

EDITION 12, AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2026



*Buninyong and District
Community News*

Village VOICE

IN THIS EDITION

Historical August
What is the Death Cafe?
Community Updates



YOUR FREE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Photo of Buninyong Cemetery

THE
BUNINYONG
HOTEL

George's Weekly Specials

Wednesday



\$30
STEAK NIGHT

Thursday



\$25
PARMA NIGHT

Friday



\$25
BURGER & BEER (lunch only)
HAPPY HOUR 4 - 7PM &
\$1 CHICKEN WINGS

Sunday



\$12
GUINNESS PINTS FROM 3PM

Visit: 508 Warrenheip St, Buninyong VIC 3357
Book: thebuninyonghotel.com.au
Call: (03) 5341 9000



Open 7 Days
9:30am - 7:00pm



Tuk's Thai
Massage

Book: 0459 627 326

Relaxation, Foot and Deep Tissue
Couples Massages and Gift Vouchers

513 Warrenheip St, Buninyong

SUPPORTING OVER 120 LOCAL CREATIVES

CANDLES | JEWELLERY | PLANTS | SCARVES
HAMPERS | POTTERY | KIDS CLOTHING
MUNASH | CARDS | JAMS & CONDIMENTS
CURATED SPECIAL GIFTS



and Gallery

WINTER OPENING
THURSDAY TO SUNDAY
10AM TO 5PM
(WEEKENDS 4PM)

Catherine KING MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BALLARAT



PHONE

(03) 5338 8123

EMAIL

Catherine.King.MP@aph.gov.au

WEB

www.catherineking.com.au

Standing up for our community!

Delivering for our community

- Cheaper healthcare with more bulk billing
- More tax cuts for every taxpayer
- \$1,000 instant tax deduction and an extra permanent \$250 tax offset (from 2027-28)
- Backing first homebuyers with a fairer tax system and 5% home deposits
- Investing in enabling infrastructure to build more homes, more often
- Cutting student debt by 20%
- Cheaper PBS medicines
- Cheaper childcare
- Free TAFE



Find out more

Authorised by Catherine King MP, 5 Lydiard St Nth, Ballarat, VIC 3350

Buninyong COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

ART LESSONS with TRUDY NICHOLSON

When – Fortnightly 2nd & 4th Tuesday of the Month
Times – 12pm to 3pm
Where – Uniting Church Hall
Contact – Trudy ph. 0407 613 038

ATA ACTING CLASSES

When – Tuesday during school term
Time – from 6pm & 7pm
Where – Buninyong Town Hall
Contact – Adam ph. 0419 593 257
Website – www.ataactingstudio.com

BUNINYONG BOOK SHOP BOOK CLUB

When – 2nd Tuesday of the Month
Time – 1pm
Where – Buninyong Community House
Contact – Martine ph. 0418 503 844

BUNINYONG BRIDGE CLUB

When – Every Tuesday
Time – 10am to 12pm
Where – Buninyong Community House
Contact – Ange ph. 0402 098 267

BUNINYONG COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

When – Every Friday – during school term
Time – 9:30am to 11:30am
Website – www.buninyongcommunityplaygroup.square.site

MIDWEEK MEDITATION

When – Every Wednesday
Time – 6:15pm to 7:15pm
Where – Buninyong Uniting Church
Contact – Rev. Paul Sanders ph. 0407 833 515

BUNINYONG MOBILE LIBRARY

When – Every Thursday
Time – 2pm to 5pm
Where – Buninyong Community House

BUNINYONG & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

When – 3rd Saturday of Month
Time – 9:30am to 1pm
Where – Buninyong Town Hall
Cost – Free entry and members on hand to help visitors.
Website – www.buninyonghistory.wordpress.com/

← AUGUST
FEATURES LOCAL
ARTISTS

BUNINYONG SENIOR CITIZENS

When – Every Tuesday
Time – 11:30am to 3pm
Where – Buninyong Town Hall
Contact – Jan ph. 0409 174 605, John ph. 0434 674 334

CWA BUNINYONG GENERAL MEETING

When – 1st Thursday of Month
Time – 7pm
Where – Buninyong Community House

CWA BUNINYONG MONDAY CREATIVES

When – 2nd Monday of Month
Time – 10am to 12pm
Where – Buninyong Town Hall

CWA BUNINYONG MASTERCLASS MONDAY

When – 3rd Monday of Month
Time – 6pm onwards
Where – Buninyong Town Hall
CWA Contact – Sonya ph. 0417 168 456

BUNINYONG COMMUNITY CHOIR

When – Fortnightly from 6 February
Time – 1pm to 2:15pm
Where – St Peter and St Paul's Church
Email – hello@singbuninyong.com.au

TRIYOGA BUNINYONG

When – Every Thursday
Time – 6pm
Where – Buninyong Uniting Church Hall
Bookings Essential – myinsighthealth.com.au/yoga
Contact – Katherine Collyer ph. 0419 139 892
Email – kath@myinsighthealth.com.au

DE SOZA PARKRUN

When – Every Saturday
Time – Briefing starts at 7:50am
Where – De Soza Park
Contact – desoza@parkrun.com

ELDORADO LINE DANCING

When – Every Friday
Time – 10am to 2pm
Where – Buninyong Town Hall
Contact – Ella – ellaeldorado@gmail.com

HANDMADE AT THE HALL

When – 4th Monday of the Month
Time – 6:30pm to 8:30pm
Where – Garibaldi Hall
Contact – Carli or Kristy
Email – garibaldicommunity@gmail.com

PICKLEBALL BUNINYONG

When – Tuesday & Wednesday Nights
Time – 6:30pm to 8:30pm
Where – Buninyong Primary School Gym
Cost – \$10 or 2hrs for \$15
Contact – Wendy ph. 0458 372 906
Email – wendyvorstenbosch629@gmail.com

BUNINYONG VILLAGE SOCK MAKERS

When – 1st Saturday of the Month
Time – 9am to 5pm
Where – Buninyong Community House
Contact – buninyongcommunityeventsinc@gmail.com

OPEN HOUSE MORNING TEA

When – Every Wednesday
Time – 10am
Where – Buninyong Uniting Church Hall
What – Relaxed morning tea and conversation! Bring a friend!

Your Community: Your Association

The Buninyong & District Community Association Inc. (BDCA) is a group of volunteer local residents who have an interest in preserving the character, heritage and promotion of Buninyong. We are committed to fostering a strong sense of community and enhancing the quality of life for all who live in this beautiful region. All residents of Buninyong and the district can become members by submitting a membership application form: <https://www.buninyongcommunityassociation.com.au/become-a-member>

The BDCA, supported by a generous grant from the Buninyong and District Community Bank, is the initiating force behind this publication. Launched nearly two years ago and published every two months, Village Voice is now distributing upwards of 600 print copies and receiving approximately 70 online views each edition. As Association President, I am immensely proud of Village Voice and the small team of volunteers who deliver such a high-quality publication every edition.

The BDCA works with members, other organisations, businesses and the wider community to build a more connected Buninyong through consultation, information sharing and events. The association's AGM will be held on 22 October 2026, and membership is free (thanks largely to the success of Village Voice). We invite you to become an active participant in shaping the future of Buninyong. Whether through volunteering, attending community meetings or sharing your ideas, there are numerous ways to get involved and contribute to the growth and wellbeing of our community.

Contributor: Darren Holland, President, Buninyong & District Community Association.

Have Your Say on Ballarat's Active Future

The City of Ballarat is inviting community members to have their say on the draft Active Ballarat Strategy 2026, which will help shape the future of sport, recreation and physical activity across the municipality.

The strategy builds on the 2021 plan and reflects a broader approach to keeping people active. Alongside organised sport, it recognises the importance of informal recreation, walking, cycling and other activities that promote health, wellbeing and social connection.

More than 120 community members, along with local sporting clubs, associations and advisory groups, contributed to developing the draft strategy through surveys and consultation. City of Ballarat Mayor Cr Tracey Hargreaves encouraged residents to review the draft and provide feedback.

"Whether you're involved in organised sport or enjoy being active in other ways, your input will help ensure the final strategy reflects the needs of our community now and as we continue to grow," she said.

The draft strategy focuses on six priority areas:

- encouraging participation and inclusion
- providing equitable access to quality facilities and places
- supporting clubs and volunteers
- improving planning and innovation
- strengthening events and sports tourism
- increasing participation by women and girls.

Community members and local sporting groups can view the draft strategy and provide feedback through the City of Ballarat's MySay website until Wednesday 5 August.

The final strategy, together with a summary of community feedback, will be presented to Ballarat City Council for consideration in September.



Contributor & Photo Supplied by:
Ballarat City Council Website.

