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JOHN AND MARGARET NELSON

interview

Sunday 8th March 2020



it was a marvellous effort! Five girls and two boys. She lived on for a long time. She died in about 1945 so I remember her well. She was very kind. You'd go there and she would cram you with food. The table was always covered with food, buns and stuff like that.

It would have been tough for Sarah to lose her husband and then live on in Boort as a newcomer and without extended family to help out. I daresay the kids would have had to get their act together pretty quickly. To her credit though, she made sure her children were educated.

She managed to put together a team of horses for each of the two boys and they went to Chinkapook and started farms there.

John - My great-grandparents were Peter and Sarah McRae and they came up to Boort from Ballarat in the 1880s. He was 47 and she was 17 when they married in 1877. They had five children when they came to Boort and Barbara, the sixth child, was born in 1889 in Boort. They purchased land on the Boort-Yando road. Peter died in May 1890. With six children to get to school, Sarah leased what is now our home block from 1893 so that all children could go to the Boort school.

I'm not sure why the McRaes chose to come to Boort; it is a question I wish I had asked. But the place is called 'Inverness' as that is where Sarah's family (McCloud) came from. The McRaes were also from Scotland.

Sarah rented this place here (320 acres) and by herself, she educated all those kids at Boort school. She probably ran a few stock and bits and pieces, and what she got from this farm was her only income. There were no benefits in those days – I think

My grandfather, Jack Nelson, had been the station manager and worked for the McClean Bros at Towanninie Station and Loddon Park, Durham Ox. (*John has a copy of Jack's diary from 1907 when he managed Towanninie Station, with the entries bemoaning the lack of rain and the dust, perhaps reminding us that nothing much has changed in farming!*) Jack married Christina McRae (Sarah and Peter McRae's daughter) in Yando in 1905, and in 1915 they purchased this place (that had been leased by Christina's parents). Jack died in 1923 when my father Hyland was 14. Hyland then left school and helped his mother Christina at home until he had a team of horses and that is when he went to Gredgwin share farming. The farm was between Gredgwin and Oakvale. When you get to Gredgwin you just turn right straight up near the railway line. About a kilometre up there.

Dad (Hyland) and Mum (Hilda) married in 1934. They grew

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wheat out there at Gredgwin. I often think about when I was born and what it would be like having a young child with no power, no water – nothing.

Mum was a Slatter. There were seven girls in that family and two sons (Harold and Jim). Most of the girls married locally and I have about 50 local cousins on the Slatter side. On the Nelson side, Dad only had one sister, Heather, who married Jack Malone. Their children were Margaret (Wishart), Russell and Bruce.

I was born in 1935. Most people were still using horses at that time. I just remember the horse teams; fortunately I wasn't quite old enough to have to handle that sort of thing. There was the odd tractor but not many. We moved into here (current Nelson farm 'Inverness' on the Quambatook Road) in about 1940 to be close to school and town. Great Grandma McRae was still alive, but she moved in with her daughter Heather Malone to a house in Victoria Street.

My school career started in 1941. I quite liked school and did fairly well. A lot of my mates didn't like school and left when they were 14 but I went right through to Form 4, which was the end of the schooling offered in Boort. Mathematics was my best subject. In Form 2, I had the honour of getting 100 per cent for each of the mathematics subjects. I could handle mathematics. It's funny... it didn't really take any talent to do maths, you just had to learn how to do it. When it came to English literature or art, you couldn't learn how to do it, it had to come out of your brain. I could do well if I was required to learn and recall, but not so good if I had to rely on natural ability.

I was extremely keen on sport. I held the 100 yards interschool sports record for some years. (*Margaret hands over an old flyer, '1949 Metropolitan and Country Under 15 State Schools Football Carnival'*.) I played in this representative football carnival in 1949, and then in 1950 I went there again as captain of North West Victoria. It was interesting because we played on the League grounds down there. I was fairly dominant as a kid in football. But I felt that I didn't move up. Let's put it another way. They didn't have any juniors in those days so at 15 I played a full season in the seconds and when I got to 16 I was in the seniors. But I never really reached a standard that I was happy with in senior football, I was just an ordinary sort of player, but managed to play over 300 games for Boort. When I think back, there probably weren't many kids playing football in these carnivals. This was something I came to understand from my experience of National Service training. Suddenly I went from a kid in a group of about 30 to a group of 1000, 18-year-olds. That was a big learning step for me. I'd been dominating through all the kids sport but then suddenly I was just a number and I still know what that number is - 3/750610. So I was a reasonable footballer but I never starred.

Dad was involved in football as president and was a life member of both the North Central League and the Boort Football Club. Dad had not been a sportsman himself – he always had a limp. We never knew why, we just accepted it. But Neil had a theory that he probably did an Achilles tendon and he just did nothing about it, just waited until it cured itself, so he never played any football really. So, he was an administrator forever.

Margaret – It was said that Hyland was the one who always made sure all the players were on the train before it went and everyone was on the truck before it went home. He was a teetotaler, so he was always getting those that had too many drinks loaded on.

John - There was not football from 1940-45 due to the War so Dad was instrumental in getting it all going again after the war.

I can say I've always been involved in sport, playing or administrating. I ended up being a life member of the football club and a life member of the tennis club. I played tennis until I did an Achilles – I should have stopped years before that, but I didn't.

I was 16 when I finished at Boort School - that was as high as you could go at Boort. Even though it went all the way to Form 4 it

wasn't overcrowded because all the little country schools like Minmindie and Barraport and Yando were still operating in those days. There was about 50 in the higher elementary part of Boort School. Most kids in the small country schools and in Boort left at the end of Form 2. There were about nine students left in my class in Form 4: Beth Piccoli, Doris Kane, Janice Wood, Frank Byrne, Ann Weaver, Margaret Graham, Yvonne Austin and Floris Hosking.

(General discussion about one-teacher schools and John's brother Neil - known as Hank - who wrote With its Hat About its Ears; Recollections of a Bush School.)

Margaret - School commenced for me at the Boort School as I boarded with my Grandma Cable because there was no school at Meering West. In Grade 3, I had first-hand experience of one-teacher schools, as I continued my schooling at Minmindie. I rode a horse from Leaghur to Minmindie. I don't think our parents worried about us. I rode four-and-a-half miles. Sometimes I got sick of the horse and I rode a bike for a change. But the thing was you had other people! I was usually dinking my younger sister and I came out onto the Kerang Road near where Boyds live now, and met Ken Loader on his horse, and then on the next corner we met all the Richards kids (Robert, Doug and Doris [Kane]), then all the Frosts (Dorothy, Joyce and Jeffrey). We were never alone. There were no sealed roads, you just had dirt and gravel. I can't remember being cold or wet, you just got on your horse and you went, it was part of life.

(John reflects on riding a horse to school. And adventures such as trying to outrun the cars coming into town.)

John - We used to leave the horse in Great Grandma McRae's back yard in Victoria Street. At school when it was your turn on duty you had to go and collect a bit of kindling out of the trees and light the fire. Every classroom had a fireplace.

The 1940s dust storms are something we'll never forget.

Margaret - I was at Meering West. My father's two brothers were at the War so my father had two extra farms to look after. And there were rations for fuel so he had a motorbike that he would travel around to each of the farms on. I always thought he was refused enlistment for a medical reason, but I have since discovered that it was because he was required to look after three farms. I remember him going off in uniform every weekend. He was in the Volunteer Defence Corp and we were left at home to look after the farms, including keeping the goannas away from the chooks. I was only a little kid, but I will never forget those dust storms (early 1940s), you could not even see your hand if you put it up close to your face. We were told, when you hear the screaming wind get into the house as quick as you can or hang on to a fence so you can find your way back. It amazes me how the women put up with it. I can remember sitting at the kitchen table with a tilly lantern and the dust was swirling through the house. People complain now, but having lived in those storms, it was unbelievable! We had no refrigerator, no electricity, no washing machine. The dust storms were so bad that in the end we had to go into Boort via the Kerang Road, because all you could see were the tops of fence posts the other way.

John – Direct drilling is unbelievable the difference it has made to soil stability. I can remember when some people started doing it and others said it would never work. In the early years, we sat on our rough old tractors with no cab working fallow and now they have these beautiful tractors with air conditioning, but they don't work their fallow anymore!

In those days if there was one weed in the paddock, we worked the whole paddock. You see the straw and weeds that the crops are drilled into nowadays, farmers in the 1940s would have thought that was terrible.

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I can't remember much about what we did for fun at school. The boys played sport all the time - kicked the footy and played cricket.

(Margaret comments that at the little schools like Minmindie, you all played together, boys and girls alike.)

