

HARCOURT NEWS THE CORE

January 2016

HARCOURT NEWS - Edition 24

Harcourt Progress Association Inc

<http://harcourt.vic.au/news>

Edna McDougall Community Member of the Year



*Edna with her Australia Day Award accompanied by her husband Ken.
Read more of Edna's achievements in the community on page 4,
More photos from the Australia Day Breakfast, page 5.*

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DEADLINES & PUBLICATION DATES

We aim to publish by the 3rd of the month. The deadline for submissions is the 24th of the month prior. Advertisers and Community Groups will be sent reminder emails. There is no edition in January.





Applefest King and Queen



Congratulations to David Heath and Genevieve Ward who have taken on the respective roles of King Jonathan and Lady William for Applefest 2016. David and Genevieve are both active volunteers in the Harcourt community. As the Chair of the Harcourt Progress Association David is involved with fundraising events such as Easter Egg Hunt, market BBQs and this will be his third Applefest as a volunteer. David recently completed the Loddon Murray Community Leadership course which has strengthened his leadership skills, plus he's taken up the project to see Stanley Park North irrigated. His discussions with stakeholders look promising and he hopes to see this beautiful town centre green all year round for locals and visitors to enjoy.

Genevieve is the Advertising Coordinator of Harcourt's local newspaper - The Core. She also lends a hand at HPA fundraisers, is a member of the Mount Alexander CWA and this is her fourth Applefest as a volunteer. David says, "Last year's Applefest was a huge success with a pleasing attendance attributed to the new Kid's Karnival and a bigger market". With more rides, a kid's stage and extra market stalls he is confident 2016 will be another exciting festival.

David and Gen are pleased to be ambassadors for the Harcourt Valley in the lead up to March 12. They will be promoting Applefest at local markets in Castlemaine, Wesley Hill and Bendigo. If you see them around town give them a wave or say 'hi'.



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Printing provided by Lisa Chesters, Federal MP for Bendigo

Edna a Fitting Choice for Australian Day Award

Edna McDougall's win of the Community Member of the Year in Harcourt was a genuine surprise for her. She had no idea that she had been nominated. In her acceptance speech she thanked the person who "dobbed her in" who was her husband Ken. Ken wrote a lengthy letter to the Harcourt Lions outlining Edna's outstanding contributions and achievements in the community. Who better to nominate Edna than someone who knows her so well? Edna also thanked the Harcourt Lions for hosting the event and the sponsors who supported it.

Edna has been deeply involved in sports in the district since she arrived from Albury in 1954. Her interests have included Netball, Basketball, Aerobics and Cycling. But she has not just been a participant; apart from winning sporting awards, Edna has coached, taught, organised and taken part in fund

raising – especially for the "War Memorial" Sports Stadium at Wesley Hill in Castlemaine. As a founding member of the netball and basketball communities she was on the committees which organised the 40th anniversaries of each in recent years.

She also enthusiastically assisted Ken when he joined St. John's Ambulance in 1967. She was responsible for the dressmaking of all the Nursing Cadet uniforms and supervised and cared for the Cadets as they worked for St John's.

Edna has ridden the Murray to Moyne bike ride five times to assist in raising money for Castlemaine Hospital and true to her desire to keep fit she continues to ride 45 – 50kms about three times a week.

Well done Edna; our outstanding Community Member for 2016.

The Applefest Art Show

Artists throughout central Victoria are busily preparing their paintings for the 2016 Harcourt Applefest Art Show. This event will be launched on Thursday 10th March and be open to the public until Monday 14th March.

Art works are to be no greater than 40 X 40 cm and are eligible for a number of awards, including Best Local Subject, Best Oil/Acrylic and Best Watercolour. These last-named awards are presented annually in memory of Cameron Lang, foundation chairman of the Heritage Committee and of Shirley Stewart, a talented Harcourt watercolour artist. The Student Awards generally attract a strong field of talent and a pleasing range of entries.

The Art Show entry form is available to download on <http://www.harcourtapplefest.org.au/> forms. Entry forms should be submitted by 26th February.

This year's Art Show will have a special feature in the art work of students of Harcourt Valley Primary School. During the last term of 2015, under the guidance of Ms Susan Redland, every child in the school had a hand in creating a series of witty, amusing and thought-provoking tableaux which will be on display the whole weekend. We are looking forward to seeing their work on display at Harcourt's ANA Hall. All-in-all, the March 2016 Applefest Art Show promises to be a not-to-be-missed happening!



Saturday March 12th 2016
The Silver Anniversary
Harcourt Applefest



Harcourt Lions Australia Day Breakfast



All stand for the anthem...



(left to right) Alan Garner, Alan Elliot, Neil Frankling, and Joe Norris enjoyed the breakfast.



Welcome to the family and friends of the Good Day Eco-Life Orchard at Sutton Grange who attended their first Australia Day breakfast.

Book your Kids Karnival tickets online now!

After the success of last year's inaugural event, the Applefest Kids Karnival is back bigger and better than before.

We have consolidated the Karnival within the Pony Club grounds at the Bridge Street Reserve and PACKED IT FULL of entertainment, activities and rides for kids of all ages.

New at this year's Kids Karnival is the bouncing aerial bungee jump and the laser tag zone. There's also a dedicated kids entertainment area with musicians and performers and a Teddy Bears Picnic and tea party. We've invited back the fabulous folk from Specky Sports along with the pedal powered slot cars, miniature train, animal farm and climbing wall. They will also be arcade games and a craft zone and it wouldn't be a festival without jumping castles and face painting. There are free activities at the pool and crazy bike events in Bridge Street.