August/September Events

SUNDAY 2 AUGUST

BARD IN BUNINYONG

JANE AUSTEN'S – LADY SUSAN

Time – 2pm

Where – Buninyong Town Hall

Address – 308 Learmonth Street, Buninyong

Cost – \$10

SUNDAY 2 AUGUST

THE CIRCADIAN RHYTHMS OF OUR WILD GARDEN AND iNATURALIST WORKSHOP

Time – 2pm to 4pm

Where – Buninyong Botanic Gardens

Address – Cnr Scott & Cornish Streets, Buninyong (look for the flag)

Cost – Free

Bookings essential – Email

info@buninyongbotanicgardensfriends.org.au

or text Judith ph. 0419 103 213

More information & Trybooking –

<https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1618161>

SATURDAY 29 AUGUST

BUNINYONG VILLAGE MARKET

Time – 1pm to 5pm

Where – Buninyong Town Hall Precinct

Address – 308 Learmonth Street, Buninyong

Cost – Free

More information –

www.buninyongvillagemarket.com

SUNDAY 30 AUGUST

SAVOY OPERA COMPANY –

YEOMAN OF THE GUARD

Time – 2pm to 5pm

Where – Buninyong Town Hall

Address – 308 Learmonth Street, Buninyong

Bookings – [Trybooking](#)

SATURDAY 5 SEPTEMBER

BUNINYONG VILLAGE SOCK MAKERS OPEN DAY & FATHER'S DAY SOCK SALES

Time – 10am to 12pm

Where – Buninyong Community House

Address – Warrenheip Street, Buninyong

Cost – Free

MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER

LET'S CHAT BUNINYONG with Cr Ben Taylor

Time – 4pm to 6pm

Where – Buninyong Town Hall

Address – 308 Learmonth Street, Buninyong

Cost – Free

SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

BUNINYONG COMMUNITY TENNIS CLUB OPEN DAY

Time – 2pm to 4pm

Where – BDTA Courts, Forest Street Buninyong

Cost – Free (includes free bbq)

SATURDAY 17 SEPTEMBER

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS FOOTBALL NETBALL

GRAND FINAL

Where – Eureka Stadium

FATHER'S DAY 6 September

He is a trout fisherman



He strides out
with a purposeful gait,
wearing waders too wide,
he looks as if he had a meeting with fate.
Carrying a large net over one shoulder,
she says to herself, yes you are getting older.
His army waistcoat punctured with flies,
"I will see you next week," he cries.
Living with his obsession with trout,
she wonders what this man is really all about.
Endless conversations about rivers and flows,
she wonders if this is all he knows.
Musty old feathers cover his desk.
She sneezes with the dust,
and realises he's quite clever,
making flies, and beetles,
out of thread, books and feathers.
She gazes up at a wall,
where his picture is hung
with him smiling and arms outstretched,
he might be holding a baby.
No it's not, it's an 8lb trout!
His obsession is driving her crazy.
There's three people in this marriage she
shouts, "me, my husband and a trout!"

Pauline Porteous, Mount Helen, July 2026 (poet & artist)

If you have a local event that you'd like to highlight to the community – please email us!
news.bdca@outlook.com

Buninyong Men's Shed: Busy hands, big projects and new members

June was AGM time, with president Ken Smyth stepping down after two great years to make way for 'new blood'. Russell Williams is the new president, with Francis (Frank) Rouhan as secretary.

A wind farm company recently offered us large quantities of quality second-hand timber from packing cases used to transport windmill components. We have started collecting it and welcome anyone who can use the timber, garden bed frames or sturdy 20-litre plastic buckets to drop in for a chat on Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday mornings, or call David on 0411 389 275.

Our workload has been hectic. We completed a turned spire for a roof finial and repaired fold-out card tables for a local ladies' card group. A magnificent large wooden gate was too rotten to restore, so we used it as a pattern to create a new one, which has now been finished, painted, delivered and installed for its new owner.

Traditional cast iron park benches are starting to leave our workshop, with two more to go soon. Come and get yours before the old parts run out.

Member Rob Broadbent is making a huge steel-framed flat-bed trolley for the Little Athletics Group. Rob is a meticulous craftsman and our main 'go-to' person when a difficult job comes up. We are also making bird boxes to order, so keep us in mind.

Another project is restoring two big light fixtures from the old 'red rattler' train carriages. If these interest you, come and have a look. They could be just the thing for adding a bit of old-world charm to your renovation.

A newer member, Colin, has nearly finished restoring an old rocking chair, and it looks lovely. We hope the owners will be as pleased as we are. Great job, Colin.

Alongside our outside work, many members have their own projects. Currently, two members are making fancy timber writing boxes. Another member is turning a fruit bowl, and a further member is cutting up garden stakes.

Finally, we have been blessed with two new members, Ruben and Geoff. So, if you feel the inclination to find out more, come and have a squizz. Whether you are just curious about us or chafing at the bit to join up, you are always welcome.

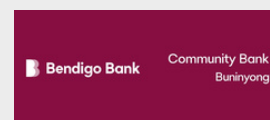
The same applies if you are looking for jobs to be done. Call in on any Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday morning from 9am to 12pm, or phone Russell on 0418 503 875 or Rossco on 0428 219 470.

Cheers, David Senior.



PRODUCED BY

This is a community project of the Buninyong and District Community Association, with the support of the Community Bank Buninyong.



Buninyong and District Community Association
Registration Number A0039386K
ABN 63 951 689 126



Management Committee

Village Voice: Buninyong and District Community News Production Team under the direction of Buninyong and District Community Association.

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Publication cut-off is STRICTLY 14th of the month prior to production.

How to Contribute

Email – news.bdca@outlook.com

Max 400 words per article. Longer submissions **WILL** be edited down.

Electronic submissions must be in either Microsoft Word or plain text only. Photographs or images **MUST** be in jpeg format.

The photographer must be identified, and have provided permission for publication prior to the photo being published.

Hand-written articles or photographs may be posted to - Village Voice: 408A Warrenheip Street, Buninyong VIC 3357. Please provide a stamped, self-addressed envelope if any material needs to be returned.

The contributor's name **WILL** be published.

Where to read the Village Voice or see guidelines

Online via the website:

www.buninyongcommunityassociation.com.au

Facebook: Village Voice - Buninyong and District Community News

Via Poster QR codes on local noticeboards, for you to read or download to print at home.

Advertising

For any advertising enquiries, please contact news.bdca@outlook.com

This publication can be viewed using this QR Code.



Disclaimer: Views, opinions, and responses expressed in the "Village Voice: Buninyong and District Community News" belong solely to the contributor and do not necessarily represent their employer, organisation, or committee.

New season serving up more than tennis

The first warm days might still be a little way off, but tennis season is already on the agenda. Buninyong Community Tennis Club is getting ready for the summer season, and now is the perfect time for new players, returning players and local families to get involved.

Whether your child is keen to learn; you are looking for a friendly way to get involved; or you have not picked up a racquet for years, the club is keen to welcome you onto the court this season. Club President Paul O'Beirne said the club was focused on building a genuinely welcoming tennis community for all ages and abilities.

"It has been really pleasing to see so many kids keen to play and improve, while also seeing adults return to tennis socially. We're certainly seeing people who used to play come back to the sport for a bit of fun. That's exactly what community sport should be about," he said.

Local clubs are now recruiting junior and senior players for the 2026–27 season, which begins in October.

For juniors, tennis is a lifelong sport that builds coordination, confidence, resilience and sportsmanship. The club is especially keen to hear from adults returning to tennis in a friendly, low-pressure way. You do not need to be match-fit or tournament-ready or secretly training for Wimbledon in the backyard. Just bring a willingness to have a hit.

A highlight of the past year was the return of Fast Four in February, which brought players of all ages together for casual Thursday night tennis, food and fun. Numbers grew from 24 to 42 players in just two weeks, showing a real appetite for social tennis and a good excuse to enjoy a summer evening.

"It was great to see kids, parents and grandparents all involved. That's the kind of thing we want to keep building: a club where people feel welcome, whether they are playing competitively, helping their kids get started or just coming back for a social hit," Paul said.

Behind the scenes

Like all community clubs, Buninyong Community Tennis Club relies on volunteers. Whether helping with juniors, events, registrations or season planning, every contribution helps keep the club strong and sustainable.

"We have a really great club and a lot of opportunities ahead. The more people we have involved, even in small ways, the stronger and more sustainable the club will be," Mr O'Beirne said.

Buninyong Community Tennis Club, in conjunction with the Buninyong & District Tennis Association, will host an open day to meet local clubs, try tennis and register on Sunday 13 September 2026 from 2pm to 4pm, with a FREE BBQ to enjoy.

The day is open to children, families, adult players, returning players and anyone curious about joining, helping or simply having a hit. Just bring a racquet along and the willingness to have a go.

Anyone interested in playing, registering a junior member, returning to tennis or helping the club can email secretary@bunctc.org.

Follow Buninyong Community Tennis Club on Facebook and Instagram: [@buninyongtennisclub](https://www.facebook.com/buninyongtennisclub).

Contributor & Photos Supplied by: Sam Elshaug, Buninyong Community Tennis Club. (Photos printed with permission)



August: The Month That Changed Buninyong Forever

August holds a special place in Buninyong's history. It was during this remarkable month that a quiet farming settlement became the starting point of one of Australia's greatest events—the Victorian Gold Rush.

On 8 August 1851, local blacksmith and wheelwright Thomas Hiscock made a discovery that would transform Victoria forever. While prospecting in a small gully near Buninyong after hearing of a government reward for finding gold, Hiscock uncovered payable gold. His announcement of the discovery sparked a rush to the district and soon led prospectors to the richer goldfields at Ballarat's Golden Point, laying the foundations for the immense wealth generated by the Victorian goldfields.

Born in 1812 near Reading, Berkshire, England, Hiscock migrated to Victoria with his wife, Phoebe, and their two sons. After working as a blacksmith at Trawalla Station, he established a blacksmith, wheelwright and general store in Buninyong during the 1840s. His trade made him a respected member of the growing community, but it was his curiosity and determination that secured his place in history.

