating things at home and school and deciding it would be fun to enter the Show.

The produce and cookery of Foster local Lyndon Bath continues to prosper at the Foster Show, and this year she entered a winning fruit cake, Yo-Yo biscuits, lemons and onions.

"They were short of entrants and I've done it ever since," she said of the beginnings of her annual tradition 15 to 20 years ago.

"I just like the challenge," Lyndon said, explaining that stewards pass on feedback from the judges, helping her fine-tune her future entries.

CWA's Marilyn Mackie likely surprised her audience during a sponge cake demonstration, repeatedly dropping the tin on the bench to bang out air bubbles.

While only a couple of ladies competed in the women's sheaf tossing, Kylie Nicholls and Darcy Nicoll were enjoying themselves and performing strongly as the crossbar they had to clear continued to be raised.

There was a cuteness overload on the animal front.

Gary the Goat was judged the pet with the prettiest eyes, announced by South Gippsland Shire Mayor Nathan Hersey.

Those eyes were focused on the prize, a large bag of stock food suited to goats.

Gary's handler Kelarny Leeworthy of Port Welshpool dressed up for the occasion ensuring she and Gary made an eye-catching pair.

While Gary is only a couple of years old, Frosty the donkey is in his thirties, proving a hit with Harley Hodson and savouring a brush from the youngster.

Frosty has played a part in a couple of Liam Neeson films.



Gary the goat, shown by Port Welshpool's Kelarny Leeworthy, won the judge's heart with his stunning eyes. A29_0926



Amelia Smith of Cannibal Creek Pony Club puts Penny through her paces, the pair completing a clear round. A32_0926

British Longhair cat Shalida Olivia underwent a close inspection from judge Troy Willems, who considers the whole cat, including ear and eye shape, size and placement, the feline's colour, ease of handling and personality.

Sentinel-Times checked out cattle judging, a mixture of breeds on show, seeing Cheryl Hedger take charge of a couple of winning Belted Galloways, 'Jalaway What a Lad' in the section for bulls aged under 12 months, and Jalaway Mont Vantasari triumphing in a heifer class.

Allambee's Emily Garrett showed 'Brejyanne Willow' in that heifer class, the South Devon coming second.

With such jam-packed action across the Foster Show, it highlighted the concerns of the Foster & District Agricultural & Pastoral Society about plans for a skatepark

in the Showgrounds that would take up valuable space.

"With the preferred location adjacent to the playground where the woodchop is currently held, we invite you to contemplate what change in this space will bring for our event when you visit the grounds on showday," Foster & District Agricultural & Pastoral Society President Noel Afflitto wrote in the Prom Coast News.

He stressed that such loss of useable groundspace will impact the A&P Society's ability to offer the variety of attractions and competitions it strives to at the Show.

As for this year, the only complaint is that it would have been great if the Show ran for longer, particularly with such beautiful weather, things winding up by about 3.30pm.

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Closing the doors on 19 years of community



Mirboo North Primary School's school leaders for 2026 Aisling, Hudson, Ava, Victoria, Kayliah and Jackson with acting principal Mr Collins.

Mirboo North launches into new school year

MIRBOO North Primary School has kicked off 2026 with new leaders and a few unexpected visitors at its bush campus in the Strzelecki Ranges.

The school's more than 300 students have already had encounters with koalas and blue tongue lizards on the grounds with one stray sheep also making its way onto the site before students safely returned it home.

Six school leaders have been appointed for the year with Aisling, Hudson, Ava, Victoria, Kayliah and Jackson taking on the roles alongside a newly elected Student Representative Council.

The council members are motivated to embody the school's values of being Caring, Confident and Capable in 2026.

The school has also welcomed Mrs Williams to Grade 3/4 and two former students Tyler and Charlie who return as trainees for the year.

Council to consider \$2.2 million Kernot bridge tender

BASS Coast Shire Council will this week consider a \$2.2 million tender by Timber Restoration Systems for the renewal and strengthening of the Stewart Road bridge at Kernot.

The project received a significant boost in December when the federal government committed \$1.768 million through the Safer Local Roads and Infrastructure Program.

The existing bridge which crosses the Bass River has a 20-tonne load rating and was deemed unsafe following several structural assessments in 2025. The bridge was closed for safety reasons in March last year.

The closure forced the Kernot-Grantville CFA to take significant detours during emergency responses with paramedics at one point delayed by 15 minutes attending a life-threatening medical emergency.

Council resolved to reconstruct the bridge to a higher load rating of 44 tonnes with a 50-year-plus design service life.

Construction is expected to commence in April and be completed by late 2026.

TSG WONTHAGGI closed its doors on January 31, 2026, but owner Stephanie Creighton says it wasn't just the brand-new \$2,000 licensing fee that forced the local store with so much history to close for good.

The Graham Street shop wasn't always primarily a tobacconist, beginning as a DVD hire store.

Despite being a non-smoker herself, Ms Creighton purchased the business in 2007, while it was selling cigarettes, DVDs and a small range of gifts.

"I had to think very hard about buying it, because it was a cigarette shop, and I'm a non-smoker," she said. "But it's a legal product, and I follow the law. That's how I ran the business."

Over the years Ms Creighton watched the business grow recalling Friday night movie rushes, families browsing, children tagging along and regulars popping in for the paper.

The store had regular clientele from as far as Phillip Island, Venus Bay and Coronet Bay.

"It wasn't just a smoke shop," Ms Creighton said.

"It meant many things to different people."

Like many business owners, Ms Creighton says the pandemic marked a turning point. They stopped renting DVDs during COVID and never started doing so again. She believes that if not for the pandemic, DVD hire would've continued to this day.

"We'd been a DVD hire shop until COVID," she said. "I think it would have always been a DVD shop if COVID hadn't happened."

Even after DVD hiring stopped, Ms Creighton sold \$20,000 worth of DVDs. She donated all old videotapes to the Salvation Army in Wonthaggi, and now plans to do the same with any remaining DVD stock.

Eventually, as DVDs faded and tobacco became a larger

share of the business, the store was left prone to the never-ending stream of government regulations on smoking-related products. However, Ms Creighton insists that her closing wasn't the result of the recently introduced tobacco licensing scheme alone.

"That wasn't a reason at all for closing the shop," she said of the \$2,000 fee.

Instead, she pointed mainly to years of rising excise, consistently rising wholesale prices and changing consumer habits.

Refusing to give up on her store and customers, Ms Creighton diversified whenever possible, selling milk and newspapers and even opening the store seven days a week while continuing to build the gift side of the store. This, however, was not enough to stop turnover from sliding.

"It just became not really viable," she said.

Ms Creighton also pointed to a major drop in income

following changes introduced on July 1 last year, including restrictions on pack sizes and the banning of menthol and flavoured cigarettes.

"Overnight, it was a drop of 30 to 40 per cent in my turnover," she said.

The store's final weeks saw Ms Creighton working personally in the store every day so she could personally thank and farewell customers.

"Their faces just dropped," she said. "I had tears."

Ms Creighton employed three staff members all of whom were given considerable notice and have since moved to other working arrangements.

After 19 years, Ms Creighton says she will remember the people most.

"I was very particular on the level of customer service," she said. "For someone who wasn't sure about buying this particular type of business, I've had the most wonderful years there. And it's purely because of my customers."

Approval still pending for Hilton Chadwick Reserve turning lane

By Bruce Wardley

PROGRESS seems to have stalled on plans for Hilton Chadwick Reserve in Cowes as Bass Coast Shire continues to seek Department of Transport approval for a turning lane.

In answer to a question from Graham Jolly during public question time, Bass Coast Shire CEO Greg Box said council was addressing feedback from the Department of Transport and had resubmitted plans for review and endorsement a number of times.

Terry Parkin asked if a design plan had been completed for the new toilet block at Olive Justice Place in Cowes. Mr Box replied that Stage 2 designs for the Cowes Streetscape Master Plan, which included the Olive Justice Place toilet block, had not commenced.

"There is no funding allocation in the long term financial plan," said Mr Box.

John Kuzma asked for details of an inspection



Graham Jolly asked Bass Coast Council if a permit had been approved from the Victorian Transport Authority for a new turning lane at Hilton Chadwick Reserve. B03_0926

conducted at the site of the former Wonthaggi Secondary College which council does not own. Mr Box responded that council had allocated \$350,000 to the old Wonthaggi Secondary College site redevelopment project and was conducting a review of the

Wonthaggi Secondary College Senior Campus Structure Plan.

Questioning council over funding for the Stewart Road bridge at Kernot, John Kuzma asked if council had actually received the federal government grant money.

Mr Kuzma was told grant funding had not been received to date, however council had received advice from the federal government that its application for grant funding had been successful in the amount of \$1.768 million.

"The grant agreement has been received, signed, and returned to the funding body," said Mr Box.

Leanne Panozzo asked why \$30 million in public funds had been placed into term deposits instead of being used for long-promised infrastructure such as a swimming pool.

Mr Box replied that cash surpluses held and subsequently invested were often a result of funds received in advance of specific contractual or legislative obligations with which the funds are tied to.

"Council's community vision, council plan and strategic objectives are all developed in consultation with the community and the long term financial plan," said Mr Box.

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Smarter living in a changing climate helps save on energy costs

HOPE for comfort all year round without the hefty electricity bills that continue to rise is daily life for residents at The Cape.

Resident Kim Hauser says you do not understand that level of comfort until you experience it and as temperatures climb the way homes are designed is becoming increasingly important.

The homes in The Cape are built for year-round comfort designed to keep costs low and resident Richard Keech said his annual electricity bill is as low as \$100.

In an interview with the Sentinel-Times The Cape residents Richard and Kim explained the level of design in the Cape homes that helps reduce financial costs.

"Our home at The Cape has a 7.9-star NATHERS energy rating and is an all-electric home. The average home is eight stars at The Cape," Kim said.

"We've lived here as a family of four since December 2022 with two adults working from home and two children. It was originally intended as a holiday house, but we loved it so much that we made the move permanent."

Coming from inner-city living where the family had no garden or outdoor space Kim said the shift to The Cape has been genuinely transformative especially for the kids.

"They can ride their bikes freely, feel comfortable heading to the sports precinct, and know their neighbours. There's a real sense of safety, connection, and community."

Despite working from home full-time Kim explained their total energy costs from September 2024 to August 2025 were under \$500.

"A figure that still surprises visitors when we tell them."

"The house stays at a comfortable 18 to 25 degree temperature all year round with very little intervention. On warmer days we open the south-facing windows and allow cool air to flow through naturally pushing warm air out through the north-facing windows. It's all about the design."

"We have 6.6 kilowatts of solar panels which were installed during the build and cover most of our household energy needs. All homes at The Cape have a minimum of five kilowatts of solar."

Like all homes at The Cape the house is oriented north-facing maximising passive solar design.

In winter the low sun warms the concrete floors storing heat in the thermal mass.

In summer well-designed shading prevents the high sun from overheating the home.

Kim's home is also installed with an induction cooktop eliminating the need for gas a heat pump for hot water and a split system for heating and cooling.

"We are also on an OVO Energy plan that provides free electricity between 11am and 2pm which fits perfectly with the way the house works," she said.

"We schedule washing, dishwashing, and other energy-intensive tasks during this window to further reduce our running costs, and these plans could be on offer for anyone looking to reduce their household bills."

Richard said that making your home more efficient and getting off gas will save the typical Victorian home thousands of dollars a year.

Done right homes might reasonably expect to reduce their overall energy costs by at least 60 per cent.

"The upfront costs will quickly pay for themselves," he said.

"The most fundamental thing homes can do to reduce their overall energy costs is to stop using gas. Gas is neither cheap nor clean. Using efficient all-electric alternatives to gas can significantly reduce overall energy use."

"Another reason that electrification makes sense is that it lets homes make better use of their own rooftop solar."

Richard confirmed that prior to moving to The Cape his own experience retrofitting a home was that he was able to reduce the home's underlying energy consumption by 75 per cent.

The remaining 25 per cent was fully offset by solar.

"This reduced my bills to near zero," he said.

"Home electrification is a journey. My retrofit took me about six years, but the results were amazing."

With the current heatwave placing real strain on people's health and comfort homeowners might consider getting a professional home assessment to help improve comfort and reduce costs in the long run.

In the meantime eligible Victorian households can claim the \$100 Power Saving Bonus which provides practical help for anyone having trouble paying their energy costs.

Applications for the \$100 Power Saving Bonus close at midnight on Tuesday March 31.

To apply visit compare.energy.vic.gov.au or call 1800 000 832.

For those looking to make the switch and design their home to be more affordable long-term visit newenergythinking.com.



Applications for the \$100 Power Saving Bonus close at midnight on Tuesday March 31.



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Wild west fears for Wonthaggi desalination plant expansion

AN expansion of the Wonthaggi desalination plant could create a "wild west" and double the cost of renting a local house according to Watershed Victoria.

With plans to increase the capacity of the Wonthaggi desalination plant from 150 gigalitres to 200 gigalitres Watershed Victoria fears an influx of construction workers could result in the same social problems experienced 15 years ago.

Drug use, prostitution and soaring rents are among the concerns of Watershed Victoria president Mark Robertson.

A planning document released by the state government has estimated the desalination plant could be expanded to produce a further 50 gigalitres of water each year.

The Wonthaggi desalination plant is seen as an essential buffer for city reservoirs with the ability to go on standby in heavy rainfall years to provide water when it is needed.

Work on the \$840 million upgrade could start as early as 2030 and be completed by 2034 as part of a 30-year strategy to bolster the state's water security.

"It's a quick fix," Mr Robertson said. "I'm unsure whether the power supply would cope."

The alternative according to Mr Robertson is a second desalination plant west of Melbourne.

Concerned about the social problems that may be caused by a large temporary workforce needed for the desalination plant upgrade Mr Robertson wants to know if there will be consultation with the local community or if the same problems will return.

"How many workers will be required and who's paying for it," he said.

"Last time rents doubled and with the extra demand for power from Victoria's new data centres where's the energy going to come from?"

Another concern for Watershed Victoria is the wastewater pumped into the ocean.

"They don't worry about being next to a marine park and penguin feeding ground."

Mr Robertson said desalination is the most energy-intensive and environmentally questionable option.

Last year Melbourne's water consumption rose by five per cent and Geelong by 14 per cent.

Universal adoption of dual-flush toilets could save as much water as a desalination plant can produce according to Mr Robertson.

"Desalination plants just don't add up, they cost billions of dollars."

Mr Robertson called for an environment effects study to look at the impact of the Wonthaggi desalination plant in the Bunurong Marine National Park and the impact on the community from a predicted influx of construction workers.

"Highly paid workers create a wild west that is out of control."

Inverloch Lions recognise trio for outstanding service

By Trent Westaway

THE Inverloch Lions Club gathered on Sunday February 22 to celebrate some of its own members whose volunteering commitment has contributed much to the community.

The Sound Shell at The Glade served as the location of the presentation as President Terry Hall presented the prestigious James D. Richardson Honour Award to Hazel Missen, Ron Missen and Klaus Edel.

The award recognises exceptional service and reflects what the club describes as the very best of Lionism exhibiting traits such as steadfast commitment to the community and selfless service among many other admirable virtues.

Hazel and Ron Missen have donated their time, energy and skills to countless projects over the years including many fundraisers and community events.

"Ron's practical support and steady leadership, combined with Hazel's warmth and keen sense of fellowship, have strengthened our club and helped us better serve our community," said Mr Hall.



Hazel Missen, Klaus Edel and Ron Missen were presented with the James D. Richardson Honour Award at Inverloch on Sunday February 22.

"Most importantly, they serve with humility and teamwork, truly living the Lions motto Service Above Self."

Mr Hall said Klaus first joined the Lions back in 2013 and quickly distinguished himself with his leadership, commitment and willingness to take on responsibility.

He also served as Club President from 2014 to 2016.

Among other things Klaus's leadership was largely responsible for the construction of the Sound Shell in Inverloch the same place he would receive his James D. Richardson Honour Award.

He invested an extraordinary amount of time alongside fellow Lion Gary McAinch who together drove the project forward.

Without Klaus leading the charge the project very well may have never moved beyond an idea.

Mr Hall emphasised how big of a year 2026 is for the club marking 25 years since it was first chartered in 2001.

In that time members have raised and contributed more than \$700,000 to local causes.

Last year alone \$27,505 was donated across 28 community groups.

"This award recognises Klaus Edel's exceptional leadership, dedication, and enduring contribution to Lions and to the Inverloch community, qualities that strongly reflect the spirit, service, and legacy of James D. Richardson," said Mr Hall.

"This all happens because of people," Mr Hall said.

"People willing to give up their time."

"People willing to lend a hand."

The Lions Club may have paused for a moment to recognise the achievements of its members but that pause will be short-lived as they look to complete even more community projects including a pedestrian and wheelchair ramp into The Glade.

Greens candidate pushes electric bike racing for Phillip Island

UPPER House Greens candidate for Eastern Victoria Mat Morgan is calling on the state government and regional tourism leaders to pursue a world-class electric motorcycle championship for Phillip Island after the MotoGP was shifted to South Australia.

The Australian Motorcycle Grand Prix was confirmed on Wednesday February 19 as moving to an Adelaide street circuit from 2027 under a six-year deal after MotoGP Sports Entertainment Group rejected the Victorian government's offer to keep the race at Phillip Island.

The loss is significant for the Bass Coast economy with a 2023 Ernst and Young economic impact study finding the MotoGP generated \$54.6 million in economic benefit for Victoria including \$29.4 million in direct local spending within Bass Coast and supported 284 full-time equivalent jobs.

Last year's event drew

93,000 fans and was the highest attendance since 2012.

Local accommodation providers, cafes, restaurants and small businesses are facing a major loss of income with one of the region's key event weekends stripped from the calendar.

"Local businesses on Phillip Island and across the Bass Coast depend on major events to survive especially outside peak holiday periods," Mr Morgan said.

"The decision to move this championship interstate has hit local traders hard but it also gives Victoria a chance to think bigger and smarter about the future of motorsport."

Mr Morgan said Phillip Island should seize the opportunity created by the global pause of the MotoE World Championship.

The FIM and MotoGP put the all-electric series on indefinite hiatus after the 2025 season citing a lack of



Electric motorcycle racing could fill the gap left by the MotoGP departure from Phillip Island.

viewership and insufficient development in the electric performance motorcycle market.

"With the MotoE World Championship in hiatus there is a genuine opening for Phillip Island to step forward as the home of a new electric bike championship," he said.

"Phillip Island already has international recognition, world-class facilities and a passionate motorsport community."

"It makes perfect sense for this iconic circuit to lead the transition to cleaner, quieter and future-focused racing."

Mr Morgan said an electric championship would help replace lost tourism revenue while aligning with Victoria's climate and innovation goals.

"This is a chance to turn a serious setback for our local economy into a forward-looking opportunity," he said.

"Electric motorcycle racing can attract new audiences, new sponsors and new investment while protecting the livability of our community and supporting local jobs."

The World Superbike Championship remains on Phillip Island's calendar but its contract expires in 2027 and its future at the circuit is also uncertain following the MotoGP departure.

Danny O'BRIEN_{MP}
State Member for Gippsland South

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Free travel expo returns to Warragul

LOCAL TravelManagers representatives are inviting residents to their third free travel expo on Saturday March 14 from 10am to 2pm at Oaks at Logan Park, 19 Howitt Street Warragul.

The event has moved from Lardner Park to Logan Park which is a short walk from the train station to better accommodate those using public transport.

More than 30 travel suppliers will be on hand to showcase cruise, rail, touring and holiday options covering both international and domestic destinations.

Whether visitors are dreaming of a river cruise through Europe, an ocean voyage in the Mediterranean, a coach tour through the Canadian Rockies or a rail journey closer to home the expo promises something for every type of traveller.

Team members Emily Turner, Kerrin Poupos, Kirra Moon-Curry, Kylie Crosbie and Natalie Thompson bring more than 101 years of combined travel experience between them and will be available for personalised consultations on the day.

Ms Poupos who has more than 22 years in the travel industry said the expo was a chance for people to explore their options face to face with expert advice and exclusive deals only available to attendees.

For the first time visitors will be able to secure their dream holiday on the day with a deposit.

Door prizes will be offered throughout the event with first prize being a \$3000 travel voucher along with the chance to win cruises, rail journeys and tours.

The expo will again support Girls Day Out which will be on-site raising funds for breast cancer research and offering the chance to win a car raffle.

The event is free but registration is encouraged through Eventbrite.

For more details contact Kerrin on 0411 853 070, Natalie on 0460 872 763, Emily on 0431 153 881, Kirra on 0403 190 234 or Kylie on 0408 552 177.

Welshpool gardeners urged to showcase their best blooms

THE 65th Welshpool Autumn Flower Show is calling for gardeners to submit their best entries for the annual display on Friday March 6 and Saturday March 7 at the Welshpool Hall on the South Gippsland Highway.

The show is presented by the Welshpool and District Horticultural Society with the theme for 2026 being Autumn Artistry.

Entries are encouraged from first-timers and seasoned exhibitors alike and entry is free.

Local gardens have required substantial watering over summer and different plants have thrived at various times this season.

Several growers have reported that tomatoes have been slow to fruit with ripe fruit not expected until after the show.

However dahlias and roses have performed well and organisers are hoping they remain in peak condition for the show dates.

The Welshpool show has become one of the best dahlia exhibitions in Victoria with exhibitors competing for the coveted Bronze Medallion from the Dahlia Society of Victoria for the Best Dahlia Exhibit in the Show and the Gladys Johns Championship for multiple blooms.

The schedule includes a Snapshots and Visual Arts section to ensure the best



Floral art featuring Australian natives at a previous Welshpool Flower Show.

plants and produce can be on display.

This year's public choice competition theme is A Song Title with visitors invited to vote for their favourite entry with a gold coin donation.

Funds raised from public choice voting are donated to the charity or organisation of choice of the person who officially opens the show.

Frances Grylls will officially open this year's event.

Ms Grylls has been secretary of the horticultural society since 1985 and is a life member of the Dahlia Society of Victoria.

Show schedules and programs are available in

digital and hard copy from Ms Grylls on 0481 385 122, Prue Fleming on 0418 775 717 or Helen Baud on 0427 880 014.

The show is a longstanding fixture on the South Gippsland calendar and draws exhibitors and visitors from across the region including Yarram, Foster, Leongatha and Korumburra.

Admission is by gold coin donation with the show open from 2pm to 5pm on Friday and 10am to 3pm on Saturday.

Entries must be notified to Ms Fleming by email at pruefleming@bigpond.com or by phone on 0418 775 717 by 6pm on Wednesday March 4.

Helping families explore independent living options

A NEW peer group for families and people with disabilities who want to explore options for moving out of the family home will hold an information session in Wonthaggi on Wednesday, March 18.

Making Moves will be held at the Wonthaggi Centennial Centre Art Space meeting room from 10am to 11.45am with morning tea included.

The group is designed for people with disability or their families who would like to look beyond the service-led or congregate housing models often offered to people with disabilities.

Participants will have the opportunity to share conversation and ideas with others facing similar challenges around moving out of the family home.

The group is based on the principle that home should be a place of safety, self-expression, autonomy and sanctuary for all people regardless of ability.

Facilitator Joanne Walters from Belonging Matters has more than 25 years of experience working with people with disabilities and their families to help them achieve their goals of moving into a home of their own.

Belonging Matters has found that bringing families together and supporting them to learn from each other keeps people with disability and their families at the centre of the process rather than services or organisations.

Through peer groups people with disability and their families develop confidence, connection and momentum to achieve their goals.

The session is particularly relevant for Bass Coast and South Gippsland families where limited local housing options and long NDIS waitlists can make the prospect of independent living feel overwhelming.

Registration is free. For more information visit belongingmatters.org or contact peers@belongingmatters.org or phone 0452 195 743.

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VET pathways lead to high-paying careers

LOCAL secondary colleges are opening a range of learning opportunities to create Vocational Education and Training and Vocational Major pathways to well-paid careers.

Secondary colleges do not generally deliver TAFE courses but VET or VM pathways are increasingly available at senior secondary level to secure apprenticeships or traineeships with nationally recognised qualifications in areas such as agriculture, horticulture, plumbing, health services, hospitality, sport and carpentry.

With tradies in high demand across Australia, trade jobs are attracting big salaries.

Construction managers can earn between \$160,000 and \$180,000.

Chisholm Bass Coast offers VET pathways through a two-year VCE Vocational Major applied learning program designed to prepare students for work, apprenticeships or further TAFE studies.

Students can undertake industry-specific training such as Certificate II in Building and Construction, Electrotechnology and Salon Assistant alongside their VCE or VCE VM.

The Housing Industry Association has welcomed incentives provided under the Key Apprenticeship Program to improve access to skilled labour.

HIA managing director Jocelyn Martin said it was one of the biggest operational issues holding the industry back from contributing to meeting the nation's housing targets.

"A recent survey of HIA's small business members indicated that the cost and access to skilled trades were both in the top five issues placing pressure on builders," Ms Martin said.



Zucchini soup

By Meg Viney

A FRIEND gave me a zucchini from her garden.

Years ago I wrote a book called *The Not so Humble Zucchini* having spent a season creating a book full of recipes for our prolific garden.

Still having turkey stock left from Christmas I did soup.

Ingredients

- 5-700 gm zucchini
- 2-3 cups stock (chicken or whatever you have)
- Salt, pepper, sugar to season
- 1 onion
- 1 tablespoon butter
- A good drizzle of cream

Method

Chop the onion.

Melt one tablespoon butter in a pot and add the onion along with a good pinch of salt and sugar.

Lid on, cook over a low heat for 10 minutes.

In a larger pot place the onion, chopped zucchini and stock.

Cover and simmer for 20 minutes then puree well.

Taste for seasoning.

A good shake of white pepper will help but you want to add small amounts of salt, pepper and sugar until you are happy with it.

Then add cream, stir and taste again.

It ought to taste lovely!

You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs

By Bruce Wardley



New trees will be planted to offset the removal of vegetation to build more cabins at the Park Lane Caravan Park on Phillip Island Road.



New trees will be planted to offset the removal of vegetation to build more cabins at the Park Lane Caravan Park on Phillip Island Road.

A PLANNING application to remove trees and build more cabins at the Park Lane Caravan Park on Phillip Island has been approved by Bass Coast Shire Council despite the removal of trees close to the Phillip Island Koala Conservation Reserve.

"You can't make an omelette without breaking eggs," said Cr Ron Bauer.

"A hollow tree is as valuable to our environment as a living tree and gives a home and ecosystem to various flora and fauna, but we have to put the tree issue to one side and look at the forest not just the trees," Cr Bauer said.

"Five of the cabins that are being built will cater for people with disabilities.

I was impressed by the attitude of the owners to this project and their commitment to our Island.

The owners of this application were able to secure funding through the state government.

It is my understanding that the clock is ticking and that the grant will lapse shortly.

Entrepreneurs like this need to be encouraged to invest in our shire."

Mayor Cr Rochelle Halstead said the trees were not part of the planning application and were able to be exempt under the provisions of the Bushfire Management Overlay.

Cr Tracey Bell said there was high community sensitivity to the removal of trees.

"There seems to be no strategic alignment between council's Climate Change Action Plan, Urban Forest Strategy and tree protection laws and the state government's own laws for canopy trees and requirement to remove trees for fire safety.

Approving an application that facilitates the removal of 44 trees seems to be in direct opposition to our strategic

direction," said Cr Bell.

Disagreeing with the way the state government had implemented environmental policy with a blanket approach rather than relying on local expertise Cr Mat Morgan said it was out of Bass Coast's local government jurisdiction.

"Council could not refuse the application," said Cr Morgan.

"But that's where we're at and it's our job to deal with the application in front of us."

The scale and form of the proposed development was found to be consistent with maintaining the existing rural character of the area and providing for growth, investment and innovation in the local tourist economy to meet a growing demand for a greater range of well-designed and sited tourist facilities.

Cr Jon Temby said he was upset by the potential loss of habitat trees.

"CFA assessments should be more nuanced by the plant species involved," he said.

"I appeal to Park Lane to either modify their plans or be more environmentally friendly and consider expanding onto land that is already environmentally degraded."

Cr Tim O'Brien said the koala reserve just nearby had very specific vegetation.