You divided into two teams and played cricket, rounders, or whatever.

I did National Service training in 1954. I had left school in 1952 and all 18-year-olds got called up for compulsory training. We did three months at Puckapunyal, which we thought was a lifetime! Lee Jackson went with me. We had to go back each year for refresher training for the following three years. The interesting observation about that experience is that when Lee and I went down to the 50-year reunion at Puckapunyal in 2004, there were maybe 2000 people there, and it was so interesting that everyone there was 18-plus-50 so 68-years-old and you got a look at the differences life has bestowed. Some people could hardly walk and others were as fit as a fiddle. It was a cross-section of life, a lot of the outcomes for people are through no fault of their own, it was just the draw they were dealt. It was a sobering and interesting moment of reflection and observation. National Service did us a lot of good. For me, I'd never been in a mass of people. Some people had been away to school, but I'd never done anything like that. It made you realise that you were only a speck in the ocean. I went there thinking I was important, but you get down there with 1000 others and you find out you're not that important.

When it came to coming home on the farm I don't think we thought of any other option really.

(Margaret reminds John that he had won a scholarship to the Bendigo School of Mines (TAFE), so he did have another option.)

But that would only have delayed things a bit. And it probably would have tested my parents to be able to finance it. So, they didn't encourage me to take it and I was quite happy to come home anyway.

I left school at 16 to come back on the farm, also doing odd jobs for others such as working in shearing sheds. We had a tractor with a ripper on it and when rabbits were rampant, I would go out and rip out burrows for people. A lot of these jobs were done as an exchange of labour between farmers as there wasn't a lot of money around in those days.

Margaret – After four years on a block in Nyah, my family, came back to Boort at the end of 1954. Father sold the vineyard in Nyah in the year that I was in Form 4. He came back to Boort and built Cable's Service Centre and became a businessman. That is the shop that Saunders have, my father had that built. He dealt in International Harvesters and equipment. I think he would have been better off if he had done that earlier in his life. He was much better suited to it. It was something he could do very well. He also had an extremely good mechanic – Danny Martin - who he interviewed in Melbourne and then brought him and his family up to Boort. Danny wrote a short piece in our family history book where he wrote about how he came to be in Boort and how Dad was one of those people who thought the customer was always right - no matter what time day or night, the machinery had to be repaired. In my last two years of school in Swan Hill (Forms 3 and 4), I studied commercial principles, shorthand, typing and accounting. My parents were asked by a number of businesses in Boort if I could work for them, but Dad and Mum said I would be working for them in the new family business. So, at 16 I was running the office for the HR Cable International Service in Boort.

We met through the church and tennis. The Methodist Church had a very strong Youth Group. Behind Jaron Motors there were

two tennis courts. We met playing tennis there. We had three teams - the Ramblers, Rovers and Rangers. There has been quite a change in religion. Methodists had a church at Catumnal, a church at Minmindie, Lake Marmal, Oakvale and Yando – now there is one in Boort that is struggling. In Boort, in those days, there was a minister for every church in town. Now Stephen Field has gone, there is no minister in town. Most young people aligned their social activities with their church. We had a big youth group that I was secretary of, and a Sunday School which I taught at. In our lifetime there has been a big change. Once, you would not have found one tractor working on a Sunday. There was always a family dinner on a Sunday. Sunday was all about family time.

In those days (1950s), Boort had many different businesses. When you came out of the 'pictures' (where the tyre service is now) you walked towards the main street and you could either go left or right to a café. Facey's to the left and another to the right. You might buy an ice block or some smarties to roll down the aisle of the theatre. It was a place to gather. Saturday night was a time to get together and weeknights was ballroom dancing. In those days people weren't so mobile - Bendigo was a major trip. The pubs were shut at 6pm and they didn't have counter meals so much.

Boort was just so lucky to have two beautiful dress shops. Where Jenny Withington's shop is now, that was Violet Brady's (McClelland). We all called her Aunty Vi. She had the most gorgeous clothes. For our wedding, Vi said, 'now Margaret, you and your mother are coming to Melbourne with me and we will find you the wedding dress and we will get your going away outfit, gloves and shoes and hats that will all match'. John got his outfit at the Boort Emporium (where the current hairdresser is). It had men's clothes on one side and women's on the other. My parents (Merl and Bert) lived in what is now Waltons in Holloway Street. When it was my sister's wedding three weeks after I had Paul, I wasn't allowed to be a bridesmaid because I had a baby but Vi said, 'I am going down to Melbourne to the warehouses and I will bring you back a frock and you will look as good as the bride'. She also had some pretty impressive foundation garments!

The Emporium had another fantastic lady who was very stylish - Merl Darker. She was in charge of the ladies clothing, she was immaculate! Bill Rye was in charge of the men's section, he was also a football trainer (he strapped up John's broken rib once so he could play in a footy final). Then down there where George's Hardware is now, you had Andrews' Stores - they sold everything. If you went in there during the war years to ask for tea, flour or sugar, you would get everything individually weighed and packed in a brown paper bag. There was no supermarket. The hardware shop was owned by Jack Seaman (now the chemist). There was a butcher (Café Renu) and also SH McClelland, who had a fuel agency with bowlers out on Godfrey Street. There was no reason to go to Bendigo; everything was here.

John – When you think about it back then, the Post Office dealt with letters and stamps, the newsagent only sold newspapers, the chemist only had medicine. So, in fact now you could set up one big shop in Boort that would sell everything! We started off our married life (1958) with next to nothing and you didn't buy anything until you had the money. We had a tiny house. It did have what they termed as three bedrooms. It was a prefab place and the toilet was an outside building. They built it in Maryborough and transported it in two pieces and dropped it here. It looked a bit out of place sitting here in the middle of a paddock with nothing around it. When we got home from our honeymoon, we had to stay at Margaret's parents' house as the house had nothing connected to it.

Margaret - In those days, once you got married, women didn't have a job. I sure wasn't short of things to do. I had grown up on a farm and being the eldest I was

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always outside helping Dad. I had been required to milk a cow before I went to school. I had been his right-hand man and in Nyah I had learnt to prune grapevines. I resumed this role once I was married. My kids were not indulged; they were put in a playpen in the dairy while we milked cows, or in the pram while I was a shed hand.

(Margaret shows photo of her 'apprentice' great-granddaughter Pippa with broom in the shearing shed.)

When we were first married, we had a small dairy farm. Most people in the area did. We milked 30 cows, supplying fresh milk to the town and cream to the Boort Cooperative Butter Factory (near the current Lakeside Café). In those early years of our marriage the cream cheque was divided between the two families (John's parents, and themselves) and that is what we lived on.

John - The establishment of the Pyramid-Boort Irrigation System after the War was very significant and there was a huge expansion of irrigation through northern Victoria in the 1960s and 1970s. After we got married there was pretty much unlimited irrigation water available. We had 100 acres of irrigated lucerne, which was a pretty full-time job as you were either watering, cutting or baling. And then later in the Hycube days it was pretty full on. *(Hycube was an export hay processing facility in Boort.)*



***A photo taken by Ford.
John with the first radio on a Ford tractor***

We were awarded an irrigated farm prize in 1984. This was for the most effective channel and weed control practice. The Department of Ag had some trial plots on our land for a number of years. I was well aware that I never knew everything there was to know about farming, and I realised there were a few cluey blokes in the department. I had them out here and I followed their advice. For example, we had all these little bays and there were no concrete stops, you just used dirt. And you could only have about five bays going at once and you would have a slow stream going down the bays and that water was soaking through the profile into the water table. So, a lot of this country was starting to get a bit salty. We then had Mr Bill Haw to survey using cut and fill pegs.

We had elevated scrapers following his pegs to form the right slope for irrigation. We were then able to have bigger bays, wider stops and you could just put the water down with more control and faster so there was less water soaking down into the water table. When laser technology became available (late 1970s) it was the greatest thing that ever happened to irrigation. First, we hired laser equipment, then we bought our own equipment and we were some of the first to use lasering technology in the community. We leased this equipment out to other farmers to assist them to adopt these new techniques and demonstrate the revolutionary impact of lasering.

It was about this time (1979) that I got involved in Goulburn-Murray Water. This is a frustrating job! My father was involved in this organisation and after he gave it away, and someone must have said 'why don't you hop in?' so, I did. It was an interesting time. I was someone who didn't know much about the politics of

water and at that stage the local engineer used to be chairman of the local district (Goulburn-Murray Water – Loddon Valley District). Some information came out from head office to say that the committee had to be headed by a local irrigator. I knew this was coming up but because I was new to the committee, I wasn't too worried about it. But when we came to the first meeting, the pointer went around to various people to take over, but they all had a prepared reason why they couldn't do it and there I was, with no excuse. So, I became chairman and have been ever since.