Tickets are on sale now, starting from \$15. A day pass entitles you to access all areas for 5 hours crammed full of fun. Order your tickets now and we'll post them so you avoid the queues. Online tickets also save you money - go to www.trybooking.com/KAUH

Dave Chaplin, Alma Chaplin, Darren Rennie, Marion Rennie, Charmaine Nicholson, Ed Nicholson seen at the Australia Day breakfast.



Councillor Update

It is great to see the developments going ahead at Harcourt. We will see more new houses underway and there will eventually be flow-on to the school and local businesses.



Who would want to live anywhere else??

At the Australia Day ceremony I enjoyed catching up with local identities and I was reflecting on how fortunate we are in our community. Yes we have our occasional setbacks but when we persist we will be successful. I feel very fortunate to represent my local community at Council and it has been a steep learning curve as many of the issues are very complex.

As you will know our elected Councillors are all experienced people from our municipality. It is no surprise they understand community values and aspirations and are there to do their best for the community. Given that scenario, imagine how frustrating it is when Council fails to deliver what the community wants.

To put it simply my expectation is that Council delivers the highest possible customer service. In the latest customer service survey there has been no improvement in service delivery. This is clearly not acceptable and we have a long way to go in this regard. When I raise my concerns on various matters at Council people talk about world's best practice!! I can tell you we might have the world's best community but we are a long way removed from world's best practice when it comes to service delivery.

All we want for our community is a fair go and value for money.

Many of you will know that the State Government has introduced rate capping. I support this and I support the notion that Council must be more efficient in the delivery of services.

In real terms rates have doubled in the last ten years and this is a real problem for all of us. Under rate capping, rates will still rise at around CPI and there will be fluctuations as property values change.

This morning we had heavy rain and some hail. I hope that apples have not been damaged. A lot of dams are low and hopefully there will be some run off. At least the rain will be good for the gardens.

I wish everyone in the district a safe and happy New Year.

Best regards, Tony

AG Cordy
Councillor

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Update from Tread

Owners Andy and Paula have been busy renovating the rooms at Tread to provide more accommodation options for visitors to Harcourt. Four rooms are currently available, with another six getting a complete make-over and becoming available in the coming weeks. Work will continue around the buildings also with landscaping and painting scheduled for the coming months.

The café and restaurant will remain closed for the foreseeable future as Andy and Paula concentrate their efforts on upgrading the accommodation offering. In the meantime, coffee addicts can pop by the General Store, travel down the road to Skydancers or further afield to Castlemaine to get their fix. For all accommodation enquiries visit Tread's website at www.treadharcourt.com.au

Mount View Estate

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Mount View Estate

The Mount View Estate in Market Street Harcourt went to sale on 23 December, 2015. Five of the available fourteen lots have sold and are under contract.

The Core spoke with Bill O’Neil the representative of the two local families responsible for the development of the Estate. Bill O’Neil, Melissa Pollock and Michael and Sharon Blake are long term residents who want to see sensitive development in Harcourt and are committed to doing it in the right way. For example, the wide street is consistent with other road reserves in Harcourt to maintain local character and will have a bitumen spay seal with a landscaped verge planted with shade trees. All services will be installed underground, including power. The average lot size is equivalent to existing township lots and are generous compared with other developing residential estates in the Shire (the lots range in size from 870m² to 3333m²). The developers had extensive consultation with NCCMA and Goulburn Murray Water; as a result the easement on Picnic Gully Creek has been transferred to the NCCMA permanently. Much rehabilitation work has been done along the creek bed including the eradication of gorse and blackberry. A required developer contribu-

tion will see a footpath constructed from the estate to the bus stop on Market Street.

Bill said “We are demonstrating that there is strong demand for residential township allotments in Harcourt. It is fantastic that five blocks were pre-sold within a month. The Loddon Mallee South Regional Plan states that Harcourt is a designated growth town, because of its strategic position in the Calder road and rail transport corridor. We believe our development is sympathetic and sensitive and importantly its location doesn’t compromise the horticultural or tourism future of the town.”

The subdivision is Stage 1 of this development; Stage 2 and Stage 3 are planned subject to Council approval. These stages will require re-zoning and planning permits.

The subdivision has certainly got off to a flying start, it is only a year since the land was purchased with all consultations and approvals complete. The next stage should see the construction of the road commence in April and titles for the blocks should be issued towards the middle of the year enabling house construction to commence.



Harcourt CFA Report

I would like to share a few lines from the January operational update written by our Chief Officer Joe Buffone.

“The unpredictability of the weather is continuing and the fire threat remains with us. The Crib Point fire and fire at Edgecombe near Kyneton in recent days are examples of how quickly fires can escalate and threaten property under erratic conditions..... There were also some good examples of preparedness by some residents and this is a timely reminder to stay vigilant. It’s not too late for individual households to prepare and plan and be fully aware of the fire risk..... This season there have already been 18 Total Fire Ban days, 15 major incidents (including interstate deployments) and more than 23,000 hectares burnt. Although the total number of fires against comparable years is consistent, the number of hectares burnt is significantly lower. Again, this is evidence of our preparedness, readiness and the importance of aggressive, determined initial attack. I commend everyone for their ongoing efforts.”

Locally we have experienced a quieter December (three turnouts) and January (at time of writing, five turnouts) than normal which is pleasing to report.

Of the eight calls only two of these were a primary brigade call. So while this is a great result, we cannot afford to let our guard down as February and March will provide the hotter and windy conditions conducive to the spread of fire. It is also likely that we will experience more summer thunderstorms that will produce lightning strikes. And please remember that the end of February does NOT mean the end of the fire danger period.

