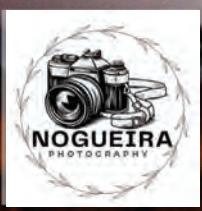


Aurora Australis over Winchelsea

Jason Nogueira's photos of the magnificent Aurora Australis captured over Winchelsea this week

Thank you Jason



CONTENTS

27 January 2026

COVER

Aurora Australis

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Julia Holohan's sister, Danny O'Brien, Jenny Mathison **2**

FEATURES

Aurora Australis over Winchelsea	Jason Nogueira	3
CWA at next Winchelsea market	Elaine Atkinson	4
Winchelsea Movie Club	Jenny Mathison	5
Sage and Ted	Julia Holohan	8
Cooks Corner	Alice Cloake	9
Housing below needed numbers	HIA	12
'Tap and Go' being trialed	Vic Government	16
Basketballers' road safety message	Vic Government	16
'Moneycare' financial advice	Salvation Army	16
Supporting renter rights	Vic Government	30
Birregurra Men's Shed	Barwon Water	30

THE ENVIRONMENT

Carlisle River evacuation warnings	Colac ICC	3
Help needed for habitat restoration	Trust for Nature	6
Winchelsea SES at fireground	SES Winchelsea	7
CFA starved of funds	VFF	7
What to do if you are evacuating	FFM	7
The Climate Report	Judy Cameron	15
Climate Risk Forum	Gig Sustainability	23

THE ARTS

ArtsRural - Tess McGair	Zinaida Campion	11
Creative Development Grant	Surf Coast Shire	30

HISTORY & CULTURE

Former Wesleyan Mission Chapel	M. O'Donnabháin	17
Memories of Sat night dances	Ray Jones	18

CHURCHES

Church Services		22
Thought of the Week	John Bader	22

FARMING

Farmers should register now	Rural Aid	23
Managing fire affected dams	EECA	29
Stubble grazing sheet	EECA	29
Tail docking cattle is illegal	EECA	29

FUN

Cartoon	Gary Clark	23
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HEALTH & WELL BEING

Mosquito borne diseases	DHHS	27
Greening may improve mental health	Aust for MH	27
HESTAA Excellence Awards	HESTAA	27

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

What's On Jan/Feb 2026		20
Community Noticeboard		24
Services & Activities in Winchelsea		25
Business Phone Directory		28

SPORTS & EXERCISE

Winchelsea Golf Club	Rachel Boddington	33
Winchelsea Tennis Club	Fletcher Allen	33
Winchelsea Bowls Club		35
Blues News	Janet Fletcher	37
Trebeck Parkrun	Neil McInnes	39



Letters to the Editor

Julia I have so loved reading your articles in the Winchelsea Star. In fact, I just love the Winchelsea Star! Of course, your column is my favourite but I also love reading Stitch It Don't Ditch It and HIPPY as well as all the wonderful goings on around Winchelsea. You are lucky to live in such an active community.

Julia Holohan's sister

Dear Editor,

Australia Day is, at its heart, about reflecting on the character and spirit of the Australian people. In recent weeks, that spirit has been clearly on display during the bushfires that have ravaged the state.

Across fire-affected communities, Victorians have helped one another without hesitation. Opening their homes to strangers, sharing what they had, volunteering their time, and standing shoulder to shoulder in the face of loss and uncertainty.

Our firefighters, many of them volunteers, worked tirelessly to protect lives and property, backed by local communities that rallied around them and stepped up in every way possible.

These actions speak louder than any words about what Australia Day represents to many of us. Mateship, resilience, generosity, and a willingness to help others in tough times are values deeply woven into our national identity. They are not limited to one day of the year, but Australia Day provides an opportunity to recognise and appreciate them.

The response to the bushfires demonstrates that our nation's greatest strength lies in the compassion and resilience of our people.

That is something worth acknowledging and celebrating. Happy Australia Day!

Danny O'Brien MP, Leader of The Nationals

Hello editors

So lovely to have the paper back but hope you all had a well deserved rest.

I so much appreciate what you all do to make this paper come to life each week.

Many thanks

Jenny Mathison, Winchelsea Movie Club Committee



Aurora Australis

Jason Nogueira



On Tuesday night, while most of the denizens of Winchelsea lay tucked up asleep in their beds, Jason Nogueira was busy working - and here are some of the results of that evening's work, photos of the magnificent Aurora Australis captured over the south end of the Green Estate in Winchelsea between 10:15 - 11:30pm on 20 January 2026.

Evacuation warnings issued ahead of fire conditions Tuesday

Colac ICC

Residents in town near the Carlisle River fire, including Gellibrand, Kawarren, Beech Forest, Forrest, Barongarook and the Otways National Park are urged to evacuate Monday ahead of extreme fire danger conditions Tuesday.