I've seen lots of changes in that time. Now, we have this problem with the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and water leaving the district and going down the river to big almond orchards and the river is getting scoured on the banks and falling in. Common sense seems to have gone completely out the window. Water in Australia creates high emotions. When it's dry everyone wants water, when it's flooding nobody wants it, they want to push it somewhere else. There are many controversies over floodwater and neighbours who hold long grudges about flood water. I'm probably at advantage because our farm here doesn't get flooded, so I can stand back and look at the bigger picture. There was a stage there when our local committee got sacked by the Board of Goulburn-Murray Water because we challenged their decisions. But after 12 months, the Board was sacked because it was discovered that what we had said, was true. It was interesting times, but I don't get stressed. I approach things logically. At the time Margaret said, 'you should write a letter to the paper and tell them what's really going on', but I said, 'just hang on, the truth will come out' and it did.

I look back on my farming years and think that probably the last 10 years have been the best years I've ever had on the farm. A lot of people say it's been dry and complain about this-and-that, but we've produced more in the last 10 years than ever before. Good farming practices have contributed to this.

We went out of sheep for a long time and they were anti-fences – I had this place set up in 30-acre paddocks but all the fences went. Then a couple of years ago they started going back into sheep and they had Dan Lanyon employed fencing flat out! We had a pretty good setup with sheep, but they were hesitant in buying replacement ewes because the price was going up and they thought \$60 was ridiculous, but they ended up buying them for \$180!



Harvest 1960-61. Fordson Tractor and 8ft McKay header and auger. Field bin lined with hessian

Not only have the last 10 years been productive on the farm, but also having three generations working here is great. Hunter and Pippa are the sixth generations of our family on this farm. I've backed right out of the farm and that is the way it should be. I find it very interesting to just watch and see what they are doing. Usually my day starts with someone (Paul or Tyler) giving me a ring, usually to take someone out somewhere. Nelson Farms is

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Nelson interview continued

quite spread out, but I suppose that it does help with weather variations. But I'm at the stage now that it doesn't take much to keep me occupied.

Margaret – I've had a number of part-time jobs over the years. I did an off-campus course in office practice at Longerenong (1990s) and then with the introduction of the GST, I started a secretarial business from home, helping farmers and businesses with the new tax system. Another plus for me was helping out on the farm by getting my truck licence and carting our wheat to the silo.

I think we were the first people outside of the school to have a computer. In the mid-1980s we saw an ad in the paper about this word processor and we went down and had a look at it. But when we asked the shop assistant how it worked, not even he knew how to work it. So, he asked us to take it home and have a play with it. It was \$799, which was a lot of money, but they didn't even ask for a deposit, they just sent it home with us – glad to get it out of the shop. Robert Russell from the school helped us get it going.

John - In those days if someone got a 100 bags off, you would think you had had a good day. Now Tyler strips 100 bags in the header in 15 minutes. This tractor (above right) had an electric welder on the front that ran off a pulley in the tractor. I was one of the first in the district to have an electric welder, so it was an exciting addition.

I eventually did do a TAFE course. About 15 years ago. I'd always been keen on the workshop. I thought I needed a lathe, so I bought a lathe and I thought 'how do I operate a lathe?' So, I went down to Bendigo TAFE near the old saleyards. I went down there one-night-a-week. I have made bulk bins, sheds and bins for trucks. Those two new sheds down there are the first sheds on the farm I haven't made. I still do a lot of the fixing on the farm.

We had three children. Paul studied Agriculture and is home here on the farm, Debra studied to be a teacher and then Commerce and is now the financial manager at the Capital Theatre, and Trevor took a while to work out what he was going to do. Rob Krober had a hand in helping him find his way and eventually he went to university to study Science and has had a very successful career in the area.

My late brother Neil (*noted writer and historian Hank Nelson*) and I would talk most Sunday nights. Never about personal topics. We would discuss football, cricket, politics – all the important things.

Modern society is very mobile. When we were young, playing tennis for example, you were in a team and you were committed to that team, completely. But today they can't get people to do that. People want to be able to go away. The young people, they all have flash cars so they can just go to Melbourne for the weekend, which we would never have thought of doing! Even if we went on holidays, we would make sure we were home to play our Saturday sport. Also, we knocked off from work to go to tennis or a meeting. Sunday afternoons were spent visiting friends or family. We didn't work on Sundays or late into the night like people do these days.

I would like to see more people committed to the Boort Tourism Development Committee. That is our planning for the future. I have been involved with sporting clubs all my life (60 years on the Boort Football Club Committee) and I only started bowls a few years ago and now I'm president. Positions on committees are very hard to fill these days. I'm trying to get the bowlers to embrace computers. Emailing is a great help to sharing information instantly, so I've been trying to drag them into the 21st century.

We both came from families in which volunteering was important.

(John has an Order of Australia Medal for service to the community. He is also a recipient of an Australia Day Award and is a life member of the Boort Football and Tennis Clubs. He also has a medal for his National Service contribution. Margaret is a life member of Boort Netball Club and North Central Netball Association and received a Queen's Centenary Medal for contribution to the community (A & P Society, Boort Development Committee, golf, tennis and netball). It is also interesting to note that John's brother Neil (Hank) has an AM)

Our parents showed us the way as volunteers and instilled in us the importance of service to the community. It is this philosophy that has been the foundation of our lives.

This interview was conducted by Jacqui Verley and Susan Gould as a part of an ongoing project to record the stories of people of the Boort district.



BOORT ANGLING CLUB INC A 0051259 P

*34 Ring Road, Boort, Vic. 3537 or
P.O Box 43 Boort, Vic. 3537*

Hi to All

Hope everyone is fit and well and at least had a chance to have a fish. No camping allowed at this stage, so please stick to the rules.

After considerable discussion with our Committee and others including health professionals, we have decided that **THERE WILL BE NO BOORT ANGLING CLUB ANNUAL CARP ERADICATION COMPETITION AND FAMILY WEEKEND in 2020.**

This decision has been made because of the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 virus, possible health risks to locals and the wider community.

We are also unwilling to approach and collect gifts and produce from our many wonderful Sponsors when we are unable to guarantee to fulfil the obligation to advertise for them and distribute their gifts to the community. We will be writing to all our sponsors to inform them as to why this decision has been made and ask that they support us in the future. If you have friends or relatives who have been involved could you please inform them of the situation.

In time, and when we start to get a grip on what is the new normal, we will start our Monthly Meetings and consider the possibilities of Club Competitions again.

Reports:

Ron, Peter, and Rod had a nice day in the sun on Monday along the shores of Lake Tchum. They caught 5 Silver Bream, 1 Redfin, 1 Trout and a large Eel Tailed Catfish.

May your lines be wet and tight in the near future, BAC

Email: boortanglingclub@yahoo.com

Statement

The Hon Dan Andrews MP
Premier

Sunday, 24 May 2020 STATEMENT FROM THE PREMIER

The whole way through this pandemic, our advice to Victorians

has remained the same: “stay home”.

Now, as we begin to settle into a new normal, our message is “stay safe”. That means maintaining your physical distance. Using common sense. And as we ease restrictions, each of us playing our part to keep one another safe. With the rate of community transmission remaining low, and the rate of testing remaining high, we’re in a position to make a number of additional changes.

As always with these things, there’ll be questions about why we can do this, but not that. Why one activity is okay, but another might not be. And the truth is, we’ve had to make some tough decisions. Just as we can ease some restrictions, some of our other measures must remain in place.

One of our most important messages to Victorians is this: if you are working from home, you must keep working from home – at least until the end of June. I understand there’ll be questions about why you can go to the pub or the park – but not the office. But the health advice on this is very clear. We just can’t afford to have millions of people moving around our state – taking public transport or using the communal kitchen. Let alone when you think about the logistical challenges of getting people in and out of lifts or lobbies.

Now I understand this won’t reflect everyone’s working conditions. And there are plenty of workers for whom this just won’t apply. But for those bosses who have employees who can work from home – we’re asking that they keep working from home. It’s making a very real contribution to the safety of our state. Because of that contribution – and the contributions of every Victorian – today we can announce our next steps.

Each of these changes are cautious and considered. And each of them is underpinned by one key principle: by limiting the number of people moving around our state – we can limit the spread of this virus.

That means from Tuesday – and in line with the return to face-to-face learning in school – outdoor playgrounds, skateparks and outdoor communal gym equipment will reopen. Then, from 11:59pm on 31 May, you’ll be able to have a total of 20 people in your home. For a family of five, that means 15 visitors. Outdoor gatherings can also increase to 20. Overnight stays can resume at private residences. And importantly, for our tourism industry, so can overnight stays in accommodation. In good news for those itching to pitch their tent, this will also apply to campgrounds and caravan parks – but not with communal facilities like kitchens or bathrooms so we can stay safe.