Hiscock's discovery was officially recognised with a £1,000 government reward, an extraordinary sum at the time. Sadly, he did not live to enjoy his legacy for long. After catching a severe cold while visiting the Mount Alexander goldfields, he died in 1852 and was buried in Buninyong Cemetery. His obituary praised him as a pioneer whose discovery opened the way for the development of Ballarat and changed the future of the colony.

The gold discovery accelerated Buninyong's growth. Churches, schools, hotels, businesses and public buildings soon followed, and by the mid-1860s the town had developed into a thriving regional centre with around 1,500 residents. Although large-scale mining in Buninyong itself was relatively short-lived, the district's rich agricultural land ensured its long-term prosperity.

Today, visitors can stand where history was made. A memorial marks Hiscock's Gully, while another honours Thomas Hiscock near Buninyong Cemetery. Together they commemorate the man whose discovery on a winter's day in August 1851 changed not only Buninyong, but the course of Victoria's history.

Sourced: Federation University Historical Collection

Ref: Buninyong | Victorian Places;

Ref: <https://www.eurekapedia.org/>



Gold Discovery Monument

Photo by: Shell Corcoran.

August 1851: Buninyong's Miners Take a Stand Against the Gold License

Buninyong holds a distinctive place in Victoria's goldfields history. In August 1851, only weeks after gold was officially discovered in the district, the township became the site of the first organised protest meeting against the then colonial government's gold license fee. This gathering – small in size but immense in consequence – marked the beginning of a political awakening that would eventually culminate in the Eureka Rebellion three years later.

The gold license, introduced by Governor Charles La Trobe, required miners to pay 30 shillings per month for the right to dig. For many, especially those who had travelled great distances with limited means, the fee was excessive and unfair. It applied regardless of whether a miner found gold, placing enormous pressure on individuals and families already facing harsh conditions on the diggings.

Recognising the injustice, miners at Buninyong convened a public meeting in August 1851 to voice their opposition. Contemporary accounts describe a determined group of diggers, tradesmen, and local residents gathering to debate the fee and petition the government for change. Their protest was peaceful but resolute, signalling a new willingness among ordinary people to challenge authority and demand fair treatment.

This meeting is now commemorated by a plaque erected by the Ballarat Reform League, the organisation later central to the events at Eureka. The plaque acknowledges Buninyong as the birthplace of organised resistance on the Victorian goldfields – a place where miners first stood together to assert their rights. The monument to that meeting has been placed at the site where it is believed that the meeting took place, in Hiscock Gully Road, about 400 metres from the Midland Highway.

The Buninyong protest did not immediately overturn the license system, but it planted the seeds of collective action. Over the following years, dissatisfaction grew as enforcement became harsher and fees remained high. Miners across the region formed alliances, held mass meetings, and drafted charters demanding representation and justice. By 1854, these tensions erupted at the Eureka Stockade, where miners took up arms in a dramatic confrontation that reshaped Victoria's political landscape.

Today, Buninyong's role in this story is increasingly recognised. The 1851 protest meeting stands as a reminder that major movements often begin with small gatherings – ordinary people raising their voices in pursuit of fairness. It is a proud chapter in the community's history and a foundational moment in the broader struggle for democratic rights in Australia.

References: Victorian Government Archives – Goldfields Administration Records, 1851–1854; Ballarat Historical Society – Early Goldfields Protests and the Road to Eureka; Buninyong Heritage Walks, published by the Buninyong & District Historical Association, with detailed annotations.

On This Day – 28 August: Cook Pine Planted at Buninyong Botanic Gardens

On 28 August 2008, a new *Araucaria columnaris* (Cook Pine), a species native to New Caledonia, was planted in the Buninyong Botanic Gardens to replace an older tree of the same species.

The planting is part of the continuing story of one of Victoria's oldest public gardens. The Buninyong Botanic Gardens were established after the first Buninyong Municipal Council reserved 10 acres for public gardens in 1859. An ambitious plan prepared in 1861 included landscaped walks, bridges, fencing, gates and public bathing facilities.

A significant period of development began in 1872 when German immigrant Conrad Fegbeutel was appointed Curator of the Gardens and Superintendent of the Baths. Under his care, the gardens expanded with the help of plant donations from leading horticulturalists, including Baron Ferdinand von Mueller, Director of the Melbourne Botanic Gardens, as well as the Ballarat and Geelong botanic gardens, the State Nursery at Creswick and local nurseries.

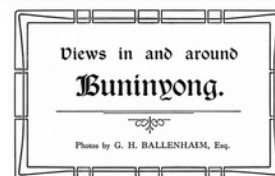
Following the devastating Buninyong fire of 1876, the nearby reservoir known as "The Gong" was enlarged to improve the town's emergency water supply. Today, the upper section of the gardens surrounds the lake, which remains a central feature of the reserve.

During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the gardens became a popular destination for visitors arriving by train from Ballarat. Travellers came to enjoy the ornamental trees, flowering shrubs and picturesque setting. The railway era was considered the gardens' heyday before passenger services ended in 1937.

Over the years, the gardens have continued to evolve. The Queen Victoria Rotunda, opened in 1901, remains a prominent landmark, while the former courthouse reserve was incorporated into the gardens in 1990.

The Cook Pine planted on 28 August in 2008 continues the long tradition of renewing and preserving the gardens' historic collection of significant trees, ensuring the Buninyong Botanic Gardens remain an important part of the community's heritage for future generations.

Sources: Friends of Buninyong Botanic Gardens, History (including A Brief History by Anne Beggs Sunter) and Timeline, <https://www.buninyongbotanicgardens.com/history/>



Keeping the Peace with Your Neighbours

Most of us have neighbours, and sometimes disputes arise over trees, noise and dogs, to name a few. This article provides a brief summary of what you can do to resolve disputes.

The basic principle is that you have the right to use and enjoy your property, so long as it does not interfere unreasonably with your neighbour. The two main disputes are trees and noise, which are known as nuisance claims.

The first thing to do is speak to your neighbour to try and resolve the issue, but if that fails some options you have are:

- You can legally cut back any branches or roots that protrude onto your land up to the fence line. The cuttings strictly belong to your neighbour and should be returned to them. You cannot enter your neighbour's property to carry out such work.
- Noise can be in the form of loud music or barking dogs, which can be a nuisance, but that depends on the level of noise and whether it is reasonable.

The occupier of premises where a dog or cat is kept is liable to a fine if it creates a nuisance, which can include endangering the health of any person. Council can declare a dog to be dangerous or menacing and issue infringement notices. Where a dog bites a person or rips their clothing, a report should also be made to police, who have the power to impound the animal.

Help is available from the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (www.disputes.vic.gov.au), which should be visited before escalating the issue with council or engaging a lawyer. Going to court should be the last resort because the outcome is never certain and the costs can be high.

Contributor: Dean Cinque, Lawyer.

Meet Some Locals!

Names: Marley and Stumpy

Ages: 13 and 7 respectively

Breeds: Miniature Dachshund and Miniature Fox Terrier

Bio: Marley and Stumpy can often be seen walking around Buninyong, with their little legs setting quite the pace for owners Darren and Katherine.

Union Jack Reserve and De Soza Park are their favourite places, with many new things to sniff and, sometimes, a big obstacle course of branch hurdles and puddles to tackle.

Marley says: I'm a dog of small stature, but I think I'm a big dog – especially if you come to our house, when you will hear my extra-loud bark. My favourite things are waking Dad up early by bopping him on the nose for breakfast and making sure Stumpy and the two cats are behaving themselves. Someone has to do it and, as the senior sausage, I take this role very seriously.

Stumpy says: I moved to Buninyong from New South Wales when I was three, and my kind new owners picked me up from temporary foster care.

My favourite things are zoomies and dinnertime, plus trying to please Mum (which she says is very easy). I love living here, albeit a little cold. I hope to meet all my new Victorian neighbours soon.



Historical Snapshot

Submitted by: Shell Corcoran

In 1903 Buninyong was described in the Australian handbook

BUNINYONG (37° 39' S. lat., 143° 53' E. long.), a mining and agricultural township, with post, money-order, telegraph office and savings bank, under municipal government, in the vicinity of the mountain of the same name (an extinct volcano), on the main road between Geelong and Ballarat (county Grant, Grenville electorate). It lies 96 miles W. by N. from Melbourne. Height above sea level, 1,471 feet. Railway communication with Ballarat, 7½ miles; fares, 8½d. and 6½d. single; return, 1s. 1d. and 10d.; to Melbourne, 14s. 6d. and 9s. 8d. The principal hotels are—the Buninyong, Crown, Royal, Exchange, Caledonian, Eagle, and Princess Royal. In the borough (area, 3,424 acres), are 280 dwellings; the net annual value of ratable property is £6,143; rate 1s. 3d. in the pound; in the shire the assessment is £49,475, area of shire 296 square miles, dwellings 1,370, ratepayers 1,480, rate 1s. Bank: National. There is a State school (No.1,270), and five places of worship belonging to the Church of England, Presbyterian, Catholic, Wesleyan, and Disciples of Christ communities; also a Public Library of 2,000 vols., and a court-house. Freemasons', Oddfellows', Rechabites', A.N.A. and Foresters' lodges. The mining is both alluvial and quartz, now principally the latter (the yield for 1900 being 4,686 ozs.) and gives employment to over 300 miners. The country in the neighbourhood of Buninyong is in some parts well adapted for farming operations, and the soil is very productive; but the town has been principally famous for the gold-fields in the vicinity. According to the statistics for the year ending March 1, 1901, there were 10,740 acres under cultivation, principally wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, peas and beans, and hay. About 1¼ miles distant from Buninyong is the celebrated Hiscock's reef, named after Hiscock, who is said to have been the discoverer of gold in Victoria, and to have found it in this place. Industries: Butter factory and tannery. Mount Buninyong (4,600 feet) is in the district; also monument where gold was first discovered in Victoria. Town lighted with acetylene gas. Formation: basaltic lava on the west and on the east silurian, with recent surface drift. The population is 1,284; of the entire shire, 6,302. Local paper: *Buninyong Telegraph*, published Friday morning.