The planning application identified the need to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the area including the retention of vegetation and faunal habitat and the need to revegetate land including riparian buffers along waterways, gullies, ridge-lines, property boundaries and saline discharge and recharge area.

Council found the proposal appropriately mitigated against bushfire hazard.

The application attracted 18 objections.

Vibrant Korumburra Lions Club continues to appeal

KORUMBURRA Lions Club continues to thrive since being revived by a membership drive about five years ago that saw it bounce back from a precarious position, recently welcoming another new member.

As a highly active club that offers a friendly vibe at an array of local events and raises funds for a variety of community initiatives, it attracts people to join.

Peter McMaster is the latest member, inducted by Membership Chairman Val Wilson, bringing extensive Lions experience, having joined the Lions in Melbourne in 1976 while still in his twenties.

A shift to Toora saw him join the local Lions Club, another move taking him to Sale where he continued with Lions.

He resigned from Lions in 1996 when he became President of Sale Golf Club.

During his time with Lions, he has been a Treasurer and Membership Chairman, and will take on the role of Treasurer in Korumburra from July.

"Lions is a club which not only does good deeds around



Korumburra Lions Club President Jan Hutton, Membership Chairman Val Wilson, new member Peter McMaster and his sponsor Athol Worthy. A04_0926

the community, it's also a great place for companionship and for getting to know people," Mr McMaster said, having only arrived in town a little under a year ago and looking forward to building his local connections.

Club president Jan Hutton noted, "We work in the community and support those in

need and help our youth flourish."

The Lions Club of Korumburra has a proud history of service, being chartered in 1967 with 24 members at the Austral Hotel.

Those considering membership or wanting to know more about the club and what it does can call Jan Hutton on

0403 313 451 or Val Wilson on 0439 572 263.

People are also welcome to attend a club meeting, held at 7pm on the second Monday of the month at the Korumburra Italian Social Club.

Dinner meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at about 6.30pm but are at a variety of venues.

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Fully equipped, 99,078kms, auto 4x4 double cab L101475



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4 X 4 OF THE WEEK

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OH WHAT A FEELING

* Disclaimer: If the price does not contain the notation that it is "Driveaway*", the price may not include additional costs, such as stamp duty and other government charges.

Sentinel-Times COMMENT

How satisfied are you with Council

IT'S 'Community Satisfaction Survey' time for our local shire councils, a time when around 400 people are contacted about their assessment of the shire's performance.

It used to be 800 people who got a call or even a knock on the door.

And during the past week the Bass Coast Shire Council has been out on social media coaching possible respondents about their involvement in what is supposed to be an independent survey, telling them how important it is to take the call seriously.

"We'd really value you taking the time to be involved. Your voice helps us plan better for Bass Coast's future," they say.

The survey, the same as others conducted across 56 of the 79 councils in the state, is independently undertaken by research agency TKW Research, and they should be allowed to do so without the local council's involvement, even in terms couched as encouragement.

That said, the results of the survey are potentially important and have shown a broad trend of improvement at Bass Coast, apart from a hiccup in the 2024 election year, when voters ushered in six new councillors out of nine.

At South Gippsland, apart from a standout performance in 2023 when a pleasing 77 per cent of respondents found the overall performance of their council to be acceptable, they've had a fairly consistent outcome in the survey.

Areas for improvement at South Gippsland last year were indicated by a disastrous response to the maintenance of sealed roads, while the lack of 'value for money' and 'community consultation' were also highlighted.

At Bass Coast value for money, the overall direction of council and community consultation were highlighted for improvement in 2025.

The operations of council are one thing, including picking up your bin, how long they take to process a planning permit or respond to a request, but what the community really wants is an open and transparent council which converts most of the revenue they collect in rates into capital works and services.

On that score, council should be prepared to provide details about the questions they don't want included in the survey and why, also the results from individual questions they ask locals as part of the survey but generally not divulged.

Both Bass Coast and South Gippsland need to do a better job with community consultation, not just providing opportunities but recording the success of these events.

They should also commit to listening to the community, especially at budget time, and leave enough time to incorporate worthwhile suggestions into next year's program.

Council responds on rates freeze

SOUTH Gippsland Shire Council would like to correct inaccuracies in the letter to the editor titled "Support for rates freeze petition" (Sentinel-Times, February 17).

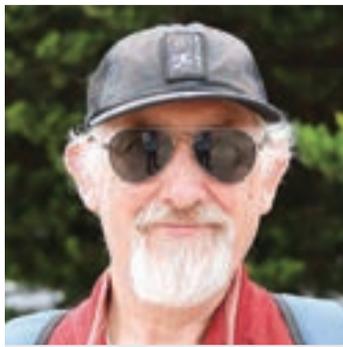
Council welcomes feedback from the community at all times. However, it is equally important that residents are provided with accurate and complete information rather than selective or misinterpreted data.

Council does not hold large amounts of "unallocated" reserves as claimed. All reserve funds, whether discretionary or statutory, are set aside for planned projects, asset renewal or future obligations.

The 2024-25 Annual Report shows \$12.05 million in reserves. This includes \$6.6

Vox Pop

Does Cowes need a McDonald's restaurant?



Brent Kerr
Cowes

"No, it just makes everything a bit crappier."



John Marjoram
Cowes

"Yes we do, because it opens earlier than everything else."



Ben McKenzie
Upwey

"No definitely not, there's no need for a McDonald's anywhere."



Sven Maxa
Blackburn

"Probably not, I haven't been here for 20 years, and you've got plenty of good food vendors already."

million of 2025-26 Grant Commission funding paid in advance due to timing, \$3.5 million committed to capital works projects and \$1.5 million in statutory reserves.

Even discretionary reserves are allocated through Council's long-term financial planning and are not idle funds.

Maintaining reserves is a legal requirement and essential to keeping Council financially sustainable. Reserves help manage asset depreciation, respond to emergencies and fund future infrastructure. Without them, Council may not be able to respond to consecutive extreme weather events, as we have experienced, and remain solvent.

The claim that a three-year rates freeze would cost \$6-10 million without affecting services is also incorrect. A rates freeze would reduce Council's ability to deliver essential services and result in an estimated \$44 million impact over 10 years.

It is also incorrect to say Council has consistently increased rates well above CPI. Council has adhered to the rate cap set by the Victorian Government, which is often in line with or below CPI forecasts.

For more information about Council's financial position, visit www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/financialposition.

Allison Jones, CEO, South Gippsland Shire Council

Continuity of health care in South Gippsland

I WISH to extend my sincere congratulations to the GPs who have taken the initiative to establish Rail Trail Medical in Leongatha.

Their leadership at this critical time demonstrates a strong commitment to the health and wellbeing of the South Gippsland community.

Continuity of care is important and it is reassuring for patients to know they can continue seeing the doctors they feel comfortable with.

In a time that has understandably caused great concern for many in our community, these GPs have shown a clear commitment to quality health care across all generations and their decision to continue practising locally is deeply appreciated.

I also acknowledge the contribution of the dedicated practice staff, Leongatha Hospital staff and the CEO whose support has been invaluable.

My gratitude extends to other local medical clinics that stepped in to take on additional patients and extend their hours when our community most needed it.

With Rail Trail Medical preparing to open within the Leongatha Hospital precinct, I am confident the community will join me in welcoming and supporting this important service as it becomes established.

This development is a highly positive step for Leongatha and South Gippsland and I wish the team every success as they commence operations in early March.

Melina Bath MP

Local favourite golf course

I WAS glad to see an article covering the Devil's Dams golf course. It has always been my favourite golf course, and Lisa and Stephen are the nicest people I know. I have played many games at this course and love it for its challenges and that it was always in pristine condition.

I have visited the restaurant many times and the service and meals were top class. I have also used the venue for some events I needed to celebrate.

Sad to see them go. I hope to visit before they leave and wish them well because it is a well-earned rest as I know it would not have been an easy job to run the course and restaurant the way they did.

Blessings Lisa and Stephen. You are beautiful people and nothing but the best is going to come to you.

Dilene Hinton, Inverloch

Research that saves lives

I AM writing to acknowledge every Victorian who supported our recent Cancer Research Giving Day.

Thanks to the immense level of generosity shown across the state I am pleased to share we together raised \$671,000 to help boost future life-saving research programs.

Recent data from our Victorian Cancer Registry shows more Victorians are being impacted by cancer than ever before and this number continues to grow year on year.

But the report also included a far more positive finding: our ongoing investment in cancer research is working and continues to lead to direct significant impacts on treatment, care and support.

In the past five years alone an estimated 23,900 Victorian lives have been saved thanks to improvements in screening, early detection and treatment. This has only been possible thanks to research.

As the largest non-government funder of cancer research in the state Cancer Council Victoria last year invested around \$26 million in local research programs at the forefront of innovation and change.

Todd Harper AM, CEO, Cancer Council Victoria

Bureaucracy on show

ALONG Yarragon Road in Leongatha there is an avenue of elm trees, possibly a memorial planting.

On the south side there is a service road, with the trees sitting between it and Yarragon Road.

Yarragon Road is a proclaimed road managed by VicRoads, while the service road is managed by South Gippsland Shire Council. There are also large power lines above the trees.

This is where it gets farcical. It takes three different arms of bureaucracy to maintain those trees.

The power authority cuts the middle of the tree to keep branches off the power lines.

VicRoads contractors cut the branches overhanging Yarragon Road. Council staff cut the branches overhanging the service road.

Three contractors for the same tree.

When one blows over, how long will it take to decide which third of the tree to work on?

It is great to see our rates and taxes at work and obviously great cooperation and collaboration between all levels of government.

Doesn't get much better, even with something so straightforward.

Doug McLaren, Leongatha North

What is Bovaer?

BOVAER, based on 3-nitrooxypropanol, is a synthetic feed additive designed to reduce ruminant methane emissions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It works by inhibiting the living enzyme essential for digestion and good health. It is classified as being flammable, corrosive, an irritant and a health hazard. There have been no confirmed cases of Bovaer contamination in milk or meat products (in approved doses) and no studies of any effects on human health.

Bovaer has been approved for use in more than 50 countries with Denmark mandating its use last year, but this mandate was rescinded after reports of cattle collapsing, reduced feed intake, diarrhoea, infertility and decreased production.

Greenhouse gas emissions from cattle is believed to be as high as 9 per cent of the global total. With Australia emitting 1 per cent of the global greenhouse gases and Bovaer reducing cattle methane emissions by between 30 and 45 per cent, some may say this is not worth the trouble while others contend every little bit helps. Beyond that question there is a natural Australian product (Rumin8) based on seaweed which claims a 90 per cent reduction in methane emissions, and importantly the argument that biogenic methane is part of the natural carbon cycle which breaks down in 12 days and forms no new carbon.

So whether your concern is for reducing greenhouse gases, animal health, human health, Rumin8, the natural carbon cycle or, as one article put it, our independent farmers being pressured by industrialised, monopolised, centralised corporate interests and you just want to produce and consume as natural as possible, I hope you will do your own research.

Steve Finlay, Leongatha

EV charging delays

IT MUST be close to a one-year delay for the not yet operational Inverloch EV charging station. Really disappointing.

It seems like we are in some Cold War era bureaucracy thanks to energy suppliers' work ethic.

Or is this a strategy... if they wait long enough EVs will have been replaced by an alternative form of energy and they won't ever have to finish the install!

Greig Mercer, Inverloch

On-street parking objections to new 100-place childcare centre

THE proposed planning permit for a new 100-place childcare centre in San Remo at 89 Shetland Heights Road supports the local economy and growing population while remaining consistent with the Bass Coast Planning Scheme but the site is in question due to a parking shortfall of 19 spaces.

While the report suggests that on-street parking can accommodate the overflow in reality residents worry about increased competition for street parking on a narrow strip that already accommodates Bass Coast College buses and cars.

Local resident and adjoining neighbour to the proposed site Sancha Stevenson, a parent and former San Remo Pre-School Committee member and San Remo school councillor, said she fully supports more childcare in San Remo. "Our families need it. But as someone who has managed the logistics of school drop-offs and student safety, I know that 89 Shetland Heights Road is the wrong site," she said.

"I care deeply about our area. I've spent the last few weeks delving deep into the application, but I object because this specific application is full of technical shortcomings that put our community and our children at risk."

The project involves constructing a single-storey facility with six activity rooms, an outdoor play area and a 19-space car park. Yet Ms Stevenson states that the parking is a failure.

"The developer's plans show only 19 on-site car spaces for 21 staff members. This means



Objections to the proposed location of the 100-place childcare centre at 89 Shetland Heights Road, San Remo, due to the narrow transit corridor.

there isn't even enough parking for the staff, let alone the parents," Ms Stevenson said.

"One hundred families will be forced to drop off and pick up their children directly on the narrow road verge of Shetland Heights Road, right across from a deep-water dam."

While the report indicates that the location is near Phillip Island Road drawing traffic toward the arterial network and away from quieter streets, Shetland Heights Road is also home to spacious residential allotments and a 100-place commercial facility. Using the same direct road as Bass Coast College could potentially cause dangerous traffic congestion.

"It's a zone mismatch," Ms Stevenson said. "The proposed commercial-scale intensity of more than 240 daily movements far exceeds the carrying capacity of this Low-Density Residential Zone. It is

a round peg in a square hole development."

Ms Stevenson has voiced her objection sharing that the council should not sacrifice child safety for a commercial development.

"There is a better, safer way," she said.

"We have a huge parcel of land between the San Remo Pre-School and primary school that is fit for this purpose. It has the infrastructure and safe parking already in place. We should be building services where the safety of our children is guaranteed by the surrounding environment."

"My concern isn't just as a neighbour, but as someone who knows firsthand that families need a site that is accessible and safe. Shetland Heights Road isn't just a quiet street; it is an integrated transport corridor used daily by pedestrians, cyclists, cars and school buses. Adding a commercial-scale parking

overflow to this already complex mix is a dangerous move. It becomes a risk for every family in San Remo, not just those using the centre."

Member for Bass, Jordan Crugnale, confirmed that the proposal for this site is a private childcare centre run through council.

Objections raised request that the council reconsider the site due to the access and safety issues. "The street in front of our six neighbouring driveways will become a de facto loading and reversing zone. It creates dangerous blind spots for the kids on bikes and the pedestrians who use this as a student transport route to Bass Coast College and for the Newhaven College buses," Ms Stevenson said.

"Realistically, the site cannot handle the capacity."

Feedback on the proposed planning permit is still open. Email: planningadmin@bass-coast.vic.gov.au

Urgent call for action on disability living funding impasse

THE Nationals Member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath has called on the state government to act with urgency on a funding impasse between state and federal governments and private providers impacting independent living supports for people with disabilities.

Transition funding from the state government was cut on January 1 without a resolution leaving residents in limbo with homes at risk of closure.

Five providers including Aruma, Scope, Life Without Barriers, Melba Support Services and Possability issued a joint statement in September confirming funding shortfalls would not allow them to continue current services.

Speaking in state parliament Ms Bath said independent living homes that care for the state's most vulnerable people located across Gippsland are impacted.

"It's unacceptable that Labor's Minister for Disability Lizzie Blandthorn has refused to intervene despite almost 2000 Victorians with profound disabilities having their supported independent living homes threatened with closure," Ms Bath said.

In 2015 the state government announced five organisations would take over Victoria's former government-run disability group homes as part of the transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

NDIS funding left a shortfall in running costs and the state agreed to provide transition funding while the matter was resolved in line with the national framework.

"It's alarming that the state and federal government have not sorted this out given they have had years to do so," she said.

"People with disabilities in eastern Victoria need secure homes and secure futures."

• FAITH FACTOR

Walking on water

Ps Andrew Fisher, Wonthaggi Baptist Church

OVER the years I have had the privilege of embarking on some spectacular walks both in Australia and overseas. From traversing the landscapes of Wilsons Promontory to exploring the wonders of Yosemite National Park in the USA, each walk has been remarkable in its own right. Yet none of these experiences compare to the extraordinary walk taken by the Apostle Peter alongside Jesus Christ, a walk that remains one of the most unforgettable moments recorded in the Bible.

Peter achieved something that many people find difficult to believe, the day he stepped out of a boat and walked on water. What makes this story truly remarkable is not just the location but the fact that Peter was walking on water and more importantly walking with Jesus. In that moment Peter experienced what it means to walk at its finest, defying the boundaries of the possible.

On that day Peter stepped out in faith and demonstrated to us all how to encounter more of God's power and presence. The act of walking on water serves as a powerful illustration of what we can accomplish with God, things that would be impossible if we relied solely on our own strength.

I believe that each of us has an area in our lives where God is calling us to walk with Him, to trust Him and to move beyond our own capabilities. When we respond to His call it sets in motion something far greater than what we could ever achieve on our own.

God invites us to step out and go for a walk on the water with Him. However there is one important thing to remember: if you want to walk on water you must first get out of the boat. This means letting go of what is comfortable and placing your trust in God even when it seems impossible. The question remains: are you ready to go for a walk on water?

Former classmate keeps Pat Cronin's story alive in Gippsland schools

TEN years after 19-year-old Pat Cronin's life was cut short by a coward punch a former classmate is helping to ensure his story continues to be heard.

Blaine Healy, 29, has spoken to almost 6500 school students through the Pat Cronin Foundation's Violence is Never Ok and Rethinking Anger presentations in the past 12 months.

On Wednesday March 4 and Thursday March 5 he will deliver six sessions to more than 700 teenagers at Leongatha and Yarram secondary colleges as part of his first regional visit for 2026.

Mr Healy reached out to the Foundation formed in Pat's memory because he felt he could make a meaningful contribution.

"The Foundation has a range of presenters who each bring their own perspective to the sessions when they go into schools," he said.

"As well as sharing and exploring the impact of senseless violence, they also focus on practical ways young people can handle anger and defuse conflict."

"I was at the stage when I felt I had the maturity and the confidence as well as my own life experience to be able to do that."

For Mr Healy the connection was personal having met Pat



Blaine Healy of the Pat Cronin Foundation.



Pat Cronin who died after being struck by a coward punch.

when they were students at Whitefriars College in Donvale.

"We started at Whitefriars together and ended up in the same cabin on the Year 7 camp," he said.

"Later we played in the same football team."

When Pat suffered an inoperable brain bleed after being struck from behind during a quiet night out in Melbourne with friends in 2016 the news shocked his community.

"After we finished school a lot of us stayed in touch," Mr Healy said.

"When the news came through that Pat had died it

was such a surreal experience. "It is surreal even now that all these years later I am telling his story in the hope of preventing similar tragedies."

Mr Healy believes Pat's story stays with students because he was a typical teenager.

Yarram Secondary school nurse Rebecca Tyler-Brennan agreed.

"You can hear a pin drop during the presentations," Ms Tyler-Brennan said.

"These sessions really resonate."

"We aim to put the whole school through each year because we believe they are

valuable and we are passionate about promoting the message that violence is not acceptable."

Leongatha Wellbeing Coordinator Rebecca Cooke described the messages as a vital conversation.

"We value the ongoing partnership with the Foundation and the meaningful impact their work continues to have on our school community," Ms Cooke said.

Since its inception the Foundation has reached more than 350,000 young people in classrooms and sports clubs across Australia.



International Women's Day

Sunday, March 8, 2026

SBWN celebrates International Women's Day in Meeniyan

IN REGIONAL communities like South Gippsland the impact of women is visible everywhere in small businesses, community organisations, workplaces and local leadership.

To mark International Women's Day in 2026, Southern Business Women's Network (SBWN) is hosting Balance The Scales, aligned with the theme #BalanceTheScales, at Trulli's Outdoor in Meeniyan on Thursday March 12 from 6.30pm until 9.30pm.

Women are building enterprises, employing locals, volunteering their time, supporting families and contributing to the strength and identity of the region.

However, the need for progress remains.

Many women still face barriers related to equality, leadership representation, pay, opportunity and the ongoing pressures of balancing professional and personal responsibilities, and SBWN is here to give women a voice.

International Women's Day is an annual reminder that meaningful change

does not happen automatically and requires awareness, conversation and collective action.

SBWN is a membership-based network described as 'run by women for women', welcoming a diverse group of members (and a few men) across professions, ages and stages of life.

It is volunteer-led, with a monthly committee meeting to manage the network's operations and finances.

The purpose is clear: to create opportunities for women across Bass Coast and South Gippsland to connect and learn.

SBWN President Robyn Eva said the organisation's focus is not only networking for networking's sake.

"The organisation positions itself as a place where women can connect, gain new skills, support one another, share challenges and wins and nurture friendships in a way that respects the reality of busy lives and competing commitments," Ms Eva said.

"SBWN also sets out core values that underpin



Southern Business Women's Network is hosting Balance the Scales at Trulli's Outdoor in Meeniyan on Thursday March 12 from 6.30pm until 9.30pm.

the network, being connection, inclusiveness, strength, confidence and kindness, reflecting the kind of community many women seek, especially in regional areas where professional support can otherwise feel scattered."

For women in business and those building careers, SBWN's membership benefits are designed to translate connection into practical outcomes. SBWN highlights

priority registration and discounted member rates for dinners, workshops and training sessions, members-only access to business resources and opportunities to profile businesses through the SBWN website and Facebook presence.

Members may also have the chance to be guest speakers or MCs at SBWN events, creating a platform for visibility and leadership.

"Membership is open to women who want to be empowered, connect and grow, and the network notes that most members live and work in Bass Coast and South Gippsland," Ms Eva said.

The event's keynote speaker is Patrice Mahoney OAM, described by SBWN as an inspiring mother, artist, businesswoman and proud Indigenous woman with a lifetime of stories to share.

The event is framed as an evening of connection, celebration and real conversation, a chance to step out of the busy, 'refill the cup' and be part of a community that supports women backing women.

SBWN notes the setting itself is part of the experience, describing Trulli's outdoor space as relaxed and welcoming, ideal for lingering chats and meaningful connections.

SBWN also acknowledges the generous event sponsorship support from South Gippsland Shire Council.

Tickets are available for SBWN members at \$50, non-members at \$65, a

table of 10 for \$500 or a combined membership and event ticket for \$115 which includes a 12-month membership subscription plus event entry.

Tickets include a two-course meal and the keynote speaker.

"International Women's Day can sometimes be reduced to a slogan," Ms Eva said.

"In regional communities, it has the potential to be something far more useful: a rally point for connection, visibility and momentum."

Networks like SBWN help ensure women are not trying to build businesses, careers and confidence in isolation.

They create space for learning, for honest conversations, for community and for practical steps forward while strengthening the broader region in the process.

For those curious about joining SBWN, attending an event or learning more about membership and upcoming activities, SBWN encourages the community to visit sbwn.com.au.



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International Women's Day

Sunday, March 8, 2026



The Bass Coast Breakers ahead of their 10th season in 2026.

Breakers bring women's sport powerhouse to Kilcunda for IWD

By Rick Koenig

THE Bass Coast Breakers will host an International Women's Day evening at the Kilcunda General Store on Thursday, March 5 as the club enters its 10th season.

The Canape and Cocktails event will run from 6pm to 8.30pm and feature guest speaker Liz Quinn, co-founder of The W Club in Melbourne, which is Australia's only dedicated women's sports bar.

Ms Quinn is a 22-year Royal Australian Navy veteran who has worked as a leadership and culture coach with Richmond's AFLW program and is a graduate of the BHP Women's Coaching Academy.

Breakers founder and president Ella Angarane OAM said the idea came after spotting an International Women's Day event at The W Club.

"It sort of sparked the idea within us that why don't we have our own," Ella said.

"We want to showcase the leaders within our team and our community.

"A lot of our sponsors

are women-run businesses or have women on their board so we thought it was a good opportunity to showcase that."

Ella said the club wanted to create something with a different feel to existing IWD events in the region.

"The ones in the community that the council run are run brilliantly but it's very corporate and it's aimed at women in the workforce," she said.

"We wanted something fun and a good opportunity to bring women together and share stories."

Ms Quinn co-owns The W Club with Tessa Lavey, the former Richmond AFLW midfielder and Australian Opals basketballer who won gold at the 2018 Commonwealth Games.

The venue at The Aviary Hotel in Abbotsford prioritises women's sport on its screens and has drawn national media attention since opening in 2025.

"She's a leadership coach, she's worked in the military, she's been a leadership and culture coach with Richmond AFLW," Ella said.

"The W Club showcases women's sport in an inclusive environment so we thought that aligned really well with our club and our purpose."

ABC Gippsland journalist Maddie Stuchbery will MC the evening.

Ms Stuchbery is a Wonthaggi local and award-winning former Sentinel-Times journalist who was recognised by the Rural Press Club of Victoria in 2024 for reporting on gender equity in agribusiness.

Ella received the Medal of the Order of Australia in the 2023 King's Birthday Honours for her services to women's football after establishing the first youth girls team in the Bass Coast and South Gippsland region in 2015 and founding the Breakers in 2017.

She said the club was shaping up well for its milestone season.

"We've had great numbers at training," Ella said.

"We've got a mix of retaining a lot of our players from last year but picking up some good recruits that have both played before and haven't.

"We're looking to build on last year where we made the finals and continue to include people that have played football before in a local environment but also tap into youth girls from Dalyston to provide that pathway for people living locally."

Ella said the event was about celebrating the women who make the club and the community tick.

"It just provides the opportunity to recognise and celebrate local women that are doing great things," she said.

Tickets are \$60 and include a canape-style dinner.

The dress code is dress to impress.

The event is co-hosted by the Breakers and KGS Kilcunda at 3535 Bass Highway.

Entry is through the courtyard with doors opening at 6pm.

Tickets are available at trybooking.com.



Christie Nelson Real Estate celebrates its team of women this International Women's Day on March 8. From left, Zoe Baker (Executive Sales Assistant), Christie Nelson (Director) and Skye Clothier (Sales Agent Representative).

All-women team powers Christie Nelson Real Estate

A TEAM of women manage Christie Nelson Real Estate and in light of International Women's Day on March 8 Christie acknowledges that since launching her own company three years ago her team reflects her values of support, flexibility and strength.

"I have been in real estate since 2020, but launched Christie Nelson Real Estate three years ago, and I hadn't given it much thought, but we've accidentally become an all-women office," Ms Nelson said.

The supportive approach that drives Ms Nelson's business extends to her leadership style.

"I have a household of six children and prioritise wellbeing and flexibility for my staff," Ms Nelson said.

"I believe this gives me a lot of grounding to help be a more supportive boss."

Christie Nelson Real Estate services Korumburra, Leongatha and all surrounding areas and is led by Director Christie Nelson, with Sales Agent Representative Skye Clothier and Executive Sales Assistant Zoe Baker.

"We're managing about a 40km radius of Leongatha, handling all aspects of real estate with a focus on residential, lifestyle properties, vacant land and small acreages," she said.

"And my business is very much about the community we live in, and we like to give back to the town where our children are growing up."

This International Women's Day, Christie Nelson Real Estate acknowledges the way women lead, the juggle they endure and the generosity they have when it comes to giving back to the community.

Ms Nelson is a successful businesswoman and her accolades are an acknowledgement of her dedication to her work.

Most recently she was nominated as the number one agent for Leongatha by realestate.com for 2025 and listed in the top 10 per cent of agents in the @reality network in November for the second year running across Australia and New Zealand.

Ms Nelson has built a community-focused, high-performing team that achieves strong results for their clients.

A real estate agency that champions working mothers and empowers women to succeed, and on March 8, on International Women's Day, the collective action is Give to Gain, a collaboration that encourages the thought that when women thrive, we all rise.

To view Christie Nelson Real Estate's property portfolio, visit atrealty.com.au/christienelson



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Xander Beach brought the classics to life on his harp. A42_0926

Delightful musical afternoon at Mossvale

A MULTI-DIMENSIONAL musical journey unfolded on a magical Sunday afternoon at Mossvale Park in Berrys Creek.

Rotary Club of Leongatha organised Music at Mossvale with the event raising funds for Monash Children's Cancer Centre, Berrys Creek CFA and Friends of Mossvale Park.

Organiser Jeremy Curtis was delighted with how the event went.

"For a renewal of concerts at Mossvale Park, it was a remarkable success," he said, recalling Music for the People that used to run on the corresponding weekend some years ago.

"We had more than 250 people there," Jeremy said of Sunday's event, noting people are already talking about wanting Music at Mossvale to continue.