Limits on our most significant ceremonies will be lifted, with up to 20 people allowed at weddings – plus the celebrant and couple – and up to 50 people allowed at a funeral, in addition

to those required to conduct the ceremony. Up to 20 will be allowed at other religious ceremonies, in addition to those required to perform the service.

Libraries, youth centres and other community facilities will be able to open with no more than 20 people in a single area, plus those needed to operate the space. That means men’s sheds and arts and crafts classes can resume. From 11:59pm on 31 May, entertainment and cultural venues like galleries, museums, drive-in cinemas and historic sites will be able to open their doors, alongside zoos and outdoor amusement parks.

Physical distancing and a limit of up to 20 patrons per space will apply, and indoor venues will be required to keep customer contact details. Swimming pools will also open with limits of 20 people and additional safety requirements in place.

Community sporting activities will also be permitted with up to 20 people in undivided spaces, provided the sport is outdoors, noncompetition, non-contact, and people are able to play 1.5 metres apart. Restrictions on professional sport will remain unchanged.

Beauty and personal care services like nail salons, spas, tattoo parlours will be able to open with up to 20 customers per space – with customer contact details required to be kept. Auctions and open for inspections will also be subject to the 20-person limit – plus those required to conduct the activity – with agents also required to keep the contact details of everyone who attends.

Non-food and drink market stalls will also be able to open from 11:59pm on 31 May.

If community transmission rates continue to remain low and testing rates continue to remain high, we will look to further relax restrictions from 22 June.

From that date, indoor fitness and recreation facilities will open with up to 20 people per space and up to 10 people per group or activity at any one time. Up to 50 people will be permitted in restaurants, cafes, galleries, museums and for the first time, cinemas and theatres.

And for those eager to hit the slopes, the ski season will open slightly later this year on 22 June. At the same time, we’re urging Victorians: In all your activities, be considered. Be cautious. Use your common sense. And if you don’t have to do it – don’t.

By making these small sacrifices, we’re each contributing to something much greater than ourselves. Working from home means we can go away for the weekend. Staggering start times means our kids can start learning face-to-face. Keeping our distance means we can open cafes and restaurants. And by only seeing those you need to, if you need to, we can help keep our friends and families safe. Because we all have a part to play.

And it’s up to all of us to make this work.

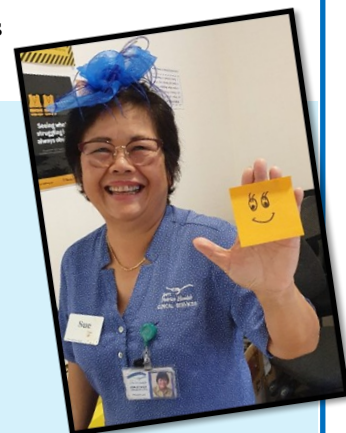
NATIONAL VOLUNTEER *Week*

National Volunteer Week, took place from Monday 18 May to Sunday 24 May, was an opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of our volunteers for their outstanding contribution to our community.

This year, Loddon Shire celebrated our volunteers with a number of online activities

including guest speaker Helen Yorston, who gave volunteer managers tips on how to retain and engage volunteers during isolation.

Our Loddon Visitor Information Centre volunteers will be treated to a familiarisation tour, visiting venues in the north of the Shire, once restrictions are lifted.



Cautious steps out of lockdown

I'm sure, like me, you welcomed the news from Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews of a gradual easing of restrictions as the spread of COVID-19 slows. For weeks there have only been four reasons to be out: shopping for food and supplies, care and caregiving, exercise, and study or work – if you can't do it from home. Now there is a fifth reason to leave home: visiting friends and family – with a maximum gathering of up to ten outdoors and up to five visitors in your home.

While this is a welcome relief, it also needs to be approached with caution since by staying at home and limiting contact with other people, we can protect the elderly, the at-risk, and our healthcare workers and each other. Vulnerable people should still continue to limit the contact they have with others.

However, we are now able to take part in more outdoor recreation, including fishing, golf, walking groups or hiking – provided physical distancing is maintained. The restrictions on numbers attending weddings or funerals have also been slightly eased. Overall the message remains, the same: if you can stay at home - you must stay at home.

The COVIDSafe app is part of the government's strategy to slow the spread of COVID-19. Having confidence we can find and contain outbreaks quickly will mean governments can ease restrictions while still keeping Australians safe. For more information and to download the app go to:

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/covidsafe-app>.

The current State of Emergency in Victoria has been extended until 31 May 2020.

Loddon Shire COVID-19 updates

A Community Contacts list is available for all residents that will be a handy reference to keep. It includes contact details, addresses and opening hours of all services that anyone living in Loddon Shire might need to find. Services include medical clinics, doctors and pharmacies, health related help, financial services, food support and lists of Neighbourhood Houses.

The list is being delivered to all households in Loddon Shire and is also available to download from our Health and Wellbeing page on the website

<https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/For-residents/Health-and-wellbeing/COVID-19>.

Works around the Shire

Our Works Department staff continue to provide maintenance services across the Shire throughout this time of COVID – 19.

The Townscape Services Team have been busy in our townships controlling broadleaf weeds, garden bed maintenance, spraying and cleaning drains, tree planting and tree maintenance along with small and large area mowing.

Upskilling young Victorian farmers

Young farmers across Victoria are encouraged to apply for the Upskill and Invest Young Farmers Scholarships which allows successful applicants to access study and training,

as well as invest in on-farm initiatives and further professional development.

The scholarships of up to \$10,000 support training and study in areas such as business and risk management, genetics and pasture management development. At the completion of their studies, recipients receive a further \$5,000 to invest in professional development and business planning or on-farm practices, equipment and technology.

This is an opportunity for the next generation of Victorian farmers to expand their skills, knowledge and agricultural expertise. To find out more about the program and to apply for a scholarship, visit vic.gov.au/youngfarmers. Applications close on Sunday 14 June.

Monitor your farm business performance

Sheep and beef producers are invited to participate in the Victorian Livestock Farm Monitor Project (LFMP). The project, which has been collecting detailed physical and financial farm information from producers for fifty years, is an opportunity for farmers to gain a thorough and independent report on their farm's performance.

Participating producers receive an annual individualised report with graphs and data from the reporting year. This information may be used for such things as obtaining or extending loans and making business decisions.

Data collected includes farm income and costs, trading and breeding details, feed, fertiliser and labour input and farm asset and liabilities. There is no cost for participants, and all information is treated as strictly confidential.

Previous reports are available on the Agriculture Victoria website agriculture.vic.gov.au/livestockfarmmonitor. For further information, please contact Sam Henty on 0430 482 443 or sam.henty@agriculture.vic.gov.au.

Get to know your recycling

During the current restrictions, large numbers of people working from home has resulted in increased household waste and decreased business waste. Unfortunately this means more contamination in kerbside recycling which increases costs to Council and therefore the community.

As mentioned in previous Mayoral Columns, people in Loddon are generally good recyclers, however contamination disrupts the ability of Council to reduce waste and achieve more value from our resources.

The most common contaminants in kerbside recycling are food scraps, soft plastics, clothing and polystyrene. It is also vitally important that recycling is not put inside plastic bags but is placed loose into the bin.

Other items which don't belong in the kerbside recycling are batteries, polystyrene, coffee cups, e-waste, tissues and wipes.

Sustainability Victoria has a great website with a tool to show you what can and can't be recycled. It also includes tips on how to make sure items are 'recycle ready' and how to recycle things that can't go in your kerbside bin

<https://www.recycling.vic.gov.au/>.

By getting to know your recycling, you can make sure it doesn't end up in landfill.



Online Cuppa and Chat

Victorian Rural Women's Network invite people to host or attend a virtual morning or afternoon tea, after-work drinks or another

form of online catch-up, in order to stay connected during the coronavirus pandemic.

Each year, the Country Cuppas are a relaxed and comforting environment for participants to connect and share ideas and experiences. Adapting to the virtual events will be a way to support rural women during physical distancing restrictions and also great for those who live in isolated areas.

Virtual Country Cuppas will be held from 23 May to 31 May. Hosts may choose any video conferencing platform and choose any date and time during that period. If you would like to host an event, which includes a free Zoom training webinar, visit the Victorian Rural Women's Network website:

<https://extensionaus.com.au/VRWNetwork/home> to register or for more details.