Renew Your Pet Registration

Ballarat pet owners are being reminded there is still time to renew their cat and dog registrations – a simple step that could make all the difference if your pet ever goes missing.

City of Ballarat Animal Management Officers recently reunited a family with their much-loved tabby cat after it had been missing for almost a year. The cat was found as a stray and taken to the Ballarat Animal Shelter, where staff identified its owners through its microchip details, leading to an emotional reunion.

City of Ballarat Mayor Cr Tracey Hargreaves said the story highlights why registration and microchipping are so important.

“Registration is not only a legal requirement, it is one of the simplest and most effective ways to make sure your pet can be returned home safely,” she said.

Renewing your pet's registration before the end of the financial year will also help you avoid the Victorian Government levy increase, which will see the levy rise from \$4.64 to \$9.00 per animal next year.

Registration fees help fund a range of important animal management services across Ballarat, including responding to animal welfare concerns, investigating dog attacks, managing stray and roaming animals, addressing nuisance complaints and caring for the approximately 2,500 stray, abandoned and unwanted animals that enter the Ballarat Animal Shelter each year.

The annual registration fee for a desexed and microchipped dog or cat is \$46, with a concession rate of \$23 for eligible pensioners.

Pet registrations can be completed online through the City of Ballarat eServices portal, in person at the Customer Service Centre at The Phoenix, 25 Armstrong Street South, Ballarat Central, or by BPAY using the details on your renewal notice.

Will's Quiz

1. Sir Donald Bradman captained an Ashes test that went undefeated in England, earning the team what nickname?
2. After arriving from Asia 4,000 years ago, dingoes are found everywhere in Australia except which state?
3. The elements in the modern periodic table are arranged by atomic number, which measures what?
4. Most diamonds are formed by extreme pressure and heat, then brought to the surface by what?
5. What is the hardest substance in the human body, found mainly in your teeth?
6. On a Chilean mountain, the ELT is a telescope with 798 mirrors of what shape?
7. A 'double bogey' is a score in which sport?
8. Which Australian PM declared himself "British to the bootstraps"?
9. London taxis are traditionally what colour?
10. In our solar system, Venus and what other planet spin in the opposite direction to the Sun?
11. THE STUMPER: Prior to the invention of the clock, what word was used for an anticlockwise direction?

*Contributor: Will, aged 14 years old.
(See page 20 for answers)*

The PBS Safety Net - Saving Money on Your Prescriptions

The PBS (Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme) Safety Net is designed to protect Australians from the ongoing cost of prescription medicines. Once your household reaches a set spending threshold during the calendar year, the cost of your PBS medicines drops significantly, or stops altogether.

How it works

General patients currently pay up to \$25.00 per PBS prescription. Once you and your family spend a combined total of \$1,748.20 on PBS medicines in a calendar year (2026 figure), you qualify for a Safety Net Concession Card and pay just \$7.70 per prescription for the rest of the year.

If you hold a pension or concession card, the threshold is \$277.20 (2026 figure, equivalent to about 36 prescriptions). After reaching this amount, your PBS prescriptions are free for the remainder of the year.

Both thresholds reset on 1 January each year.

Tracking your spending

Your pharmacy automatically records your PBS spending in their dispensing software. However, for privacy reasons, pharmacies cannot view records from other locations, including hospital pharmacies. If you fill prescriptions at more than one pharmacy, each location can print a form or sticker for you to bring to your regular pharmacy so the amounts can be combined.

Family members can also pool their spending to reach the threshold sooner. This includes spouses, children under 16, and full-time students under 25. Your pharmacy needs to manually link family members in their system, so it is worth checking this has been set up correctly, particularly if your household uses different pharmacies.

A few things to be aware of

Not all costs count toward your Safety Net total. Brand premiums (the extra cost if you prefer a specific brand) are excluded, as are early supply of medication. In most cases, pharmacies cannot apply Safety Net discounts to a prescription filled less than 21 days before it is due, or less than 51 days for 60-day prescriptions.

Think you've overspent?

If you believe you have reached the threshold but were not issued a Safety Net card, or feel you have paid more than you should have, speak with your pharmacist first. Refunds for overpayments can be arranged through Medicare.

Your pharmacist is always happy to help with questions about your medicines or costs.

If you have ideas for future articles on health and medicines, feel free to get in touch at buninyong@ufs.com.au

Contributor & Photo Supplied by: Shane Ingeme, Pharmacist, Buninyong UFS Pharmacy.



The Village Voice is proudly presented by the Buninyong District Community Association Inc.
Be part of the BDCA and amplify OUR Village Voice!

Join YOUR Community Association at the Buninyong Village Market – Saturday 29 August

Or check out our website!
www.buninyongcommunityassociation.com.au

Do You Know a Veteran *in Our Community?*

Every community has veterans living quietly among us. Some proudly wear their service with an RSL badge or military cap, while others rarely, if ever, speak about their time in uniform. They may be a neighbour, a workmate, a volunteer, a sporting club member, or someone you greet each morning at the local café.

Many veterans don't identify themselves publicly. Some left the Australian Defence Force decades ago, while others have transitioned more recently. Regardless of when or where they served, they all share experiences that few others truly understand.

Buninyong RSL Sub-Branch is here to support veterans and their families, but we can only help those we know about. A simple introduction or friendly conversation can make a significant difference. For some veterans, reconnecting with others who have served provides companionship, practical advice, access to welfare services, advocacy, commemorative activities, or simply a welcoming place to enjoy a cup of tea and a chat.

You don't need to ask intrusive questions. If someone mentions military service, shares stories of time in the Navy, Army or Air Force, or wears service medals on commemorative occasions, they may appreciate knowing that the Buninyong RSL is here to support them—whether they are looking for assistance or simply a sense of connection.

Families, friends and neighbours also play an important role. They are often the first to notice when someone could benefit from additional support or social contact. Encouraging a veteran to visit their local RSL may be the first step towards building new friendships and accessing services that improve wellbeing.

Our veterans have served Australia with dedication. Now, as a community, we have an opportunity to ensure they know they are not forgotten.

If you know a veteran who is not connected with Buninyong RSL, consider reaching out. Invite them to attend a meeting, a social event or a commemorative service. A warm welcome and a friendly conversation could be the beginning of a valuable new connection.

Together, we can ensure those who have served continue to find friendship, support and a strong sense of belonging in Buninyong.



BUNINYONG RSL SUB-BRANCH

SUPPORT • SERVICE • COMMUNITY




A FRIENDLY
CONNECTION CAN
MAKE ALL THE
DIFFERENCE



GET IN TOUCH
0419 352 307



EMAIL US info@buninyongrsl.org.au

Here for our veterans. Here for our community. 

After 26 years, Ron sells 'servo'

Buninyong's popular and well-known businessman Ron Delaland has announced that he has sold the leasehold of his booming main street petrol station, store and car and dog washes, with a changeover date of 6 September. He had previously sold the freehold of the site in 2022.

The sale will see the end of a 26-year involvement with the local 'servo' that started in 2000 when Ron bought the freehold and leasehold of the business from another Buninyong identity, Peter Innes. Prior to that, it was known as Leahy's petrol station.

At that time there was just a two-pump garage, a small shop and an old house on the site at the corner of Warrenheip and Forest streets.

Nothing much changed until 2006, when the old underground fuel storage tanks split, requiring a massive upgrade of the site.

Previously, it had been the home of the historic Paddy's Bakery, and Ron suspects there must also have been a bootmaker there, as many scraps of old leather were found during excavations for the new petrol tanks.

New start

When BP refused to fund the upgrade project, Ron decided to fund it himself and included the car wash, newsagency and, later, the dog wash in the revamped business. At its peak, they were selling 600 newspapers per day, with up to nine paperboys and girls delivering around town.

He said that, while TattsLotto, the car and dog washes continue to boom, today the sale of

newspapers and cards is a thing of the past, as most are online. A First Division TattsLotto ticket was sold in 2023. For the past 12 years, daughter Fiona has been the front-facing manager of the business.

Varied career

Ron Delaland's working life has seen many and varied careers and ventures. Starting off as a carpenter, his life was dramatically changed in the late 1960s when he was drafted into National Service, followed by a year of war service in Vietnam. Returning home, he found work at 'Digger' Schonnell's sports store in Wendouree, opened a mixed business in the Harold Street, Wendouree, shopping strip, moved to Queensland for several years, before returning to Ballarat.

That was before a career as a publican. He bought the Waterloo Hotel in Bendigo in 1977, sold it and took over Buninyong's Crown Hotel in 1980, followed by the George and Lake View hotels in the mid-1980s, before "retiring" to build his own home on the hillside of the area now known as Tandarra. Of course, the massive land and housing development there followed soon after.