Our Community Fire Ready Meeting was cancelled due to the day being declared a Total Fire Ban. The Brigade has decided not to reschedule it for this fire season but plan to have some information available at the Applefest. Keep in mind that if there is something you need to know, then you can call into the fire station of a Sunday morning between 9.00am and 9.45am.

And finally, if you were wondering where the smoke came from that drifted through the Harcourt Valley early evening on Monday 25th January, it had been blown across Bass Strait from the fires down in Tasmania.

*Tyrone Rice
Captain*

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Colour me in!



Harcourt Pool Update

There's no place like your local outdoor pool when combatting a long hot summer, and this year has been no exception.

The Harcourt Pool has been a great destination for locals and visitors alike to cool off and enjoy a refreshing dip. The pool looks great thanks to a terrific spruce-up courtesy of Mount Alexander Shire Council who have replaced the BBQ plate and painted the outdoor furniture. The new saline treatment means the water is crystal clear and clean without the use of harsh chemicals.

This season the Harcourt Pool has been better than ever thanks to the partnership between the Harcourt Progress Association and pool managers the Bendigo YMCA. Together these organisations have worked to bring you a summer swimming school program, weekly aqua aerobics classes and, recently, a very successful Pool Party. More fun is planned with a series of weekly BBQs every Friday evening in February from 5pm – 7pm (weather permitting) complete with live music thanks to local duo Summer Rain. With any luck we can get the good folk of Ice-cream Social to make a return visit with their ice-cream van peddling delicious treats.

Council have held a series of listening posts at the pool to gauge community feedback, taking on board any suggestions, comments or complaints pool users wish to make. Council officers will be back at the pool again on Wednesday 24 February 2016 5.30 pm – 6.30 pm to hear your thoughts and ideas about improving the Harcourt Pool.

Looking ahead to the end of the season, the YMCA will be bringing the giant inflatables back for a final farewell at the Harcourt Applefest on 12th March. There's plenty of warm weather looming between now and then so make sure you get along to enjoy the great delights of the Harcourt Pool.

See you Fridays in February for a snag, a song and a swim, 5pm – 7pm (weather permitting).

Summer Rain entertained those who attended the Pool Party (with occasional help from Gen Ward)



Harcourt Progress Association



Back to School at Harcourt Valley Primary

It's time to get organised for school again; time to check whether the shoes still fit and the uniform too.

Where is the school bag? Also check for any dead fruit, sandwiches and other mysterious looking food from last year still lurking in the bottom of the bag. School starts on Thursday 28th January at 9am..... Yes you do have to be up that early!

This year we are welcoming seventeen new Preps and we are looking forward to the first day for these little people. We also have some new children in other grade levels who are joining us.

The year will begin with our "Building Our Learning Community" program for the first two and a half weeks. This includes activities based around our school values, our expectations for learning and also

working together. Social and emotional learning is also highlighted at this time. There are opportunities for activities outside the school such as a visit to the pool for the afternoon. Our major excursion of this program is a visit to the Great Stupa of Universal Compassion in Bendigo followed by the movie "Inside Out" at the Star Cinema in Eaglehawk on Wednesday 10th February.

During this program, we also meet with our parents to share information about their children to help make a good start to the year. We look forward to this exchange and parents will be hearing from us soon.

Welcome and welcome back to school.

Annette Smith – Principal

Harcourt Football Netball Club



UNDER 17½ TEAM

Are looking for new players to join the club in 2016

If you or any of your friends might be interested in having a kick of the footy come along and meet the coach.

For more details ring: Glen 0411 484 698

We look forward to meeting you!

Welcome to 2016

We welcome all new players and it's wonderful that we have so many players returning.

Football had some runs prior to Christmas and training is now in full swing on Fridays. Netball had tryouts last year and will start training on Thursdays: 5.30pm to 6.30pm for Juniors, Under 15's 6pm to 7pm and 6.30pm to 8pm for Seniors.

We are fortunate to have Sean Smith back as senior coach and we do not at this stage have a reserve coach. Glen Wallis joins us as the Under 17.5 coach. Mark Teasdale is looking after the Auskick this year and is looking for one of the parents to co-ordinate.

We are still looking for some Under 17.5 players, so please recruit and give them Glen Wallis's contact details. See the advertisement on this page.

In Netball we have Deb Ginnivan coaching the under 17's, Meg Ginnivan coaching the Under 15's and the Under 13's are being coached by Carly Wilkins. The senior coach is me unless anyone has a better idea!

We look forward to a successful year in 2016 and we look forward to all members' support when we hold fundraising events.

Our AGM will be on the 17th February 7pm followed by a full club meeting. The AGM and meeting are COMPULSORY for all players and junior parents. Players should RSVP in Team App.

GO LIONS!

*Kathie Teasdale
President*

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LIMERICK

*by
The Bard of North Harcourt*

*When playing a good game of tennis,
My opponent (called Roger) said when is
This game due to end,
'Cos I've got a friend
Who urgently needs me in Venice.*



Maree Edwards MP

State Member for Bendigo West

Putting Community First

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Harcourt Tennis Club Supports Andrey Kuznetsov at the Australian Open 2016

The Harcourt Tennis Club through Tennis Australia was awarded a main draw player to cheer for at the Australian Open 2016.

Andrey Kuznetsov is 24 years old and is from Russia.

Members from the Harcourt Tennis Club were very excited to meet Andrey and wish him all the best for his next match. Andrey made it all the way through to the 4th round where he was beaten by Gael Mon-

files. It has been a wonderful experience following Andrey through the Australian Open and we will always be cheering for Andrey in all his future tennis endeavours.