MAYORAL COLUMN 4 May 2020

Council meeting

The State Government recently passed the COV-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) Bill 2020 in order to implement a range of temporary emergency measures to support Victorians.

The legislation amended the Local Government Act 2020 to allow virtual meetings for local councils to carry out their work remotely from 1 May. This is a common-sense approach to physical distancing measures to enable Councillors and staff to fulfill their duties without compromising their health. We intend to implement this approach for the May Council meeting.

Voucher system for fee free waste disposal

At the April Council meeting, we voted to implement a voucher system to replace the fee free waste disposal days. This is was in response to a number of issues that have arisen since the program was implemented at the end of 2017.

Many residents had found it inconvenient to save up their waste until the quarterly disposal day. This also resulted in long delays and congestion at the sites, stress on our staff and ultimately led to less sorting of waste and recyclables. We also heard that for a variety of reasons, residents would sometimes miss out on attending the disposal day.

In response to community feedback, Council has decided that a voucher system would give residents greater flexibility to dispose of their waste at their convenience and spread out the pressures on our landfills and transfer stations.

The voucher system will be introduced and delivered to residents through the annual rates notice process. Residents who are renting will be advised to contact the landlord or property owner to obtain a voucher. The final fee free sessions will be the days that are currently scheduled for 16 May at Inglewood and 17 May at Wedderburn, Pyramid Hill, Dingee, Boort and Newbridge.

Other Council meeting items

Other matters resolved at the recent Council meeting included the agreement to advertise the Draft Budget and changes to fees and charges for public exhibition and submissions.

The completed Pyramid Hill Community Centre Master Plan and Feasibility Study was presented and will now be submitted to Regional Development Victoria.

In addition, Council reaffirmed its commitment to the Victorian Local Government Women's Charter (VLGWC),

which was adopted by Council in February 2019. Council agreed to progress actions by appointing Cr Colleen Condliffe and Council Officer Janine Jackson as Charter Champions and displaying the Charter in council premises.

The VLGWC aims to increase women's participation in local government as citizens, candidates and councillors. It is based on three principles: gender equity, diversity and active citizenship.

Community Grant applications extended

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, some groups have experienced difficulty finalising and lodging their applications for the Community Grants. Therefore the closing date has been extended until 5.00pm on Monday 1 June 2020.

Visit the website for more information, including the application guidelines and details on how to apply:

<https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/For-residents/Community-support/Council-grants>.

Staying connected with the library

As mentioned in a previous Mayoral Column, the Goldfields Libraries are doing everything they can to stay connected with communities during COVID-19 restrictions. The library serves as an important social connector for many people in our community.

The library staff are working hard to make more of the collection available to more people by increasing e-book and e-audio collections and boosting online music and film streaming services.

Work has also commenced on how to gradually restore services once easing of restrictions begins. This may include limited access to the collection using a 'click and collect' process.

If you are at home with small children, you might like to watch the online Storytime sessions. There is a big range to choose from with new ones added all the time. Favourite library storytellers have recorded sessions to allow children to read, sing and dance along at home.

Join in at the library website:

<https://www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/storytimes>, it's open to everyone.

It's also easy to sign up if you would like to receive the Goldfields Libraries newsletter:

<https://www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/newsletter>.

Housing for seniors

Loddon Shire Council manages a number of 1 or 2 bedroom self-contained units, providing accommodation to older residents in Dingee, Pyramid Hill and Serpentine.

Council's Elderly Persons' Units (EPU's) support residents in the Shire to stay close to friends, family and their support networks as they age.

Unit leases are on an ongoing basis with rental set annually by Council and based on the type of unit.

We currently have a vacancy in Grevillea Court, King Street, Dingee. If you, or someone you know may be eligible for the accommodation, please visit our website for more information <https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/For-residents/Services-for-our-older-residents-and-people-with-disabilities/Housing-for-seniors>.

Did you know

If you notice that Telstra service pit lids in the footpaths in our towns are damaged or needing attention, the correct authority to notify is Telstra, not Council.

If you are concerned about a Telstra pit please lodge a report <https://say.telstra.com.au/customer/general/forms/report-damage-to-telstra-equipment> in order to have the issue rectified.

Staying Apart Keeps Us Together

Our efforts and actions during COVID-19 restrictions are making a difference and saving livings, but we can't stop now. The Victorian Government has launched a campaign that reflects on how we can look after ourselves and one another as part of a community, a workplace, a family.

It's about keeping the actions going to support others while staying apart – knowing what support and assistance is there to turn to if you should need it.

There are lots of tips and ideas for staying connected on the new Victoria Together website <https://www.together.vic.gov.au/victoria-together>. Here you can enjoy some of the best music, entertainment, nature and art our state has to offer. It's a way to support local talent and host creative content.

Creative industries employ around 260,000 Victorians, but the sector has been hit hard by coronavirus restrictions with many artists, musicians and other creators losing their livelihoods as a result of the pandemic. Through the website you can explore online exercises classes, visit museums, check in on zoo animals through the live stream, discover food stories and recipes, as well as experience theatre, dance, comedy and film.

Support for business

The Victorian Government has expanded the criteria for its Business Support Fund to help small businesses survive the economic impacts of COVID-19 and keep people at work.

Funding of \$10,000 per business is available and will be allocated through a grant process. Small businesses that have been subject to closure or highly impacted by the Restricted Activity Directions, have a turnover over of more than \$75,000 and hold an ABN number will be eligible to apply.

Visit the Victorian Government Business Support Fund webpage for details <https://www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance/business-support-fund>. Applications under the fund will be accepted until 1 June.

La Trobe University has fully funded up to 25 spots for local business for the COVID-19 Industry Response Program. The 12-week course delivered in partnership with Investible will give small businesses the mindset, resources and networks, they need to adapt and innovate in the face of unprecedented change.

The program, consisting of online workshops, expert mentoring and online learning, is designed to support established Victorian retailers, manufacturers and small businesses across all major industries and sectors.

Council is also providing financial relief to those suffering hardships at the moment with respect to rates and charges. For details and links to other government packages, visit <https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/For-business/COVID-19-business-support>.

Draft budget

Following the last Council meeting, the Draft Budget 2020/2021 was made available for inspection and submissions until close of business Friday 29 May 2020.

This budget was developed through a rigorous process of consultation and review and Council endorses it as financially responsible. I encourage the community to read through this document, in conjunction with the Council Plan 2017-21.

Council has increased rates by 2.0% in line with the Fair Go Rates System. Kerbside waste collection services will increase by 15% per collection item due to the expected cost increases to waste collection services and landfill operations with the continuation of Council's decision for this activity to remain cost neutral.

Other points of particular interest in the Draft Budget include an increased commitment to investment in information technology, strong investment in local road and related infrastructure maintenance, continued support for the aged services and early years programs and a capital expenditure program of \$7.24 million. The Draft Budget keeps Council in a strong cash position and debt free.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Draft Budget is available to view on our website <https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Financial-reports>. A copy may be posted on request by calling Council's Customer Service Office on 5494 1200.

The website also contains information about how to make a written submission, which must be received by close of business Friday 29 May 2020. Submissions will be considered when the Draft Budget is presented to the June 23 Council meeting for final adoption.

Home energy webinars

Loddon Shire is part of the Central Victorian Greenhouse Alliance. This formal network of 13 local governments in central and northwest Victoria is working together on tackling climate change. The Alliance is working to develop and implement regional projects, to share knowledge and undertake advocacy on climate and energy policy.

The Alliance is partnering with councils and other organisations to offer two free webinars for residents across the region. The webinars will provide expert advice on ways to reduce energy bills, particularly relevant at a time when people may be struggling financially as well as spending more time at home and using more energy.

The first webinar took place on Wednesday 20 May at 7pm. This webinar looked at simple steps that everyone can take to achieve more affordable bills. The session is suitable for both renters and owner occupiers.

The second session on Wednesday 27 May at 7pm will go into more detail about what you can do around your own home to save energy and stay warm this winter. Both sessions will be delivered by energy experts.

For more information or to register for this event go to <http://www.cvga.org.au/>.

Pool and spa registration reminder

Residents who have private pools or spas on their properties are reminded that the deadline to register them is 1 June 2020.

As mentioned in the Mayoral Column early this year, the requirement for registration of pools and spas is part of a program to help ensure child safety and to ensure that the standard of fencing and safety barriers around swimming pools and spas on properties is maintained.

To obtain an application form please contact Council's Building Services on 5494 1242 or email building@loddon.vic.gov.au or download the form from our website: www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Forms-and-permit-applications.