Ron has been a great supporter of local groups. A founding director of the Community Bank for 16 years, he has been President of the Buninyong Golf Club since 2014. He and his businesses have been generous financial supporters of any group that started with the letters Bun.

Now again "retired", Ron plans to keep working for the golf club, while Fiona is going to "take a break, and then worry about the future after that". They leave the servo with deep gratitude to their many loyal customers.



Contributors & Photo Supplied by: Ron and Fiona Delaland and Barry Fitzgerald, Village Voice Community Reporter.



Buninyong Community Events Inc. thanks Ron and Fiona for their ongoing generous sponsorship over many years for our various community events.

Buninyong & District Community Association thanks Ron and Fiona for hosting one of our community's defibrillators and running the Key Registers for various community organisations' buildings.

Photo supplied by: Lisa Cressey, Secretary, BDCA.



CLYTEMNESTRA

ADAPTED AND DIRECTED BY SUSAN PILBEAM
AT THE CRESWICK COURTHOUSE THEATRE
FRI 4TH & 11TH, SAT 5TH & 12TH SEPT 7.30PM
SAT 5TH & 12TH AND SUN 6TH & 13TH 2PM.





Busy year for the Bard

The Bard began the year with our biggest and most successful gardens show, *The Birds*, by Aristophanes. Audiences loved the humour, fabulous costumes, and original music and songs.

Our Greek theme continues with *Dark Bard* in September. It is an adaptation by Susan Pilbeam of works by Euripides, Aeschylus and Sophocles to create a new tragedy telling the story of Clytemnestra, the murderous wife of Agamemnon and sister of Helen of Troy, with original music and songs by Hemlock Wilde and Bronze Age design by Jo Adcock and Michael Collins.

Another aspect of our collaboration with Creswick Theatre Company has been monthly play readings – so far Chekhov, Molière, Wilde and Mae West, with Jane Austen and local contemporary playwrights to come. These provide opportunities for actors and new directors to explore a range of works and skills on a smaller scale. For new writers, it is a vital part of their process to see and hear their scripts. Our dramatised reading of *The Importance of Being Earnest* was our first event at the Buninyong Town Hall, with Lady Susan and *The Bird Life* to come.

The Magic Pudding was again performed at CresFest and for the Buninyong Community Playgroup. Three Bard regulars developed *Snow White*, delighting children in Buninyong and Creswick. We have established a Performing Arts Award at Buninyong Primary School to encourage young thespians, and our version of *Macbeth* is again helping secondary students revise. We are liaising with Ballarat Grammar School about presenting *Clytemnestra* there.

With support from the Community Bank Buninyong, we will again be running free workshops for behind-the-scenes skills and for performers over spring and summer. It is a great opportunity to find out more and to become involved.

Thanks also to the Community House, which is our workshop venue, and Buninyong Community Events. Next year will be our 10th birthday, so there is lots of celebrating ahead.

We would like to acknowledge the vital and ongoing support of the late Roger Permezel, President of the Friends of the Buninyong Botanic Gardens. His enthusiasm for live performance in the Buninyong gardens, together with his encouragement, advice and practical support, helped to establish the company. Vale Roger.

Thanks to everyone who volunteers and supports us in so many ways to make our work possible, and especially to our audiences.

More information: Facebook –
thebardinbuninyong

Contributor: Susan Pilbeam, Bard in Buninyong.



Vale Roger Permezel

Buninyong lost a passionate community advocate with the passing of Roger Permezel on 2 July 2026.

Roger cared deeply about Buninyong and was a strong advocate for the Buninyong Botanic Gardens, as well as many other local issues and community projects. He was never afraid to speak up for the things he believed mattered to the village, and his commitment to preserving and improving the place he called home will be remembered.

A celebration of Roger's life will be held in spring.

Village Voice will also publish a longer tribute in a future edition, reflecting on Roger's life, his community involvement and his contribution to Buninyong over the years.

Contributor: Lisa Cressey, Secretary, Buninyong & District Community Association.

**Our next edition will be out on
1st October 2026 with
submissions to be provided by
14 September 2026.**

Jane Austen's *Lady Susan*

*A dramatic reading
of her unfinished novella
adapted for the stage*

All tickets \$10

2pm August 2nd at the Buninyong Town Hall



Council Updates

Botanic Gardens baths update

The City of Ballarat are pleased to inform Buninyong residents that restoration works on the historic walls of the former swimming baths in the Buninyong Botanic Gardens are now complete.

The heritage conservation project has stabilised and preserved the former baths by adding new foundations to support the long-term integrity of the concrete walls.

Works included replacing several wall panels, repairing and sealing cracks, and laying gravel to improve drainage away from the footings. Now that the wall conservation works are complete, planning is underway to reinstate the much-loved garden.

This project was fully funded by the City of Ballarat.



Buninyong Botanical Gardens baths restoration works.



The Gong Dam, Buninyong.

De Soza Park toilets update

Following community consultation undertaken by the City of Ballarat in March 2026 on the new facility, planning and design work has been completed on a proposal to build new public toilets at De Soza Park.

The plans for the project involve removing the existing toilet block from inside the Queen Victoria Rotunda and constructing a new standalone facility beside it.

The aim of the upgrade is to provide a safer, more accessible public toilet for residents and visitors, while also increasing the usability of the rotunda.

Once the toilet block is built, the rotunda will be renovated and transformed into an accessible picnic and barbecue area, with new seating and barbecue equipment installed.

These works are subject to future budget allocation from the City of Ballarat.

Planning Underway for Gong Dam Rehabilitation

Planning is underway for the rehabilitation of the Gong Dam in Buninyong, with the project aimed at reducing flood risk for nearby residents and the Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

The project will upgrade the embankment beneath Cornish Street, which has experienced significant internal deterioration and could fail during a major flood event.

The project is currently in the concept design stage and is being led by engineering consultant JJ Ryan Consulting. The City of Ballarat is working closely with the Ballarat Botanical Gardens and Heritage Victoria to ensure the upgraded infrastructure is both fit for purpose and sensitive to its heritage setting.

The design is expected to be completed by the end of 2026. Planning and heritage approvals, including approval from Heritage Victoria, will then be sought before construction is put out to tender.

Construction is expected to take place during the 2027–28 financial year.

Let's Chat COUNCILLOR ROADSHOW

The community is invited to come and have a chat with Councillors about local services and priorities. Your input will help shape the future direction of the City of Ballarat.

ballarat.vic.gov.au/letschat



BUNINYONG
with Cr Ben Taylor

 **Monday 7 September**
4-6pm

 **Buninyong Town Hall**
Learmonth Street, Buninyong

T 5320 5500 ballarat.vic.gov.au

CITY OF
BALLARAT 

Book Review

Say Nothing — a compelling account of the Troubles

A book very different from my usual choice and taking me well out of my usual “reading comfort zone”, *Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Mystery in Northern Ireland* is enthralling. It's by American journalist Patrick Radden Keefe, who has written two other books, *Snakehead* and *Chatter*.

It begins with the abduction of Jean McConville (later proven to have been an abduction and murder), a widow with 10 children living in Belfast. The children were left to fend for themselves, with no one coming to their aid — not the church, the local priest, the neighbourhood, friends or the government.

The book explores the vicious conflict known as the Troubles in Northern Ireland from the late 1960s to the 1990s. It describes the lives and exploits of the Price sisters, Dolours and Marian, Brendan Hughes, Gerry Adams and the McConville family, among others. It details the activities of the Provisional IRA, its bombing campaign, the hunger strikes, the peace process, the RUC, the British Army, the Belfast Project and the ‘disappeared’, to name a few.

Keefe began researching and writing the book after reading an obituary of Dolours Price in 2013. It was published in 2018 and, in 2024, was listed at number 19 on The New York Times 100 Best Books of the 21st Century. It has also been adapted into a television series, *Say Nothing*, for Hulu and Disney.

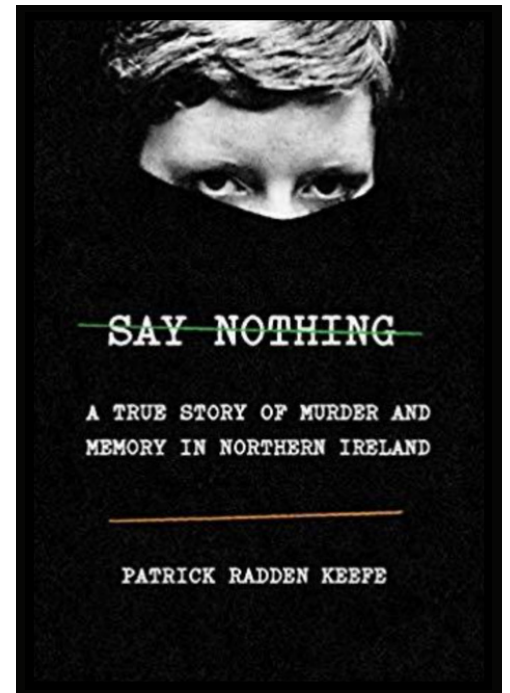
It is hard-hitting and graphic, and it brought back memories of the headline news reports of the tragic violence and struggles that ravaged Northern Ireland and London from the 1970s onwards. It is nonfiction but reads like historical fiction, detailing the actions and lives of its main characters, especially the militant IRA and its leaders.