Sharon Blake

(Below) Kate Blake, Tori Parsons and Donna Parsons pictured with Andrey at the Australian Open.



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hArcouRT

No. 5: Ben Laycock

We know Harcourt is a place with hidden treasures, but perhaps not many of its residents would necessarily name the arts among them. Yet we have among us a significant – and increasing – number of talented, often successful, occasionally illustrious, practitioners from across the spectrum of the art world.

Recently the stroke of some nameless office geek's pen mysteriously redrew – for rate purposes – the boundaries of Harcourt. Harcourt was the winner, because it can now count among its art luminaries a man who probably needs little or no introduction. Drum roll, please.

Ben Laycock is a familiar figure in the area, even to people who may not know his name. “The barefoot guy”, who wears shoes maybe once a year (and then often just thongs) for special occasions. I've visited him in the dead of winter when frost is thick on the ground, thinking he'd have to be shod today, but it's me that should know better.

Ben is an artist. A real artist. From his leathery soles to the tip of the tousled hair, he epitomises the label more than anyone else I know. You could say he was born to it. You'd be right.

The artist colony of Dunmoochin, in Cottles Bridge outside Melbourne, was established by Clifton Pugh in the 1950s and became a mecca for artists from all over Australia and the world. Among their number were Helen and Peter Laycock, both greatly respected potters who built a studio there but also found time to have children. Ben grew up in an idyllic bush setting surrounded by art and artists.

At age 13, he was invited to join Pugh on one of his trips to Australia's remote north, where he witnessed for the

first time the landscape that would inform his work for the rest of his life. He has returned many times since, while living in St Kilda before settling in what was, until recently, Barkers Creek.

“I have come to realise Australia is very old, very dry and very flat,” he says. “This place of ours has been worn away over millions of years. Etched and carved and shaped by countless floods till it resembles a vast canvas, painted by the weather.

“Because of this, I find myself painting more and more from a bird's eye view, much as aboriginal people do. The only way to really see such a flat landscape.”

Ben's paintings are big, bright and bold, rendering the landscape in graphic shapes and colours. Water – in rivers, lakes and seas – is often the central feature. He sees water as the great ‘artist’ of the planet, the patient creator of the landscape as we see it now. “Water, and the landscape it has created over millennia, is my primary fascination.”

Ben's creative output is not limited to painting; he also does work on paper, sculpture and community art (the mural opposite the library entrance is a once-controversial piece of his that is now part of the town fabric), writes regularly for local publications and has a weekly show on WMA-fm. His Kastlemaine Kulcha Kalendar makes a regular, irreverent appearance in many peoples' email inboxes and he keeps a blog as Ben Boyang, bush raconteur. He's a busy man!

Ben maintains a studio at CASPA, Castlemaine's contemporary art space above Stoneman's Bookroom, where he is also a director. It's well worth a visit if you're lucky enough to catch him there. He will have an open studio during Arts Open on the weekends of 12/13 and 19/20 March.

If you can't get along to CASPA, you can see more of Ben's extraordinary work at www.benlaycock.com.au, read his blog at binsblog.org (that's not a typo – he used to go by the alias Osama Bin Liner).



Snake River - oil on canvas, 2008 by Ben Laycock

New Manager at Thompson's Orchards



Adrian Clay took up the Manager's position at JefThompson's orchard in Harcourt six months ago. Adrian is passionate about fruit growing and made up his mind while in Year 11 to be involved in production horticulture.

Originally from an apple and pear growing family on the Mornington Peninsula, it was a logical step for Adrian to begin an apprenticeship close to home, and then to consider a career in the apple growing business.

After some further study and business experience Adrian landed the position in Harcourt. He is very happy with the team at Thompson's and is looking for opportunities to advance the business by tapping into industry expertise, especially that provided by APAL (Apple and Pear Australia Limited). As an example Adrian mentioned the APAL Future Orchards program which finished in 2015, which in part looked at new strategies for high production and improved techniques for growing high quality apples. He is also in touch with the local Fruitgrowers Group.

JefTomson's Orchards has 83 hectares planted in Harcourt and Adrian intends to have another 10 hectares planted in winter 2017. As with all local orchards, Thompson's must contend with hail damage and birds. He said "I know that in New South Wales growers were given a 50% subsidy for netting from the government to assist in preventing damage from fruit bats. It would be great if the State Government could provide similar assistance in Victoria, as the cost of netting can be prohibitive."

On a more personal note, Adrian has recently married and his wife is a hairdresser who is aiming to find work in the district.

Robyn Miller

Barbecues every Friday in Feb at the pool

See you Fridays in February for a snag, a song and a swim, 5pm - 7pm (weather permitting).



Harcourt Progress Association members, Jacqueline Brodie-Hans, Genevieve Ward and David Heath, assisted by Steve Carroll served many happy customers at the Pool Party held recently.

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Harcourt CWA

Friendship Day in the Gardens



Twelve members of Harcourt CWA met under a large shady tree at the Castlemaine Botanical Gardens on Thursday 21st January. Although the day was very humid, a breeze kept the temperature down in the early part of the afternoon.

The members chatted amongst themselves and caught up on what had been happening since their Christmas break-up in December.

Dot was the winner of the raffle – a large box of laundry products.

We were reminded that the next raffle will be for Applefest – once again Harcourt CWA will be selling tickets with all proceeds being distributed to worthy organisations towards the end of the year.

If you would like to check us out – we are a very friendly lot – come along on the first Thursday in the month, 1pm, at the Harcourt Leisure Centre or contact the Secretary, Marie, on 5472 5450.

All welcome.