He expressed his appreciation to Mirboo North Bendigo Bank and Mirboo North & District Community Foundation for funding support that made the event possible.

Ten local acts performed in the Mossvale Park Soundshell with some audience members basking in the sunshine while others sheltered under expansive oak trees.

While a cappella group Acoustic Kitchen was celebrating the 14th anniversary of its first public performance new band Gippy Fusion made its debut.

Bandleader of the new arrival Diana Reardon explained the origin of the nine-member group.

"Some of us met at Meeniyah and other gigs and thought it would be fun to play together, and Martin on the oboe said he had some arrangements that might work," she said.

While Gippy Fusion was formed for Music at Mossvale its members are keen to play together elsewhere in future.

"We're interested in keeping alive flutes, oboes, violins and getting that side of it heard," Diana said adding the aim is to provide something different.

The group has already set a focus on diverse music with its offerings on Sunday ranging from Somewhere Over the Rainbow to a piece originating in Versailles 350 years ago.

Acoustic Kitchen made its disdain for coriander clear in a song to the tune of Fernando with the group continuing its light-hearted theme while its members delivered the vocal strength required with no musical accompaniment.

Talented Korumburra teenager Xander Beach had his audience spellbound with peaceful harp music that included a Baroque piece from George Frideric Handel.

The popular Treble F Singers delivered numbers including Rainbow Connection the song made famous by Kermit the Frog and I am Australian.

Latrobe Community Concert Band adopted a moon theme playing numbers such as Moonlight Serenade and Moon River.

Keachange provided a great musical mix while The Black Notes featuring the vocals of Tarnya Wilson gave the audience a taste of jazz.

The UpBeats turned up the decibels and ensured everyone was awake for the drive home.

Leongatha star performer living the dream in The Book of Mormon

LEONGATHA'S Josh Gardiner must be ready on any given night to step into the spotlight of the smash hit stage production The Book of Mormon, currently playing at the Princess Theatre in Melbourne.

The 32-year-old is the understudy for one of the show's protagonists, Elder Cunningham, a role he has dreamed about for more than a decade.

Like many performers, Gardiner's journey had humble beginnings, starting on a small stage in Leongatha.

"It all kind of kicked off in Leongatha during Leongatha Lyric Theatre days," he said.

"I think my first production was Grease Lightning, maybe around 2006.

"I just found a love of acting there."

Those early productions sparked something in Gardiner.

After finishing school, he went on to study music theatre at the Victorian College of the Arts in the form of a three-year degree.

Since graduating, it has been difficult for Gardiner to find stable work in acting at times, as is common in the world of performing arts, though he has appeared in numerous major productions including the 10th anniversary tour of Billy Elliot and Cinderella.

The Book of Mormon, however, was always a dream in the background.

"I've auditioned for this show about four times," he said.

"Elder Cunningham has always been a dream.

"I feel like there's not been a more perfect role written for my skill set, my personality.

"I just feel like I know exactly who he is."

The Book of Mormon was created by Trey Parker and Matt Stone, known primarily for creating the hit animated television series South Park, along with co-creator and composer Robert Lopez, known for writing music for Frozen and Coco.

Following the story of two mismatched Mormon



Safe to say Josh Gardiner is excited about landing a dream role in the worldwide hit stage production The Book of Mormon.

missionaries sent to Africa to spread their faith, it first opened on Broadway in 2011 and has gone on to win nine Tony Awards, making it one of the most successful musicals of all time.

Gardiner's character, Elder Cunningham, serves as the chaotic contrast to his confident partner, Elder Price.

"Price is tall, handsome, by the book, and can sell the Book of Mormon perfectly," Gardiner explained.

"And then there's Cunningham.

"He has no idea what the Book of Mormon really is, he's just thrilled to be there, a bundle of energy.

"He's that awkward, odd guy that everyone kind of turns away from in a conversation."

But among the crude comedy that Trey Parker and Matt Stone are known for, Cunningham also carries emotional weight.

"He's singing, he's dancing, he's acting, but he's also the heart of the show," Gardiner said.

"He plays to the truth of what real friendship is, in amongst all the chaos.

"He's just a delight."

Being an understudy for a lead role presents its own challenges, both physically and mentally, as the protagonist is on stage for most of the show.

"It's tricky," Gardiner admitted.

"Because the role is so demanding and you're not doing it every night, that show fitness is hard to maintain."

Gardiner has performed the role 20 times, with most of those coming during the show's time in Sydney, although he has already stepped into the role in Melbourne.

Like any workplace, lead performers often take personal or sick leave, and that is when Gardiner must be ready to step in at a moment's notice.

He shares a close friendship with the man who plays Elder Cunningham most nights, American-born actor Nick Cox, and said both bring something unique to the stage.

"We've been given some great creative licence to make it our own," Gardiner said.

There is also some irony in the timing of Gardiner's casting, as he is 32, while Elder Cunningham is 19.

"I auditioned for Cunningham so many times when I was his age," he said.

"But now feels like the right time to be playing it.

"You need that little bit more experience and understanding of the world."

For now, Gardiner is content.

In an industry known for uncertainty, The Book of Mormon offers something often hard to come by - job security.

"It's pretty rare in this line of work to get a nice, decent contract," he said.

"So I'm happy sitting here for the moment, making a consistent wage.

"It feels like a relief."

That said, it does not stop him thinking about the opportunities the future could hold.

"Doing Cunningham has really taught me so much and shown me how much I can actually do if I push myself in this field," he said.

"So, I'm excited post Book of Mormon to see what happens, and now that I'm getting a bit older, some more roles."

Send us your photos

If you're having a 21st, club function, wedding, or other social event, take some photos, name the people in the snaps and email to news@sgst.com.au

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An uncanny vision that became a seed for Orpheus Nine

AUTHOR Chris Flynn a resident of Wonthaggi woke from what seemed a nightmare with a scene so vivid he could not ignore it an uncanny vision that became the seed for his latest novel Orpheus Nine published by Hachette Australia and recently recognised with the 2025 Aurealis Award for Best Horror Novel at a ceremony in Brisbane on Saturday February 21.

In an interview with the Sentinel-Times Chris explained that at the time he was taking a break from writing having just finished travelling after the release of Mammoth but the impulse behind this supernatural dream was a vision he could not ignore.

Chris says the book is set in the present day and reads in part as a parable of the pandemic era without intention but delivering a message of shared catastrophe whereby instead of uniting, a community fractures.

"Orpheus Nine is about every nine-year-old in the world dying at once: children are on a football field, their mouths open into a Latin chant, before their bodies swell with salt," Chris said.

"The story is about the slow, wrenching collapse of a small town of Gattan, with families left to splinter under the weight of the grief; no knowing of what's happening, with desperate



Award-winning author Chris Flynn's latest novel Orpheus Nine received the Aurealis Award for Best Horror Novel of the Year in Australia. Photo: Karli Michelle Photography.

attempts to protect the children they still have."

The story uncovers that 10-year-olds are the last of the generation and children coming to the age of nine are facing their death.

The story intertwines a sense of horror while following three families in the fictional town of Gattan all of whom are facing a different

level of grief and in turn an eruption of conspiracy theories grows due to blame and radicalisation spreading as easily as fear.

Chris said what started as a dream stayed with him through a summer of fevered drafting and a year of revision.

"This supernatural story soon became a social mirror of how quickly trust can erode, how truth becomes negotiable and how people weaponise uncertainty to suit their own narratives," he said.

As the book was published in 2025 and readers began to interpret it Chris recognised the dream as an echo of his past.

"I grew up in a foster home, where my sister and I were the only biological children. In my teens, we had over a hundred children through the house," Chris said.

"This recurring pattern of sudden departures of children leaving and never returning appears to be connected to this vivid dream of inexplicable loss."

Chris says the novel ends on an unexpected note that will satisfy some and frustrate others.

With growing attention Orpheus Nine looks to be a novel that will live on in conversation.

Orpheus Nine is available online or in store locally at Turn the Page in Cowes or Nice Stack of Books in Meeniyan.



Julie Sullivan, Martha Dunemann, owner Hilary Sullivan and Steph Anderton celebrate the new larger premises of The Hare and Tortoise Books. A12_0926

The Hare and Tortoise Books offers even greater selection

KORUMBURRA'S The Hare and Tortoise Books proves the popularity of traditional reading remains high despite widespread forecasts years ago that technology would spell the end of physical books, the business having outgrown its original home and moved to larger premises.

The recent official opening of the new store on a Tuesday evening drew a substantial turnout, with attendees happily chatting and browsing, and no formal proceedings such as speeches, owner Hilary Sullivan keeping the vibe relaxed.

"It's an indication that the town is growing," local business operator Steph Anderton said of the need for the bookstore to adopt a new larger home.

Regular shopper Rosie Marshall of Korumburra loves reading books and the aesthetic of

By Andrew Paloczi

them to such an extent she hopes to work there.

Hilary's proud dad Phillip Sullivan said his daughter majored in literature and it was always her dream to open a bookshop, clearly delighted the business continues to thrive and expand.

"It authenticates that people are reading books," he said, noting the new premises at 35 Commercial Street are in an ideal central location near the brewery and bakery, and that The Hare and Tortoise stocks the latest releases in its varied range.

Another regular customer, Alexandra Farmer, said the new store is more open and while she enjoyed the cosy setting in the original shop, she is pleased with the change and having even more books to choose from.

The ARCHIES CREEK HOTEL PROUDLY PRESENTS

Month	Date	Performer
March	SUN 1/3	HARRY MANX (CAN)
	SAT 7/3	ROSS WILSON & THE PEACENIKS
	WED 13/3	MARY COUGHLAN + MICK THOMAS TRIO
	FRI 19/3	HUSSY HICKS
	SUN 25/3	THE SILVER SOUND w/ AMARILLO
	SAT 21/3	LIZ STRINGER & BAND
	SUN 22/3	BONDI CIGARS
	FRI 27/3	EMILY LUBITZ & BAND
	SAT 28/3	PLAYLUNCH
	SUN 29/3	IRISH MYTHEN + EMILY ULMAN
April	FRI 10/4	FRANK YAMMA
	SAT 18/4	KEVIN BORICH EXPRESS
	SUN 19/4	ERIC BIBB & BAND
May	FRI 1/5	BEN LEE
	SAT 2/5	HENRY WAGONS
	FRI 8/5	NOT DROWNING WAVING
	SUN 10/5	TEENY TINY STEVIES
	SUN 17/5	FOR THE SAKE OF THE SONG - SARA STORER, SHANE HOWARD & SHANE NICHOLSON

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Owner of The Hare & Tortoise Books Hilary Sullivan stands between members of the store's book club Tracy Wallens and Taighn Gardiner at the celebration of the shop's new home. A16_0926



Inverloch's Orli Richardson and Korumburra's Rosie Marshall enjoy the new premises of The Hare & Tortoise Books. A17_0926



Proud dad Phillip Sullivan celebrates the success of The Hare & Tortoise Books, his daughter Hilary's business now in a larger place. A18_0926



Paul and Jacqui Rotthier check out the new home of The Hare & Tortoise Books, being the owners of the building in which it is housed. A19_0926



Delilah Bright with her work that earned second place in the creative art section. A22_0926



Hazel Bright got second prize for her photo 'Buzz Buzz Buzz' as well as winning first prize in the junior garden competition for her frog pond. A23_0926



Foster locals Harry and Ruby enjoy the Show. A24_0926



Lyndon Bath stands near her prize-winning lemons, having also enjoyed success with her fruit cake, onions and Yo-Yo biscuits. A25_0926



Melody-Day Mulholland and Ebony Winter enjoy snow cones at the Foster Show. A26_0926



Prom Coast News committee members Kaye Rodden (Chair), Neil Travers and Linda Giddy at the Foster Show. A27_0926



Denise Bravington of Woorarra and Tania Pell of Fish Creek check out the Foster Show. A28_0926



Macki, Alexandra and Abby Farmer enjoy the new home of The Hare & Tortoise Books. A20_0926



Jo Street from Inspired by Nature at the South Gippsland Garlic Festival. w09_0926



Alanna and Harry Quirk were having a blast browsing the stalls at the Garlic Festival. w10_0926



Inverloch's Tim Holt was just one of the many Garlic Festival attendees who opted to bring their furry friends along for the fun. w15_0926



Nat Kunst from Wild and Precious Flower Farm was delighting passers-by with her beautiful flowers at the South Gippsland Garlic Festival. w13_0926

Snapped Out

Pictures of you and your friends at Opening of The Hare & Tortoise Books' new premises, Foster Show and the South Gippsland Garlic Festival



Jess and Tia from Citrus and Ice Popsicles were helping the crowd stay cool at Saturday's Garlic Festival in Korumburra. w12_0926

Sentinel-Times

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Buyers are out in force and ready to move

RAY White Wonthaggi sales agent and director Chris Wood has a message for property owners sitting on the fence about selling.

The market is moving. Mr Wood said Ray White had already sold 33 properties in 2026 and demand showed no signs of slowing down.

"Market conditions are really good," Mr Wood said.

"Good properties that are priced well, that people see value in, sell quickly.

"We're not talking about under-selling or selling cheap but things that are priced according to the market, people are snapping up."

Mr Wood said properties priced under \$550,000 were attracting the most attention with a deep pool of buyers in that range.

"There is a lot of buyers in that buying pool, sub-550," he said.

He said open home numbers told the real story regardless of broader economic headlines.

"We are seeing it on the ground," Mr Wood said.

"We're seeing the volumes of people at open homes, we're seeing first home buyers back in force.

"Local people upsizing, downsizing and first home buyers are all out in force and that's why that lower price point under 550, there's certainly lots of buyers around for that."

The surge in first home buyer activity across Bass Coast



The Ray White Wonthaggi team at 38-40 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi.

mirrors a national trend driven by the federal government's expanded First Home Guarantee scheme which allows eligible buyers to purchase with as little as a 5 per cent deposit.

In Victoria first home buyers purchasing a property valued at \$600,000 or less pay no stamp duty while those buying up to

\$750,000 receive a concession.

Mr Wood said the agency was not suggesting anyone rush into a sale but encouraged owners who had been considering a move to take a serious look at current conditions.

He said owners of investment properties affected by recent state government changes

around land tax and associated costs may also find now a good time to reassess.

Victoria's land tax threshold dropped to \$50,000 in 2024 as part of the state government's COVID debt repayment plan catching many smaller investors who were previously exempt while the vacant

residential land tax now applies across all of Victoria including regional areas.

For more information or to browse current listings visit raywhitewonthaggi.com.au or contact Chris Wood on 0423 461 703 or the office on 5672 1833. Ray White Wonthaggi is at 38-40 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi.

Victorian new home builds fall to decade low

THE number of new homes built in Victoria has fallen to its lowest level since 2014 with Australian Bureau of Statistics data confirming 54,323 new homes were completed in the year ending September 2025.

The state government's 2023 Housing Statement targeted 80,000 new homes a year but only 116,025 have been completed in the two years since, almost 44,000 short of the target.

Opposition Leader Jess Wilson said the figures showed the Housing Statement had failed and the state's property tax burden was pushing investment in new housing supply interstate.

Shadow Minister for Housing and Building David Southwick said first home buyers and key workers were bearing the brunt of the failure.

"Two years on from Labor's so called Housing Statement and the completion of new homes has crashed to a decade low," Mr Southwick said.

"Victorians are not asking for slogans. They are asking for homes."

Housing Industry Association executive director for Victoria Keith Ryan said Victoria had started construction on just 13,970 new homes in the September quarter, well below the state government's own target of 20,000 homes per quarter.

"Since the RBA's rate hiking cycle Victoria has been unable to mount a strong and sustained recovery," Mr Ryan said.

"Relatively weaker population and labour market dynamics, expensive residential land and increasing state government taxes and regulations on home building have held back the state while markets like Western Australia, Queensland and South Australia race ahead."

The Property Council of Victoria said Victoria was at serious risk of falling behind other states warning that a growing web of property taxes was scaring away investment and delaying new housing projects.

Property Council Victoria deputy executive director Andrew Lowcock said the

data made the consequences of Victoria's tax settings impossible to ignore.

"Victoria has the fastest-growing population in the country but we're building homes at 2014 levels. That mismatch is unsustainable," Mr Lowcock said.

Victoria carries the highest property tax burden in the nation with state net debt climbing by \$1.7 million an hour and forecast to reach a record \$192.6 billion by 2028-29.

ABS building approvals data for December 2025 showed Victoria's total dwelling approvals fell 32.2 per cent in seasonally adjusted terms with just 339 apartments approved compared with 1496 in November.

Nationally 195,730 dwellings were approved across 2025 which was 12.8 per cent higher than 2024 but still well below the 240,000 new homes required each year to meet the National Housing Accord target of 1.2 million homes over five years.

The statewide shortfall comes as Bass Coast continues to grapple with its own housing affordability crisis.

The median house price in Bass Coast reached \$700,000 to June 2025 well above the \$590,000 regional Victorian median while the population continues to grow at 1.9 per cent a year.

Fewer new housing approvals were recorded in Bass Coast in the last financial year despite ongoing demand driven by families relocating from Melbourne and retirees drawn to the coast.

Bass Coast Shire Council's Affordable Housing Strategy found 733 households in the shire or 5.1 per cent required affordable housing.

In South Gippsland only 12.3 per cent of farm workers can afford to buy a home.

The Wonthaggi North East Precinct Structure Plan approved in January 2024 is expected to eventually deliver about 5000 new homes but housing advocates have called for 100 new affordable dwellings a year in Bass Coast to address years of neglect in public housing builds.

Ray White



Auction

34 Stewart Street, Wonthaggi

POTENTIAL PLUS!

Located on a rear block of a previously subdivided lot, this three-bedroom, one-bathroom weatherboard home offers a central location.

Property Features:

- Living & Dining: A living area with timber flooring and a wood-burning fireplace.
- The kitchen/dining area includes a dishwasher and freestanding electric stove.
- Bedrooms: Three bedrooms in total, with main bedroom with built-in wardrobes.
- Bathroom & Laundry: Functional bathroom with wood-panelled walls and a separate shower, plus a dedicated laundry and separate toilet.
- Exterior: Fully fenced yard on a low-maintenance rear block, with a small garden shed and a rainwater tank.

This residence is in original condition and requires updates to both the interior and exterior. It represents an opportunity to secure a home on a tucked-away block in a growing regional centre.

3 1

Auction:
Saturday, March 28,
11am onsite

Siaan Grinham
0422 418 132

Chris Wood
0423 461 703

Ray White Wonthaggi

38-40 McBride Avenue, Wonthaggi | 5672 1833

www.raywhitewonthaggi.com.au



Freehold hotel opportunity in the heart of Bass Coast



Freehold 3,935m²
 Lot 1, 24-32 Hade Avenue, Bass
Auction Saturday March 14 at 1pm
 (unless sold prior)
Price: \$770,000 - \$840,000
Agent Andersen Property Specialists
 Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846

THE George Bass Hotel is an exceptional chance to acquire a landmark freehold pub complete with fit-out and ready for a re-launch.

Offering solid foundations, strong local recognition and a high-profile position, this property is primed for new owners to restore and elevate its former popularity and reputation.

Positioned just off the Bass Highway in the township of Bass, the hotel captures constant traffic flow between Melbourne, Phillip Island and the spectacular Bass Coast coastline.

Its accessibility makes it a natural stop for holidaymakers, weekend explorers and the many locals travelling between Grantville, Woolamai, Corinella, Coronet Bay, San Remo and Wonthaggi, as well as a hub for Bass locals to gather.

The George Bass Hotel is generously fitted out and designed to operate seamlessly across several customer segments.

The venue features a welcoming sports bar with ample seating, a comfortable bistro lounge ideal for family dining, multiple indoor and outdoor sitting areas, a convenient drive-through bottle shop and a spacious three-bedroom owner's or manager's residence.

Well-maintained back-of-house facilities, storage areas and upgraded amenities complete the package.

With its broad layout and infrastructure the property offers considerable scope for repositioning, whether as a revitalised

local pub, dining destination, live music venue or mixed-use hospitality hub.

Set on a substantial 3,935sqm township-zoned allotment, the hotel boasts an impressive 90-metre frontage enhancing visibility and future development flexibility.

The property is offered with vacant possession inclusive of all existing furniture, fittings, chattels, plant and equipment on a where-is, as-is basis, excluding the billiard tables and children's arcade games.

This provides incoming operators with a near turn-key platform for reopening.

The Bass Coast is one of Victoria's most dynamic coastal regions renowned for its thriving tourism economy and strong year-round visitor numbers.

With Phillip Island a renowned national and international tourist destination, unspoiled coastlines, surf beaches and nature reserves, growing residential communities and significant investment in local infrastructure, hospitality venues along this corridor are well positioned for growth.

A flourishing food, wine and hospitality scene attracting both locals and travellers adds to the appeal.

With continued population growth and increasing travel to the region, the George Bass Hotel represents a rare opportunity to secure a freehold hotel in a prime Bass Coast location.

Contact Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846 for further information or to arrange an inspection.



AUCTION: SATURDAY MARCH 14 at 1pm IF NOT SOLD PRIOR

THE GEORGE BASS HOTEL

A landmark hospitality opportunity.

The George Bass Hotel is going under the hammer. This is your chance to secure a landmark hospitality venue positioned in the heart of Bass and rich in history. The George Bass Hotel is a cornerstone of the community ready to be brought back to life. Whether you're an experienced operator, savvy investor, or hospitality visionary this is a rare opportunity to own an iconic piece of Bass Coast heritage. Opportunities like this don't come around often. Be there. Bid strong.

\$770,000 to \$840,000

Contact Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846 to arrange a pre-auction inspection.



DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

**Lot A 24-32 Hade Avenue Bass
 4 Lot Subdivision with conditional Town Planning approval**

An opportunity to secure a rare 6,18 m² development parcel in the picturesque township of Bass situated adjacent to the George Bass Hotel, at the gateway to San Remo and Phillip Island and just 15 minutes from the regional hub of Wonthaggi. This site comes with conditional town-planning approval to subdivide into 4 large residential lots, positioning you to capitalise on the Bass Coast's growing population and booming visitor economy.

\$550,000 to \$580,000

Scott Andersen 0409 785 846
 Aminah Hart 0415 256 678



Country living with panoramic views to Western Port

ESCAPE the hustle and bustle to the absolute serenity of Woolamai Park, a magnificent seven-bedroom dual-occupancy residence set high on the hill in Woolamai.

From its commanding position the property offers uninterrupted panoramic views over Woolamai Racecourse, the Bass Flats and across the shimmering waters of Western Port.

This exceptional rural retreat combines space, versatility and comfort, making it the perfect choice for large or extended families, multi-generational living, entertainers or those seeking a home that offers income potential through dual accommodation.

Designed to take full advantage of its remarkable setting, the home provides expansive living zones, seven generous bedrooms including a master with ensuite, three bathrooms, three toilets and multiple outdoor areas ideal for entertaining or quiet contemplation of the stunning natural surrounds.

As you move through the residence you will discover an effortless flow between living spaces and wide verandahs where you can relax and take in the ever-changing moods of the landscape.

The design allows family and friends to gather together with ease while offering privacy in its accommodation.

Whether hosting a large celebration or enjoying a peaceful morning coffee, every moment at Woolamai Park feels like a retreat from the pace of everyday life.

Set amidst rolling hills and open skies, this is a property that truly captures the essence of country living while being within easy reach of everything the beautiful Bass Coast has to offer.

Explore local weekend markets, scenic bike and walking trails and the vibrant coastal communities and beaches of San Remo and Phillip Island, all just a short drive away.

Woolamai Park is more than a home.

It is a lifestyle destination where families can come together along with friends to enjoy a gentler pace.

With its breathtaking outlooks, versatile design and inviting sense of calm, this remarkable residence offers a rare opportunity to secure your own slice of rural paradise.

Contact Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846 for further information or to arrange an inspection.



7 | 3 2.02ha

125 Trew Road, Woolamai
Price \$1,550,000 - \$1,650,000
Agent Andersen Property Specialists
 Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846



Residential land 6,181m²

Lot A, 24-32 Hade Avenue, Bass
Price \$550,000 - \$580,000
Agent Andersen Property Specialists
 Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846

Development opportunity with four-lot subdivision approval

AN opportunity to secure a rare 6,181sqm development parcel in the picturesque township of Bass at the gateway to San Remo and Phillip Island and just 15 minutes from the regional hub of Wonthaggi.

The township-zoned land is located at the rear of the George Bass Hotel site and comes with conditional town planning approval to subdivide into four large residential lots.

Subject to title registration, the approval positions buyers to capitalise on the Bass Coast's growing population and booming visitor economy.

The Bass Coast property market shows solid fundamentals for investors with

median house prices and rental yields in the shire providing a healthy backdrop for new supply.

The location is minutes to San Remo's larger town amenities and the bridge to Phillip Island with easy access from Melbourne making it perfect for country lifestyle lots.

With Phillip Island attractions drawing large numbers of visitors annually and the Bass Coast showing healthy population growth, this represents a rare chance to deliver new residential lots in a robust regional market.

Contact Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846 for further information or to arrange an inspection.

"WOOLAMAI PARK"

\$1,550,000 to \$1,650,000

Impressive Dual-Occupancy Country Living on 5 Acres with Spectacular Panoramic Views to Western Port

Experience the absolute serenity of Woolamai Park – a magnificent 7-bedroom, dual-occupancy residence set high on the hill in Woolamai. From its commanding position the property offers uninterrupted panoramic views over Woolamai Racecourse, the Bass Flats, and across the shimmering waters of Western Port.



Call Scott Andersen on 0409 785 846 to arrange your private inspection.





Nyora Grange offers families space to build homes and community



FOR families searching for space, connection and a place to truly call their own, Stage 1 of Nyora Grange offers more than just land.

Nestled in the welcoming township of Nyora, this development gives families the chance to create their dream home while becoming part of a growing and close-knit community.

Here, neighbours will meet over front fences, children will ride bikes along quiet streets and lasting friendships will take root.

With titles now available, buyers can start building without delay.

Stage 1 offers generous allotments ranging from 597 square metres to 975 square metres, designed to give families plenty of room to grow.

Whether it's a backyard for children to play, space for alfresco entertaining or gardens to relax in, these blocks provide the perfect canvas for a home that suits any lifestyle.

The sizeable blocks set Nyora Grange apart from many newer developments where land parcels have steadily shrunk, giving buyers the freedom to design a home with real breathing room rather than building boundary to boundary.

Nyora strikes a balance between peaceful country living and convenient connections.

Melbourne's CBD is just 70 minutes away via the M1 freeway, while the beaches and wineries of the Mornington Peninsula and the coastal attractions

of Phillip Island are within easy reach for weekend adventures.

The township itself offers a primary school, general store, recreation reserve and an active community association that hosts regular events throughout the year.

For those who commute, the nearby Nar Nar Goon and Tynong railway stations provide access to the V/Line network, while the towns of Drouin, Waragul and Pakenham are a short drive away for larger shopping, medical and education needs.

Nyora Grange is not a single release either.

More stages are planned for the near future, ensuring a vibrant community that grows together.

This thoughtful rollout gives early buyers the chance to be part of shaping a neighbourhood from the ground up, with the confidence that the estate will continue to develop around them.

For families who have been priced out of suburbs closer to Melbourne but still want that sense of community and connection, Nyora represents genuine value with the lifestyle benefits of country living on the doorstep.

Stage 1 is now on the market.

For more information, plans or pricing, contact the selling agents at Carman Real Estate.

Jarrold Carman can be reached on 0423 144 102 or jarrod.carman@carmanre.com.au, and Gary Kohlman is available on 0402 117 077.



NYORA GRANGE
Stage 1
Now Selling!



PREMIUM RESIDENTIAL ALLOTMENTS IN NYORA, VICTORIA

Titles Now Available: Start building your dream home without delay.
Land Sizes: 597 m² to 975 m² – designed for space, privacy, and lifestyle.

Lifestyle & Location:

- 70 min to Melbourne CBD, 40–50 min to Mornington Peninsula, 40 min to Phillip Island.
- Well-connected roads; close to schools, shops, and community facilities.
- Parks, walking trails, and outdoor recreation nearby.
- Build Your Dream Home: Large, peaceful blocks perfect for families, investors, or bespoke designs.