Further information how the regulations can be obtained from the Victorian Building Authority website <https://www.vba.vic.gov.au/consumers/swimming-pools>

MEDIA RELEASE

Privacy Awareness Week

FURTHER INFORMATION: (03) 5494 1205

Privacy Awareness Week is an initiative held every year across the Asia Pacific to raise awareness of privacy issues and the importance of protecting personal information.

Loddon Shire Council takes your privacy seriously.

For more information see: <https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Council/Privacy> or <https://ovic.vic.gov.au/privacy/victorian-privacy-network/privacy-awareness-week/>



Information about easing of restrictions for sport and exercise from 11:59 on 31 May.

From 11:59pm on 25 May

Public playgrounds, outdoor gyms and skateparks will open. People should not gather in groups of more than 10, and stay 1.5metres apart from others where possible.

From 11:59pm on 31 May

- Up to 20 people can participate in outdoor group sport and exercise activities, provided you can keep your distance (at least 1.5 metres apart) and they are not competitive.

- Up to 20 people can use public playgrounds, outdoor gyms and skateparks

- Indoor and outdoor swimming pools can be opened to a maximum of 20 patrons per separate enclosed space and a limit of 3 persons per lane in each pool.

22 June 2020

- Indoor sports centres and venues can be opened with up to 20 people allowed per separate enclosed space, subject to the four square metre rule and up to 10 people per group/activity

- Indoor physical recreation (e.g. gyms, health clubs, class fitness studios) can be opened with up to 20 people allowed per separate enclosed space, subject to the four square metre rule and up to 10 people per group/activity

- Indoor and outdoor swimming pools will remain at a maximum of 20 patrons per separate enclosed space, subject to the four square metre rule calculated on the publicly accessible area excluding the pool and a limit of 3 persons per lane in each pool.

For more information visit:

<https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/sport-and-exercise-restrictions-covid-19>

Library Agencies Storytimes Online

Nurture your child's listening and learning skills in these fun-filled sessions of stories, songs and rhymes.

TERM 2
2020

Mondays 10:30am with Ange

Wednesdays 10:30am with Elise

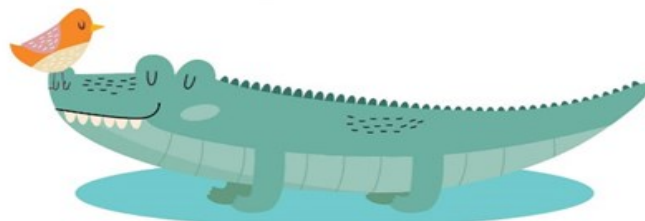
Fridays 10:30am with Hayley

Watch via Facebook:

www.Facebook.com/GoldfieldsLibraryAgencies



Or find us on YouTube YouTube



For more information please visit
www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/storytimes



Storytimes Term 2

Storytimes will continue for Term 2 online with your favourite library storytimers, Ange, Elise and Hayley

Join them at 10:30am Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays for stories, songs and rhymes.

Watch via Facebook or search for Goldfields Libraries on YouTube.

www.Facebook.com/GoldfieldsLibraryAgencies

Online store for Loddon Shire businesses

MAYORAL COLUMN 25 May 2020

An exciting collaboration aims to put our unique, gourmet products at the fingertips of food lovers and discerning shoppers throughout Australia.

The development of an online store on the Visit Loddon Valley website, in partnership with the Food Purveyor, will give consumers direct access to the high quality artisan produce of our region, all in one place at one time. The Food Purveyor is a gourmet hamper e-store delivering indulgent food experiences to customers and corporate clients around the country.

By participating in the store, emerging and established Loddon businesses can promote their products to a wider audience and extend their sales reach as part of the recovery of COVID-19.

The store will be accessed via the Visit Loddon Valley website www.visitloddonvalley.com.au. Any Loddon Valley business who would like participate in the initiative should contact the Loddon Visitor Information Centre on (03) 5494 1257 or email loddonvisitorinformation@loddon.vic.gov.au.



Australian Government

Be Connected

Every Australian online.

Be Connected

With social distancing requirements, there has never been a better time to get online!

Do you need help using your device?

Be Connected is a FREE Australian Government program to help you get the most out of going online, so you can add new skills and experiences to your life. Using your own device, such as iPad, iPhone, Tablet, Android Phone or Computer the sessions can be worked through at your own pace or with the help of BRIC staff.

Call BRIC for more information 5455 2716



Clubs, community win big with local sports support

The State Government have just released a funding program targeted directly at clubs, so support their survival through the COVID pandemic. The grants are 'first come, first served',.

12,000 clubs and associations across the state will be able to apply for support under a \$40 million program to help with basic running costs and to support readiness to return to play. The \$40 million community club and association program is a key component of the Government's Experience Economy Survival Package and will help associations, leagues and clubs maintain their viability and connection to their communities, assist the return to training and play, and support members.

Eligible organisations will be able to apply for funding in four categories, with grants available for amounts:

- Up to \$350,000 for large state sporting associations
- Up to \$200,000 for smaller state sporting associations, regional sports assemblies and academies, and other state sport and recreational bodies
- Up to \$15,000 for associations and leagues
Up to \$1,000 for individual clubs.

Applications for grants under the Victorian Community Sport Sector Short-term Survival Package will be accepted from 25 May until 15 June 2020, or until the funding allocation is exhausted.

Guidelines are through this link - <https://sport.vic.gov.au/grants-and-funding/our-grants/community-sport-sector-coronavirus-covid-19-short-term-survival-package>



Over the past two weeks we have all enjoyed the opportunity to return to some longed-for social and recreational activities with the gradual easing of restrictions. At the same time, we are asked to use common sense when it comes to taking part in activities outside of the family home.

These include limiting our exposure by continuing to maintain a physical distance when out, keeping up careful and thorough handwashing regimes as much as possible, and remaining at home.

This week we will see school children begin a gradual transition back to normal school routines and many businesses, including those in hospitality are also planning for a phased re-opening from the beginning of June.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that these changes will result in an increase in traffic, particularly in the return to our roads and paths of school children. Please take care around school crossings and remember that speed restrictions at schools apply.

BOORT COMMUNITY PHARMACY

The Pharmacy have flu vaccine shots scheduled to arrive at the end of May. They also have Smart Phone Sanitiser in stock.

Remember some people can get their medications delivered due to the COVID-19 situation. Give the pharmacy a call for more information. Ph. 5455 2044

The death occurred in Shepparton of Norman Weaver

I would like to thank the many friends who cared by thoughts of cards, flowers, phone calls and prayers. *It was greatly appreciated by his sister Marie Worland.*

Ken Evans would like to notify the Boort Community that his beloved sister Avis Ruby Daly (nee Evans) passed away in Brisbane 16/05/2020 aged 92.

Her family feel a great connection to Boort and have many fond memories of growing up here.

NBN waives additional charges

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, NBN Co has announced that it will waive charges for additional capacity of up to 40 per cent to Retail Service Providers for at least three months to help support Australian residential and business NBN customers. The additional capacity pricing relief will apply to all fixed line, fixed wireless and satellite NBN technologies.

This announcement will be welcome news to the many Australians now working from home as the wholesale network prepares to meet the demand. For more information go to: <https://bit.ly/3dou7w7>.



Loddon Healthy Minds Committee – Community Representatives

Loddon Shire Council is seeking expressions of interest from residents across the municipality, in particular the Boort & Tarnagulla areas, to represent the community on the Loddon Healthy Minds Network committee.

The Loddon Healthy Minds Network promotes and advocates for improved wellbeing and access to appropriate services for people in Loddon Shire affected by mental health issues.

If you have an interest in improving mental health and wellbeing in the wider Loddon Shire community, we are interested in hearing from you.

For further information please contact Wendy Gladman, Director Community Wellbeing on 5494 1226.

To obtain the Healthy Minds Network Terms of Reference or an Expression of Interest form, please contact Vicki Andrew on 5494 1230 or visit the Loddon Healthy Minds Website www.loddonhealthyminds.com.au

Council elections

The Victorian Government

recently announced that Council elections in Victoria will go ahead as planned on Saturday 24 October 2020, by postal votes.

To ensure the election is safe, and in an acknowledgement of physical distancing requirements, longer candidate statements will be allowed in the Victorian Electoral Commission Voter Information packs and guidance will be available on suitable and safe campaigning methods.

Being a Councillor in Local Government offers individuals the opportunity to contribute to a greater degree in the development of their community, to take part in strategic choices about budgets, economic growth, quality of life and social justice.

It has been a great honour for me to work with Council and our communities to advance many worthwhile projects, to encourage the growth of our population and continue to improve the liveability of our towns and region.

To find out more about running for Council, as well as a raft of valuable links and resources, visit our website <https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Our-Council/Council/Council-elections>.