The Carlisle River fire breached containment lines on Saturday, and has burned approximately 9,400ha. With extreme fire danger conditions forecast Tuesday (27 January), the fire may impact southern Otway National Park and coastal communities as far as Lorne and Aireys Inlet. Fire spread will threaten homes, properties, livestock and lives.

From midday Monday, VicPol and VICSES began door knocking homes and properties in the Greater Otways, strongly recommending more than 1,100 properties to evacuate before sunset Monday.

Visitor sites in the Great Otway National Park and State Forests are closed until further notice. Forrest-Apollo Bay Road towards Colac is currently open but increased fire activity may lead to the closure of this road.

Residents are strongly advised to enact their bushfire survival plan immediately and leave early. It is critical that community



members follow the direction and advice of emergency services when asked to evacuate.

For those who do not have a safe place to go, an Emergency Relief Centre is open at Colac Showgrounds for domestic and large animals including horses. Bluewater Leisure Centre in Colac 118-134 Hearn St is also open but pets are not allowed. The Grovedale Community Hub, located 45-47 Heyers Road is also open for people and families and can accommodate domestic pets self-managed, kept on a leash or in crates.

If you leave your home, let friends, family and emergency services know you are safe with Red Cross Register.Find.Reunite.

Staying informed is critical at this time. Never rely on one source for emergency information

- **VicEmergency app, www.emergency.vic.gov.au**
- **Emergency broadcasters such as ABC local radio, community radio stations, SkyNews TV**
- **VicEmergency Hotline 1800 226 226**
- **VicEmergency on Facebook and X**



Winchelsea Community Market welcomes CWA Fundraiser at February Market

Elaine Atkinson

Devonshire Tea fundraiser for the CWA at February Community Market. Come and enjoy the Market vibe and support this much-loved organisation.

The next Winchelsea Community Market will be held on Sunday 1 February 2026, from 9.00am to 1.00pm at Shire Hall, bringing together local producers, makers, and community groups for another vibrant market day.



Honey up close



Tarts Bacus Beagh

Visitors are encouraged to explore the diverse range of stalls located both inside Shire Hall and outdoors, and to take the time to chat directly with local businesses, artisans, growers, and community organisations.



A highlight of the February market will be a Country Women's Association (CWA) fundraiser, featuring a classic Devonshire Tea. Market-goers are invited to enjoy freshly baked scones, jam and cream while supporting a cause that has long been at the heart of Australian communities.

According to Kim Johnson, President of the Winchelsea Country Women's Association, the CWA is about connection, service, and strengthening communities from the ground up.

"The Country Women's Association has always been about supporting families and communities, especially in regional areas," Ms Johnson said. "Funds raised through activities like our Devonshire Tea go directly back into local initiatives—whether

that's helping people in times of need, supporting education, or contributing to community wellbeing. When you support the CWA, you're supporting your own community."

All proceeds from the Devonshire Tea will be reinvested locally, making it an easy and enjoyable way for visitors to give back while catching up with friends over morning tea.

The February market will also see the distribution of the Winchelsea Community Market annual calendar to stallholders. The calendar outlines key themes for each market throughout 2026 and notes that the market will be closed during June and July 2026 for the winter break.



Winchelsea Shire Hall

Planning is also already underway for our "Hop into Easter" market, with early preparations progressing well and more details to be shared soon.

The Winchelsea Community Market continues to be a welcoming place to shop local, connect with neighbours, and support community-driven initiatives.

Mark the date:

- Shire Hall, Winchelsea
- Sunday 1 February 2026
- 9.00am – 1.00pm

Winchelsea Community Market

Email: winchelseamarket@gmail.com

Stallholder Coordinator: Kim Johnson 0418566790

Admin: Elaine Atkinson 0458009616

Social Media: Perlita Purcell 0417553929

Facebook: Winchelsea Community Market



Winchelsea Movie Club is off to a good start for 2026

Jenny Mathison



Many memberships for this year have already been paid. The list of movies to be shown is released and we are off to a good start.

Do you believe that eight years ago, maybe nine, the movie the Dressmaker was released. Growing Winchelsea inc. showed it to the public over several nights, to full houses at Globe Theatre.

This was just weeks after the very successful exhibition at Barwon Park, of dresses made for the movie.

Would we dare to dream that nine years later, we are still showing movies, now monthly, with an annual membership of around 60-70 people, having formed the Winchelsea Movie Club, a subcommittee of Growing Winchelsea. Inc.

A Movie club committee was formed in 2016 and a successful application for new equipment made to the Surf Coast shire. We joined the Federation Victorian Film society to enable reduced Royalties, which did include the necessity to be a membership-based Movie Club and other rules..... but then we were up and running.and all that is history

Nowadays, every third Monday of the month (except Jan and July) at 7.30 pm, on the dot, a movie is shown at the Globe Theatre, followed by a yummy supper and for many people, a chance to catch up with friends or meet new people.