SCAN FOR LOT PRICES



SOLD

69 FARMERS ROAD, DUMBALK



UNDER CONTRACT (Off Market)

8 NERRENA ROAD, DUMBALK



SOLD

37 MILLER STREET, DUMBALK



SOLD

2480 SOUTH GIPPSLAND HIGHWAY, STONY CREEK



UNDER CONTRACT

21 CATHERSTON CLOSE, KORUMBURRA



UNDER CONTRACT

7 RITCHIE STREET, LEONGATHA



UNDER CONTRACT

29 ISABELLA BOULEVARD, KORUMBURRA



SOLD

9/1 HANNAH STREET, MORWELL



SOLD

5 PARKSIDE CLOSE, LEONGATHA



UNDER CONTRACT (Off Market)

19 DOWDS ROAD, MEENIYAN



SOLD

285 GARVES ROAD, NERRENA



SOLD (Off Market)

170 MILLAR ROAD, YANAKIE



SOLD

390 KORUMBURRA-WONTHAGGI RD, KORUMBURRA



UNDER CONTRACT

778 WHITELAWS TRACK, BUFFALO



SOLD

85 HUGHES ROAD, NERRENA



Barry Redmond
Director / Estate Agent
0477 622 292



Kellie Thomas
Licensed Estate Agent
0438 647 449



Monique Wightman
Marketing & Administration
(03) 5662 2292

We are your real estate specialists

47 Bair Street (03) 5662 2292
nutrien.harcourts.net/au/office/leongatha



CROSSWORD

No. 78 - by 'Johnno2' of Cape Paterson

CRYPTIC CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Country with its tail up, to lead in Middle East political organisation (7)
- 5 Made just for one's bestie, partly to arouse (7)
- 9 Upon spill, stood without challenge?(9)
- 10 Progressive, vibrant label, copiously copied, steadily becomes boring (5)
- 11 Slight lad is daintily parading (7)
- 12 Grow AirNL (7)
- 13 Me tasting hit lands use charge (9)
- 14 Draws jugs for ears (5)
- 16 Two-wheeler, in both ways: King and Queen? (5)
- 18 High and dry on exercise yard (9)
- 21 Antelope, little by little drained after scrutiny (7)
- 23 Dribble, torpor, anaemic, empty. Time for take away! (7)
- 25 Where's the cherry-o? (2,3)
- 26 Disturbingly volatile, but lot less than a biblical monster (9)
- 27 'Stay, puss!' (flicks tail) (7)
- 28 Gives in spades, pursuant to banks leverage in rent (7)

DOWN

- 1 Pile diamonds, clubs and hearts on four of spades (5)
- 2 One of a pair from Asia - Spooner's close little one (9)
- 3 I'm first to embrace design for lodge (7)
- 4 Ruhr city walls, to confine nature (7)
- 5 Convalescence, Spooner's announced, is 'on top shelf!' (3,4)
- 6 Kelly now (and then) lives over in Spain (7)
- 7 Equal? No - over four short, pardner! (2,3)
- 8 Forever Thu ? (9)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9										10				
11										12				
13										14		15		
16				17		18		19		20				
21		22						23						24
25						26								
27										28				

- 13 'Ambitious', this, not even going for the middle of August? Cryptic! (9)
- 15 Another beat up around ad for a literary fundraiser (4-1-4)
- 17 Weakening inside, overrates pale response (7)
- 18 R-E-S-T-E-D? (7)
- 19 A carved, limber body (7)
- 20 Online dance sport? (7)
- 22 Shut-eye in Santorini? (5)
- 24 Deliberately loses storage (5)

STRAIGHT CLUES

ACROSS

- 1 Political party organisation (7)
- 5 Made just for one (7)
- 9 Without challenge (9)
- 10 Boring, dull (5)
- 11 Slight, contempt, indifference (7)
- 12 Grow, make bigger (7)
- 13 Use of land by stock, and charge (9)
- 14 Draws, as in salary (5)
- 16 Two-wheeler rider (5)
- 18 High, as in school (9)
- 21 A type of antelope (7)
- 23 Take away (from) (7)
- 25 Where the cherry is! (2,3)
- 26 Giant biblical sea monster (9)
- 27 Stay, hang (7)
- 28 Gives in (7)

DOWN

- 1 Pile, raised ground (5)
- 2 Asian eating tool (9)
- 3 Lodge, insert (7)
- 4 Nature, core (7)
- 5 A means of convalescence (3,4)
- 6 City in Spain (7)
- 7 Equal (with) (2,3)
- 8 Forever (9)
- 13 Cryptic, equivocal (9)
- 15 Fundraiser involving books (4-1-4)
- 17 A weakening, return to lesser state (7)
- 18 Rested; also, set out constituent letters (7)
- 19 (Dead) body (7)
- 20 A team sport (7)
- 22 Greek letter with 'Z' sound (5)
- 24 Deliberately loses; also, types of storage (5)

SOLUTION

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

CODEWORD

No. 311

Each number corresponds to a letter of the alphabet. Two have been filled in for you, can you work out the rest?

	4		23		21		17		18		12						
12	16	17	9	8	10		3	17	21	6	7	18					
	23		6		12		21		3		9						
15	9	12	18		6	20	5	3	17	9	22	24					
	3				18		6		11		8						
26	B	17	1	25	F	F	6	13		2	9	20	6	13			
			9		21		8		22								
25	F	3	15	6	13		17	16	22	24	9	18	5				
	12		7		9		2					14					
26	B	17	3	8	11	21	16	12		17	16	1	13				
	16		6		6		17		16		3						
6	2	26	B	17	6	2		6	17	26	B	16	19	18			
	26			10		18		20		6			11				

SUDOKU

No. 320

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.

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

2002 | PUZZLES AND PAGINATION © **pagemasters**

SOLUTIONS

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

QUICK QUIZ

- 1. What pen-name did writer Eric Blair go by?
- 2. Is Quito, the capital of Ecuador, in the Northern or Southern Hemisphere?
- 3. Actor Kristen Stewart (pictured) stars in a 2016 music video for which rock band?
- 4. What unit of measurement is used to measure the height of a horse?
- 5. A Robin Hood statue is located in which city in England?
- 6. What is a cowslip?
- 7. What is the only type of penguin found above the equator?
- 8. Tennis star John McEnroe married which actor in 1986?
- 9. A hard-boiled egg wrapped in sausage meat and coated in breadcrumbs is known as a what?
- 10. The first episode of Doctor Who aired in which decade?



ANSWERS: 1. George Orwell 2. Southern Hemisphere 3. The Rolling Stones 4. Hands 5. Nottingham 6. Flower 7. Galapagos penguin 8. Tatum O'Neal 9. Scotch egg 10. 1960s

WORD SEARCH

No. 231

Can you find all the words listed? The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

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

- AMAZON
- CONGO
- ELBE
- EUPHRATES
- GANGES
- GREEN RIVER
- HUANG
- INDUS
- JORDAN
- LENA
- LOIRE
- MEKONG
- MURRAY
- NIAGARA
- NIGER
- NILE
- ODER
- ORANGE
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SECRET MESSAGE: Life is like a river, sometimes calm, sometimes turbulent, but always flowing forward.



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**Thursday 19th
March 2026**

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BrownWigg launches major giveaway to celebrate 20 years

GIPPSLAND-BASED rural merchandise business BrownWigg is celebrating 20 years in business throughout 2026 marking two decades since founders Michael and David opened their first store in 2006 with a simple goal to support local farmers with trusted products, local knowledge and genuine service.

What began as a single store has grown into eight locations across Gippsland employing more than 90 local staff and the anniversary provides an opportunity to thank the community, customers and farming families who have supported the business every step of the way.

Founded on strong local values, BrownWigg has grown alongside Gippsland's farming community.

As BrownWigg marks 20 years of serving Gippsland's farming community, the celebrations are set to reach an exciting new level with the launch of its first major competition - a giveaway designed to give back in a big way.

BrownWigg is proud to announce a competition that reflects its deep connection to the farming community.

The headline prize is a brand-new Turnbull Toyota Hilux ute built for reliability and performance representing the hard-working spirit shared by local farmers and tradies alike.

Second prize is a Honda XR150L motorbike, a practical and versatile addition to any farm operation, perfect for checking fences, moving stock or navigating paddocks with ease.

Third prize brings essential on-farm value with a Bushmans 22,500-litre water tank - reinforcing BrownWigg's long-standing commitment to practical solutions that support farming businesses and rural households.

The major giveaway is about recognising the loyalty of customers and the generosity of suppliers who have supported the business over two decades.

"This milestone belongs to our community," they said.

"For 20 years, local farmers, families and businesses have backed us. This competition is our way of saying thank you and celebrating the future together."

From sponsoring local sporting clubs and community initiatives to employing local people and supporting regional suppliers, the business has remained committed to keeping investment and opportunity within the region.

Customers can enter the competition by visiting any BrownWigg store throughout the promotional period.

Full details, including entry information and terms and conditions, are available in-store and via BrownWigg's social media channels.

Twenty years on, BrownWigg remains proudly independent, locally owned and focused on the long haul - continuing to build a business grounded in community, service and support for Gippsland agriculture.

And with prizes like these on offer, the 20-year celebrations are only just getting started.

Commitment to action after performance review

DAIRY Australia has pledged to act on findings from its 2021-2025 Independent Performance Review committing to a sharper focus on practical outcomes for dairy farmers.

The review has particular significance for Gippsland which is one of Australia's most important dairy regions with more than 6000 people employed across the industry.

South Gippsland and Bass Coast are home to hundreds of dairy operations with the sector underpinning the local economy from Leongatha and Korumburra through to Poowong and the Strzelecki ranges.

The independent review conducted every five years provides feedback from dairy farmers and industry stakeholders on performance to support continuous improvement.

Dairy Australia CEO Dr Matt Shaffer said the review provides an important and timely check.

"The review is clear about where Dairy Australia is performing well and where we need to improve," Dr Shaffer said.

"We welcome its findings and we're committed to making sure farmers can clearly see how their levy is being invested and how it contributes to improved profitability and productivity on farm."

The review confirms strong performance in governance, compliance,

trade and market access and leadership through the Australian Dairy Sustainability Framework.

It also identifies areas for improvement including greater clarity on Dairy Australia's role, stronger engagement with dairy farmers and better visibility of on-farm outcomes.

In response Dairy Australia will improve how it listens to farmers and ensure consistency of engagement across regions to align work more closely with partners in the Regional Development Programs.

GippsDairy the regional development program for the Gippsland dairy industry works directly with local producers and would be a key partner in delivering improved on-farm outcomes.

"Our new Strategic Plan 2030 provides greater clarity on Dairy Australia's purpose and priorities as well as a stronger line of sight between investment decisions and outcomes for farmers," Dr Shaffer said.

"It sets a clear direction for Dairy Australia's work over the next five years with a focus on improving farm profitability through productivity, innovation and sustainability."

The review comes during a period of leadership transition for Dairy Australia with the appointment of a new chair and chief executive officer over the past 18 months.

Fish Creek farm puts SGW resilience grant to work

BUCKLEY Park Community Farm in Fish Creek has completed a series of infrastructure upgrades funded through a South Gippsland Water community resilience grant.

The farm was one of three local recipients of the grant, which South Gippsland Water activated following last year's precautionary boil water advisory in Fish Creek as a gesture of thanks to the community for its cooperation during the disruption.

The funding has been used to upgrade and expand drip irrigation systems, install a chlorine filtration system to support soil health and establish a dedicated watering system in a new hothouse.

South Gippsland Water said the improvements would deliver long-term benefits for local food production and environmental sustainability at the Buckley Park site.

Fish Creek was subject to a precautionary boil water advisory in 2025 after a potential issue was identified with the town's water supply.

South Gippsland Water supplies drinking water to more than 40 communities across the shire, including many small towns where ageing infrastructure can be vulnerable to disruption.

More information on the Fish Creek project is available at sgwater.com.au.

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Follow us on Facebook for all our 20 year celebrations



Understanding heat stress in livestock and ways to prevent it

Dr Jeff Cave, Senior Veterinary Officer

AS WARM summer temperatures continue across Victoria, farmers are urged to take extra care of their livestock to prevent heat stress.

Cattle are most comfortable in temperatures between 5°C and 25°C, while adult pigs prefer a narrower range of just 18°C to 20°C.

High-producing animals, such as dairy cows, are especially vulnerable, and poultry have been known to succumb to extreme heat on scorching days. When the mercury rises, animals divert energy to cooling themselves, which can lead to reduced feed intake, slower weight gain, and lower milk production. Fertility may also decline.

Humidity adds to the problem, intensifying heat stress even at moderate temperatures.

Signs of heat stress include panting, standing rather than lying down, seeking shade, increased drinking, and decreased appetite.

Farmers are advised to check their stock daily during hot weather and take steps to keep them comfortable.

Key recommendations include:

- Provide unlimited access to shade or shelter
- Ensure cool, clean drinking water is always available
- Avoid animal movement during the hottest part of the day or on extreme heat days
- Offering high-quality feed in the cooler evening hours
- Have a fire plan ready and ensure someone checks on stock if you're away.

By making small adjustments to daily management, producers can significantly reduce the impact of heat stress and protect both animal welfare and productivity.

Shorthorn demand surges as Gippsland producers chase premium returns

WITH Australian beef exports hitting record levels and strong demand for premium marbled product from Asia and the United States Gippsland Shorthorn breeders are well positioned to capitalise.

Doben Park Shorthorns at Buln Buln reported strong interest at the recent Gippsland Beef Week open day where visitors inspected the Benson family's bulls and praised their sound structure and quiet temperament.

The stud has been breeding Shorthorn cattle since 1977 and currently runs 130 registered and commercial cows along with 25 unjoined yearling heifers and 28 weaner heifers across registered and commercial lines.

The cows are joined to roan and red Yamburgan-bred Shorthorn bulls, having been selected for their excellent fertility, calving ease, mothering ability, milk production and docility. These qualities combine to produce more live and healthy calves with the ability to grow quickly and finish on pasture or grain to yield premium quality meat with marbling and even fat distribution.

For Gippsland producers running Angus or Angus-infused females the Shorthorn bull offers an ideal cross to



Doben Park bulls are available from 20 to 22 months in red, white and roan.

increase growth through hybrid vigour while maintaining the marbling both breeds are renowned for. A red Shorthorn bull over an Angus cow produces a predominantly black calf while a white or roan bull produces the sought-after Steely Blue calf. Over Hereford or Hereford-infused cows the result is the strawberry roan or broken-faced calf with hybrid vigour.

The Shorthorn bull is also a strong alternative in the dairy industry producing the type of dairy beef calf processors are

looking for.

The advantage of the breed is that while steers are turning out quality carcasses their sisters are forming the basis of a functional and efficient cow herd. Shorthorns are the easy-care breed with ease of calving and resistance to both bloat and eye cancer.

The Australian beef industry is moving away from commodity production towards a value-based brand system with demand for premium marbled product from Japan, China and the United States

continuing to grow. Shorthorn beef has become one of the most sought-after products at high-end dining establishments and adding Shorthorn genetics to a herd will increase the ability to deliver a premium product and maximise returns.

Doben Park will have a selection of bulls for sale from 20 to 22 months in red, white, red and white roan along with a selection of cows and calves and heifers.

For more information contact Doug on 0407 343 966 or Sandy on 0409 074 291.

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Alex Mathews judges Showmanship at this year's International Dairy Week.

Alex Mathews passionate about dairy and inspiring youth

MARDAN dairy farmer Alex Mathews has a wide interest in the industry and inspiring young people to view it as an attractive career having recently had the honour of judging Showmanship at International Dairy Week in Tatura.

There she officiated across various youth age groups.

"I wasn't judging the cattle, I was judging the people who were exhibiting the cattle," Alex said having assessed each competitor's ability to show their dairy calf.

"What I'm looking for is a clean well-presented heifer and leader, someone who's paying a lot of attention, and who's trained their animal to behave properly," she said.

The young leaders are assessed on how quickly they can perform the tasks the judge asks of them, ones which should be simple if an animal is well trained and the leader is paying attention.

Training kids to be the best cattle handlers possible is a focus for Alex with her strong background in doing so and her vast judging experience leading to the chance to judge Showmanship at International Dairy Week.

Originally from Ontario in Canada and growing up on a multi-enterprise family farm with dairy cattle, draught horses, sheep and beef cattle, her passion for dairy started at a young age.

Alex undertook the 4-H program, a development initiative in Canada for youth in agriculture, with judging one of the areas she was exposed to.

"It was something I really enjoyed so I pursued it," she said.

Judging has offered extensive travel opportunities including having officiated in every Australian state apart from Western Australia.

Alex used to be heavily involved in running youth camps at the Melbourne Showgrounds for those aged between 16 and 21 with each participant being assigned a partially broken in heifer to lead.

Clinics were offered on showing, leading, clipping, presenting and judging and each youth practised with their heifer throughout the camp culminating in a Showmanship competition.

While there are still youth camps running for younger participants aged under 15, increasing costs and resultant sponsorship shortfalls eventually ended such opportunities for older teens.

"It was an amazing camp for keeping people of that age engaged in our

By Andrew Paloczi

industry," Alex said feeling the retention rate in dairy has diminished as a result of the camp's discontinuation with some in the affected age group drawn to other pursuits.

Still Alex continues to inspire young handlers noting they need to "practise, practise, practise" with their calf while being mindful calves can get bored with always doing the same thing in the same place so variety is important.

"They like to practise with other calves, so sometimes it's good to have a sibling or a friend come and practise with you because you can each have a calf," Alex said.

With shows being confronting for calves it's advisable to get them accustomed to different distractions during training be that other people, dogs or machinery so your animal won't be easily spooked in the show ring.

Alex and her husband Darien bought their Mardan dairy property about four years ago after share farming and leasing around Gippsland for 15 years.

They run 200 Jerseys and 100 Holsteins, Darien having grown up on a Jersey farm while Alex was raised on a Holstein property.

She said the current mix of cattle feels like the right one.

While juggling dairy farming, family life and judging might seem like plenty to manage Alex also works as Solutions Coordinator at Semex managing all its mating programs and genomic testing.

"Genomic testing is taking a tissue sample from an animal, in our case a dairy calf, and that sample gets analysed; from the tissue, we can read the predicted outcomes of that calf, so how much milk they're going to give, whether they're going to have disease issues, where they're going to excel and where they might have downfalls," she said.

That can alter breeding and animal management decisions and even whether the farmer wants to keep working with a particular animal.

Alex came to Australia in 2007 to study at Marcus Oldham College in Geelong earning an Associate Degree in Agribusiness having initially intended to stay for a year but deciding to extend her study commitment.

She got a job, met her husband and has firmly established herself Down Under having settled in as a South Gippslander.

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LEONGATHA		WONTHAGGI	
Dane Perczyk - Livestock Manager	0408 176 063	Rob Ould - Livestock Manager	0408 595 183
Jack Curtis	0427 762 670	David Holden	0428 749 390
		Alan Bolding	0419 723 255
WARRAGUL		Imogen Price	0417 225 498
Neil Darby - Livestock Manager	0418 595 265	PAKENHAM	
Terry Ahearn	0438 562 816	David Setches - Livestock Manager	0409 443 473
Jordan Sim	0448 058 435	Glenn Barwick	0408 975 476
Mark Malacarne	0418 654 590	Morgan Croucher	0457 001 877
Georgie Snell	0417 100 657	Tim Gibson	0420 306 599

Real Estate Sales

KORUMBURRA		LEONGATHA		MELBOURNE LAND	
Scott McKenzie	0427 552 898	Andrew Newton	0402 940 320	Matt Koster	0474 781 711
		Peter Dwyer	0428 855 244	COWES	
WONTHAGGI		Emily Hillberg	0422 622 299	Greg Price	0419 337 441
Phillip Hanley	0417 140 508	Tony Giles	0407 528 192	Brian Silver	0407 347 509
Cal Nation	0439 334 163	Dan Huther	0418 334 801	George Grigg	0458 478 308
Mick Chambers	0418 349 783	WARRAGUL			
GRANTVILLE		Alan Steenholdt	0409 423 822	VENUS BAY	
Angus Hall	0466 326 487	PAKENHAM		Daniel Lawrie	0417 631 252
INVERLOCH		Tom Gibson	0438 574 472	Sue Lawrie	0419 885 489
Marni Lee Redmond	0403 525 413	LANG LANG		KOO WEE RUP	
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MARKET REPORT

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Prices lift up to \$200 at Leongatha store sale

By SGSAA

NUMBERS eased back this week with around 2,100 head on offer, down from 780 on last week. Quality was very good overall highlighted by Phelan & Henderson's annual feature run of weaners.

A strong crowd was on hand with most local agencies active and a couple of feedlot orders filled on suitable lines. Prices lifted across most grades improving by up to \$100 with a few standout sales jumping as much as \$200 per head where the quality was there.

Leongatha Store Sale on Thursday, Feb. 26, 2026

Steers			
Eye Site P/L, 10 Angus	666kg	\$4.71	\$3140
JF Hargreaves, 8 Angus	573kg	\$4.86	\$2790
Forrester & Mitchell, 13 Angus	557kg	\$4.75	\$2650
Forrester & Mitchell, 14 Angus	543kg	\$4.78	\$2600
M Cochrane, 12 Angus & BB	494kg	\$4.79	\$2370
CW Littlejohn, 9 Angus	454kg	\$4.84	\$2200
Hillside Past, 18 Angus	447kg	\$4.69	\$2100
J & S Kelly, 11 Angus	425kg	\$4.70	\$2000
Hillside, 20 Angus	422kg	\$4.50	\$1900
P & T Bailey, 15 Angus	412kg	\$5.07	\$2090
'Loyola', 17 Angus	410kg	\$4.97	\$2040
NK Epp, 20 Angus	408kg	\$4.89	\$2000
Cw Littlejohn, 9 Angus	402kg	\$4.69	\$1890
MJ Jeffrey, 24 Angus	396kg	\$4.67	\$1850
'Loyola', 15 Angus	373kg	\$4.91	\$1830
NK Epp, 16 Angus	363kg	\$5.03	\$1830
Md Gordon, 12 Angus	350kg	\$5.20	\$1820
J & S Kelly, 11 Angus	331kg	\$5.31	\$1760
MP Lee, 23 Angus	319kg	\$5.45	\$1740
MJ Jeffrey, 16 Angus	317kg	\$5.45	\$1730
J Sharp, 11 Angus	295kg	\$5.38	\$1590

Heifers:			
P & T Bailey, 10 Angus	521kg	\$4.53	\$2360
Hillside, 13 Angus	419kg	\$4.41	\$1850
Re Kuch, 23 Angus	418kg	\$4.73	\$1980
Re Kuch, 10 Angus	381kg	\$4.46	\$1700
R & M Lane, 9 Angus	374kg	\$3.55	\$1330
P & S Joyce, 14 Angus	345kg	\$3.91	\$1350
MP Lee, 14 Angus	333kg	\$4.44	\$1480
MJ Jeffrey, 9 Angus	333kg	\$4.20	\$1400
Md Gordon, 10 Angus	323kg	\$4.14	\$1340
J Sharp, 11 Angus	293kg	\$3.88	\$1140
MJ Jeffrey, 15 Angus	269kg	\$4.12	\$1110

Crossbreeds:			
Jelbart Dairy, 19 Fre Strs	517kg	\$3.86	\$2000
Jelbart Dairy, 20 Fre Strs	71kg	\$3.80	\$1790
D & G Albanese, 14 Angx Strs	350kg	\$4.62	\$1620
Southside Past, 3 Angus X Hfrs	423kg	\$4.13	\$1750

Lardner Park Calf Market Report

Monday, February 23, 2026

Jersey & Jersey x.....	\$22 to \$38
Friesian Bulls	\$42 to \$200
Beef Bulls	\$80 to \$280
Beef Heifers	\$30 to \$185
Friesian Heifers	\$100
Number of Calves: 105	
Number purchased to rear: 48	

Excellent prices at Leongatha Store Sale

By Andrew Paloczi

IMPRESSIVE steer prices across the board made for an exciting Leongatha Store Sale for sellers on Thursday.

Sentinel-Times saw auctioneers Brian McCormack (Nutrien SGL), Jarrod Bennetts (Everitt Seeley & Bennetts), Jimmy Kyle (SEJ) and Simon Henderson (Phelan & Henderson & Co) all achieving strong results.

Mr Bennetts sold a pen of 11 Angus steers weighed at 605 kilos for \$4.85 a kilo at \$2,940 a head to Nutrien SGL, Bass Valley Pastoral of Woodleigh the vendor.

He achieved \$4.94 a kilo on a pen of 10 Angus steers from S Jacques, also in Woodleigh, weighing 526 kilos on average and being knocked down for \$2,600 a head to commission buyer Campbell Ross.

Nutrien's Mr McCormack sold a pen of 11 Angus steers averaging 331 kilos from J&S Kelly of Korumburra for \$1,760 a head to ESB, a return of \$5.31 per kilo.

Mr Kyle made \$4.60 a kilo on a pen of 11 Angus steers with plenty of weight, tipping the scales at 690 kilos on average, those animals selling to Mr Ross for \$3,180 a head, the vendors being JW Moore and KLN McRae of Leongatha.

A slightly lighter pen of six Angus steers from the same vendor, weighed at 644 kilos, achieved \$4.65 per kilo at \$3,000 per head, while 15 black steers from Mooney View in Ruby, averaging 563 kilos, managed \$4.92 a kilo at \$2,770, going to Nutrien.

It wasn't only black steers performing strongly.

Mr Henderson sold a pen of 20 Hereford steers from Stuart Investments for \$5.31 a kilo at \$1,750 apiece, averaging 329 kilos, another pen of 20 of Tony Stuart's Herefords averaging 384 kilos going for \$2,000 each at \$5.20 a kilo.

Like the other livestock agents in action, Mr Henderson also had plenty of appealing Angus cattle to sell, a run of pens from KD Opray in Hedley among the highlights.

They made up to \$5.16 a kilo, when 15 steers averaging 463 kilos went for \$2,390 a head.



Vendor Scott Bentley and his livestock agent Jake Anthony of Phelan & Henderson & Co are happy with Thursday's buoyant market. A06_0926



Patrick Bloomer of Poowong is pleased with the prices he got for his steers at Thursday's Leongatha Store Sale. A07_0926

Another Opray pen of 14 steers made \$5.11 per kilo on animals weighing slightly less at an average 450 kilos, those achieving \$2,300 each.

Sentinel-Times saw six pens of Opray steers sell, all achieving strong prices with many of those animals snapped up by Mr Ross.

In total, 98 Opray steers sold, averaging 446 kilos and \$2,214 a head at \$4.96 per kilo.

While in much smaller numbers, heifers from Opray also performed strongly.

A total of 27 Black Baldy and Angus heifers from that vendor averaged \$2,076 and 442 kilos at \$4.69 per kilo.

Scott Bentley of Poowong was one of the happy vendors, achieving healthy prices for the couple of pens of Angus steers Mr Henderson sold for him.

A pen of 15 weighed at 390 kilos made \$4.82 a kilo, selling for \$1,880 a head, while 13 averaging 312 kilos achieved \$4.58 a kilo, going for \$1,430 apiece.

Mr Bentley's heifers also achieved excellent prices.

A pen of 17 averaging 277 kilos went for \$1,300 a head at \$4.68 per kilo.

"It'll give me a little bit more room at home," Mr Bentley said after selling the steers, looking forward to using that extra paddock space to grow more fodder that will feed this year's calves after they are weaned soon.

Having had 24mm of rain in recent days and 12mm the week before gives him confidence the grass will take off well, with warm weather continuing and good soil temperatures.

"You can already see a green

tinge," Mr Bentley said, noting that while the recent rain has been good for grass growth, it has been insufficient to get any runoff into dams.

He runs 120 breeders, all Angus cows, predominantly using Artificial Insemination, but also having his own bulls to avoid the need for a costly second round of AI.

His steers sold on Thursday featured Millah Murrah Rembrandt blood.

He said using such high-quality bulls is key to improving genetics.

"Improving genetics, you get more eye muscle and you get more beef, so they put on a few more kilos than your normal run of the mill," Mr Bentley explained.

He cell grazes, an intensive rotational system, moving his cattle regularly and ensuring they always have new pasture and pasture health is maintained.

Mr Bentley mentioned the help he receives from livestock agent Jake Anthony of Phelan & Henderson & Co, Mr Anthony speaking about what goes into preparing cattle and presenting them for sale.