Expressions of interest are being taken for these courses:

Provide CPR \$70 HLTAID003

Provide First Aid \$170 HLTAID001

Call BRIC on 5455 2716



centrelink

Centrelink Farm Household Allowance

Call Rural Financial Counselling Service on 1300 769 489



Rural Financial Counselling Service
VICTORIA - NORTH WEST



Agriculture Energy Investment Plan

Agriculture Victoria offers free on-farm energy assessments and grants as part of implementing the Agriculture Energy Investment Plan. The plan supports on-farm businesses to improve energy efficiency, manage energy cost, improve energy reliability and support own-generation capacity.

To be eligible for an on-farm energy grant, a free on-farm energy assessment is required. The on-farm energy assessment will provide recommendations on how to improve the energy efficiency and productivity of your farm business. In light of current events, the program has been extended until 30 June 2020. To find out more visit: www.agriculture.vic.gov.au/agenergy.

loddon campaspe
community legal centre

A program of: arcjustice

FREE LEGAL ADVICE

We provide free legal advice in areas that include:

- Child Protection
- Family Violence
- Parenting Arrangements (Family Law)
- Debt

To book a telephone or video link appointment, contact us:

PH: 5445 0909 or Freecall: 1800 450 909

DUTY LAWYER SERVICES

We can help people with family violence intervention orders via telephone at courts in Bendigo, Maryborough, Echuca, Kyneton and Castlemaine. Call us for more information.

SECONDARY LEGAL CONSULTATIONS

We also provide general legal information to workers in the health and community sector, to help you support your clients and make the most appropriate referrals. Secondary consultations are general in nature, so please do not share your client's name or any identifying information when speaking with our lawyers. Contact us to book a telephone appointment.

lcccl.org.au

Like us on Facebook

[/loddoncampspecommunitylegalcentre](https://www.facebook.com/loddoncampspecommunitylegalcentre)





TENNIS

There is no tennis news to report on, so we have supplied a great picture for some of our readers to reminisce.

Do you remember or can you guess the 1985 Country Week A Grade premiers?



Wave for a Volunteer



BOORT LAKESIDE CROQUET Club



The Boort Lakeside Croquet Club is very happy to announce that they are back together on COVID19 rules and are very keen to catch up with players whom they have missed in person.

The Club has announced a "booking system" for those who wish to play on Club Days. A Form will be up on the Notice Board to place your name against the Date you wish to play.

However, once 10 members have registered, another time will have to be organised for anyone wanting a game after that. This game will be a social game with name recorded, date, time of arrival and time of finishing their game and departure included.

Sanitisation and social distancing is crucial and must be strictly adhered to by all players.

Thanking everyone for your patience and understanding. We will see you all as time goes on.

Alan Puttick - President



BOORT BOWLS CLUB

There has been very little happening at the bowls club, but finally members are now allowed to have a practice (minimum people 10 on green at any one time and to practice social distancing.)

Congratulations also to John Nelson who won 2019-2020 "B" Grade Singles Championship. *Well Done John.*



John Nelson - 2019-2020 "B" Grade Singles Champion.

BOORT GOLF CLUB

Golf News

The 2020 season of our golf commenced the 2nd Wednesday in May for the Ladies when 7 players were able to try out the nice green golf course playing an Ambose event for 9 holes, Di went on to play 18 holes as she had a new set of golf Clubs to try out. There are some different rules to play by while we have the CORONA VIRUS problem to deal with. We are asked to bring a towel to use when handling the Flag or Scrapers, we mark our own card, no rake for the Bunkers and there is no social gathering at the Club House. We all had a good day walking in the fresh air.

The Men commenced their year with a Stableford event when 11 players took to the golf course. The star of the day was the Men's Captain Andrew Kane with 35 points while Damien Lanyon finished as runner-up with 32 points. Jamie Sutton and Kevin Linehan each received a golf ball on a count back from Ian Morris and Scott Rollinson.

If unsure of the new playing regulations check with your Captain and be sure to take an extra small towel and some sanitiser, but make sure you have your name in so that you can be allocated a playing time.

For information about Golf events the following can be contacted.

President: Stuart Tweddle 0413 482 353
Captain: Andrew Kane 0428 378 738
Ladies President: Dot Beattie 0427 552 461
Lady Captain: Di Johnston 0427 434 625

BRIC GYM

The following advice is taken from
DHHS Website - Sport and exercise

From 22nd June 2020

Indoor physical recreation (e.g. gyms, health clubs, class fitness studios) can be opened with up to 20 people allowed per separate enclosed space, subject to the four square metre rule and up to 10 people per group/activity.

The BRIC Committee of Management will consider the options available for the reopening of the Boort Community Gym to best accommodate the needs and safety of our Gym users. Decisions on access to the Gym will be communicated via Facebook, About Boort and Community Noticeboards.

For further information please contact BRIC 5455 2716



Boort District P-12 School are preparing for students to come back on-site. This is something all staff have been looking forward to doing. Below are some dates regarding which classes are coming back and when.

Staged Return

Monday 25th May – Pupil Free Day mandated by the Department of Education

Tuesday 26th May – Years F, 1, 2, 3, VCE and VCAL return (Schools with existing composite Grade 2/3 classes can apply local discretion to the return of the Year 3s.)

Tuesday 9th June – Years 4-10 return to school

Correction Day – Friday 26th June – pupil free day (Last day of Term)

Remote learning will continue for all students who are not required on-site until 9th June

What is Boort District School doing for the Biggest Morning tea?

WE'RE SPRINKLING SOME FUN!

BIGGEST MORNING TEA... REMOTELY!

Prizes for best costume, best decorated biscuits or cake/cupcake!

Email a photo of your fancy dress costume or decorated biscuit or cake to Mr Sims or Miss Griffiths and let our SRC members decide on some winners. Good luck!



CARBON MONOXIDE (CO) POISONING



CAN'T BE SEEN



CAN'T BE SMELLED



CAN'T BE HEARD



CAN BE STOPPED

Carbon monoxide and gas heater safety

Key messages

- Carbon monoxide is an odourless, colourless gas that may cause symptoms including tiredness, shortness of breath, headaches, dizziness, nausea, weakness, confusion or chest pain if inhaled. Symptoms can be mistaken for a flu-like illness. Very high levels of carbon monoxide can be fatal.
- This winter many Victorians are at home for longer periods due to the current circumstances of coronavirus (COVID-19) and may be running gas heaters for longer periods than usual. This could increase the risk of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning if domestic gas heaters are not regularly maintained, or operated without adequate ventilation (fresh air).
- If carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected, turn off all gas appliances and fans, open windows and doors, leave the property and seek medical advice.

Energy Safe Victoria recommends that all gas heaters are serviced at least once every two years by a qualified gasfitter. Some models of open-flued gas space heaters are subject to a safety alert and must be rectified as well as serviced before use <https://esv.vic.gov.au/safety-alerts/gas-open-flued-gas-heaters/>. Installing a carbon monoxide alarm is a useful back-up measure but does not replace the need for regular servicing of gas heaters.

o Before using a gas heater, check that any permanent ventilation in your home is clear and ensure there is fresh air flow into the room. Under certain conditions such as inadequate ventilation or running bathroom exhaust fans or kitchen rangehoods at the same time as an open-flued space heater can result in negative pressure which draws carbon monoxide into the room instead of discharging outside through the flue or chimney.

o Gas heating should not be left running continuously overnight or for extended periods.

Portable outdoor gas appliances should never be used indoors. Heat beads produce carbon monoxide and should never be used inside for cooking or heating purposes.

**Authorised by the Victorian Government,
1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.**

Contact Bryan Streader in Boort if you need your Gas Heater/System tested






25 MAY TO 5 JUNE 2020

WINTER WOOLLIES DRIVE

Collection of warm clothes and blankets for vulnerable people in our community.

DONATE HERE!

NDCH support over 200 community members across our region who are at risk or are experiencing homelessness – for these 200 people there are over 500 dependent children



BDH are currently operating with the recommended RESTRICTED ACCESS recommendations of the Department of Health.

ALL staff and visitors to the health service are being screened prior to entering the service delivery areas.

We encourage everyone to have a flu vaccine, especially if they intend on visiting an aged care facility as now it is mandatory for anyone working in or visiting and aged care facility.

FREE FLU VAX for over 65 / Bulk Billed

Echuca, Swan Hill & Bendigo health are now set up as the screening sites.

Our Facebook page is regularly being updated with our latest advice.

Our current residents and patients are continuing with a modified lifestyle program of activities such as bingo, craft and music to keep them stimulated and entertained.