It reminded me of the atrocities of ‘knee-capping’, the code of silence, the car bombings, the force-feeding of hunger strikers, and the fear and paranoia experienced by both innocent people and those responsible for the destructive violence. It features the Belfast Project (the Boston Tapes), which was intended to be an oral history narrated anonymously by many of the main participants in the IRA conflict, but which later caused legal and personal issues.

Say Nothing is a large tome, at over 500 pages, and not for the faint-hearted. It is daunting at the start; however, Keefe is an engaging author, and I read the book surprisingly quickly, with its detail and pace resulting in a nonstop read.

When I visited Northern Ireland in 2008, I always felt that unrest and resentment were still just below the surface of the “peace” that currently reigns – a powder keg waiting for a spark that we all hope never ignites a repeat of the Troubles. It is a fascinating reminder of the devastation caused by violence, its immediate and lingering effects, and its destruction — a timely reflection in our fractured and angry world today.

Contributor & Photo Supplied by: Bev Elshaug.



EVERY 5TH^{*}
SATURDAY
OF THE MONTH
1PM TO 5PM
*Excluding December

2026 MARKET DATES
SATURDAY 29 AUGUST
SATURDAY 31 OCTOBER
SATURDAY 5 DECEMBER

BUNINYONGVILLAGEMARKET.COM

BUNINYONG VILLAGE MARKET
BUNINYONG TOWN HALL PRECINCT

BUNINYONG VILLAGE MARKET @BUNINYONG_MARKET_OFFICIAL

Buninyong Village Sock Makers: a new tradition takes shape

It all began with a crank!

In October last year, Buninyong resident Lisa Cressey was welcomed into the fascinating world of circular sock knitting machines (CKSM) at a 'Crank In' at the Lost Trades Centre in Ballarat.

It was there that Lisa met Leanne Wills of The Odd Sockery in Clunes and Janette Richards from Invermay, who owns Rosie and J. Leanne was keen to start a local crank group in Ballarat, and Lisa, under the auspices of Buninyong Community Events Inc., came to the party!

The Sock Makers meet on the first Saturday of the month at the Buninyong Community House, providing a welcoming place to share skills, work on projects and enjoy plenty of conversation and laughs.

You don't need a circular sock knitting machine to join in! Knitters and crochet sock enthusiasts are all welcome to bring along their latest project and spend the day creating in good company.

Many of the circular sock knitting machines are more than 100 years old and are remarkable pieces of engineering, transforming yarn into beautifully knitted socks with the turn of a crank.

Janette has been a wonderful mentor to Lisa, generously sharing her knowledge and teaching her the intricacies of circular sock knitting. Now Lisa is beginning to pass those skills on to newcomers joining the group.

It's rather fitting — just like the machines themselves, the knowledge travels in a circle: one person learns, then passes it on to the next.

The group's Mother's Day Open Day earlier this year was a huge success, with visitors watching the machines in action and many mums receiving a cosy pair of locally made socks.

Now the Crankers are doing it again! The Father's Day Open Day will be held on Saturday 5 September at the Buninyong Community House from 10 am to 12 pm, with demonstrations, plenty of cranking and handmade socks available to purchase — just in time for Dad to get a pair of hand-cranked socks the next day!

Whether you're curious about these wonderful old machines, love knitting or crochet, or simply enjoy making things with like-minded people, you're very welcome to come along.

Because good company is just as important as good socks.

Contributor & Photos Supplied by: Lisa Cressey, Buninyong Community Events Inc. & Buninyong Village Sock Makers.



Community Roots Growing Along Union Jack Creek

If you are walking along Union Jack Creek near De Soza Park on the last Sunday of the month, you might spot a group of volunteers weeding and planting native trees and shrubs.

Since September last year, the Friends of Union Jack Creek, operating under Friends of Upper Williamson Landcare and the Leigh Catchment Group, have been planting shrubs, trees and grasses, mulching and maintaining the site. The long-term plan is that this site, and others along Union Jack Creek, develop into habitat to encourage a greater diversity of wildlife along the creek.

Friends of Union Jack Creek welcome anyone who is willing to help maintain plantings, plant new plants and enjoy a cup of tea and a chat with other Buninyong and surrounding locals. The group meets on the last Sunday of each month.

Contributor & Photo Supplied by: Martin Thomson.



Jane and Willow helping restore native habitat along Union Jack Creek.



August is Dying to Know Month

Bringing Peace to Life

One of the greatest gifts we can leave our loved ones isn't something that fits under the Christmas tree or sits safely in a filing cabinet—it's the peace of mind that comes from knowing our wishes have been talked about, understood and written down.

Now, before you stop reading because this sounds a little too serious, hear me out.

Conversations about end-of-life planning aren't exactly dinner party favourites. Most of us would rather debate pineapple on pizza than who gets to choose the funeral music! But avoiding the conversation doesn't make the decisions disappear—it simply means someone else will have to make them later, often during one of the hardest times of their lives.

Working at a cemetery, we meet families when emotions are high and important decisions need to be made quickly. It's in those moments that we often hear, "I wish we'd talked about this."

Planning ahead isn't about focusing on the end of life. It's about making life a little easier for the people you love. When your wishes are known, your family isn't left wondering, second-guessing or trying to guess what you would have wanted. They can spend their time supporting one another instead of making difficult decisions under pressure.

Many people have organised their legal affairs with a Will and their healthcare wishes through an Advance Care Directive. Both are incredibly important. But there's another part of planning that's often forgotten—your "Emotional Will."

Would you prefer burial or cremation? Is there a favourite song you'd like played? A poem, prayer or celebration of life? Would you like to be buried wearing your wedding ring? Would you prefer a simple farewell or something that reflects your unique personality? Where would you like your final resting place to be? These aren't just practical decisions—they're deeply personal ones.

The wonderful thing is that once people have these conversations, they often tell us they feel an enormous sense of relief. It's one less thing to worry about, and one more way of caring for the people who matter most.

So perhaps this month is the perfect time to start the conversation. It doesn't have to be formal, and it certainly doesn't have to happen all at once. Share a cuppa, have a chat, write a few things down, and let your family know what's important to you.

It's one conversation that may not be easy—but it could become one of the kindest gifts you'll ever give.

What is the Death Cafe?

You may see Death Cafes advertised during August, when we also recognise Dying to Know Day – a national campaign that encourages open conversations about death, dying and planning ahead. The aim isn't to dwell on death, but to help us live well, support those we love and leave a legacy that reflects what matters most to us.

If the name Death Cafe makes you pause, you're not alone! Despite the title, a Death Cafe is simply a welcoming, relaxed gathering where people come together over a hot beverage and a biscuit to share thoughts, ask questions, listen to others or simply sit quietly. Conversations are respectful, confidential and guided by curiosity rather than agendas.

Although it is facilitated by someone with skills and experience, there is no one telling you what to do, no products to buy and no expectations. Instead, it's a chance to explore our thoughts about death in a safe, supportive environment. Many people find that talking openly about death helps them appreciate life even more.

If you're curious, why not look up your local Death Cafe? Whether you have questions of your own or simply want to better understand the conversations your family may one day wish to have, attending can be a gentle first step towards making those discussions a little easier.

So where did this Death Cafe idea come from?

In 2010, Jon Underwood decided to develop a series of projects about death, one of which focused on talking about death. In November, Jon read about the work of Bernard Crettaz in *The Independent* newspaper. Inspired by Bernard's work, Jon immediately decided to use a similar model for his own project, and Death Cafe was born.

Death Cafes have spread quickly across Europe, North America and Australasia. As of today, there have been 24,143 Death Cafes offered in 97 countries since September 2011. If 10 people attended each one, that would represent 241,430 participants.

If you would like to learn more or attend a Death Cafe, keep an eye out for local events in the community. Everyone is welcome, whether you are curious, have questions, or simply want to listen and share.

The next cafe is hosted by Annie De Jong, 5 August, 10am to 11am at Our Social Kitchen Cafe, 25 Barkly Street, Ballarat East – no cost. For other gatherings see – www.deathcafe.com

*Both Articles Contributed by:
Shell Corcoran,
Village Voice Community Reporter
(Potential conflict of interest
has been recognised).*



Buninyong Cemetery: A Goldfields-era Gem

Buninyong was first settled in 1838. In those days, burials took place in a small area of land now known as the 'Old Burial Ground', just a short distance west of the original post office on Learmonth Street in an area now left as open paddock on the South Side of De Soza park. No records remain of the burials there.

By 1849, those planning cemeteries in rural Victoria must have had an inkling of what was about to happen in the sleepy village of Buninyong.

In that year, a Crown survey was completed of an area of land some two miles from the village. Seventeen acres, surrounded on three sides by wide road reserves, were set aside for a new cemetery.

This was to be Victoria's second registered inland cemetery.

Then, in 1851, gold was discovered by Thomas Hiscock on a hillside in the area to be known as Black Lead — literally opposite the cemetery's new site.

Death on the Goldfields

In the following years of frenetic gold mining and associated business, Buninyong's population rapidly swelled to some 10,000.

The first burial at the cemetery was in 1852 — a two-year-old child, Elizabeth Gullan. Deaths on the goldfields soon mounted due to mining accidents, rampant sicknesses such as dysentery, phthisis or marasmus, stillborn children or those dying within days or months of birth, and accidents such as drownings, or even death from being struck by lightning ... or the occasional murder.