He appraises the cattle and offers advice on the optimal weight to sell them at based on the current market, including monitoring the international market.

Effective drafting into suitable lines is an important aspect of presenting the animals for sale, aiming for consistency.

Patrick Bloomer was another happy vendor at Thursday's Store Sale, SEJ's Mr Kyle selling 32 of his Angus steers that averaged 495 kilos for \$2,420 each, or \$4.88 a kilo.

He bought the steers out of Naracoorte in South Australia about 16 months ago, usually aiming to purchase cattle weighing in the 200 to 250 kilo bracket and get them to feeder weight.

Mr Bloomer generally likes to buy and sell on the same market.

While he recently bought some cattle privately, he hadn't succeeded in acquiring any at the Store Sale when he spoke to Sentinel-Times, saying he had a crack but the prices went too high.

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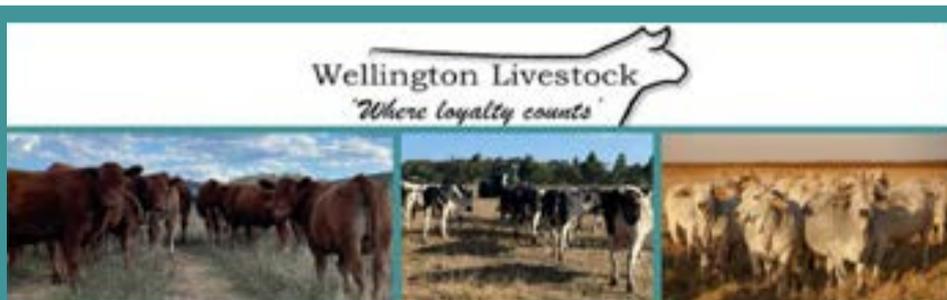


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Irrigation incentives expanded for Gippsland farmers

FARMERS across the entire Lake Wellington Catchment can now access support to design and upgrade their irrigation systems through an expanded state government program.

The Irrigation Efficiency Incentives Program previously operated only in the Macalister Irrigation District but has been extended to help more irrigators plan improvements that boost water efficiency and reduce environmental impact.

The Macalister Irrigation District is one of the largest and most productive irrigation areas in Victoria covering approximately 53,000 hectares of irrigated farmland near Maffra, Stratford and Sale.

It is the largest irrigation area south of the Great Dividing Range and plays a crucial role in the state's agricultural economy with major products including milk, dairy products, fodder crops, vegetables and beef.

About a third of Victoria's dairy production comes from Gippsland representing 19 per cent of Australia's dairy output.

The incentive covers 75 per cent of the cost of an updated irrigation farm plan up to \$45 per hectare for design only or \$90 per hectare for survey and design capped at \$10,000.

Agriculture Victoria Irrigation Extension Officer Stephanie Veskoukis said tailored options are available for farms with specialised requirements.

"A well-prepared plan improves water-use efficiency, reduces nutrient losses and ensures works meet statutory requirements," Ms Veskoukis said.

"For farmers involved in the program, increased confidence is one of the most consistent outcomes.

"Farmers really value the independent advice and support they receive at every stage of the farm planning process."



Gippsland farmers can now access support for irrigation efficiency planning across the Lake Wellington Catchment.

Kilmany beef producer Phillip Padula approached the program seeking help to design a complex reuse and drainage system that had to navigate native vegetation and waterways.

"It was a lot easier than what I thought it would have been," Mr Padula said.

"I thought it could have been a nightmare, but it has been really easy to work with the team."

West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority Statutory Waterways Officer Gavin Prior said collaboration between farmers, planners and agencies is central to the program's success.

"I think it is so good for the farmers, seeing us all work together to try and remove some of the so-called red tape and be efficient and considerate of their time," Mr Prior said.

The program is administered by Agriculture Victoria in partnership with the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority with funding from the Sustainable Irrigation Program.

Renowned soil educator to deliver workshops

SOUTH Gippsland farmers and land managers will have the opportunity to learn from internationally respected soil and plant health educator Joel Williams who is visiting the region to present two practical workshops on regenerative farming.

Hosted by the South Gippsland Landcare Network the sessions will be held on Tuesday, March 10 in Meeniyan.

The morning workshop Soils in Transition will introduce key soil health and regenerative agriculture principles exploring strategies to improve fertiliser efficiency, build soil fertility through diversity and strengthen long-term soil regeneration.

The afternoon session will focus on biostimulants and biofertilisers with participants learning how these products work within the soil and plant microbiome.

Best-practice application methods will be covered with examples including humics, kelp, molasses and microbial inoculants.

The workshops will provide science-based independent education designed to help producers better understand the biological processes underpinning productive and resilient farming systems.

Mr Williams is known for translating complex soil science into practical on-farm insights drawing on international research and real-world case studies.

The workshops aim to build farmer confidence, support informed decision-



Renowned soil educator Joel Williams will deliver workshops on regenerative farming in Meeniyan.

making and encourage knowledge sharing across the South Gippsland agricultural community.

With dairy and beef production the backbone of the local economy and increasing pressure on farmers to reduce input costs while maintaining productivity the workshops offer practical tools relevant to everyday farming decisions.

South Gippsland's high-rainfall environment and volcanic soils provide strong foundations for regenerative approaches with local producers increasingly exploring biological farming methods to complement conventional

practices.

The South Gippsland Landcare Network represents 16 local Landcare groups and more than 600 members working across 270,000 hectares of farmland, bush and waterways.

In the past year alone more than 31,000 trees were planted across the region supporting healthier farms and ecosystems.

New participants are welcome to attend and join the region's growing conversation around regenerative and biologically-informed agriculture.

Registration is essential. Visit www.sgn.net.au/event-calendar for more information.



Lot 3 Wattlewood Vroom V8.

Wattlewood Angus annual bull sale

WATTLEWOOD Angus is gearing up for its annual bull sale on Thursday, March 5 at 4pm at the stud's new sale venue at Lang Lang.

The sale follows a successful Beef Week Open Day and Bull Sale Preview where visitors were impressed by the new purpose-built complex and the quality of bulls on offer.

Wattlewood is looking forward to hosting the sale in the new setting that has come to fruition after months of evolving ideas, intensive labour and appreciated support. The venue was well received at the recent open day where visitors loved what had been created.

Positive comments from past buyers, new visitors and livestock agents highlighted the bulls' sound structure, shape and quiet temperament, something John and Fiona Glover have become renowned for over decades of operating their stud.

"Despite the hard start to spring that Gippsland experienced the bulls have come along really well," Fiona said.

"They are just so easy doing."

"They have had all their vaccines and boosters that make them Immune Ready

compliant along with having passed semen testing and being genotyped.

"Producers can buy with confidence." When selecting genetics Wattlewood prioritises great feet and leg structure, low to moderate birth weights and balanced EBVs.

Any animals with ill temperament are not tolerated.

The end product is also a major consideration with the stud looking for animals with high carcass qualities like intramuscular fat and feed efficiency.

Wattlewood is also bringing back its after-sale bull care program where if requested the team will travel to administer annual vaccination boosters for new Wattlewood bulls.

"We place a lot of emphasis on our breeding herd," Mrs Glover said.

"That is theoretically where 50 per cent of the next generation come from."

"We love our cows and want longevity in our herd and breed for this accordingly."

Wattlewood welcomes attendees to stick around after the sale for nibbles and light refreshments.

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60 Angus steers, 2 yo, GF & ABF

D & T Pament, Poowong (ELDERS)

35 Angus steers, 26-27 mths

13 Hereford steers, 22 mths

Aurora Racing, Lang Lang (ELDERS)

15 Angus steers, 18 mths

Wanjo Consulting, Loch (ELDERS)

12 Angus steers, 20-22 mths

Forrest Herbs P/L, Nyora (ELDERS)

10 Angus steers, 18-22 mths, GF & ABF

GROWN HEIFERS

Aurora Racing, Lang Lang (ELDERS)

15 Angus heifers, 18 mths

Forrest Herbs P/L, Nyora (ELDERS)

8 Angus & Angus X heifers 18-22 mths, GF & ABF

WEANERS

Trandara, Erica (ELDERS)

100 Angus steer weaners, Leawood blood

J & B Gathercole, Glengarry (ALEX SCOTT)

45 Angus mixed sex weaners, 10-12 mths

Sparta & Latrobe Park blood

J & O Currie, Drouin South (ELDERS)

35 Angus mixed sex weaners, 10 mths

WJ Horner, Woolamai (ALEX SCOTT)

20 Angus steers, 10-12 mths

By 'Wattlewood Tenacious' bulls, out of 'Te Mania'

cows, weaned, 2 x 5in1, Coppernate, Selovin LA inj.

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14 Hereford cows, 6-7 yo, full Injermira blood

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Tibooburra Angus, Hoddles Creek (ELDERS)

2 Angus Bulls, 16 mths, registered



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SOUTH GIPPSLAND ASSOCIATED AGENTS

Leongatha college to receive \$1.89 million for campus expansion



Community College Gippsland CEO Dale Gemmell, Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh and ECG Secondary College Principal Russel Praetz.

COMMUNITY College Gippsland will receive \$1.89 million to build five additional classrooms, an outdoor learning area and two hardcourts at its ECG Secondary College campus in Leongatha.

The funding was announced by Member for Eastern Victoria Tom McIntosh with the school one of nine independent schools across Victoria to share \$26.2 million in the latest round of the \$450 million Building Fund for Non-Government Schools.

ECG Secondary College is the independent secondary school of Community College Gippsland providing flexible and supportive

education for students in Years 9 to 12.

The Leongatha campus was established in 2015 with just nine students and has grown to serve more than 75 offering an alternative learning environment for young people who may not thrive in traditional school settings.

Mr McIntosh said the investment recognised the school's role in the local community.

"ECG Secondary College provides another practical option to local kids to complete their education with comprehensive support and I am glad to see this investment in their campus in Leongatha," he said.

Community College Gippsland CEO Dale Gemmell said the funding represented a transformative opportunity for the Leongatha campus.

"This funding allows us to create modern, engaging learning spaces and outdoor areas that inspire students," Mr Gemmell said.

"It will enable us to continue providing safe, inclusive and stimulating spaces where students can thrive.

"The Leongatha expansion not only increases student places but also strengthens our ongoing commitment to improving facilities that support learning, wellbeing and engagement."

The Leongatha campus serves students from across South Gippsland including Korumburra, Mirboo North and surrounding farming communities.

Community College Gippsland has been operating in the region for more than 40 years delivering education, training and community programs across South Gippsland and West Gippsland.

Education Minister Ben Carroll said with more than a third of Victorian students attending Catholic or independent schools it is important all children have access to first-class educational facilities.

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21ST BIRTHDAYS

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DEATHS

CUFF, Pamela Joy:

Born 20.10.1937,
Passed away
23.02.2026.

Loving wife of Alan (dec).

Adored mother to Travis and Suzanne, Brendan, Narelle and Ian and their families. A private burial service has been held.

DOWEL, Kristy Anne (Kiddo):

07.02.1983 - 23.02.2026.

With broken hearts, we announce the sudden death of our beloved daughter, **Kristy (Kiddo) Dowel**, aged 43, on Monday, February 23, 2026 at the Victorian Heart Hospital, Clayton. Kiddo, cherished eldest daughter of Garry and Gail Dowel, loving sister of Tracey and Jac, and much-loved sister-in-law to Daniel and Aaron. She was a proud and devoted aunty to Rhianna, Shelby, and Kendra.

Affectionately known as "Kookaburra" by her dearly loved partner Scott, Kristy was the adored Mumma of Ellie (17) and Torah (15). Her girls have lost an irreplaceable link in their family chain, a love that can never be replaced.

DEATHS

DOWEL, Kristy Anne (Kiddo):
Treasured granddaughter of Trevor (dec) and Jean Dowel, Ron Eaton (dec), and Cherie Knight.

Kristy was a bright light in all our lives and in the lives of all who knew and loved her. Her friendship circle reached far and wide - her kindness, laughter, and beautiful spirit will remain with all of us - always!

To the many children Kristy supported in her working life, she was a daily anchor, a mother figure, an encourager, a safe place, and a true friend. Children waited for her at the school gate each day, and they too will feel her loss deeply.

Scott's respected family - Robert and Gail Bernau (dec), Scott's sister Davina and Nic Andre, and their children Alita and Zarah - are deeply saddened and will hold Kristy close in their hearts.

Heartache will be felt by aunts, uncles, cousins and extended families.

Kiddo, you will remain in our broken hearts and will always stay loved and remembered.

You are Our Shining Star

Funeral details to follow www.nielsenfunerals.com.au.
Warragul

DEATHS

DOWEL, Kristy Anne:
07.02.1983 - 23.02.2026.
Eldest granddaughter of Trevor (dec.) and Jean Dowel.

To know her was to love her, she will be in my heart forever.

Love Gran

DOWEL, Kristy Anne (Kiddo):

Gone too soon but always remembered.

Malcolm, Kay (dec.)
Boys and Partners.

DOWEL, Kristy Anne:

We are extremely saddened to hear of Kristy's sudden passing and wish to provide our deepest condolences to Richie and their children.

Kristy was a valued long-term player of the Korumburra Basketball Association and represented both the Wild Cats and CBL Women's teams.

We also wish to express our sincere sympathy to the Dowel Family. Garry and Gail are Life Members and have been significant contributors to the ongoing success of Korumburra Basketball.

The Korumburra Basketball Association and Korumburra Recreation Centre Management Committee inc.

VAN BREEMEN (née Donovan), Karren Marie:

23.10.1953 - 26.02.2026

Now at peace.

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Beloved wife of John for 53 years.

Loved by family and grandsons.

Reunited with Joyce, Jim and Michael.

In God's Care.

VAN BREEMEN (née Donovan), Karren Marie:

23.10.1953 - 26.02.2026.

So blessed to have had you in my life. I will miss you always. I will cherish the memories and our many years of friendship.

Rest in love and peace my dear friend.

Forever remembered,
Cindy xx

WATSON, Murray Ronald:

1937 to 21.02.2026

Passed away peacefully at Wonthaggi hospital. Much loved Husband of Gwenda Watson.

Much loved by Family and Friends.

This is not Goodbye, I'll see ya later. All my love
Gwen/ Thermo

DEATHS

WHYKES, Geoffrey Kim:
Passed away Thursday, February 19, 2026, peacefully at Korumburra Hospital.

Loved and loving father of eight children and three step-sons. Cherished partner of Thao.

Loved former partner and lifelong friend to Judy and Trudy.

Proud Pop and much loved member of a big, blended family.

FUNERALS

VAN BREEMEN:
The Funeral Service for Karren Marie Van Breemen will be held at Handley and Anderson Chapel, 3085 Loch-Wonthaggi Road, Wonthaggi, next Tuesday, March 10, 2026, commencing at 11am.

A Private Cremation will follow.

Karren's service will be live streamed, go to www.handleyandandersonfunerals.com.au.

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WHYKES, Geoffrey Kim:

A funeral service to celebrate the life of Mr. Geoffrey Kim Whykes will be held at Stephen Baggs Funeral Chapel, 613 Main Street, Bairnsdale 3875, Friday, March 5, 2026, at 12pm.

The Butchers Farewell:

A celebration of Geoff Whykes will be held at The Club Hotel Bairnsdale on March 6, 2026. BYO dish that reminds you of Geoff to share, all welcome.

BEREAVEMENT THANKS

HUTCHINSON, Geoffrey:
Gaye and Claire Isabel wish to thank those who reached out with condolences and support following the recent passing of Geoff.

A very special thank you to the McKnight family and Les Hutchinson, and also to Sarah and Mandii of Handley Funerals.

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Applications to be submitted to: recruitment@newhavencol.vic.edu.au
Applications close Monday 9 March - 5pm

Newhaven College is a child safe environment. Every child has a right to be safe, and at the College we have a zero tolerance for child safety risks.



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SITUATIONS VACANT



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Bass Coast Team

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Keen to learn more? Send your CV and a cover letter sharing why you're the right fit for the role to our People & Culture Manager, Rosanne Brownlee, at rosanne@highview.com.au.



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Diversity is celebrated and respected as important for our wellbeing and success. Through our Equity, Inclusion and Diversity Strategic Plan, Gender Equality Action Plan and upcoming Reconciliation Action Plan we are actively working to address the gender pay gap, create opportunities for underrepresented groups and partner with Traditional Owners.

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Please go to <https://www.sgwater.com.au/careers/> for more details about SGW, the role and how to apply

Applications Close: Monday, March 16, 2026 at 5pm

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Visit www.basscoast.vic.gov.au/careers or contact Myka Johnston, Team Leader Roads and Compliance Operations on 0407 781 649 for more information.

Applications close 9 March 2026.

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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

Cricket clubs urged to apply for infrastructure grants

THE Nationals Member for Eastern Victoria Melina Bath is encouraging local cricket clubs schools and community groups to apply for funding through the Australian Cricket Infrastructure Fund.

The fund is a partnership between Cricket Victoria and Cricket Australia designed to support upgrades and improvements to community cricket facilities and boost participation for players of all ages and abilities.

Established in 2019 the fund has generated more than \$300 million in partnered investment alongside federal, state and local governments.

Funding is available under two main streams with a Community Cricket Infrastructure Grant of up to \$15,000 for minor projects and between \$15,001 and \$40,000 for major projects.

Larger multi-faceted projects seeking more than \$40,000 are assessed on a case-by-case basis through the Strategic Cricket Infrastructure Funding stream.

Ms Bath said cricket clubs are important to regional towns as they bring players, families, volunteers and supporters together.

"Team sports like cricket help to build local pride and strong healthy and connected communities," Ms Bath said.

"Cricket is one of few sports that is truly inclusive and able to be enjoyed by people of all ages and abilities.

"I strongly encourage all eligible organisations to consider applying."

Cricket clubs across Gippsland from Leongatha and Korumburra to Wonthaggi and Inverloch play an important role in community life with grounds and clubrooms often serving as gathering places beyond match days.

"Cricket brings people together building pride connection and strong community spirit in our clubs," she said.

Applications close on March 27.



The Koonwarra/LRSL and Leongatha Town under-15s cricket team won the semi-final against Kilcunda Bass on Sunday. Photo: Jodie Arnup.

LDCA Juniors shine in Semi-Finals



Koonwarra/LRSL's Ryder Pedlow took 1/3 in the under-15s semi-final. Photo: Jodie Arnup.



Levi Richardson completes a run for Inverloch in their semifinal clash with Wonthaggi Club / Glen Alvie. W27_0926



Phillip Island's Justin Tran prepares to sweep this delivery. Tran finished with 29 runs and a tidy 2/14 with the ball as Phillip Island fell to Leongatha Clubs Combined 7/104 to 8/102. W23_0926



Leongatha Clubs Combined celebrate after Louis Read catches Drew Fusinato out. Leongatha went on to win the match 7/104 to 8/102. W25_0926



Phillip Island's Drew Fusinato finished the match with seven runs as they fell to Leongatha Clubs Combined in the U17 semifinal on Sunday, March 1. W24_0926



The Inverloch batting partnership of Levi Richardson and Liam Jones putting some runs on the board in their semifinal clash with Wonthaggi Club / Glen Alvie. W28_0926



Wonthaggi Club / Glen Alvie bowler Ollie Donohue delivers a ball to Inverloch's Louis Sorensen. The semifinal clash ended in Wonthaggi Club / Glen Alvie defeating Inverloch 3/213 to 10/105 and they will face Koonwarra LRSL / Leongatha Town next week in the grand final after Koonwarra LRSL / Leongatha Town defeated Kilcunda Bass 8/102 to 10/97. W29_0926

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Challenging conditions for the 2026 World Challenger Series at Phillip Island

By Bruce Wardley

SURFERS battled a heavy swell and strong offshore crosswinds on the first days of the 2026 Phillip Island Pro QS 4000 and Pro Junior Series at Cape Woolamai.

Phillip Island is the last stop in the World Surf League Australia/Oceania Qualifying Series for surfers looking for a place in the 2026 World Challenger Series.

A high-stakes event, qualifiers from the 2026 Phillip Island Pro QS 4000 and Pro Junior Series will go on to compete on the world tour taking them to Brazil, Portugal and USA.

The series attracted 240 competitors representing 12 nations.

The Phillip Island series was extended by an extra day this year because of the large number of entries and the need to allow for storms. Depending on conditions the competition can switch from Cape Woolamai to Smiths Beach or the Penguin Beach at Sunderland Bay.

The Pro Junior featured seven local under-20 surfers from the Phillip Island Boardriders Club including Lennox Archibald, Sam Patterson, Angus Kennedy and Eddie Maier in the junior men, and Abbie Clarke, Scarlett Rennie and Sophie Fletcher in the women's.

Local surfers Chad Garrett and Joe Van Dijk made it through the early rounds with Van Dijk among the early standouts. A crisp three-turn combo was enough to earn Van Dijk the first excellent score of the event, an eight in his second heat of the day after an early



Local surfer Joe Van Dijk successfully made it through the early rounds of the Phillip Island Pro Qualifying Series. Photo: WSL/Hughes.

round of 104 win advancing into the round of 64.

A typical day at home for Van Dijk who had to call in late for work to surf his heats.

"It's like every other day of the week, but I still have to go to work now and get back on the tools," Van Dijk said.

"So it's just a normal day for me, I mean, there's waves, so I had to surf."

Excited to start strong in her QS debut Sophie Wilkinson posted an outstanding highest heat total of the day in the women's event, a 12 with an equal-highest score of 6.5.

The 17-year-old Mornington Peninsula surfer delivered aggressive hits to the lip on her forehead to advance ahead of

Ruby Berry who had made a string of finals across QS and JQS competition internationally in recent months.

"First QS I've ever been in, so yeah, it feels pretty good to take the win, all the four girls were ripping," Wilkinson said.

"It's just down the road from Mornington Peninsula, so it feels like home pretty much."

Former Victorian and Australian junior champion Codie Jeffery was eliminated when he snapped his board going for a big turn and put all his weight on the back foot.

Top Australian junior Dane Henry was expected to make an appearance after winning the 2025/2026 World Surf League World Junior Championships

in the Philippines which automatically earned him a spot in the 2026 Challenger Series.

Victorian surfers Xavier Huxtable and Tully Wylie have also been in the action.

Supported by Visit Victoria and Bass Coast Shire this is the second year the Phillip Island Pro and Pro Junior Series has served as the final event in the Asia and Australia/Oceania Qualifying Series season.

Countries represented include Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Indonesia, United Kingdom, French Polynesia, Germany, United States, India, Vanuatu and France.

The 2026 Phillip Island Pro QS 4000 and Pro Junior Series continues until March 4.

PIBC event champions in opening round of the Victorian Longboard Titles

PHILLIP Island Boardriders Club surfers claimed victory in the opening round of the Victorian Longboard Titles on Phillip Island where competitors were greeted with idyllic autumn conditions across the weekend.

Cat Bay turned on offshore winds and clean consistent two-foot waves on the Saturday allowing competitors to showcase classic longboard style and flow. A slight drop in swell and a change in wind direction saw the competition move to Surfies Point for finals day on the Sunday where clean lines and light winds provided a fitting stage to crown the event champions.

Andrew Burgan took out first place in the over-40 men followed by Andrew McHenry in second. First place in the over-50 women was awarded to Jacquie Chambers and over-60 women was won by Sian Adnam.

Open men saw Tom Fahey take fourth followed by Andy



Phillip Island Boardriders Club crew Andrew Burgan, Jacquie Chambers, Andy McHenry, Sian Adnam, Ebony Maier and Tom Fahey at the opening round of Victorian Longboard Titles on Phillip Island.

McHenry in fifth place and open women saw Ebony Maier score fifth.

The open men's title was claimed by Ben Considine from Barwon Heads who posted a two-wave heat total of 16.64 with two excellent scoring rides. Bea Conroy from Point

Lonsdale took out the open women's division.

Both winners have moved one step closer to securing the coveted wildcard spot into the WSL Bells Beach Longboard Classic later this year.

The final round of the Victorian Longboard Titles will be

held at Point Impossible on the Surf Coast on May 2-3. With the overall titles and wildcard positions still to be decided competitors will be looking to deliver their best performances in what promises to be a decisive showdown. Entries are open now via surfingvic.com/events.



Neville Chapman and Lorrie Read were the winners of the Life Members Shield.

PHILLIP ISLAND BRIDGE

THE Phillip Island Bridge Club hosted the prestigious Life Members Shield event on Monday.

Six and a half tables filled the room, all vying for club honours.

In a hard-fought contest, Neville Chapman and Lorrie Read emerged victorious, taking out the Shield with an impressive score of 68.75 per cent.

The action continued on Wednesday, drawing five tables.

This time, it was Caroline Shaw and Janusz Wolnik who claimed top spot, posting an impressive 70.37 per cent to secure the win.

SOUTH GIPPSLAND BRIDGE

NEVILLE Chapman and Peter Campbell carried Monday night's play with a score of 55.5.

They were followed by Sean Munley and Bruce Higgs (53.5), and Linda and Grant Austen (52.5).

Tuesday at Wonthaggi RSL was won by Deb Anglim and John French (62.5), trailed by Su Edwards and Ruth Harvey (58.33), Neville and Philip Chapman (56.77), Anne Gibson and Julie Perriam (55.56), and Lois Dwyer and Alan Johnston (55.21).

Alan Johnston and Clive Hope won N/S on Friday (59.95), then Denise Allitt and Tom Kudelka (56.02), Sean Munley and Bruce Higgs (54.07), Robyn Synan and Catherine Burton (52.78), Hannah Martin and Ruth Stevenson (50.93), and Alan Johnston and Clive Hope (55.07).

Playing E/W, Moya Crowley and Mike Dooley (66.2), Peter Campbell and Matt Higgins (65.97), Faye Rowlands and John Currier (55.56), Lois Dwyer and Robin Egan (53.7), and Maureen Stiles and Marie Sands (50.23).

It is still not too late for bridge-curious members of the general public to join John French at the series of beginners' lessons, which started on February 16.

It would be easy to catch up. The sessions run from 12.30pm to 2.15pm, in Inverloch on Mondays. Ring 0417 568 753 for more information.

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 March 3	WEDNESDAY March 4	THURSDAY March 5	FRIDAY March 6	SATURDAY March 7	SUNDAY March 8	MONDAY March 9
▲ 12:27am 1.39m	▲ 1:27am 1.45m	▲ 2:16am 1.52m	▲ 2:59am 1.56m	▲ 3:35am 1.58m	▲ 4:07am 1.57m	▲ 4:36am 1.55m
▼ 5:58am 0.79m	▼ 7:14am 0.66m	▼ 8:10am 0.52m	▼ 8:55am 0.41m	▼ 9:33am 0.33m	▼ 10:08am 0.29m	▼ 10:42am 0.27m
▲ 12:17pm 1.30m	▲ 1:30pm 1.38m	▲ 2:32pm 1.48m	▲ 3:25pm 1.56m	▲ 4:10pm 1.61m	▲ 4:49pm 1.63m	▲ 5:24pm 1.61m
▼ 6:26pm 0.44m	▼ 7:30pm 0.44m	▼ 8:23pm 0.44m	▼ 9:08pm 0.46m	▼ 9:45pm 0.49m	▼ 10:20pm 0.53m	▼ 10:54pm 0.57m

Email us your fishing photos
news@sgst.com.au



Monday's Breakaway Bowls winners were Ken Webb, Linda Newman, Anne Poulton and Peter Novak.



The Breakaway Bowls winners on Friday were Pat Novak, Brian Newman and Janet Elsworth.



The Jack Attack winners at the Foster Bowls Club were Jontoss, Helen, Cheryl and Kevin.



Leongatha Bowls Club's second-last monthly Triples winners Ken, Russell and Jannette with the sponsor from Nesci Transport.



South West Gippsland Midweek Bowls Group's winners were Louis Magri (S), Gillian Harper (3), Tony Morris (L) and Gwen Jeffery (2).

BREAKAWAY BOWLS

MONDAY's winners with +25 were Ken Webb, Linda Newman, Anne Poulton and Peter Novak.

Runners-up were Marj Ford, Marg Brown, Jenny Bakker and Liz Low.

A great day of bowling and a scrumptious afternoon tea was enjoyed by all.