Danni Kent

MILO in2Cricket



It's not everyday that the Harcourt Cricket Club has a representative play cricket on the MCG, in fact in my lifetime we have only had one former player achieve the feat. However today we were lucky enough to have 9 of our finest Cubs receive the privilege of getting to participate in the lunchtime Milo in2Cricket clinics during day 3 of the Australia vs. West Indies Boxing Day test! And along with them, an extremely excited and enthusiastic co-ordinator

in Brian 'Breakdown' O'Connor got to head out and supervise, and run a few drills for the kids! So a big congratulations to all involved, and I'm sure with the talent displayed by these Cubs it won't be long until we're all coming down on Boxing Day to represent the country out on the 'G again. *Steve Carroll*

(From a post in the Hardcore Harcourt Facebook page)

Harcourt Uniting Church

Happy New Year has been the greeting in the last few weeks and Christmas seems so long ago. Prior to Christmas the Harcourt Uniting Church held our annual Carols in the Park with the Thompson's Foundry Band leading us under the baton of their new Band Master Pip Avent. George was our MC and kept us singing a variety of carols. We enjoyed the wonderful talents of Maya Pearson who sang and accompanied herself on keyboard – what a lovely voice! We hope to hear from her again soon. Donations collected on the night and on Christmas Day were donated to the Christmas Bowl Appeal.

Thanks to Katherine Seppings for the photos of the Carols.

January has been a quiet month – no meetings! The Adult Fellowship group will commence meetings in February. As part of our Fellowship we visit people who are elderly; not able to join in community activities easily or who are now in Aged Care in Castlemaine. This is a very rewarding activity for both those who are visited and those doing the visiting.

Our weekly church services are held at 9am in the Church in Buckley St Harcourt followed by morning tea and a chat in the Hall - you are welcome to join us any time. On the 5th Sunday of the month we meet as a Parish and on January 31st Harcourt hosted this service at 10am.

Jan Jenkin



(Left) Maya Seppings performing at the Christmas Carols in Harcour. (Below) George Milford the MC and the Thompson's Foundry Band led by Pip Avent. Photos courtesy of Katherine Seppings.

ANA Refurbishment



Anyone driving through central Harcourt would have noticed the fencing and building works taking place in and around the ANA Hall. The renewal works include external painting, re-stumping, and replacement of doors, door frames and window frames along with other general maintenance items.

The works were identified through a condition audit of all Council-owned buildings. A further five renewal projects are planned for community buildings in Maldon, Newstead and Castlemaine this financial year. The Shire has commissioned registered builders FNG Group Pty Ltd to undertake the building works.

It is business as usual for the Heritage Centre volunteers, who normally meet on Wednesdays, as they will continue their weekly tasks off-site until they can re-occupy the ANA Hall. The 'third-Sunday-of-the-month' tour program will re-commence on April 17th.

The works will be completed by the end of February, well in time for Applefest and the annual Harcourt Art Show which is held in the Hall itself. The total cost of the works is \$58,000 and the works will help secure the ANA Hall's use well into the future. ***This update is brought to you by the Harcourt Heritage Centre and Harcourt Progress Association.***

*Back in the old days, "when cocky was an egg", it was traditional to play a prank on New Year's Eve.
The following is one such prank I'll never forget, Melva Graham.*

New Year's Eve Nostalgia

When the Christmas tree was thrown on the wood heap,
And the rellies had taken their leave,
We kids would get into a huddle,
Planning pranks for a fun New Year's Eve.

One year we put ants in the porridge
A-warming for brekkie next morn,
But the year that we hid Dad's tobacco
We wished that we'd never been born.

Epsom salts put in Grandma's gazunder
Caused a stir and tongue-lashing from Mum;
We thought piglets let loose in the kitchen
Would be harmless, and cause so much fun.

But the piece de resistance, I think,
Was the year that we shifted the throne
To the sandhills behind our old homestead;
'Twas a job we could not do alone.

It took us hours to do in the moonlight,
Our older cousins were in on the act,
Our parents were tired and slept soundly,
To tell no-one we all made a pact.

We were up early again as our wont,
To write on each door the new year;
Then we waited, and waited, and waited
To see who'd be first to appear.

My father came out looking groggy;
He knew milking had to be done,
But first he must make a quick visit
To the throne – but of course, there was none!

Somehow he never DID see the joke,
But the telling got better each year,
Even now, many, many years later,
I remember as New Year draws near.



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Rabbit Control and Field Day



Ravenswood Valley Landcare Group (RVLG) will be conducting a rabbit control field day on Sunday 14th February to demonstrate control methods for local landholders.

Ben Perry from the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources (DEDJTR) along with Michael Blake and Lachlan Brown from Maine Environment Services will be discussing and demonstrating methods (*see warren ripping above*) that small and large landholders can use to control rabbits.

When: 8:45am - 1pm Sunday February 14

Where: Nth Harcourt Hall (near the Tennis courts) and followed by a visit to a farm for practical demonstrations.

Cost: Free

Program:

- 0845 Coffee/tea and muffins.
- 0915 Rabbit control overview
- 1030 On site - How to fumigate, rip, bait, ferret
- 1230 Finish

All welcome.

To assist with catering please RSVP to Tricia Balmer Secretary Ravenswood Valley Landcare Group
Mobile 0429 635 272
Email triciabalmer@mac.com

Rabbits breed like....rabbits!!

Twenty-four rabbits were released near Geelong in 1859 and by the 1920s they had increased to about 10 million. The current population is about 200 million and covers 1/3 of Australia. They are Australia's most costly vertebrate pest and cause more than \$200 million loss of agricultural production per year and do immeasurable damage to the landscape.