As was the case with many cemeteries of that era, the cemetery was divided into areas designated as Presbyterian, Wesleyan, Episcopalian and Roman Catholic, with smaller areas designated as Baptist, Independent and Other.

Over the first 15 or so years following its opening, extensive tree planting was undertaken under the direction of local nurseryman Francis Moss. In turn, Moss was guided by the curator of Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens between 1857 and 1873 — the famous Baron Ferdinand von Mueller. Some trees were even donated by him.

Many massive 160-year-old trees are still to be seen today. A cemetery sexton was in place from the opening until 1968.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the cemetery became overgrown and neglected. In the early 1990s, the Shire of Buninyong (about to be amalgamated into the City of Ballarat in 1994) undertook a restoration project, particularly tackling the rampant growth of blackberries.

A lawn section was established in 1971, and several rose garden beds were later designed to accommodate the interment of cremated remains.

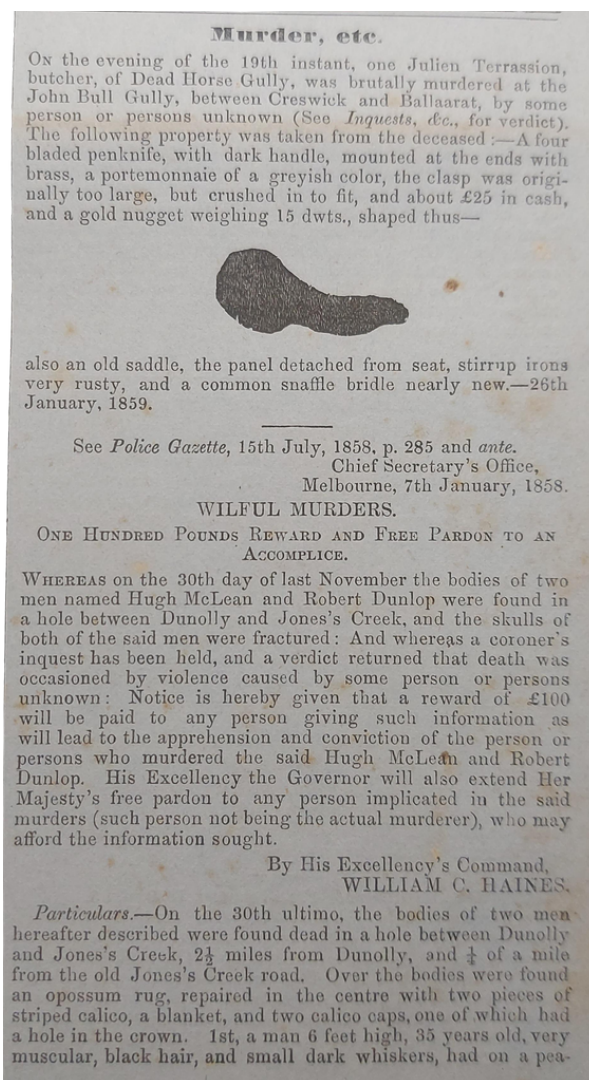
This is only part of the story of the Buninyong Cemetery. In the next edition of *The Village Voice*, I will explore its Chinese heritage, more recent restoration projects and the ongoing work to preserve this remarkable piece of our local history for future generations.

Contributor: Barry Fitzgerald. Chairman, Buninyong Cemetery Trust.

Photo Supplied by: Shell Corcoran, Village Voice Community Reporter.



1858 Newspaper Extract submitted by David Senior



Flowers stolen from Buninyong Cemetery graves

District families with relatives buried in Buninyong Cemetery are angry and upset about a recent rash of flower thefts from graves at the cemetery. Over recent months, there have been recurring reports of the theft of flowers placed on graves in the Lawn and Ash Garden sections.

One local family said that, on many occasions, fresh flowers had been stolen soon after being placed on a grave in the Lawn section. The parents said, "We are very upset that flowers have been taken on numerous occasions from our son's grave, as well as from the graves of our parents and brother." They said, "These flowers are not simply decorations but a way for us to remember, honour and continue to show our love for those we have lost." Other thefts have included protea blooms and a small potted cyclamen plant from above recently interred cremated remains. Two particularly sad cases involved thefts of flowers from the graves of a Vietnam veteran and a stillborn child.

Cemetery Trust Chairman Dr Barry Fitzgerald said that Trust members were "angry and frustrated at the actions of heartless thieves who stooped low by stealing flowers placed in memory of loved ones". "This cemetery is maintained and managed by community volunteers who do their best to present the cemetery in a calm and peaceful way, as it is the resting place of over 7500 people from local districts," he said. He added that, under Section 74 of the Crimes Act, severe penalties would apply to those convicted of stealing from a cemetery. "We will be happy to throw the book at anyone caught stealing flowers, plants or other items from the cemetery." These matters have been reported to local police, who already undertake regular patrols of the cemetery grounds. Local police officer Leading Senior Constable Brian McGuinness said that police would welcome any reports of suspicious activity in this regard.

Contributor: Barry Fitzgerald, Buninyong Cemetery Trust.

Building a Community with a Shared Passion

With her early years on a dairy farm, Dianne Ray has always been surrounded by great produce. Growing their own vegetables and consuming their own livestock, there was minimal wastage. It was all about fresh, seasonal and sustainable produce ... before it was even a thing.

Fast forward to her years as a nurse and the origins of The Shared Table. "So, The Shared Table basically originated from dinner parties that I used to hold once a year, and I'd have 20 good mates that would come along, and I would source produce as well as bits and pieces and experiment with lovely food. And they'd all come, and we'd just sit around the table and share food, conviviality, great wine, stories; they'd all help, you know, put it together, as in plating and doing dishes. So that's where The Shared Table was born. It was about sharing good company, good food, good wine, not necessarily on one table, but people coming together basically and making it feel like a dinner party, not a formal thing ... tell us what you can't eat or you don't eat, and we'd work around that. So, that was the absolute bare bones of it, and that's what I want people to feel in the restaurant, like they're sharing good company, good food, good wine and good stories."

It's a bit of a leap from dinner parties to having your own restaurant. From nursing, Di trained as a chef in her early 40s with Peter Ford. After eight years with Peter, "I went to Craig's Royal Hotel with Philippe Desrettes, the French chef ... it was a grand place to eat, it was bistro-style French food, and I learnt to do à la carte restaurant work there." Di went back to work with Peter Ford while transforming The Shared Table from a concept into a reality.

Working with architect Eva Fosha, who designed Attica, this took 2½ years. Local builder Tim Williams helped bring it all together. "I wanted to utilise all our local plumbers, electricians, all the seats and tables have been made in Ballarat. So, again it fits with our philosophy of local producers, local artisans, and that kind of thing, so it's not just about food."

That passion for working with good local produce has stuck with Di. We spoke a few days before the Winter Harvest Dinner, which will feature Henderson's Lane Short Ribs (Buninyong), vegetables from Spring Creek Organics (Navigators) and Western Plains Pork (Mt Mercer).



Photo: Di Ray, owner of The Shared Table.

"Coming off a farm, I understand the passion and the respect that producers have for their animals, vegetables or wine, and all the labour that goes into it. It can be a long time until you get a product and even then it's not guaranteed. For us to use it, sell it, to produce something with it, also demands respect."

In supporting and building a community of quality producers around her, Di is doing the same thing with her people. In the seven years since opening the doors, she has trained several apprentice chefs, Peter and Kris, who went off to set up Monde Green Café. Emil went off to Vue de Monde, Smith Street Bistro and is now at Reine & La Rue in the Old Gothic Bank in Collins Street. These are the cream of Melbourne dining, each with multiple hats. Her current apprentice is Gus, yet another local lad.

With the current cost of living and people tightening their belts, all areas of hospitality are doing it tough. I asked Di if she had a message she'd like to get out to people. "I understand it's hard on people, and I'm really mindful of that. I'm not asking for them to come spend a fortune but do what you can. If they've got a celebration, support people as best you can. Spread the love around; utilise lots of businesses, because at the end of the day, if they're not supported, then they won't be there."

Contributor: Peter Roche, Village Voice Community Reporter.

Buninyong Art Prize & Exhibition returns this October

The much-loved Buninyong Art Prize & Exhibition returns to the historic Buninyong Town Hall from 9 to 11 October, bringing together artists, art lovers and the community for a weekend celebrating creativity in all its forms.

Presented by Buninyong ARTpreneurs, a creative group operating under the umbrella of Buninyong Community Events Inc. (BCE Inc.), the annual exhibition showcases an exciting and diverse collection of work by artists from across the region and beyond.

A highlight of the event is the major prize, proudly sponsored by Community Bank Buninyong. The winning artwork becomes part of the bank's collection and is displayed at the Buninyong branch for the community to enjoy – giving the prize a lasting presence well beyond the exhibition weekend.

Entries open at the end of August, so artists, it's time to start thinking about what you might enter! Keep an eye on our socials and watch for posters around town with entry details and further announcements.

Save the dates – Friday 9 to Sunday 11 October – and join us for another wonderful celebration of art in Buninyong.

Contributor & Photo Supplied by: Lisa Cressey, Buninyong ARTpreneurs.



Photo L-R - Trudy Nicholson, Lisa Cressey, Karen Garratt, Marg McKee, Buninyong ARTpreneurs.

BUNINYONG
ART
PRIZE & EXHIBITION - 2026



is active!