Thank you ladies for your contributions which are always enjoyed by the members.

There was another good turnout for Friday indoor bowls.

The winners on +16 were Pat Novak, Brian Newman and Janet Elsworth.

Runners-up on +14 were Les Stanbury, Peter Grenville and Linda Newman.

FISH CREEK

MIXED bag for the week of bowls with a great preliminary final victory for the Division 2 Midweek team against San Remo.

All rinks played well with Wendy Watkins, Bill Symmons, Robyn Napier and Anne Cowell setting the tone with a 22 to 11 win.

Bron Williams, Paul Kerr, Linda Heywood and Peter Poletti drew 25 all and Don Cripps, Rob Poletti, Ray Watkins and Louise Vuillermin narrowly went down 15 to 16.

Grand final today (Tuesday, March 3) against Inverloch at Leongatha.

Go Fishy.

Unfortunate result for Saturday Division 2 against Meeniyana which played very well.

Played at Corinella the club went down 55/2 to 69/14.

Some excellent bowls was played with 50 all at one stage

but a couple of lapses in concentration towards the end cost the club.

Another great season by Division 2 which has been so close to getting into the top division over the last four years.

The Turkey Triples event was another fun day although a couple of empty rinks.

Special thanks to the clubs and teams who committed every week.

Sponsored by Paragreen Real Estate who was represented by Tiff Wightman saw the winning team of Theo Tymensen, Michael Flanagan and Kenny Dawson.

Runners-up were Dino, Lucy and Matt Gallagher.

Best last game was taken out by Col Pulham, Dave Collier and Rab Best.

Bowlers do not forget the McLaughlin Memorial Day on Sunday, March 15.

Now with finals over the club will need to get all the 21 up and mixed pairs games completed.

FOSTER

LAST Wednesday night saw the usual crowd for Jack Attack.

It was a splendid night for bowls.

Winners for the night were Jontoss with Helen, Cheryl and Kevin.

Another new sponsor for the season Kay Jay Marine (KJ Marine) Lower Franklin Road jumped onboard to sponsor the prizes.

Awesome and much appreciated Kiel.

Runners-up were DRK with Kate, Des and Rachel winning the chocolate prizes sponsored by Promontory Kitchens.

There was another great raffle

night as usual.

It is the place to be on a Wednesday night.

Sadly the end of the competition is fast approaching.

There is one more week of competition then presentation night on March 11.

The last night is dress-up night with an open theme.

Have fun and come dressed in whatever you wish.

The club is abuzz right now.

Next week the club will have a big report on the Pennant side of things and the new green replacement will begin this week.

Supplies have started arriving. There is so much going on at this amazing little club.

Stay tuned.

KORUMBURRA

PENNANT season is done and dusted for Korumburra for this season with Division 6 playing off in the grand final at Cowes on Saturday.

Although acquitting themselves very well they stumbled at the final hurdle.

Lena Harfield had a 24 shots to 22 win and Mick Manning came back well to go down 11 shots to 17 for an overall loss of six shots.

Well done to all players on a great effort.

LEONGATHA

WITH all the buzz and excitement of the grand finals happening it is understandable that numbers were a bit down this month for the monthly Triples Day.

Nesci Transport generously sponsored the day with winners being a Leongatha team of Jannette, Russell and Ken.

Second was another Leongatha team of Chris, Bruce and Ron.

Third place getters were Jim, Anne and Lance from Phillip Island.

Best last game honours went to the girl power team of Anne, Jenny and Marj.

Last but not least the bottle of wine went to the Meeniyana side Nick, Dave and Bob.

Well done to all and thanks for supporting the club.

On a hot rainy stormy Tuesday the last 18 tradies night was played with a mixed bag of winners.

The sponsor for the night was Jeremy Warren of JW Refrigeration and Air Conditioning.

The winning team with a score of 68 shots was the Dumpsters.

Runners-up with a very close score of 67 was the Edney side.

This team had three generations of McGannons playing together which was great stuff.

The overall event sponsors for the season were Hayes Jewellery and Toyota with a big thank you.

The wooden spooners who all received a real wooden spoon were the Teammates.

Lastly the two sides that played off in the grand final were JJS and AW Smith.

The winning team was JJS with a 63 to 37 shots.

Well done to all.

Thanks again to all that helped throughout the two seasons.

Without you these events would not happen.

The Saturday social bowls started again on February 28.

You all know the drill with names in before 12pm for a 1pm start and do not forget there is a new number.

The B Grade Club Winner this year is Lyn who played against

Jannette.

It was a close affair.

Congratulations to Lyn.

MIDWEEK

WHAT a day.

Fifty-four players were signed in by John and Bev as Vern worked hard to arrange the teams.

A big thank you to greenkeeper Cameron Davey and Tracey and Steve for running the bar.

Once the bowlers started playing it became evident that the wind was a factor for the day.

This does not seem to bother some bowlers but it certainly does make it hard.

There was lots of laughter across the green but this did not distract from the quality of the bowls although a few of the charitable bowlers were happy to assist the Children's Hospital with some wrong bias bowls.

The winners on 36 points were Louis Magri (S), Gillian Harper (3), Tony Morris (L) and Gwen Jeffery (2).

Runners-up on a score of 35 were John Nicholson (3), Peter Gratton (S), Tamara Fourd (L) and Steve Banks (2).

Best one game winners on 19 points were Rob Pagnoni (S), Cameron Davey (3) and Peter Thorley (L).

Next week the club will be meeting at Lang Lang 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.

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.

Mirboo North claims first Division 1 pennant



Wonthaggi Bowls Club's Thursday social bowls winners Frank Cimino and Brian Cuman.



The Tuesday winners at Wonthaggi Senior Indoor Bowls were Pat Smith, Lino Cuman, John Rook and Paul Holmes.



Laurie Culph, Jeannie Slocombe and Fred Demenech were the winners at Wonthaggi Senior Indoor Bowls on Friday. Absent: Carol Thorpe.

WONTHAGGI

IT was another week of finals. Tuesday saw Division 1 venture to Meenyan looking to book its place in the grand final. Foster took control of the match early and did not look back. The final scores were Wonthaggi 31, Foster 90. Thursday 9.30am social bowls saw a good number of bowlers enjoy a fine morning and lunch. Thursday 1pm social bowls saw 20 bowlers grace the greens on a fine afternoon. There were three teams that were two-game winners with the teams being three-bowl pairs. The winning team was Frank Cimino and Brian Cuman with a score of two wins and 34 points. Friday night was a success with the members draw not going off. Next week the draw will be \$60. Brian was a happy winner of the meat tray. Michael took home the chicken tray. Denise and Allan each received a brekky pack.

Other winners were Denise, Di, Wayne, Brian and Denise. Saturday was grand final day with Division 4(4) and Division 6 playing at Phillip Island. Division 4 had a mixed day with two rinks being close matches and the other up against a good rink. As you would expect Wonthaggi fought the match out until the last bowl but it was not its day. The final scores were Wonthaggi 56, Foster 72. Division 6 played Korumburra on a day where the weather became warm to hot. In a close match all day the match came down to the last end. With one rink finished Wonthaggi went into the last end five shots up.

In a test of nerves and skill Wonthaggi was able to bowl the last end and only go one shot down. That meant Wonthaggi was able to claim the flag. The final scores were Wonthaggi 39, Korumburra 35. Saturday night was the Pennant wind-up at the clubhouse with most Pennant players present. They were treated to a feast of fine food which was well received. It was a good night to celebrate a very good season and the win by Division 6 and to look forward to Division 3 on Tuesday being played at Leongatha starting at 10am hoping to bring home another flag.

Bowls this week:
 Tuesday: Midweek Pennant grand final being played at Leongatha.
 Thursday: Social bowls at 9.30am and at 1pm.
 Friday: Coaching at 10am.
 Saturday: Social bowls at 1pm.
 Do not forget the Friday night members' draw this week being \$60 plus meat trays and other prizes to win.

WONTHAGGI INDOOR

WHAT an amazing week of bowling with a total of 56 players over the week. Tuesday's winners with a plus 26 were Pat Smith, Paul Holmes, Lino Cuman and John Rook. Runners-up on plus 10 were Maggi Scapin, Pam Russell, Jeannie Slocombe and Theo Scholey. Both teams won two games each. On Friday only one team won two games on plus six. They were Carol Thorpe, Jeannie Slocombe, Fred Demenech and Laurie Culph. Runners-up on plus seven winning one game only were Jenny Bakker, Helen Rook, Malaya and John Ferguson.



The Foster Division 3 pennant premiership team after their grand final win at Phillip Island on Saturday.



The Foster Division 4 pennant premiership team after their grand final win at Phillip Island on Saturday.



The Wonthaggi Division 6 pennant premiership team after their grand final win at Phillip Island on Saturday.

History made as Mirboo North claims first Division 1 pennant



Mirboo North celebrates the club's first Division 1 pennant premiership in its 72-year history after defeating Inverloch 62-36 in the grand final at Phillip Island on Saturday.



The Meeniyans Division 2 pennant premiership team celebrates with the flag at the clubhouse after their grand final win at Corinella on Saturday.



The San Remo Division 5 pennant premiership team after their grand final win at Corinella on Saturday.

MIRBOO North Bowls Club has claimed its first Division 1 pennant premiership in the club's 72-year history after defeating Inverloch 62-36 in the grand final at Phillip Island on Saturday.

Saturday marked the completion of the 2025/26 Saturday pennant season with grand finals for Divisions 1, 3, 4 and 6 held at Phillip Island while the Divisions 2 and 5 played at Corinella. Both host clubs did an exceptional job and both venues were well attended by supporters.

The Division 1 grand final started as a tight contest but it was soon evident why Mirboo North finished the home and away season as minor premiers.

Inverloch dug deep trying to mount a comeback but Mirboo North proved too strong.

There was plenty of emotion in the Mirboo North camp after the game as a large contingent of the club's 38 members were there to witness the historic achievement.

It has been a remarkable rise to the top for Mirboo North. Just seven years ago the club won the Division 5 premiership and has since won its way through the divisions, making it through to the Division 1 grand final twice before only to fall agonisingly short.

There was to be no such stumble this year with the focus and determination apparent from the start.

Mirboo North will be looking to put on the same "all-time" display when they take on Strzelecki North winners Traralgon in two weeks with the winner of that match representing Strzelecki at the State Pennant Finals in Moama in April.

Foster was the big winner on the day with two premierships, claiming both Division 3 and Division 4.

Meeniyans took out the Division 2 flag at Corinella while San Remo claimed the Division 5 premiership.

Wonthaggi rounded out the day with the Division 6 flag.

Division 1 premiers Mirboo North: Tom Whitelaw, Luke Gervasi, Mick Coram, Andrew Soplakaw, Angela Hackett, Jack Oddy, Daniel Earl, Josh Taylor, Lincon Oddy, Brent Harriage, Riley Oddy and Patrick Lewis.

Division 2 premiers Meeniyans: Ian Griffith, Bob Wylie, Karen Barwick, Lucy Bignocchi, Ray Spokes, Leonie Hanks, Allan Hanks, Dean Jones, Dino Bignocchi, Joe Paynting, Ray Corry, Rita Richardson and Nick Kelly.

Division 3 premiers Foster: Jenny Roffey, Norm Cooper, Bev Tyers, Ian McLeod, Noleen McGlead, Judy Prain, Nancy Parry, Maureen Taylor, Brian Roffey, Charlie Tyers, Mark Taylor and Phil Facey.

Division 4 premiers Foster: David Collier, James Ganson, Ian Parks, Kelvin Park, Neil Shaw, John Warren, Ray Prain, Michael Flanagan, Malcolm Ellis, Peter Stapleton, Andrew Kent and Colin Pulham.

Division 5 premiers San Remo: James Martin, Steve Edge, Lou Capsalas, Vern Elliott, Bev Elliott, Peter Gratton, Bob Arnold, Tony McKiernan, Peter Thorley, John Nicholson, Raff Merente, Chris Andrews and Peter McWilliams.

Division 6 premiers Wonthaggi: Rodney Jeeves, John Gilliland, Rodney Hogan, Dorothy Stein, David Harrison, Alan Lowe, David Turnbull and Roelof Cornelis.

KORUMBURRA

RESULTS: Tuesday, February 24. Stableford: 40 players.
 A Grade winner: Billie Wrigley (4) 40 points, B Grade winner: Peter Hislop (17) 37 points.
 NTPs: first Roy Fleming, seventh Guv Fields, 10th Guv Fields and 13th Dale Wyhoon.
 Thursday, February 26: Stableford: 22 players.
 A Grade winner: Steve Rose (7) 34 points, B Grade winner: Doc Dixon (37) 31 points.
 NTPs: first Steve Rose, seventh Greg Shuttlesworth, 10th Wayne Knights and 13th Barry Kerr.
 Saturday, February 28: Sponsor: Chris McConnell and Steve Duffield.
 Two-man Ambrose: 42 players. Winners: Roy Fleming and Kingy King 62 net.
 NTPs: first Steve Duffield, seventh Peter Draper, 10th Ian Gibson and 13th Craig Kerr.

Ladies

CONGRATULATIONS to the 2026 Women's Club Champion Merrissa Cosson.
 The Singles Championships have been played over the past three weeks with the course in fabulous condition.
 Many thanks to the green staff and volunteers.
 Well done to all who played and congratulations grade winners.
 A Grade Gross: Merrissa Cosson Rnds 84/83/83. Net: Merrissa (11) Rnds 73/72/72.
 B Grade Gross: Trudi Mantell Rnds 97/100/93. Net: Trudi Mantell (25) Rnds 72/75/68.
 C Grade Gross: Lyn Leppin (34) Rnds 108/106/112. Net: Julie Cole (52) 67/76/79.
 Seniors Trophy Best Net Score: Pam Evers 226 net.
 Norrie Little Memorial Trophy for the Best Net Score across all grades went to Trudi Mantell 215.
 Congratulations and well done to everyone who played over the past three weeks whether it be a Saturday or Wednesday the club had a great field of women turn up each week.

The daily competition was sponsored by Beryl Brown and the club thanks Beryl for her ongoing support.
 The club sends its love and best wishes to Beryl and her family.
 A winner: Merrissa (11) 72net.
 Runner-up: Lyn McIvor (19) 73net, B winner: Trudi Mantell (25) 68net and best score of the day, Runner-up: Trudy Olden (24) 73net, C winner: Pam Evers (38) 71net c/b, Runner-up: Colette Pearl (35) 71net.
 BDTL: Gail Beer and Kim Enbom 73net and Jenny Blackmore and Julie Hillberg 74net.
 NTPs: first Lyn McIvor, 10th Gail Beer and 13th Pam Evers.
 Thursday Twilight players battled the easterly winds and had a difficult night with a novelty of not using your putter which was very tricky for some.
 Winners: Mandy Seater and Scott Burgess on 16 points.
 NTP: Bob Stiff and Colette Pearl.
 Saturday was Bring a Guest Day with a two-person Ambrose played.
 Congratulations to the winning pair Aliesha Wrigley and Chrissy Lomagno with a score of 63.75 net.
 Runner-up was Merrissa Cosson and Karen Sorrell 65.75 net.
 NTPs on the first and 10th Kerri Besley, seventh Merrissa Cosson and 13th Deb Wrigley.

LEONGATHA

RESULTS: Tuesday, February 24. Competition: Par. Entrants:

57. Overall winner: Marianne Leaver (25) +2c/b.
 A Grade: Alan Starkey (4) +2; Neil Gray (4) +1.
 B Grade: Marianne Leaver (25) +2c/b; Will Norden (17) +1.
 Nearest the pin: fifth Michael O'Rafferty 180cm; 14th Neil Mackenzie 340cm; 16th Neil Mackenzie 999cm.
 Thursday, February 26: Competition: Ambrose Pairs. Entrants: 84.
 Winners: Alan Starkey and Jeremy de Silva 62.5; Donald Smith and Ross McRobert 63.25; Jeffrey Brewer and Paul Luck 64.75.
 Nearest the pin: fifth Lyndon Thompson 210cm; 14th Ken Smirk 309cm; 16th Antony Gedye 232cm.
 Saturday, February 28: Competition: Stableford. Entrants: 103.
 Overall winner: Jo McNaughton (27) 41 points.
 A Grade: Stuart Smith (12) 39 points; Toby Cumming (9) 37 points (Anglesea Golf Club).
 B Grade: Nick Shaw (17) 39 points; Gordon Morrison (14) 36 points.
 C Grade: Andrew Smith (18) 37 points; Bryan Roylance (19) 36 points.
 D Grade: Jo McNaughton (27) 41 points; Robert Reardon (24) 36 points.
 Nearest the pin: fifth Phil Douglas 180cm; 14th Andrew Smith 3cm; 16th Jon Smith 26cm.

Ladies

FORTY women competed in the monthly Invy Stableford event in superb conditions last week.
 The outright winner of the day was Helen Mackenzie with 41 points.
 She was also the winner of B Grade.
 Jo Miles won A Grade with 38 points and Jo McNaughton was just one shot behind for runner-up position.
 Down the line balls went to 33: Jan Brownlie, Else Gedye, Cheryl Borg, Shirley Welsford, Deb Miller, Maryanne Gartner and Di Williams.
 The nearest the pin winners were Alison Strong on the 16th and Anna de Bondt on the fifth.
 Maxine Eabry returned from a long stint away to win the nine-hole competition with 16 points.

MEENIYAN

THE qualifying round for the popular Ray and Heather Poletti 4BBB Board event was played on Wednesday.
 Eight teams headed out in near-perfect weather with the course looking great after the recent rain.
 The winners were Andrea Thorson and Louise Vuillermin with 44 points.
 The runners-up were Lyn Jenkinson and Jan Trease with 41 points.
 Down the line balls went to Heather McCaughan and Irene Holm 41 points and Susan Straw and Tanya Thorson 40 points.
 Faye LePage won the nearest the pin.
 It was very nice seeing Heather Poletti in the clubhouse when everyone got in.

MIRBOO NORTH

TUESDAY, February 24:
 Day winner: Max Woodall (8) 38 points.
 B Grade: Chris Hatherly (27) 37 points.
 DTL: Craig Bourne 37 points, Ray Matthews 36 points and Tom

Whitelaw 35 points c/b.
 Hole-in-one: Stuart McKenzie on the sixth.
 Birdies: Paul Lee (16th), Malcolm Payne (fourth) and Gary Renwick (fourth).
 NTPs: fourth Stuart McKenzie, sixth Stuart McKenzie, 13th Max Woodall and 16th Stuart McKenzie.
 Saturday, February 28:
 Day winner: Mark Heiberg (17) 41 points.
 A Grade: John Woodall (10) 38 points.
 C Grade: Gary Fry (24) 37 points.
 DTL: Shane Woodall 36 points, Tom Traill 36 points, Connor Williams 35 points, Noel Baker 35 points and Jeff Hughes 34 points c/b.
 Eagle: Connor Williams on the 17th.
 Birdies: Tom Traill (13th), Garry Shandley (sixth), Brandon Bradshaw (13th), Stuart McKenzie (sixth) and Hudson Kerr (fourth).
 NTP: fourth Hudson Kerr, sixth Garry Shandley, 13th Garry Shandley and 16th Shane Woodall.

WONTHAGGI
RESULTS: February 26.
 Competition: Stableford 18-hole.
 Overall winner: Adrian Nixon 36, Winner A Grade: Glen Turner 36, Runner-up: Gino Hennequin 34, Winner B Grade: Adrian Nixon 36, Runner-up: Ian Hack 34.
 Place getters: Neil Beer 33, Mat Johnson 32, Graeme Campbell 32, Craig Charles 32, Keith Riddle 31, Paul Brusamarello 31 and Graeme Crawford 31.
 Eagle: Keith Riddle 11th.
 NTPs: Inoke Baudromo second, Mat Johnson fourth, Paul Jackson eighth, Kevin Loughran 13th and not claimed 17th.
 Results: February 26, SR. 36.
 Competition: Stableford nine-hole one to nine.
 Winner: Willy Williams 18.
 Place getter: Mark Nicholson 15, Peter Sullivan 15 and Norm Burne 15.
 NTP: Graham Ryan eighth.
 Results: February 28, S.R 72.
 Overall winner: Bruce Betts +7.
 A Grade: Leigh Clifford +4.
 Runner-up: Steve Brann +1.
 B Grade: Geoff Huther +3.
 Runner-up: Alan Jones +2.
 C Grade: Glen Rielly +1.
 Runner-up: John Geyer 0.
 D Grade: Bruce Betts +7.
 Runner-up: Mick Bourke +1.
 Place getters: Graeme Crawford +2, Garry O'Connor +1, Peter Hanley +1, Stephen Kane 0, Clive Kilgour 0, Robert Geyer -1, Kevin Bayley -1, Bill Howard -1, Mark Nicholson -1, Rod McBride -1, Michael Scott -1, Matt Walsh -1, Joshua Kilgour -2, Don Paproth -2 and Paul Jackson -2.
 NTPs: Bill Howard second, Darcy O'Halloran fourth, Messy Chand propin eighth, Miles Foster 13th and Joshua Kilgour money hole 17th.

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 Runner-up: Mick Bourke +1.
 Place getters: Graeme Crawford +2, Garry O'Connor +1, Peter Hanley +1, Stephen Kane 0, Clive Kilgour 0, Robert Geyer -1, Kevin Bayley -1, Bill Howard -1, Mark Nicholson -1, Rod McBride -1, Michael Scott -1, Matt Walsh -1, Joshua Kilgour -2, Don Paproth -2 and Paul Jackson -2.
 NTPs: Bill Howard second, Darcy O'Halloran fourth, Messy Chand propin eighth, Miles Foster 13th and Joshua Kilgour money hole 17th.

Ladies
WOW, what a great finale for the 2026 Ladies Championships on Wednesday.
 There were some great scores including some from the champions which built on their previous great rounds.
 Daily event results:
 A Grade winner: Kaylene Hodgetts 90(21) 69 net.
 B Grade winner: Patsy Britt 95(25) 70 net.
 C Grade winner and round



The winners and runners-up of the monthly Invy Espy Stableford event held at the Leongatha Golf Club were Jo McNaughton, Helen Mackenzie and Jo Miles.



Wonthaggi Golf Club's 2026 Club Champions were B Grade Anne Tschiderer, Open Champion Jan Beaumont and C Grade Betty Bowmar.



Korumburra's Club Singles Champions B Grade Trudi Mantell, A Grade Merrissa Cosson and C Grade Lyn Leppin.

of the day: Kathy Dunscombe 109(43) 66 net.
 Placegetters: Chris Yann 67, Betty Bowmar 68, Jan Beaumont 69, Jenny McRae 71, Donna Brosnan 71, Robyn Wilkinson 72 and Geraldine Prentice 73.
 NTP: fourth Jan Beaumont, eighth Anne Tschiderer, 13th Marg Johnson and 17th Simone Lindsay.
2026 Champions:
 In an exciting finish the 2026 Club Champion is first-time winner Jan Beaumont who played steady golf over the three rounds and is a worthy champion.
Results:
 A Grade Scratch: Jan Beaumont 91,97,88=276.
 A Grade runner-up: Marg Johnson 96,94,87=277.
 A Grade Handicap: Jan Beaumont 72, 78, 69=219.
 B Grade:
 Anne Tschiderer took a commanding lead into round three and was also in contention for the Open Champion with rounds of 94,95,96=285.
 B Grade runner-up: Geraldine Prentice 99,96,97=292.
 B Grade Handicap: Donna Brosnan 72,73,71=216.
 C Grade:
 Betty Bowmar had a three-shot lead going into round three from Chris Hamilton.
 It was neck and neck until Chris found trouble on the 13th dam hole.
 C Grade Scratch: Betty Bowmar 102,105,99=306.
 C Grade runner-up: Chris Hamilton 106,104,113=323.
 C Grade Handicap: Betty Bowmar 71,74,68=213.
 This score also won Betty the Pearl Kewming best 54 net score over all grades.

WOORAYL
THE first round of the Di and John O'Connor 4BBB Board event sponsored by Betta Electrical was played on Wednesday.
 The conditions were overcast. Winners on the day were with much happiness Tricia Berryman and Jean Hayes 43.
 Runners-up on a c/b were Kath Davis and Ann Poole 39.
 BDL: Anne Grist and Jo Fennell 39 and Tracey Ryan and Inge Giliam 37.
 NTP: eighth Ann Poole, 11th Jean Hayes and 17th Heather Sullivan.



Mark Nelson and Dave Healey were the winners of the Owen Walton Memorial Trophy.

Healey goes solo and steals the show

THERE are nights at the Dart Centre that remind everyone why local sport is the heartbeat of the community and Monday night's Owen Walton Memorial Trophy was one of them.

Thirty players gathered for the annual drawn doubles showdown hosted by the Phillip Island and Districts Darts League all chasing their name on the coveted Owen Walton Memorial Trophy.

After a fiercely contested evening the grand final boiled down to Scott Lethbridge and Marilyn Smith taking on Dave Healey and Mark Nelson.

In a twist worthy of a darts drama series Mark better known as "Noddy" was called away on an emergency just before the decider.

That left Healey flying solo.

Giving away a turn each second throw and facing immense pressure Healey could have folded.

Instead spectators were treated to a masterclass display of composure, precision and nerve.

The match went to a thrilling third leg with both sides poised on a double.

You could hear a pin drop in the Dart Centre then bang.

Healey nailed the winning double to seal a remarkable victory claiming the Owen Walton Memorial Trophy in unforgettable fashion.

It was a performance that will be talked about for seasons to come.

Leongatha Small Bore

2025: 50m Prone Pennant - Section A.

Round one: Leongatha A 579.29 (bye).

Kenneth Hart 194.11; Daniel Croatto 194.09; Christopher Sargant 191.09; Jack Sargant 190.06.

Round two: Leongatha A 581.20 defeated FTPRC A 579.28; Kenneth Hart 196.11; Daniel Croatto 193.03; Jack Sargant 192.06; Christopher Sargant 191.05.

Round three: MCC 581.30 defeated Leongatha A 576.14.

Kenneth Hart 197.08; Jack Sargant 190.03; Daniel Croatto 189.03; Christopher Sargant 186.05.

Ladder: M.I.S.C A 12; Leongatha A 8; Shepparton 8; FPTRC A 4; MCC 4.

2025: 50m Prone Pennant - Section D:

Round one: Leongatha B 521.06 (bye).

Christine Denbrok 179.03; Richard Denbrok 172.02; Agan Hengstberger 170.01; Cameron Davidson 164.02; Bradley Hall 183.05x (x - not nominated).

Round two: Brunswick 572.19 defeated Leongatha B 541.09.

Bradley Hall 185.03; Christine Denbrok 183.06; Richard Denbrok 173.00; Cameron Davidson 148.00; Agan Hengstberger x171.00 (x - not nominated).

Round three: Leongatha B 551.13 defeated Camberwell 539.12.

Christine Denbrok 186.05; Bradley Hall 184.03; Richard Denbrok 181.05; Cameron Davidson 173.03; Agan Hengstberger x144.00 (x - not nominated).

Ladder: Brunswick 12; Leongatha B 8; Mildura 8; Camberwell 4; FPTRC C 4.

The club shoots Friday nights at 8pm at the rifle club on the Leongatha Recreation Reserve.

Any inquiries, please call R. Spratt 0400 360 505.



The action heats up during the 888 Racing Woolamai Whirlwind Race Day at Woolamai on Saturday.

The Gov reigns in 888 metre dash at Woolamai

By Trent Westaway

LOCALS returned to the track at Woolamai Racing Club on Saturday, February 28, for the 888 Racing Woolamai Whirlwind Race Day.

As temperatures climbed towards 30 degrees, racegoers settled in for another afternoon of picnic racing entertainment. The event built on the strong momentum garnered a few weeks earlier at the Woolamai Cup.

With six races on for the day, there was plenty to enjoy.

The card opened at 1pm with a 1008 metre race, the Bet365 Maiden Plate. Four-

year-old bay mare Tartan Queen took home the choccies, proving too fast and taking the race by one and a half lengths. Trained at Pakenham by Jaymee Cockram and ridden brilliantly by Rowan Cox, Tartan Queen was able to hold off the rest of the field, with Doubt I'm Rich, Gypsy Warrior and Hayhat filling out the podium to kick off the afternoon.