Rabbits have an inbuilt ability to increase numbers very quickly in response to favourable conditions.

Pregnancy lasts 30 days and the young rabbits are weaned at 25 days. A rabbit can re mate 2 hours after giving birth. Young rabbits can mate at 4 months and the average litter size is 4 - 6. This means one breeding pair can potentially increase to 184 in 18 months. When well controlled the target management number is 1 rabbit per spotlight km. In some parts of our local area the latest count was 30 rabbits per spotlight km. (*continued next column bottom right*)



Harcourt walking group find a child-friendly meeting spot for the rest of summer

The Harcourt Walking Group have resumed their usual Monday morning walk after a break over the festive season to find their meeting place has been temporarily taken over by an upgrade to the ANA Hall.

The group's first walk for 2016 involved some additional walking around Harcourt to find a suitable spot to meet and have their morning tea. The shady Stanley Park opposite the BP service station was decided as a suitable location for the rest of summer.

Harcourtian Wendy Barron, who is also a Castlemaine District Community Health Volunteer, has attended this group since it started in May 2014. "We encourage anyone wanting to get more active to join us," says Wendy. "We also encourage stay-at-home mothers to come along. It's a great opportunity to get out of the house with the young ones in the pram, and the park where we meet even has a playground."

Meet at 9.30am on Monday mornings, at Stanley Park on High Street for a one hour walk, followed by morning tea. All Harcourt residents are most welcome to join this group.

Liza Shaw

Rabbit Control methods (*from previous column*)

Myxomatosis and calicivirus have been very effective in reducing numbers but do not provide long term control. In the 1950s Myxomatosis which spreads by mosquitoes and fleas, was released to assist with rabbit control. In 1995 Calicivirus RHD which spreads by direct contact with an infected rabbit and carriers including rabbit predators and insects, escaped quarantine and killed 10 million rabbits in 8 weeks. Strains of both viruses continue to appear around Harcourt infrequently.

Warren fumigation and baiting are also effective method of reducing rabbit populations but The BEST long term method to control rabbits is to DESTROY the warren.

The key to the success of the rabbit in Australia is the warren, which provides protection from weather and predators. Contrary to popular belief, rabbits do not dig new warrens readily. Although they usually live in warrens, rabbits readily live above the ground whenever there is adequate shelter.

Ravenswood Valley Landcare (RVLG) is keen to assist its members and the local community to control rabbits to alleviate pressure on agriculture production and to minimise damage to the environment. So come along and learn the best methods for ridding your property of rabbits.

Harcourt Bowling Club



The first week back from the Christmas break was a successful one for Harcourt with all divisions of Weekend and Midweek teams enjoying success on the greens.

Ladies Singles Champion – Moira Straw

Moira competed in the Championship finals in Bendigo on January 17th but was beaten on the day.

Men's Single Championship

The Men's Championship was won by Steven Douglas over Gary Maddern early in January. Steven went on to compete in the Division championships on 17th January and won his first round game comfortably and showed great tenacity in Round 2 to fight off a challenge from John Klein. Despite a good effort he was not able to progress any further in the Semifinals on 24th January.

We are proud of the efforts of Moira and Steve in representing the club at this high level.

Men's 100-up

The men's 100-up is still in process.

Christmas Break

The club enjoyed a good turnout for the break-up in December. Members and their guests were treated to a delicious dinner with the usual merriment befitting the occasion. Bowlers were treated to a month off from Pennant competition.

Community Event

The Harcourt Progress Association community event held at the Club and was well attended in December. Community members enjoyed the opportunity to get together in a social environment with good food and entertainment provided by the Progress Association.

Barbeque and Social/Barefoot Bowls

The barbecue and social bowls evenings have commenced and on Tuesday 19th January a lively crowd of locals enjoyed a delicious Barbecue and salads and some social bowls. Sam Gale's team was the winner on the night. These social nights will continue fortnightly until March commencing at 6pm. All welcome, bowls provided if needed, and there will be lucky door prizes! To assist with catering please put your name down on the form at the club, leave a message on 5474 2494 or email: harcourtbowls@bigpond.com if you are attending. See dates below.

Active Community Grants

The Harcourt Bowling Club has been awarded an Active Community Grant from the State Government to purchase 6 sets of bowls to assist with new members and for other community events such as the Barefoot Bowls and Sponsor's nights.

Junior Jack Attack

Members of the Club are working with the local schools to arrange a program of bowls for school students. We are excited about the prospect of introducing our younger community members to the game of bowls.

Outdoor Deck

The Club outdoor deck extension is progressing well and expected to be fully operational by mid-February. Our thanks go to the many Club members and volunteers who have put in significant efforts and hard work in the heat to make this possible.

Singles Champion contenders Moira Straw (below, top) and Steven Douglas



COMING EVENTS AT THE BOWLING CLUB

Barbeque and Barefoot/Social bowls

Tuesdays at 6.00pmFebruary 2nd and 16th
March 1st

Sponsor's Challenge

Round 2Tuesday 23rd February

Round 3/FinalTuesday 8th March

Tournaments

Men's Invitation FoursSunday 7th February

Ladies Fours TournamentThursday 11th February

Grant Pairs Club TournamentSunday 21st February

Ladies Drawn pairs.....Thursday 3rd march

Men's Gough (drawn)pairs.....Thursday 10th March

Mixed Fours TournamentSunday 10th April

Rice Memorial Mixed TriplesSaturday 17th April

AND *End of Season Presentation & Break-up night* following Rice Triples

Christmas celebration →

- Dessert
- Fairlie at the Christmas Party



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ASQ Plant of the Month

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Pips 'n' all

Hello Garden lovers,

After lamenting the low water level in our dam before Christmas, we were very fortunate to have 57mm of rain in one day in early January. This has been a saving grace as it takes the pressure off water availability for our garden. The rain was patchy across the region but for those in its path, it was a blessing. Although the rain fell too fast to penetrate far into the soil, it certainly helped with water capture. Fortunately, it has been followed up with slower, steadier showers that have soaked into the soil. These have added some moisture to parched soils and added a little green to the landscape, freshening our spirits at the same time.