Buninyong Community Events Inc. (BCE Inc.) is an incorporated not-for-profit association that has become the administrative cover-all for a large number of community event groups that would otherwise have had to find their own committee, seek separate insurance and deal with their own administrative overheads.

BCE Inc. also collaborates with other community groups and local businesses to assist in promoting events and sharing equipment and resources to enable community activation in our village.

Running more regularly now on the fifth Saturday of each month, the Buninyong Village Market remains a popular anchor point for the community. Sarah Suttie has been doing a wonderful job with new imagery and social media for the market, but is handing its leadership to Kylie Padgham, who we welcome on board.

In May, the second Buninyong Fine Art Faire and Market was a huge success, building attendance and exhibitor numbers from 2025. The CWA assisted with Devonshire tea, which added a special touch. Sue Pilbeam has been running wonderful events at The Bard in Buninyong and has a fantastic program lined up for the remainder of the year (see other article in this edition).

The 2026 Buninyong Film Festival was very successful, screening seven films on a new weekend in June. Patron numbers were strong at each screening, with many people discovering this boutique film festival for the first time. Joan Goldsmith, who has been part of the festival since its inception, was delighted and felt very positive about 2027.

Sadly, after two enthusiastic but freezing years of running an international Play Music on the Porch Day session in August, we have decided the seasons are simply too unkind for an outdoor music event, and we will all stay inside and keep warm instead.

After launching with just a handful of crankers six months ago, our new sock-making group continues to grow in popularity, drawing knitters from across Victoria and Australia. The group meets on the first Saturday of the month at the Buninyong Community House and is planning another 'open' display and knitting session for interested sock lovers.

Preparations are now underway for one of the highlights of the community calendar. In its fourth year (pandemic aside), the Buninyong Art Prize and Exhibition is once again sponsored by the Buninyong Community Bank and will offer significant prizes and opportunities to sell works in a gallery format over three days in October.

If you would like to know more or get involved with Buninyong Community Events Inc., please email: buninyongcommunityeventsinc@gmail.com

Contributor: Darren Holland, President, Buninyong Community Events Inc.

Will's Quiz Answers (from page 10) –

1. The Invincibles; 2. Tasmania; 3. Protons; 4. Volcanos/ Volcanic eruptions; 5. Enamel; 6. Hexagon; 7. Golf; 8. Robert Menzies; 9. Black; 10. Uranus; 11. THE STUMPER: Widdershins

Buninyong Freemasons Enter Their 169th Year



**Freemasons
Victoria**

The Buninyong Freemasons are part of one of the world's oldest fraternal organisations, bringing together members who share the values of friendship, integrity and community service. The lodge supports a range of local charities and community initiatives while providing fellowship and personal development for its members.



Photo: WBro Ian Crosbie (centre front) with members of his 2026–27 Lodge team.

The June installation of Ian Crosbie as Worshipful Master of Sturt Buninyong Lodge No. 23 will continue the work of Freemasonry in our community.

Buninyong was the first lodge in the locality to open outside Ballarat in 1858 and is now the third oldest lodge in the district.

After meeting in a number of buildings around Buninyong, a Freemasons Hall was constructed at 604 Warrenheip Street in 1906.

Over subsequent years, the building has undergone improvements to create a suitable base for Freemasons and a venue available for community use.

Sturt Lodge, originally sponsored by No. 23, closed in 1998, with its members joining Buninyong to form the Sturt Buninyong United Lodge No. 23.

No. 23 has a long history of charity work both in Buninyong, the Ballarat district and further afield. This work continues in the year ahead with the Buninyong Freemasons supporting the Street to Home Program.

The program focuses on providing assistance to those who are sleeping rough in Ballarat and throughout the Central Highlands region. The eventual goal is to find these people secure housing.

Lodge No. 23 provided \$500 worth of doonas for use in the emergency housing portion of the program. Freemasons Foundation supported the program with a \$2,000 purchase of tents, sleeping bags and mats, backpacks and blankets.

These items are distributed when people are identified during regular visits across the region by the two outreach workers.

As the current economic situation impacts communities, these small donations will make a difference to those who find that sleeping rough is their only option.

Contributor & Photos Supplied by: Ron Fleming, President, Sturt Buninyong Freemasons.



Photo – Presentation of doonas and sleeping equipment to the Uniting Ballarat Outreach team by members of SBU Lodge.



Opinion Piece

Protecting the future of Lal Lal Falls

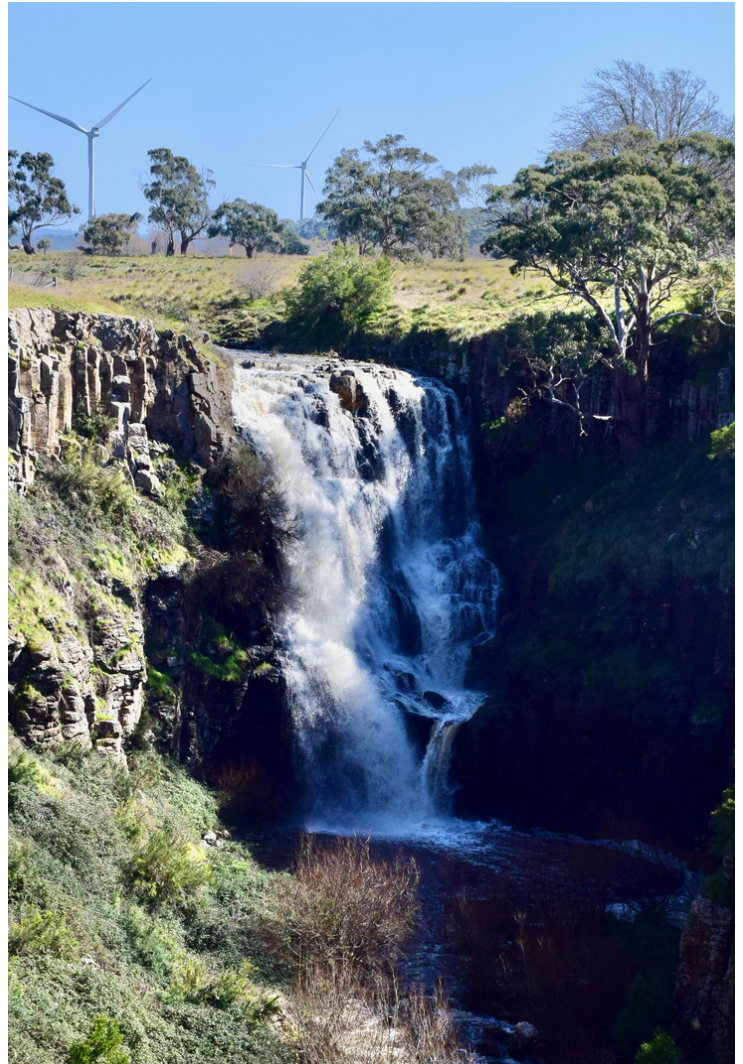
Lal Lal Falls Threatened; Sacred Victorian Indigenous site runs dry July 2026.

One of the most important sites in our local region is the Lal Lal Falls Reserve, which is sacred to Wadawurrung people. They recognise it as the resting place of the great spirit, Bunjil, who gives his name to the nearby reservoir that is so important in providing the growing city of Ballarat with its water supply.

The Falls have been known to European settlers since the 1840s and, since the 1850s, have been celebrated as a favourite tourist attraction and scenic destination for artists, photographers and field naturalists.

However, a report by Laura Mayers of ABC Regional News alerted us to a possible serious threat to the Falls. The concern relates to the actions of Tianyu, the Chinese wool company that purchased the 5,000-acre Lal Lal Estate from the Fiskin family in 2014.

Early in 2026, the proprietors of the Lal Lal Estate applied for a retrospective permit from Southern Rural Water to 'take and use' 250 megalitres of surface water for 'domestic and stock purposes' from Granite Creek. The owners already held a licence to take water for a dam on Lal Lal Creek.



Cameron Steele, Coordinator of People for a Living Moorabool, has been leading opposition to the retrospective permit. In his opinion, he estimates that the dam has expanded in volume three and a half times, with the two dams now interconnected.

In earlier years, the Fiskin family released water from their dam, but this practice has not continued under the present owners. Hence the shock in June this year when, despite several weeks of heavy rain, only a trickle of water flowed over the Falls as Granite Creek had been denuded of water by the huge dams.

Southern Rural Water has yet to announce its decision on the retrospective application for the dam.

The Moorabool Shire Council is currently working on a new Conservation Management Plan for the Lal Lal Falls Reserve. We hope it will include strong measures to protect the cultural and natural heritage of this important site. For the sake of the Wadawurrung people, everyone who enjoys the dramatic beauty of the Falls in full flood, and our future public water supply, we hope there will be a judicious resolution of the issue.

Contributor: Anne Beggs-Sunter, Buninyong & District Historical Society.

Photo Supplied by: Darren Holland, Village Voice Community Reporter.

As per ABC NEWS 19 June 2026

Southern Rural Water managing director Scott Cornish stated "A compliance inspection of the Lal Lal Estate property was undertaken on 3 June, 2026," "This inspection was conducted to assess compliance with a notice issued to the landowner, and, at the time of inspection, the landowner was complying with the requirements of that notice."

Source: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2026-06-19/lal-lal-falls-sacred-indigenous-site-without-water/106802870>



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State Member for Eureka



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