The headline act, the 888 Racing Woolamai Whirlwind Open Trophy Race is

famously Victoria's shortest race at, you guessed it, 888 metres. It was seemingly over in just a flash, but not before eight-year-old bay mare The Gov created a gap of one and a half lengths, bolting to the finish line and taking first place. Trained at Cranbourne by David Noonan and ridden confidently by Jasmine Trenwith, The Gov managed to finish ahead of Doctor Coto, Struggle Street and Italian Informant, who filled out the placings.

Third place Struggle Street was ridden by Maddison

Morris, who is coming off a remarkable performance at the Woolamai Cup a few weeks prior, where she claimed victory in three races, including the Alex Scott and Staff Woolamai Cup.

The Reg Manning team won the \$200 strappers prize on the day, sponsored by 888 Racing. The award recognises the hard work of stable hands and strappers.

The Woolamai Racing Club will now turn its attention to the Phillip Island Health Hub Race Day on Saturday, March 21.

Dominant performance from Gippsland United

GIPPSLAND United Football Club hosted Nunawading City Football Club in round three of the season with strong performances across multiple age groups on Sunday, March 1.

U13s: three-three draw.

The U13s got off to a flying start with Archer Riess finding the back of the net in just the third minute to give Gippsland United Football Club (GUFC) an early lead.

GUFC continued to dominate possession and attacking play but an unfortunate own goal allowed Nunawading to level the scores.

The response was immediate with Tayt Talerico restoring the lead.

Not long after Ethan Pritchard unleashed a cracking shot that struck the post and rebounded perfectly to Archer Riess who rose to head home his second goal of the match.

GUFC headed into halftime with a strong three-one advantage.

Five minutes into the second half Nunawading narrowed the margin with a well-taken goal and began applying sustained pressure.

GUFC's defence worked tirelessly to deny multiple chances but with just two minutes remaining Nunawading broke through again to equalise.

Despite a dominant first half and a determined defensive effort the match finished in a hard-fought three-three draw.

U14s: four-one win.

The U14s' victory over Nunawading City Football Club sees them move into second place on the Boys Youth State League South East ladder.

Both teams started strongly with Nunawading looking dangerous through their pace, technical skill and wide attacking shape.

Gippsland initially struggled to establish control but maintained possession through individual effort and physical presence.

GUFC opened the scoring when Kingston Vella delivered a cross from the right that found Jayden Ryan for a composed finish.

Momentum continued though a second goal was ruled out for offside.

Nunawading capitalised on Gippsland's high defensive line to level the score at one-

one sending their quick striker through one-on-one with the keeper.

Late in the first half GUFC earned a free kick deep in attacking territory.

Alexander Olijnyk delivered a deceptive ball into the six-yard box and Yien Ruey finished via a deflection to restore the lead.

After a clear halftime message from the coaches and technical director Scott Housden the U14s started the second half strongly.

Another goal was disallowed early, this time from Yien Ruey after a Logan Scott driving run and cross.

Jayden Ryan converted from the penalty spot midway through the second half following a tripping foul.

Gippsland refused to relent and left back Brody Sherburn in arguably his best performance for the club carried the ball into dangerous territory before releasing Ryan who finished confidently in a one-on-one to secure a four-one victory.

U16s: four-nil win.

The U16s secured an impressive four-nil result against visitors who started the round

one place above them on the ladder.

The match began evenly before Abbosogni broke the deadlock after 15 minutes to put United one-nil ahead.

United continued to press earning a penalty after Diston-McCann was brought down.

Sullyman calmly converted to send the home side into halftime two-nil up.

With no substitutes available due to game-related knocks United played the entire second half with the same 11 players.

The team showed tremendous resilience and commitment.

Diston-McCann added two second-half goals to seal the four-nil victory while a tiring but determined defence repelled repeated Nunawading attacks.

The win lifts United's U16s into third place on the ladder.

Other results:

U15s: two-one win.

U18s: three-one win.

It was another very successful week for GUFC.

Next week sees all teams on the road to face Ashburton away.

Give croquet a go in Korumburra

By Andrew Palocz

AN ENTHUSIASTIC group of local Lions Club members recently took to the lawn at Korumburra Croquet Club, providing a great social evening while encouraging people to take up the sport.

Korumburra Croquet Club President Val Wilson encourages people to join Tuesday morning practice at 10am or Saturday afternoon competition beginning at 1pm to give the sport a try, with the first couple of sessions free.

Inexperienced players joining competition won't be thrown to the wolves, being paired with an experienced player and learning the game as they go.

A time can also be arranged to come and try the sport.

"It's a skilful game, a challenge and good for your mental health," Wilson said, remarking it provides the added benefit of getting you into the fresh air.

Club members play throughout the year, Wilson remarking that the weather tends to be a little kinder in winter these days than it used to be.

Those who take to the game can test themselves in pennant competition against clubs from Phillip Island, Leongatha, Wonthaggi, Drouin and Warragul, with the pennant season running from August to November.

All play in Korumburra is to the Golf Croquet rules, with the club no longer holding any Association Croquet competition, the traditional form of the game. The newer approach makes the game faster and simpler and prevents people from spending so long on the sidelines.

This scribe enjoyed a game, happy to blame his borrowed mallet when things went wrong and to take credit at other times.

It certainly is a skilful game but not one you must be good at to have fun. Those wanting to know more about Korumburra Croquet Club are welcome to call President Val on 0439 572 263 or Secretary Helen on 0408 971 870.



Keryn Flenley, Gil Twite, Rob Whitaker, Steve Ronaldson, Kerrie Spencer and Linda Whitaker enjoyed taking to the Korumburra Croquet Club lawn. A01_0926



Cr John Kennedy tries his hand at croquet, while Graeme Sullivan, Betty Thompson and Diane Williams watch on. A02_0926

Wonthaggi hosts croquet doubles tournament

A WONTHAGGI Workers Club sponsored level play doubles tournament was hosted by the Wonthaggi Croquet Club on the weekend of February 21 and 22.

Split into two sections of eight pairs each, an extremely strong field battled it out over the weekend.

Six players who have represented the Victorian State side, all playing in Section 1, together with the other 26 players gave a brilliant display of croquet over the two days.

Overall, 16 Victorian clubs were represented from as far away as Wangaratta, Sale, Melbourne, Golden Square (Bendigo), the Peninsula and other Gippsland clubs.

Winners of Section 1 were Andy Barbera (Wangaratta) and Janine Sisson (Mornington) with runners-up Bob Quale (Drouin) and Graham Smith (Castlemaine).

Section 2 was won by Garry Shandley (Morwell) and Lynn Hodges (Leongatha) with



The winners and runners-up of the level play Doubles Tournament in Section 1 at the Wonthaggi Croquet Club.

runners-up Alan and Lyn Breen (Golden Square).

It was a great weekend showcasing some excellent croquet.

Thanks must go to many of the members who not only assisted in the preparation of the courts but gave up their time

over the weekend to make this a very successful tournament.

A special thank you to Haymes Paint Shop who have supplied the club with line marking paint for many years now.

On Tuesday, February 24, the

club hosted a Handicapping Workshop run by Maurice and Serina Cevaal-Hewitt, which was attended by representatives from four Gippsland clubs.

It was a very good informative presentation and lessons were learned.

ALLAMBEE MIRBOO AND DISTRICT TENNIS

RESULTS: Section 1: Westernport White 5.39 defeated Westernport Red 3.37; Leongatha 4.42 defeated Korumburra 4.31; Outtrim 6.43 defeated Koonwarra 2.27.

Ladder: Leongatha 91; Westernport White 77; Koonwarra 69; Westernport Red 66; Korumburra 61; Outtrim 50.

Section 2: Leongatha 5.41 defeated Outtrim 3.35; Korumburra 6.45 defeated Baromi 2.33.

Ladder: Leongatha 83; Baromi 69; Korumburra 55; Outtrim 53.

Westernport teams played in their club derby this week and it was a close one, with just two games in it.

Brett Tappy filled in and played a top game for White.

Leongatha did not have it all its own way in its match against Korumburra with a tiebreaker and two 7/5s keeping it close.

Equal on sets, Leongatha relied on games to win the day.

Outtrim was the winner against Koonwarra. Greg Marshman, after starring last game, was unable to play the mixed.

In Section 2, Korumburra was the winner over Baromi.

A tiebreaker and a 7/5 to Korumburra helped make the day a bit closer.

Leongatha had a win over Outtrim with a tiebreaker to Leongatha and a 7/5 to Outtrim.

Leongatha scored well in the mixed to help win the day.

There is no play next week due to the Labour Day long weekend.

RIVERSIDE TENNIS

RESULTS: Section 1 Doubles: Moe 7 - 48 defeated Drouin Maroon 2 - 36; Drouin Gold 5 - 39 defeated by Warragul 4 - 41; Neerim District bye.

Ladder: Moe 104; Neerim District 94; Drouin Maroon 78; Drouin Gold 64.5; Warragul 61.

Section 1/2 Singles: Trafalgar Red 6 - 48 defeated Drouin Maroon 0 - 2; Drouin Gold 3 - 39 defeated by Moe Blue 3 - 42; Trafalgar White 2 - 33 defeated by Moe White 4 - 42; Warragul bye.

Ladder: Moe White 87; Trafalgar Red 85; Trafalgar White 69; Warragul 64; Drouin Maroon 42; Moe Blue 39; Drouin Gold 34.

Section 2 Doubles: Poowong 2 - 23 defeated by Trafalgar 7 - 51; Hallora 6 - 44 defeated Warragul 3 - 32; Drouin 5 - 44 defeated Neerim District 4 - 38.

Ladder: Hallora 104.5; Warragul 101; Neerim District 87; Drouin 80.5; Trafalgar 73.5; Poowong 48.5.



JOIN OUR CLUB IN 2026

THE STONY CREEK FOOTBALL NETBALL CLUB ARE SEEKING PLAYERS IN THE FOLLOWING GRADES

JUNIOR FOOTBALL

U10 FOOTBALL

ALEX SHOLTE 0447 299 429

U12 FOOTBALL

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JUNIOR NETBALL

17U NETBALL

SAMANTHA DYKE 0439 523 757

TRAINING THURSDAYS 5-6PM



Vanessa Hardie reached her 25th parkrun on Saturday.

Record falls at Grand Ridge Rail Trail parkrun

PERFECT running conditions greeted participants at Grand Ridge Rail Trail parkrun on Saturday, February 28, with sunny skies, cool temperatures and no wind setting the scene for a fast morning.

Shane Grund set a new course record, finishing in an impressive 15:08 on the five-kilometre out-and-back rail trail course.

Strong performances followed, with Denzel Last (23:22) and Luke Laming (23:32) both recording personal best times.

A total of 54 people completed the event, supported by 11 volunteers.

Milestones were also celebrated, with Vanessa Hardie reaching her 25th parkrun proudly wearing the traditional milestone cape and Adrian Smith completing his 50th parkrun.

After the run, many participants enjoyed coffee at Lamezleighs Coffee House and Eatery, while the Mirboo North market added to the lively morning atmosphere.

Grand Ridge Rail Trail parkrun is held every Saturday at 8am.

Walkers, runners and volunteers are always welcome.

WDNA appoints new president ahead of 2026 season

WONTHAGGI District Netball Association has appointed Virginia Hunt as president as the organisation prepares for the launch of its 2026 Saturday Junior Competition.

A local netball parent and recent committee member, Ms Hunt stepped into the role after initially joining as joint vice president, answering the call to help guide the association into the new season.

She brings extensive leadership experience from a 30-year career in the higher education sector, offering strong governance and organisational capability to the volunteer position.

"It's an honour to lead an association with such a strong history in our community," Ms Hunt said.

"WDNA has been part of local families' lives for generations, and we're focused on building on that legacy while creating even more opportunities for our young players."

The 2026 season will see continued growth in the Saturday junior competition, which brings together hundreds of local players and families each week at the Wonthaggi courts.

This year, WDNA has also committed to entering both U13 and U15 representative teams, strengthening development pathways and providing local athletes with opportunities to compete at a higher level.

"Community sport thrives because of volunteers," Ms Hunt said.

"We're incredibly grateful for the clubs, coaches, umpires and committee members who give their time to make netball possible for our young people."

The 2026 Saturday Junior Competition launches on March 28 at the Wonthaggi netball courts, marking the start of another exciting year for local netball.

Pink delight at Leongatha Little Athletics

By Andrew Paloczi

ORGANISER Emily Perczyk is delighted with the success of the recent Pink Day run by Leongatha Little Athletics to raise funds for the McGrath Foundation to raise funds for the McGrath Foundation with a total of \$2,012.50 going towards providing McGrath Cancer Care Nurses.

"We had a goal of \$1,000," Emily said with donations, canteen sales and merchandise well and truly exceeding expectations.

She expressed her appreciation to the Little Athletics families for their support and the generosity of donations whether monetary or people giving their time for the cause.

Having firsthand experience of the importance of McGrath Nurses through her own cancer journey Ms Perczyk was thrilled to see everyone "embracing the pink" noting the positive vibe.

"A lot of people approached me about their own journeys," she said making it clear that as well as raising funds such events create discussion and a supportive environment.

"Then people are not feeling alone; being able to talk to each other about different treatments or remedies that might have helped, or journeys as a whole, sometimes it can help us get closure and



Leongatha Little Athletics Committee members Tanya Cowell, Matt Harris, Chris Rowe, Stacey Sargent, Ange Cook, Emily Perczyk, Alisha Hemming, Fiona Christensen and Ben Cruickshank (President) get into the Pink Day spirit. Photo: Morgan Fisher.

understanding of each other," she explained.

As well as the joy of a successful Pink Day Ms Perczyk highlighted the important role those at Leongatha Little Athletics and elsewhere have played in her own cancer experience.

"The committee as a whole, when I was first diagnosed,

they were so supportive and they all rallied behind me," she said.

President Ben Cruickshank painted a ribbon on the Leongatha Velodrome field for the Pink Day athletics meet.

"He made a stencil and painted the bow," Ms Perczyk remarked adding that he was mindful

to use appropriate paint that would not harm the grass.

"I really appreciated the amount of effort he went to and it was a fantastic addition to the day," she said.

As previously reported the McGrath Foundation has broadened its focus from breast cancer to all cancers.

PIBC set to take the world stage in the ABB Grand Final

PHILLIP Island Boardriders is one of the nation's most historic surf clubs, and the team are preparing for the upcoming NRMA Insurance Australian Boardriders Battle (ABB) Grand Final, returning to Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast from March 7-8, 2026.

A total of 42 boardriders clubs from across the country will return to the Gold Coast for the ABB Grand Final with three Victorian clubs set to compete including Phillip Island, Peninsula Surfriders and Jan Juc Boardriders.

The 2026 squad blends generations of talent, and Phillip Island's coastline breeds an incredible talent pool to select a team from with Phillip Island Boardriders President Jake Eisen affirming that it's one of the World's Most Exciting Team Surfing Competitions.

Phillip Island's team includes World Tour surfer Nikki Van Dijk (one of the only Victorians ever to win a World Championship Tour (CT) event), her brother, free-surf weapon Joe Van Dijk, Harry De Roth: 4-time club champion, former 5-time UK national champion, Qualifying Series standout Carl Wright, and rising grom Jarrah Cicero, who will make his ABB debut.

"Travelling as emergencies, we have Ash Easton, Angus Kennedy and Lillian Bassett," said Jake.

"With Walter Hiatt, a key coach, currently out of competition with a neck injury, the team has been lucky to continually have his support in training for the event."

The team just competed at Snapper Rocks, competing



Qualifying Series standout Carl Wright will compete at the upcoming NRMA Insurance Australian Boardriders Battle (ABB) Grand Final, returning to Burleigh Heads on the Gold Coast from March 7-8, 2026.

for the first time at the World Championships. "We qualified for that event after winning the regional ABB battle last year. This was a great event warm up for the ABB in Burleigh."

The PIBC have been fundraising for the event over the past six months and have raised more than \$7,000 towards the ABB Grand Final, with tremendous efforts from the clubs' volunteers and local businesses.

Founded in 1963, Phillip Island lays claim to being Australia's longest-running surf club, with a story that started with post-surf gatherings of friends and grew into a full community club

that built its own clubhouse from the ground up.

With supportive leadership presence from Jake Eisen and Walter Hiatt, the team is known for its deep grassroots culture, legendary Victorian team trips, and its strong community identity. From its youngest members in the Under 8s SuperGroms to club legends like Bobby Mathews (80+), the club will showcase its best team on the biggest club surfing stage in the country.

The NRMA Insurance Australian Boardriders Battle Grand Final features a unique tag-team relay format, with teams of five (Open Men, Open Women,

Junior, Masters and Power Surfer) combining strategy, endurance and performance -- including the famous Burleigh rock jump and 500m sprint up the hill -- in one of the most intense formats in competitive surfing.

The NRMA Insurance Australian Boardriders Battle is Australia's biggest grassroots surfing series, and has been instrumental in strengthening club culture, fostering future champions, and celebrating Australia's deep connection with surfing.

The event will be broadcast live and free on 9GO and mySURFtv YouTube, showcasing the best of Australian club surfing to a national audience.

Leongatha's share in racing fairy tale

A GROUP of Leongatha names recently found themselves on one of Australia's biggest horse racing stages, having an ownership stake in a two-year-old colt with a bit of a knack for turning heads.

That colt's name is Unit Five, and he has strong ownership links locally, including Frank Materia of Materia's Transport, Rod Spokes of Spokes Butchers Leongatha, and the Imps Syndicate, made up of both past and present Imperials Cricket Club players. Often travelling together, they have cheered their horse to success on more than one occasion.

The colt first announced himself to the racing world late last year, winning a Magic Millions two-year-old qualifier in Caulfield in his very first start. That result punched his ticket to Queensland's TAB Magic Millions 2yo Classic on January 17 this year, where he did it again, and claimed victory in the 1200m race after a slow start.

"We didn't get a great start in that race but were able to find the rail early and cut the corner and a gap opened up. No other horse could catch him after that," said Imps Syndicate member, Kristian Gray.

"The feeling of winning in Queensland was unbelievable. There was over 20 of us up on



Unit Five charges down the straight with Thomas Stockdale onboard donning the distinctive silks.

the Gold Coast watching, so it was just great to experience that awesome winning feeling with such a large group. We just went crazy jumping on and hugging each other."

After a couple of handy wins, Unit Five has now amassed \$1,896,750 in prize money after being bought for \$80,000 at the Magic Millions Gold Coast Sale in 2025.

There's still plenty of colour in the tale too, and not only on the racetrack. Unit Five races in what most would describe as rather unique silks, turning heads yet again with a design originally inspired by another part owner, Anthony Scaff's Persian cat named Coco. The

silks display a portrait of Coco's face on the wearer's chest, adding to the blue and black colour scheme.

Mr Gray says being a part of the Imps Syndicate only adds to the owner experience.

"The best part of the cricket guys ownership group is that we get to experience the highs and lows of racehorse ownership together," he said.

Most recently, Unit Five tackled the Group 1 Blue Diamond Stakes at Caulfield, which is the state's biggest race for two-year-olds. Unfortunately, the colt ran into its first real hurdle, finishing 10th overall after a run that didn't exactly go to plan.

Season of success set to culminate at Stony Creek Cup Day

STONY Creek Racing Club is preparing to mark the end of its stand-out 2025-26 season in style at the highly anticipated Ladbrokes Stony Creek Cup Day on Sunday, March 8.

A highlight of the Victorian country racing calendar Cup Day combines thrilling thoroughbred racing with live music, a variety of food trucks and a relaxed family-friendly atmosphere ensuring a fun-filled day both on and off the track.

SCRC chief executive Jason Benbow said the club had been thrilled with how the season unfolded both on and off the track.

"We've had a great season so far and industry participants including trainers, jockeys and owners have been unanimous in their praise of the current track conditions," he said.

"The surface has provided every horse with an equal opportunity with winners emerging from all parts of the track.

"It's incredibly pleasing and a real credit to the work that goes into preparing the track."

Cup Day is renowned for delivering a vibrant and relaxed country racing atmosphere. Racegoers can pack a picnic and settle in on the lawns or choose from a range of packages including reserved picnic tables with umbrellas, beanbags and private marquees.

For those seeking an all-inclusive option the SEN Track Marquee offers food, drinks and a vibrant trackside atmosphere making it one of the most popular ways to enjoy the day.

Children will be kept entertained

throughout the day with a range of supervised activities including pony rides, face painting and the ever-popular JockeyCam VR experience.

The much-loved Fashions on the Field competition will again celebrate style and creativity with dedicated local categories recognising the flair of South Gippsland racegoers.

Adding further excitement the club will once again crown its King and Queen of the Creek, a tradition successfully introduced last season to recognise the leading male and female jockeys across the season.

"This season has been a fantastic reflection of what country racing is all about," Mr Benbow said.

"Bringing people together, celebrating our rich history, creating memories and allowing everyone in the community an opportunity to enjoy the sport.

"To finish the season with Cup Day over the Labour Day long weekend is the perfect way to celebrate all that has gone into making these events possible and we can't wait to welcome the community back to the track once again."

Stony Creek Racing Club is located in scenic South Gippsland and is renowned for bringing together the community, racegoers and holidaymakers alike.

Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 concession and children are free. A range of packages and bus services are available to make getting to and from the track easy and stress-free.

Gates open at 11.30am.

For tickets and more information visit stonycreek.com.au.



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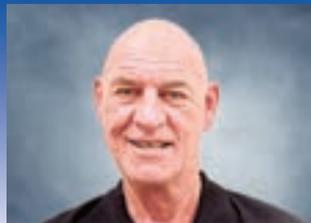
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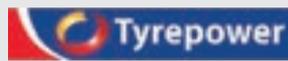
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OMK

OMK went into Saturday's A1 match against Leongatha Town with the objective to make just 40 runs.

The Diggers claimed the win with ease as captain Koby Brann led by example and hit 98 runs.

He was well supported by Jacob Lamers, who made 33 runs.

OMK declared seven down with a score of 218, sending Leongatha Town back into bat in hopes of an outright win.

Jugraj Singh was handy with the ball, taking two wickets, but Town batsman Madura Madusanka was unmoveable, making 101*.

B Grade also secured a win against Leongatha Town.

Nicholas Auddino led his team to the comfortable win by taking 5/39.

Young Liam Jones also bowled well and claimed a wicket, off the back of dad Luke Jones hitting 98 runs the previous week.

OMK's bowlers were consistent and had Town bowled out for 184, winning with a score of 277.

C1 had a win over MDU at the Dumbalk Recreation Reserve.

MDU was bowled out for 59 in 33 overs.

Barry Wyatt was the standout with the ball, taking 4/10.

The rest of the bowling honours were shared around.

Scott Handley and Brad Hayes opened for OMK and made 35* and 20* respectively.

OMK passed MDU's score in seven overs without the loss of a wicket.

C2 was beaten by Leongatha Town.

OMK made 121, which was easily passed by the Scorpions.

"This is a team full of juniors and it's been good to give them a go in C2 for their development," OMK's Jordan Myers said.

"We've got one game left in A and B, and two left in C Grade. We are heading in the right direction leading up to finals. We are playing good, consistent cricket with the bat and ball, which is setting us up really well."

LEONGATHA TOWN

LEONGATHA Town's senior sides took on OMK across all three grades, with plenty of strong individual performances highlighted across the action.

In A Grade, Leongatha posted 141 in the first innings, led by Jesse Giardina (51) and Madura Madusanka (39), before OMK replied with 7/218 declared.

Bowlers Lachie Gill and Rhett Hume each snagged three wickets.

The Scorpions fought back strongly in the second dig, with Madusanka producing an outstanding unbeaten 101, supported by Jack Hume (21*).

In B Grade, OMK made 6/277, with Ethan Smith the standout with the ball claiming 4/94, while Hugh Livingstone and Pandu Jayasinghe also contributed with wickets.

Leongatha's reply of 184 featured solid batting efforts from Luke Bowman (62), Dav Goss (46) and Sam Clark (20).

C Grade claimed the club's win for the round at Digger Park, chasing down OMK's 8/121 to finish 6/124.

Strong bowling performances from Ryan Jorgensen (3/10), Nijo Devassy (2/15) and Cam Dowling (2/22) set the stage.

With the bat, Alex Aeschlimann top-scored with 46, well supported by Ray Edwards (26).

Congratulations Alex on your hard fought first win as captain.

PHILLIP ISLAND

HAVING won on the first day, the Sharks went for an outright win against the Imperials in A1 on Saturday.

Phillip Island captain Daniel Mock made 71 runs and Phillip Island declared when the score was pushed around 60 runs past the Imps'.

Phillip Island sent the Imps back into bat but was unable to get the outright win with the Imps making 6/100.

Captain Jack Ginnane top scored with 61*.

Tim Niven and Jobe Williams were Phillip Island's standouts with the ball, taking 2/16 and 2/17 respectively.

With one game to go, Phillip Island is sitting in fifth place on the ladder.

"We can't go up the ladder, so we're just hoping to end our season with one last win. We've won the last two games, which has been great," Mock said.

It will be a challenge with Phillip Island slated to play OMK in the final round, which is sitting fourth on the ladder.

NERRENA

NERRENA lost to Inverloch in A Grade on Saturday.

The Red Caps were chasing 222 and started well with Eamon Berryman making 20 runs.

However, it began to fall apart with a few quick wickets through the middle.

Mitch Croatto steadied the ship with 24 runs and tailender Shem Murphy top scored with 32 runs.

Regardless, Inverloch bowled well and was able to get the job done.

B Grade had a massive score to contend with and was not able to match Wonthaggi Club's effort.

Club had made 323 and was successful in defending it.

Kade Berryman was best with the bat, making 32 runs.

Gerard Murphy contributed 23 runs and Tyson Harris made 26 runs.

Nerrena was bowled out for 181.

C Grade was also beaten by Wonthaggi Club, playing at the Leongatha velodrome.

Nerrena batted first and opening batsmen Ben Croatto and captain Brian Gannon making 46 and 42 runs respectively.

Third bat Darren Curtis top scored with 54 runs.

However, some low scores would prove costly.

Nerrena managed to pull together a total of 8/179, which it hoped would be defendable.

It was not to be with Club's Ian Hughes making 96 runs.

The bowlers battled with Daniel Grigg, Brendan Salmon and Raph Jefferis each taking a wicket.

Club's winning score was 3/183.

MDU

KOONWARRA/LRSL managed to chase down MDU's total of 250 with six wickets still in hand during Saturday's A2 match.

Playing at the Meeniyana Recreation Reserve, Koonwarra/LRSL looked strong early with Tanuj Namalge opening the batting.

He went on to make a whopping 146 runs, with Isuru Darshana adding 53 runs to the tally.

MDU's bowlers fought back with Mitch McGrath taking 2/58 off nine, Sembakuttige Lakshan taking 1/40 off 20 and Mark Cantwell taking 1/24 off six.

Koonwarra/LRSL's winning total was 4/251.

With one round to go, MDU is



Koonwarra/LRSL's Tanuj Namalge celebrates 100 runs in the A2 match against MDU. He went on to make 146. Photo: Jodie Arnup.

fifth on the ladder and will play Foster to finish off the season.

FOSTER

FOSTER won its first game of the season after a hard-fought battle with Korumburra in A2 on Saturday.

Playing at the Korumburra Recreation Reserve, Foster had made 188 and dug deep to defend the total.

Some early wickets to Luke Rooker, Max Johnston, Noah McMillan and Josh Toner had Foster in a great position to take the game.

However, Rumesh Rangana put the pressure on when he made the first major impact on the scoreboard, making 54 runs.

Tailender Reuben Foster also kept it nice and close with 30 more runs.

Foster's fielding side was determined and got the job done, bowling Korumburra out for 179.

Rooker was the pick of Foster's bowlers with four wickets.

KOONWARRA/LRSL

KOONWARRA/LRSL secured a win against MDU following an impressive performance with the bat in A2 on Saturday.

With the target of 250 in mind, opening batsman Tanuj Namalge seemed unstoppable as he amassed an amazing 146 run-haul before he was dismissed LBW by Sembakuttige Chathura Lakshan.

Namalge was supported by Isuru Darshana, who made 53 runs.

Louis Read and Jason Kennedy finished it off with 12* and 18* respectively.

MDU captain Mitch McGrath was best with the ball, taking two wickets.