The topping up of our dam eases the pressure on watering, but it is still important to be efficient with water. When watering, we use large droplets to reduce drift and evaporation, deep water to ensure that water penetrates into the soil and water early in the morning when evaporation is low. We have soil rings around our new trees so that we can fill them with a bucket of water and allow the water to slowly seep into the soil and root ball.

The recent rain and fresh mornings have encouraged us back out into the garden. We are using the time to freshen up the garden beds; weeding, trimming edges, topping up mulch and removing dead flower heads. The Crepe Myrtles (*Lagerstroemia indica* x *L. fauriei* 'Natchez') are flowering beautifully, adding a touch of green and white freshness to our otherwise dry and somewhat scruffy front lawn. The dry spring and low dam level has decimated our lawns (grass). Improving the lawn is something we will continue to work on because a green lawn can be beneficial in so many ways. A well-maintained lawn can help protect your home from fire by creating a moist, low fuel barrier around the house. Grass will stay cooler than air temperature unlike paving and other hard surfaces so a lawn can create a cooler microclimate around the house. Also, a fresh green lawn just helps us through the summer.

This month we are:

- Feeding the tomatoes with a couple of tablespoons of Sulphate of Potash to encourage flowering and fruiting;
- Deadheading the roses and feeding them with Sulphate of Potash;
- Summer pruning the apricots and cherries;
- Tying up the Raspberry canes; and
- Netting the peaches and apples.

*Happy Gardening
 Janyce*

Grow Great Fruit

Happy new year everyone! How's your harvest going? Hopefully it's completely problem free, and you're getting masses of healthy, unmolested fruit from your trees – you wish! The nature of growing food in an environment where lots of other creatures live (birds, earwigs, beetles...just to name a few), is that we often end up sharing more of it than we would like. Now is a great time to really notice what's going on in with individual fruit trees –and write it down! It can really help to get to the bottom of what might be causing fruit losses, so you can work towards solutions next year. Here are our top three tips this month to Grow Great Fruit:

1. If you still have fruit on your trees, it's not too late to net—and even a simple drape net really helps prevent damage from most birds, and provides at least some protection from hail damage, which many growers (including us) have experienced this summer.
2. Once a tree has been harvested, you can cut back the amount you're watering it to about half. Most of its work is done for the year, though for early fruiting varieties, they should keep growing for a while after the fruit has been picked, so don't be too lousy with water!
3. Wind can be as drying for the soil and for your fruit trees as very high temperatures - the worst conditions are a combination of the two! In very windy weather, keep a close eye on how much water your fruit tree are getting, particularly in the 6-8 weeks before the fruit is ready, and be prepared to water a bit more often than usual.

*Happy harvests!
Hugh and Katie*

Katie and Hugh Finlay own Mt Alexander Fruit Gardens, an organic mixed orchard in Harcourt. They also run a 12 month online organic fruit growing course called Grow Great Fruit, and teach a range of workshops. Check the ad in the Core for their summer series of workshops (including a number of free workshops), or get more information and book your place at <http://www.mafg.com.au/workshops>





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- Budding
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- Herb & Veggie Propagation
- Fruit Tree Nursery Tour
- Irrigation Demo
- Summer Pruning
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Welcome to our summer series of workshops, demonstrations and tours.

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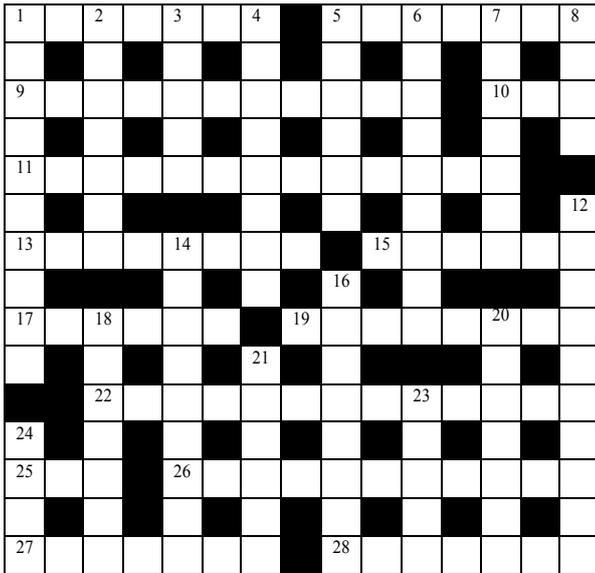
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Down:

1. Character of totalitarian regime about iron I have. (10)
2. Needed before surmise? (Something to base it on, but not on for the French.) (7)
3. Take the gravity out of an opening move for a claim too far. (5)
4. Bar a lord from left of boat. (8)
5. What tediously protracted meetings do for mother-in-law caricature? (6)
6. Camp couture sets trend. (4-5)
7. Number the north-east mural. (7)
8. Does wrong hesitations. (4)
12. Enthrals shiny poets. (10)
14. With DDT, I creep disconcertedly towards the forecasted... (9)
16. No-go sign denotes all sorts of shenanigans. (6-2)
18. Fitzgerald's "surly" one (whose visage is daubed with the "smoke of Hell") could change 1a for upright vowel to give racing advice. (7)
20. How old Othello was when making fast boat. (7)
21. Push down coffee in vessel to get postage paid. (6)
23. Sounds a good place for sore eyes. (5)
24. ...and the Man has two. (4)