Donna Doyle | Director of Clinical Services
 Boort District Health Phone: 0354 515 200
 Fax : 0354 552 502 |
 v : 15200 | Email : Donna.Doyle@bdh.vic.gov.au
 Kiniry Street, PO Box 2, Boort, Victoria, 3537
 Web Site: www.bdh.vic.gov.au

NATIONAL 18-24 MAY 2020 VOLUNTEER WEEK

**CHANGING COMMUNITIES.
CHANGING LIVES.**

BDH celebrated National Volunteer week from 18th-24th May in a different way this year. No gatherings meant thinking outside the box.

At the start of the week a pack was sent out to the BDH thank you letter, a poem, a special edition of the newsletter and volunteer specific puzzles and jokes. To show appreciation to all our wonderful volunteers, some of our staff members waved with happy faces.

To end the week a second pack was posted with a small gift, letter from the CEO as well as Volunteering information and our “Wave for a Volunteer” from BDH staff.

The contributions our volunteers make are invaluable and we are truly grateful for the difference they make to the lives of our residents, clients, community members and staff. Our community relies on volunteers in many areas and groups, programs and events would not run without them.

**So to all volunteers ...
thank you very much!**

Maree Stringer
Social Support Co-ordinator, Boort District Health



**Currently BDH has
41 registered volunteers**



BDH Volunteers

What % of volunteers are...



75.5%

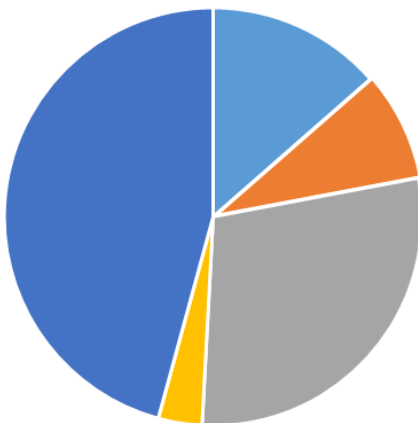
Female



24.5%

Male

Volunteer positions at BDH



■ Transport ■ Day Centre
■ Residential Aged Care ■ Gardening ■ MOW

Comments from volunteers...

- Love helping and chatting to residents
- Enjoy putting colour into the garden
- Enjoy the social side of volunteering
- Like meeting people and keeping in touch
- I love interacting with people
- Enjoy helping the community
- Like giving enjoyment to others
- Enjoy company
- Enjoy catching up with other volunteers
- I like the friendships I make
- I try to leave some humour with the meal
- Enjoy caring for and talking to people

Comments from staff...

- Residents love the music and visits from the volunteers.
- Volunteers are very helpful & are vital to our programs.
- Often available at short notice
- They bring a sense of community and connection to the residents
- Volunteers provide support and companionship



Limit the time you spend sitting down

- Do some strength exercises to break up time spent sitting at your desk, reading or watching TV
- Working from home?
 - Stand while you read documents
 - Walk around your home while you are on a conference call, a 'walk and talk' meeting!
 - Set an alarm on your computer or phone to remind you to stand up and move every 30 minutes or at least once an hour
 - Take short active breaks throughout the day – short bouts of physical activity will add up to the weekly recommendations.

Involve the whole family!

- Take a footy, netball or soccer ball down to the local park with your kids
- Dance more – share your favourite music with your family. You could even learn a TikTok dance and share it with your friends and family
- Play games like hide and seek or build a fort
- The floor is lava. Go!
- Get gardening and start ticking off those home and yard maintenance tasks you have been putting off
- Use chalk to create footpath activities for you and your neighbours, for example hopscotch



Stay safe

- If you are new to physical activity, have a health problem, or are concerned about the safety of being (more) active, speak with your doctor or health professional about the most suitable activities for you
- Be mindful of your own experience and limitations when trying something new
- Any physical activity is better than none. Start small and gradually increase duration, frequency and intensity
- Ensure you follow current State Government advice on COVID-19 physical distancing and always practice good hand hygiene.



Most importantly, have fun
and enjoy getting active!



More information

 @Healthy Heart of Victoria



The Healthy Heart of Victoria initiative is supported by the Victorian Government.

Getting active at home

Tips on how to build physical activity into your day



Regular physical activity plays an important role in maintaining and improving good physical and mental health. National guidelines recommend that healthy adults (18-64 years old):

- ✓ Are active on most days or every day – every little bit adds up
- ✓ Do 30 minutes of moderate exercise every day, or between 2.5 and 5 hours over the week.
- ✓ Do muscle strengthening exercise on at least 2 days of the week



Get walking!

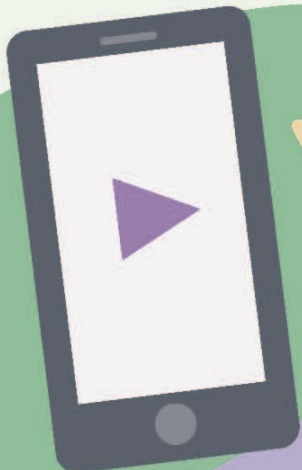
- Walking is the most popular way for people of all ages to get active. The 2019 Active Living Census found that more than 1 in 5 people (21.3%) walk for exercise
- Enjoy some time outdoors by walking in your neighbourhood, local park or bush reserve

Get creative for your strength work-out

- You can use items lying around your house to help with your workout. With a little creativity a towel or two can be your exercise mat or a backpack loaded with a few items can provide you with just the right weight resistance
- Use your body weight! Exercises like squats, push-ups, sit-ups and lunges, can all be done indoors.

Get inspired online

- Youtube offers a wide array of free guided activity videos for all ages and abilities. Here are some ideas:
 - Dance workouts for everyone
 - Yoga or Tai Chi
 - Chair based exercise and stretching
 - Strength training classes
 - High-intensity interval training (HIIT)





One of the best ways to stay informed about what is happening in the Loddon Shire and to see important Council updates is by following our Facebook page. The page is updated daily and is a useful source of information for alerts, notices, news and job vacancies.

Make sure you 'like' the page to receive updates in your newsfeed

<https://www.facebook.com/LoddonShire/>

Contact the Loddon Visitor Information Centre on (03) 5494 3489 or www.visitloddonvalley.com.au

Volunteer Week

MAYORAL COLUMN 25 May 2020

Last week we acknowledged the invaluable contribution of our wonderful volunteers across the Loddon shire. Our volunteers are the backbone of many community organisations and we have nearly double the average rate of volunteering compared to other regions in Australia.

I would like to acknowledge Frank Winzar, one of our hard-working, selfless volunteers who passed away last week at the age of 93. Due to the restrictions still in place to combat the spread of coronavirus, many people were unable to pay their respects to Mr Winzar at his funeral.

In 2017, Mr Winzar was recognised by Council for his outstanding contribution to the Dingee community. Not only was Mr Winzar active in the East Loddon Lions Club, he was involved with management of Dingee Park, where he was still looking after the toilets until two weeks ago. He was also a life member of the Dingee Bush Nursing Centre, having served on the Board for over 40 years. Frank will be sadly missed by the Dingee and East Loddon Communities.

Boort Resource and Information Centre

SERVICES UPDATE FROM BRIC
Due to Coronavirus workplace restrictions

VICROADS LICENCE RENEWALS
BRIC is still open for licence renewals.

VICTORIA POLICE FIREARMS
LICENCE RENEWALS

At this stage, there is no change to the procedure for Firearms Licence renewals. **You must pay the fee for your licence by BPAY or at a Westpac Bank** by the nominated date on your payment notice. You can then have your licence photo taken at BRIC.

For further information, contact a Victoria Police Divisional Firearms Officer at Bendigo on 5448 1306 or visit

eLibrary

The library has a fantastic range of resources available through our eLibrary, which can be accessed for FREE through our website! To start, go to www.ncgrl.vic.gov.au/elibrary. Note that some resources require you to be on a library computer or connected to our Wi-Fi, and some may require you to log in with your library card number and password. Here are just **some** of the fantastic resources available in our eLibrary:

Access eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines through Borrow Box, RBDigital, CloudLibrary and uLibrary.



Access online newspapers including the *Age*, the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the *Financial Review*.

THE ~~AGE~~ AGE
The Sydney Morning Herald
FINANCIAL REVIEW

Access a wide range of online training courses through Lynda.com.

Lynda.com®
A LINKEDIN COMPANY

Access family history resources including Ancestry.com and Find My Past.

ancestry library edition
find my past

Access free music streaming through Freegal.

freegal music

Access free movie streaming through Kanopy and Beamafilm.

kanopy
beamafilm



Articles for "About Boort" newsletter need to **arrive by 9.00am on the 20th of the month** for inclusion in the next newsletter.
Email bric.boort@bigpond.com