Regardless, Koonwarra/LRSL was able to pass MDU's score just four wickets down.

With a place in the finals locked in, Koonwarra/LRSL is looking forward to the final game of the season against Korumburra.

NYORA

B GRADE performed well and bowled out MDU for 92 on Saturday.

Nyora went in looking to defend 276 and exceptional bowling efforts from Ryan White led the way.

White bowled 2/7 off nine overs and Tully Bernaldo took 3/27 off nine overs.

This set the tone for the day, with Jaylen Waixel, Daniel Blackney and Lincoln Brock chipping in.

"This was Lincoln Brock's best bowling effort for the year. It's a good time of year to do it," Nyora's Adam White said.

C Grade had a tough day against Inverloch at the Inverloch Recreation Reserve.

Tristan Dowel and William Uren were the best with the ball, taking two wickets each, and Keith Macclure top scored with 35 runs.

"We were playing against the top team and it was a good effort from our kids to keep them to 160," White said.

"A lot of our U15s played in C2 and gave a great effort."

A and B Grade are now looking ahead to the last game of the season, with C Grade still to face Wonthaggi Club and OMK.

WONTHAGGI CLUB

WONTHAGGI Club had a convincing win over Nerrena in B1 on Saturday.

Club had amassed 323 and managed to bowl Nerrena out for 181.

The standout with the ball was Mark McCall, who took 3/45.

Wickets were shared amongst the rest of the bowlers in a real team effort.

"B Grade is going quite well. It is undefeated on top of the ladder and has been well captained by Sean Roche," Club president Luke McGuirk said.

C1 also played Nerrena and enjoyed a win.

The bowlers performed well and restricted Nerrena to 179.

Angus Benetti took 5/27, and the club was rapt with his efforts.

With the bat, Ian Hughes made 96 runs, with Kevin McLean contributing 46 runs and Jed Caddy finishing it off with 24*.

Wonthaggi Club is sitting in second place on C1's ladder.

In C2, Club played Koonwarra/LRSL, which was a good test.

Club went into bat first and Brian Osborne expertly led the way with 138*.

McGuirk opened with 21 runs and Brayden Pentland made 20 runs.

Club made 5/247.

McGuirk went on to take three wickets, with Ryan McGuirk and 13-year-old Tyler Jeffery taking two each.

Koonwarra/LRSL was bowled out for 137.

Wonthaggi Club congratulated its U15s side for winning the semi-final, with Heath Crump named man-of-the-match.

THE IMPERIALS

THE Imperials had a tough game in B2 as they were outrighted by Glen Alvie.

Glen Alvie proved to be a tough opposition, declaring with a score of 230.

The Imperials were short on players and had several juniors step up to play.

Among them was Jaxon Eddy, who had top scored in the Imps' first innings, claimed a wicket and took a catch.

The Imps came back this week to attempt to reverse outright Glen Alvie but lost a couple of wickets early and could not make up the runs.

Luke Rogers and Sam Vagg performed well, making 51 and 50 runs respectively.

In the last round of the season, the Imperials will take on Koonwarra/LRSL at Koonwarra.

The Imperials are going into this game with some confidence following Koonwarra/LRSL's loss to Kilcunda Bass and hope to end the season on a high note.

KORUMBURRA

C GRADE secured a big win and more importantly jumped into the top four on the ladder with finals now firmly in sight.

On Sunday, March 8, the club's C Grade team takes on Wonthaggi Club at Summerfield Oval in what promises to be a special day.

The match marks the final home game for club games record holder Darren Scott.

A true Cobras legend and club life member, Darren has announced his retirement at the end of the season.

After an incredible career spanning four decades, "Chop" will hang up the bat leaving behind a legacy of commitment, leadership and passion for the club.

The day will also celebrate a major milestone for Adam "Balf" Balfour, who will play his 200th club game.

A loyal servant of the Cobras, Balf began in the junior ranks and worked his way through to senior cricket including 81 A Grade appearances among his 200 games.

The Cobras invite all past and present players, supporters and friends to join them on Sunday to celebrate two outstanding clubmen and cheer the C Grade towards finals.

On Saturday, a strong all-round bowling performance kept Kilcunda Bass to a competitive total with Tom Sorrell leading the attack with three for 20 from seven overs. He was well supported by Darren Scott with two for 12 off seven tight overs.

In reply Peter Edwards provided a quick-fire 20 before veterans Trevor Allan (36 not out off 45 balls) and Darren Scott (52 not out off 44 balls) guided the Cobras home with 17 overs to spare.

In A2, Rumesh Rangana top-scored with 54 from 46 balls, well supported by captain Harry McNeill (23), before the Cobras slipped to 8/102. Reuben Foster dug in for a determined 30 and with Jason Richards put on a crucial 51-run ninth-wicket partnership before the Cobras fell 18 runs short.

Inverloch women build on sustained cricket success

By Andrew Paloczi

INVERLOCH Cricket Club recently added its third women's premiership, following its thrilling win against Koonwarra/Leongatha RSL in the 2023/2024 decider and its success in the previous season's grand final against that opponent.

The initial grand final win made the Stingettes LDCA's then Division 1 premier in the association's first women's season.

While this year's decider shaped as a beauty with second-placed Leongatha Town Inverloch's opponent, spectators didn't get to see as much action as expected.

"The grand final didn't play out the way anyone hoped," Inverloch Cricket Club said on its Facebook page after weather and LDCA rules combined to prevent Leongatha Town batting in response to the Stingettes' innings of 4/109.

However, none of that is Inverloch's fault and those at the club are proud that the result reflects the consistency, teamwork and effort shown across the year that saw the side finish minor premiers in 2025/26, as was the case in the competition's other three seasons.

Passionate Inverloch player and club secretary Jackie Newman, one of five to feature in all three premierships, attributes the Stingettes' success to a combination of culture, consistency and collective commitment that builds over time.

"Our club prides itself on a strong values-driven culture where women and girls are included and encouraged to be themselves," she said.

High training standards, depth across the squad, combined with respect, connection and trust are key factors in the sustained success achieved.

"We are lucky to have a team that shows up for each other, leaders who set the tone, coaches who support us and a club environment that fosters growth, enjoyment and high



Nicole Creaser watches the ball intently for Inverloch in the recent grand final, having now played in all three premierships for the Stingettes. A26_0826

performance," Newman said.

LDCA president John Schelling spoke of Inverloch's achievements and ability to set the standard.

"Inverloch have been the leaders all the way through with the competition and have supported our GCL teams," he said, noting it is the club all the others are trying to beat.

Schelling praised Newman's ongoing contribution.

"She's been a great driver for women's cricket," he said, crediting her with getting the association onboard with starting a women's competition.

Newman reflected on what has been achieved since, describing it as a story of momentum, belief and collective effort.

Growth in participation, with more women and girls joining, staying and progressing through the ranks, and a culture of belonging and pride in being part of the competition

are among the accomplishments she highlights.

Leadership pathways have opened up, with more women stepping into coaching, umpiring and committee roles, benefiting them and clubs.

"The competition is becoming a respected, visible part of the local sporting landscape," Newman said.

Amy McRobert, Nicole Creaser, Holly Williams and Keely Dennerley are the other Stingettes to have played in the trio of premierships.

At this stage, Newman intends to play on next season, saying that after those at the club have reflected on the recently completed campaign, they'll set their sights on determining the approach for 2026/27.

Schelling noted Newman's commitment to encouraging local women's involvement in Gippsland Cricket League competition.

"Participation in representative

cricket is one of the most powerful accelerators of player development because it exposes females to standards, environments and expectations that is a step up from domestic cricket," Newman said.

Sharpening skills, deepening game understanding and building the required mindset for higher level success are benefits that flow from GCL participation.

Additionally, an LDCA female Masters team plays in Melbourne during the offseason, providing opportunities for women over the age of 40 to play in a competition with traditional cricket rules.

Up and coming young female players can gain experience as part of the Sophie Molineux Cup squad, GCL competition for the under-17s.

Local girls and women also play in mixed competition on Saturdays at both junior and senior levels.

Goannas finish on a high note

THE Gippsland Goannas Over-60 cricket team welcomed the Ringwood Over-60 team to Gaskin Park in Churchill on a warm Sunday morning.

The wicket was in good condition, the outfield on the slow side and there was a light north-east breeze as the Goannas won the toss and batted first with Graeme Ingle and Ray Floyd opening the innings.

Ingle was bowled for seven in the fifth over and Bernie Symons joined Floyd.

These two both retired and were replaced by Neil Meredith and Ian Freshwater who took the score to 75 when Meredith was bowled for six in the 20th over.

The Goannas were 2/77 at drinks. Kingsley Rajasingam was the next to go, bowled for two.

Murray Moore retired for 25, Rob Bacchetti was lbw for three, followed closely by Rino Metlikovec bowled for 15.

The score was then 5/125 after 32 overs which soon became 6/127 when Andy Slevin was run out.

Chris de Vent was bowled for six and last man Peter Anton came to the crease.

He was joined by Floyd and they took the score to 146 when both were out, Floyd caught for 15 and Anton stumped for 12.

Symons 23 and Freshwater 32 were the not out batsmen as the Goannas innings finished at 9/154 after their 40 overs.

After the lunch break Symons and Anton opened the bowling for the Goannas with Symons breaking through with the first ball of his fourth over.

Meredith replaced Anton and Symons struck again in each of his next two overs, with Meredith chiming in to have Ringwood 4/48 after 14 overs.

Bacchetti replaced Symons and the score had reached 70 at the 20-over drinks break.

Ingle, Rajasingam, Slevin and Freshwater all bowled a few overs as the score slowly mounted with four batsmen retiring but the run rate was below what was required.

Freshwater took two wickets to finish with 2/18 from his six overs and Anton bowled the first returning batsman in the 40th over as Ringwood completed their innings at 7/135.

Symons had taken 3/16 from seven overs, Meredith 1/19 from seven and Anton 1/23 from four, while Moore, Meredith, Metlikovec and Freshwater all took catches in the field.

This match was the last scheduled for the Goannas Over-60 team with the Over-70s having matches on Tuesday and Sunday next to complete their season weather permitting, as the scheduled match at Warrandyte last Tuesday did not go ahead.

Goannas international representatives are doing well in New Zealand as the National Over-70 team participates in the second Over-70 Cricket World Cup.

Ian Southall has bowled 23 overs in three of the six games played to date taking one wicket at about three runs per over, while Ray Smith has batted four times, has made 255 runs and is yet to be dismissed.

There is one pool match remaining for the team on Tuesday and they will play in the final on Friday having five wins and one washout to currently lead the table.

Goannas Ian Gibson and his wife Heather Farley are co-managers of the team for the New Zealand tour.

Kookaburras finish season with a resounding victory

THE rampaging Kookas took on the Canterbury Constables at headquarters Outtrim last Sunday.

New skipper Ian Thorn lost the toss and the Constables chose to bat.

Micky Whiteside soon had the Constables jailed clean bowling Sergeant Angley with serious heat.

Skipper Thorn then took one for the team with a ball to the eyebrow putting him out for the innings.

Pieter Loos continued to pressure the Canterbury lads and president Neil White 1/11 and Peter "Water" Falls 1/30 cramped the scoring.

The Constables were restricted to 6/55.

They escaped somewhat and finally posted 6/170 off their allotted 40 overs.

The Kookas then swung the willow.

Vic representative Pete Miller blasted a brutal 45 not out off 30 balls well supported by Dave Tessari with an assured 18 not out.

Skipper Thorn then bravely came out and made a courageous 13 with great support from co-skipper Phil Richards 18.

Things were tight but Neil White 18 not out and master blaster Pieter Loos 25 not out off a lazy 12 balls saw the Kookas cruise to a great victory with 5/171 with six overs to spare.

Man of the match went to Pieter Loos.

Next it is off to the Victorian Over 60s Championships in Echuca where fun, friendship, great partners and great cricket will be the order of the week.



South Gippsland Kookaburras' man of the match Pieter Loos celebrates with Pankaj Parikh.



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LEONGATHA & DISTRICT CRICKET ASSOCIATION

- A1:** Madura Madusanka (Town) 101* ; Rhys Newman (Inverloch) 4/31
- A2:** Tanuj Namalge (Koon L/RSL) 146 ; Luke Rooker (Foster) 4/44
- B1:** Luke Bowman (Town) 62 ; Nicholas Auddino (OMK) 5/39
- B2:** Luke Rogers (Imperials) 51 ; Ryan Sinclair (Glen Alvie) 5/33
- C1:** Ian Hughes (Club) 96 ; Angus Benetti (Club) 5/27
- C2:** Brian Osborne (Club) 138* ; Cameron Butler (Inverloch) 4/28

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LADDERS

RD 13

Team	Points	%	Team	Points	%
A GRADE, Division 1			A GRADE, Division 2		
Inverloch	108	1.263	Nyora	120	1.486
Club	96	1.473	Kilcunda Bass	114	1.600
Nerrena	96	1.419	Koonwarra L/RSL	90	1.491
OMK	90	1.059	Glen Alvie	60	0.865
Phillip Island	60	1.126	MDU	36	0.902
Town	12	0.599	Korumburra	36	0.809
Imperials	6	0.501	Foster	12	0.436
B GRADE, Division 1			B GRADE, Division 2		
Club	134	2.416	Nyora	108	1.342
OMK	102	2.273	MDU	102	0.908
Nerrena	90	1.645	Koonwarra L/RSL	96	1.164
Inverloch	80	1.439	Kilcunda Bass	66	0.804
Phillip Island	42	0.737	Glen Alvie	62	1.117
Town	30	0.405	Imperials	42	0.783
Korumburra	6	0.238			

LADDERS

RD 19

Team	Points	%	Team	Points	%
C GRADE, Division 1			C GRADE, Division 2		
OMK	144	1.762	Inverloch	156	1.644
Club	138	1.462	Club	150	2.458
Phillip Island	108	0.927	Koonwarra L/RSL	120	1.248
Korumburra	90	1.190	Glen Alvie	120	0.977
Nerrena	90	0.849	Nyora	60	0.513
Kilcunda Bass	60	0.772	Town	48	0.563
MDU	54	0.535	OMK	30	0.625

NEXT WEEKEND'S GAMES & UMPIRE APPOINTMENTS

ROUND 14 - SATURDAY, MARCH 7 (DAY 1)

A GRADE, Division 1 - 1PM START

Phillip Island v OMK	Cowes	Ken Scrimshaw
Club v Nerrena	Wonthaggi Turf	Shane Moore
Town v Imperials	Scorpion Pk 1	Ashleigh Stride
Inverloch - BYE		

A Grade, Division 2 - 1PM START

Koon L/RSL v K'burra	Leongtha Turf	Ian Salmon
K-Bass v Nyora	Bass 1	Michael Thomas
Foster v MDU	Foster CG	Les White
Glen Alvie - BYE		

B GRADE, Division 1 - 1PM START

Korumburra v Club	Korumburra	Graham Wightman
OMK v Phillip Island	Outtrim	Steve Williamson
Nerrena v Inverloch	Nerrena	Geoff Birnie
Town - BYE		

B GRADE, Division 2 - 1PM START

Koon L/RSL v Imperials	Koonwarra	Tyson Tootel
MDU v K-Bass	Meeniyen	TBA
Glen Alvie v Nyora	Glen Alvie	TBA

ROUND 20 - SATURDAY, MARCH 7

C GRADE, Division 1 - 1PM START

MDU v Phillip Island	Dumbalk	TBA
Korumburra v Club	Poowong	TBA
K-Bass v OMK	Bass 2	TBA
Nerrena - BYE		

C GRADE, Division 2 - 1PM START

OMK v Glen Alvie	Digger Park	TBA
Club v Nyora	McMahon	TBA
Koon L/RSL v Town	Leongatha Vel.	TBA
Inverloch - BYE		

Subject to Confirmation.

Any prospective umpires can contact

Ash Stride 0432 350 944 or Ken Scrimshaw 0433 297 421



Philip Richards attempts to hold off the onslaught of Inverloch bowling. He finished 23 not out. W19_0926

Stingrays dismantle struggling Cobras

B GRADE, DIVISION 1

INVERLOCH made a statement over the weekend, crushing Korumburra in what was a very one-sided B Grade Division 1 match at Thompson Reserve.

They went into the second day of their match on Saturday, February 28 with all the momentum, after previously declaring at 6/357. They continued to roll over Korumburra, as they finished just 10/65.

Inverloch originally won the toss and elected to bat, a decision they would not regret as they made their intentions clear from the start.

Those intentions being an utter dismantling of Korumburra's bowlers, primarily through two of their most talented batsmen.

Opening batsman Walter Taberner turned the innings into his playground, producing an absolute

masterclass as he cruised to 163 runs from the same number of deliveries. He was smacking balls all over the field, as 22 boundaries flowed from his bat.

But Taberner was not the end of Korumburra's woes, as an inspired Will Rankin added a century of his own, finishing on 102 not out from just 89 balls. Between Rankin and Taberner, the pair effectively batted the Cobras out of the match.

Cobra Noah Belvedere battled hard with the ball in his hand, finishing with 3/75, while Aaron Damon also chipped in with 2/71, but the batting prowess shown from the Inverloch batsmen was too much to overcome.

If the monumental total of 357 felt imposing to begin with, then Inverloch's bowlers made it insurmountable to overcome.

Korumburra's woes continued into their batting innings, as six batsmen

fell without scoring a single run.

Stingray James McNamara was a monster with the ball, finishing the match 3/5 from just nine overs.

Taberner showed his value as an all-rounder, capping off his 163-run performance with two wickets of his own, while Isaac Seuren and Jesse Dugard also claimed two wickets each, with none conceding more than 21 runs.

For Korumburra, Phillip Richards and Aaron Damon offered some resistance with 23 and 22 runs respectively, but it was always going to be a huge ask considering the monstrous total.

It was a belief-building performance for Inverloch, who will now turn their attention to a final-round clash with top four team Nerrena, who sit one spot above them on the ladder, before preparing for a finals campaign which is now guaranteed.



Jesse Dugard pictured bowling to Philip Richards. Jess had a great day with ball in hand, finishing with 2/21. W20_0926

Kilcunda Bass build momentum as finals loom

A GRADE, DIVISION 2

KILCUNDA Bass continued their impressive A2 season on the weekend, wrapping up a convincing win over Glen Alvie at the Wonthaggi Recreation Reserve in the season's penultimate round.

The day started with the result yet to be decided, requiring Killy Bass to chase down Glen Alvie's modest total of 93 runs. They calmly completed the job, ultimately finishing 6/158 after 66 overs.

Glen Alvie dug themselves a hole a week earlier when they were bowled out for 93 in the 44th over. Early wickets made the job a lot harder than it needed to be, with both Archie Moore and Archie Donohue falling for just one run, even though they both faced over nineteen deliveries. The innings was never quite able to be recovered.

Glen Alvie's Matthew Donohue attempted to steady the sinking ship with 23 runs, while Harvey Smith also showed resilience, finishing on 24 not out. Vice-captain Matthew Dakin added a handy 15 as well, but a full innings recovery eluded them.

Bass' Todd Smith was a wizard with the ball in hand, finishing 5/20 and not allowing the Glen Alvie batsmen to settle. Ryan Brown also had a day out, finishing 3/23 from 10 overs.

Three ducks and several single-figure scores left the door wide open for Kilcunda to put the final nails in the coffin, and they did just that on the weekend.

Chasing 94, Killy Bass wasted no time. Openers Cameron Davidson and Jaydan Tregear set the pace with a strong partnership, making 34 and 39 respectively and removing any doubt from the result. Benjamin Lucas was next to pick up the bat, and he continued the relentless charge, finishing the match with 48 before Archie Moore made a stunning catch to deny him the half-century.

Glen Alvie certainly never quit though. Ben McRae delivered a stunning bowling display late in the innings, removing Todd Smith and Aaron Conron back-to-back, giving himself a hat trick opportunity. For a moment it looked like McRae had achieved the feat, as he and his teammates appealed strongly against Ash Larcombe on his first ball faced. But it wasn't meant to be, as the umpire's finger remained down. McRae finished 3/26 from 15 overs, but the damage had been done as Bass cruised to victory.

The result leaves Kilcunda Bass sitting second on the ladder with 9 wins and just a single loss coming to Nyora early in the season. They will look to consolidate as they head into their final regular season clash against that very same Nyora team with revenge on their minds.

Glen Alvie will lick their wounds and use their bye next week to prepare for their own finals campaign, as they currently sit fourth and two wins clear over fifth-placed MDU.



Killy Bass' Todd Smith sends the ball right back where it came from. W03_0926



Glen Alvie skipper Ben McRae sends one down the pitch to Benjamin Lucas, who finished with 48 runs. W01_0926



Lucas McRae fires a ball towards the bat of Todd Smith, who finished with 12 runs. W02_0926

LDCA - FEBRUARY 28 HIGHLIGHTS

A GRADE, DIVISION 1

OMK 7-d/218 d Town 10/141 & 2/131
 OMK Batting: K Brann 98, P Thind 36, J Lamers 33
 OMK Bowling (2nd): J Singh2/7
 Town Batting (2nd): M Madusanka 101*
 Town Bowling: L Gill 3/27, R Hume 3/58
Inverloch 222 d Nerrena 153
 Nerrena Batting: S Murphy 32, M Croatto 24, E Berryman 20, J Hoy17*
 Inverloch Bowling: R Newman 4/31, L Rankin 4/42, R Abeysinghe1/38, K Rotthier1/8
Phillip Island 9/129 d Imperials 74 & 6/136
 PI Batting: D Mock 71, T Cameron 13
 PI Bowling (2nd): T Niven 2/16, J Williams 2/17
 Imp. Batting (2nd): J Ginnane 61*, C Reid 36
 Imp. Bowling: A Williams 3/41, J Cochrane 2/15
Club - BYE

A GRADE, DIVISION 2

Kilcunda Bass 6/158 d Glen Alvie 93
 K-Bass Batting: B Lucas 48, J Tregear 39, C Davidson 34
 Glen Alvie Bowling: B McRae 3/26, M Donohue 1/2, M Dakin 1/41
Koonwarra L/RSL 4/251 d MDU 250
 Koon L/RSL Batting: T Namalgue 146, I Darshana 53, J Kennedy 18*, L Read 12*
 MDU Bowling: M McGrath 2/58, M Cantwell 1/24, S C Lakshan 1/41
Foster 188 d Korumburra 170
 K'burra Batting: R Rangana 54, R Foster 30, J Richards 23*, H McNeil 23
 Foster Bowling: L Rooker 4/44, M Cooke 2/34, M Johnston 1/23, N McMillan 1/43
Nyora - BYE

B GRADE, DIVISION 1

Club 8/323 d Nerrena 181
 Nerrena Batting: No scores listed
 Club Bowling: No bowling listed
OMK 6/277 d Town 184
 Town Batting: L Bowman 62, D Goss 46, S Clark 20, M Hardy 19, L Hickey 12, L Ashton 8
 OMK Bowling: N Auddino 5/39, P Dell 2/90, B Maguire 1/4, L Jones 1/20, T Nicholas 1/40
Inverloch d-6/357 d Korumburra 103
 K'burra Batting: P Richards 23*, A Damon 22, N Belvedere 8, L Dole 3, W Dourley 1
 Inverloch Bowling: J McNamara 3/5, W Taberner 2/8, I Seuren 2/19, J Dugard 2/21
Phillip Island - BYE

B GRADE, DIVISION 2

Nyora 9/276 d MDU 92
 MDU Batting: R Henry 24, K Sinclair 24, A Richardson 11, T Zukovskis 8, A Bettersby 5*
 Nyora Bowling: T Bernaldo 3/27, L Brock 2/4, R White 2/7, D Blackney 2/15, J Waixel 1/37
Kilcunda Bass 3/102 d Koonwarra L/RSL 98
 K-Bass Batting: R Gardiner 41*, A Miller 38*
 Koon L/RSL Bowling: R Read, 1/7, S Kaneshathasan 1/13, B Smith 1/21
Glen Alvie 9-d/203 d Imperials 6/42 & 134
 Imperials Batting: L Rogers 51, S Vagg 50, M Reid 14, L Anderson 8, J Jeffery 6
 Glen Alvie Bowling: R Sinclair 5/33, V Peiris 2/2, E Spiteri-Stevens 2/31

C GRADE, DIVISION 1

Club 3/183 d Nerrena 8/179
 Nerrena Batting: D Curtis 54, B Croatto 46
 Nerrena Bowling: B Salmon 1/24, D Grigg 1/25
 Club Batting: I Hughes 96, K Mclean 46
 Club Bowling: A Benetti 5/27, C Adams 2/42
OMK 0/60 d MDU 59
 MDU Batting: D Thomas 15, C Hooper 9
 MDU Bowling: Fill-in 0/18, R Prosser 0/20
 OMK Batting: S Handley 35*, B Hayes 20*
 OMK Bowling: B Wyatt 4/10, S Taylor 2/0
Korumburra 1/116 d K-Bass 8/115
 K-Bass Batting: J Hockett 40, J Matser 21
 K-Bass Bowling: A Blackney 1/33, H Bettles 0/22
 K'burra Batting: D Scott 52*, T M Allen 36*
 K'burra Bowling: T Sorrell 3/20, D Scott 2/12
Phillip Island - BYE

C GRADE, DIVISION 2

Inverloch 8/166 d Nyora 55
 Inverloch Batting: W Chapman 44, J Foote 28*
 Inverloch Bowling: C Butler 4/28, B Poll 2/0
 Nyora Batting: K Maclure 35, W Uren 6
 Nyora Bowling: W Uren 2/18, T Dowel 2/36
Town 6/124 d OMK 8/121
 OMK Batting: Private Player 26, D Wylie 18*
 OMK Bowling: M Whiteside 3/14, J Battersby 2/40
 Town Batting: A Aeschlimann 56, R Edwards 26
 Town Bowling: R Jorgensen 3/10, N Davassy 2/15
Club 5/247 d Koonwarra L/RSL 137
 Club Batting: B Osborne 138*, L McGuirk 21
 Club Bowling: L McGuirk 3/32, R McGuirk 2/14
 Koon L/RSL Batting: M Boswell 40*, B Cocksedge 22
 Koon L/RSL Bowling: G Boxall 1/18, A Piksons 1/22
Glen Alvie - BYE



Cougars fire with Pedlow double act

By Tayla Kershaw

TWELVE-year-old Ryder Pedlow announced himself in senior cricket with a devastating 7/22 against Kilcunda Bass and hasn't looked back since, dominating the B2 competition alongside his father Brett at Koonwarra/LRSL.

Brett's bowling average is second in the league while Ryder sits sixth, a remarkable feat for a player who only turned 13 in January.

Brett imagined it would still be a few years before the duo could play together but Ryder has far exceeded expectations.

"It's been amazing to see his progress. He's really holding his own in the senior grades," Brett said.

When Ryder first stepped up to bat in B2 he made 40-odd runs before delivering that match-winning 7/22 just after Christmas.

"He was really proud of that game," Brett said.

Brett said they've been lucky to be part of the Koonwarra/LRSL Cricket Club which has leaned into the development of its juniors, allowing Ryder to play in the senior grades alongside his dad and his mates.

"Ryder and his mate Reggie (Read) have been loving playing together. It's been really good for their development and it's great to watch. The beauty of cricket is that you can play at any age," Brett said.

"Based on their recent performances, they are on an upward trajectory."

Ryder also plays in the U15s Koonwarra/LRSL and Leongatha Town team, played U13s GCL and plays basketball for Leongatha Lightning which becomes a juggling act over summer.

"The cricket club is supportive of all the sports the kids choose to play. It's been a thrill," Brett said.

Ryder's passion for sport comes from his family who have had connections in local cricket, basketball, tennis and football.

"We are lucky to live in Leongatha where we have such great facilities and sport culture is embraced and encouraged. It's brilliant," Brett said.

Brett's own cricket career began with juniors at the Imperials before a stint as captain/coach at Mirboo North where he was part of a few premierships. He was also part of a group that set up the Yarram and District Pelicans and has now settled at Koonwarra/LRSL.

"I've always been in and out of cricket clubs. It's a great way to stay connected to the community and keep fit," Brett said.

With one round to go in the 2025/26 competition, Koonwarra/LRSL's B2 side has had a great season and will be featured in the finals series.

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