Across:

1. Painter might make her a pal. (7)
5. Relaxation of relations after being detained? (7)
9. After a big anal rape case reported in a plebeian rag, his lawyer might try for this... (4,7)
10. To spoil, extract metal from Heidegger. (3)
11. Erotic drive on notice to quit. (8,5)
13. Railway components Barry wanted up? (8)
15. One presumed Leyden jar was quite a mixture of disparate elements thereof. (6)
17. 'e goes into the mangled stove and cans it.... (6)
19. None arms the Viking these days. (8)
22. Basic camera for US high schools? (5,3,5)
25. To dob with a file for a tail? (3)
26. Malign sites won't give you these, but Auntie, with giant smiles, does them hourly. (4,7)
27. Saint is carried into trousers. (7)
28. Mad kernel-seekers? (7)

December Xword 2015 SOLUTION ©McW March '15



Down:

1. Take mortise & tenon [joint] back to bare timber for the raunchy night-spot. (5-5)
2. [I dives] in order to be called upon. (7)
3. [I moan] about celebrity—what's that? (5)
4. With a [glass pen] you could depict these glittery bits. (8)
5. Get one's bearings towards the dawn [Well?]
6. Fat on stock is a short [dictionary notion]. (9)
7. A flimsy complex of lies [tissue...] is what it is all about. (2, 5)
8. Shop for Indian tummy upset? [Well?]
12. One Frenchwoman [une] 28-ed but stet, even if bewildered... (10)
14. Rumpled bracket-creep? [Well?]
16. Swedish foursome's tavern [Abba's bar] stirs up stand-in son of the father. (8)
18. Stringed one [viol] consumed to break nastily into. (7)
20. Russian fatally wounded in duel enough to shove rellies [kin] over the edge... (7)
21. Annoying beetle? [Well?]
23. A century [C] to repeat [re-do] beliefs. (5)
24. Two dollars given as compensation. [pro quo]

Across:

1. Saturday's short [Sat's] clue contains Hi-ace [van] for the distinguished learned ones. (7)
5. Tree farm [or] something like silver beet? [chard]
9. Renovation comedy? [Well?]
10. Sometimes one [I] feels a hundred, [2x50] quite off-colour... (3)
11. Switching air-conditioners to "Go" constitutes swanking it up. [Well?]
13. Antique [old] 3-min hourglass? [timer] (Not crusty enough to be John [!]) (3-5)
15. He waits in motels... [Well?]
17. Tyro nun has nothing to confess. [no vice?]
19. What sounds a little too bad for the French [tant pis] is enough to discolour urine? (5,3)
22. Additions to price of seat for Damocles. [Well?]
25. We [us] terrorists have [a] monogram for the main enemy. [Well?]
26. No-risk [safe] wave [breaker] for shady locksmith. (4-7)
27. Hang cups on woman noted for her clothes?
28. Brute [i.e. Brutus in Latin] said, "But [=sed (L)] grain [corn] in it ends up being derided." (7)

Community Diary Dates

Bowls Club - see page 17 for all the Bowls Club activities

CWA First Thursday of the month, 1pm, Harcourt Leisure Centre

Pool - Barbecues every Friday in February, weather permitting.

11 February: 7.30pm Harcourt Valley Landcare Meeting, contact 5474 2754 for venue

13 February: 7pm, "A Night For Nepal Family Bushdance Fundraiser"; James Rigby & Jane Thomson Band, Uniting Church Hall, Lyttleton St, Castlemaine.

14 February: 8.45 - 1pm, Rabbit Control Field Day, Nth Harcourt Hall, McIvor Road, Harcourt, Ravenswood Valley Landcare Group

19 February: Bogan Bingo - 7.30pm Harcourt Leisure Centre

10 - 14 March: Applefest Art Show

12 March: Applefest - Market and Kids Karnival

27 March: Easter Egg Hunt, Oak Forest Harcourt.

17 April: Harcourt Heritage Centre Sunday tours begin.

24 April: Maldon Cactus Warriors, the first monthly field day for 2016

Help Update the Harcourt Community Plan

Seeking your thoughts, ideas and input!

In 2013 Council worked with the Harcourt community to identify key aspirations which formed the base of the Harcourt Community Plan. The Plan includes the visions, dreams and concerns of over 200 Harcourt residents and visitors. It identified 5 priority areas and listed 85 strategies and objectives which people would like to see pursued and implemented within Harcourt.

The Harcourt Progress Association was formed to assist realise these aspirations and to continue to work with the community to support initiatives which benefit Harcourt and the surrounding region. In the 2 years since the Community Plan was launched there have been dozens of projects undertaken including the launch of Harcourt News: The Core, the creation of the annual Easter Egg Hunt, a greater participation in Applefest, increased community

resources with new chairs, tables, umbrellas and BBQ purchased, improvements at the Harcourt pool, a reduction in the speed limit and ongoing advocacy to Council, particularly our constant lobbying to improve and enhance the town centre.

The work is never done and now is the time to re-focus our energies on the NEXT TWO YEARS. Your ideas and input are sought to help determine what are the priorities for Harcourt? What should the HPA be focusing on? An online survey has been created and a paper survey is available at the General Store.

Please share your thoughts, suggestions and ideas and contribute to a revised 2016 Harcourt Community Plan. You can find the survey online at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/NBLW62S>



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