Memberships are paid annually in January or February for 10 movies @ \$70 or \$65 with a HCC. You may choose half a year February to June or August to December for 5 movies @ \$40 or \$35 with a HCC. Members can join any time of the year, but unfortunately, it is not pro-rata. New members are very welcome.

To join contact movies@growingwinchelsea.com Information will be sent to you regarding bank details for direct debit. Also see flyer on noticeboard or the Winchelsea Star. All we ask for is an email address.

If you like to talk to people, ring Jenny 0409 672054 or Sue 0413 487915

Further details can be found on the website. www.growingwinchelsea.com

Have you thought about joining the local Movie Club?

Winchelsea Movie Club enters its ninth year of bringing affordable, entertaining movies monthly to the Globe theatre.

MOVIE LIST FOR 2026

19.2.2026 The Castle

19.3.2026 Tina

16.4.2026 One Life

21.5.2026 Roofman

18.6.2026 Gifted Hands

Break

20.8.2026 Rachael's Farm

17.9.2026 The Book Thief

15.10.2026 Mr Burton

19.11.2026 My Favorite Cake

10.12.26 Thelma

COST 10 screenings annually - \$70 Conc \$65
5 screenings Autumn /Spring seasons - \$40 Conc \$35

WHEN Movies are shown on the third Thursday of each month (except July) at 7.30. Come early.

WHERE The Globe Theatre, 17-19 Willis Street, Winchelsea
Opp Winchelsea Tavern (Top Pub)

Membership can be paid by CASH on the first night 19 February or by direct debit to your bank account.

Email your bank account details - movies@growingwinchelsea.com

Jenny 0409672054 Sue 0413487915

Further information – www.growingwinchelsea.com



Supper is always a pleasure - and Christmas is extra special



Help needed for habitat restoration

Trust for Nature

If you can, please give to the Trust for Nature Bushfire Recovery Appeal.

Devastating bushfires are affecting communities, habitats and wildlife across Victoria. We've heard directly from many of the landholders impacted – including some who have spent decades caring for some of the state's most vulnerable ecosystems.

One of the landholders impacted is Fiona Murdoch, from Mallee Conservation. On Friday 9 January, around 160 hectares of her 500-hectare conservation covenant southeast of Mildura burned. "Some of the habitat that burned isn't naturally resilient to fire. We've got trees hundreds of years old that have burned. It's irreplaceable," Fiona told us.

Fiona and her family have dedicated more than 20 years to restoring this landscape, building a 13 km electric fence to keep pests out, replanting native vegetation, and protecting habitat for threatened wildlife. The fires damaged 4 km of that fence, destroyed 53 hectares of revegetation, and burnt critical habitat for the endangered Mallee Bronze Azure Butterfly.

Their immediate priority is urgent and practical: "We have to repair the fence. We have to keep feral pigs out of the native habitat. Pigs are abundant in the area at the moment."

Fiona's story is just one example of what so many landholders are facing right now.

Across Victoria, more than 132 registered private land conservation sites – including the 55 conservation covenants, a Trust for Nature reserve and up to 100 properties registered through Land for Wildlife – have been affected by the fires. These are incredibly special places, cared for by people who devote their lives to protecting nature.



That's why we are raising funds to support them. Every dollar raised in our Bushfire Recovery Appeal will go directly to landholders for habitat recovery support.

The impact of the fires on biodiversity is wide-reaching: Around half of Victoria's threatened species have had important habitat burnt by these fires.

It's estimated almost 100 species have had substantial areas of their habitat affected, including some critically endangered plants and animals that are only found in these unique places, which have been burnt.

The fire-affected covenants support species such as the Otway Burrowing Crayfish, Regent Parrot, Fat-tailed Dunnart, Brush-tailed Phascogale, Striped Legless Lizard, Skeleton Fan-flower, Silky Glycine, Hickory Wattle, and many more.

Several threatened types of habitats have been impacted, including Semi-arid Woodland, Granitic Hills Woodland, Sands Mallee, Plains Grassy Wetland, and Stony Rises Woodland. We know that nature is resilient. But in the face of climate change and other pressures such as introduced pests and weeds, it's vital that we do what we can to help habitats and wildlife recover.

If you haven't had a chance to donate yet, please consider doing so today <https://trustfornature.org.au/donate/>

Fire Danger Period NOW

Country Fire Authority

The Fire Danger Period is when CFA restricts the use of fire in the community. This is to help prevent fires from starting.

The Fire Danger Period is NOT the same thing as a Total Fire Ban.

Your local council or shire may have their own local laws about lighting fires. Contact your local council to find out what municipal local laws may be in place. Local laws may be in place all year

Municipality	Start	End
SURF COAST	24/11/2025	01/05/2026

If you need to use fire in the open air during the Fire Danger Period or on a day of Total Fire Ban you may require a permit.

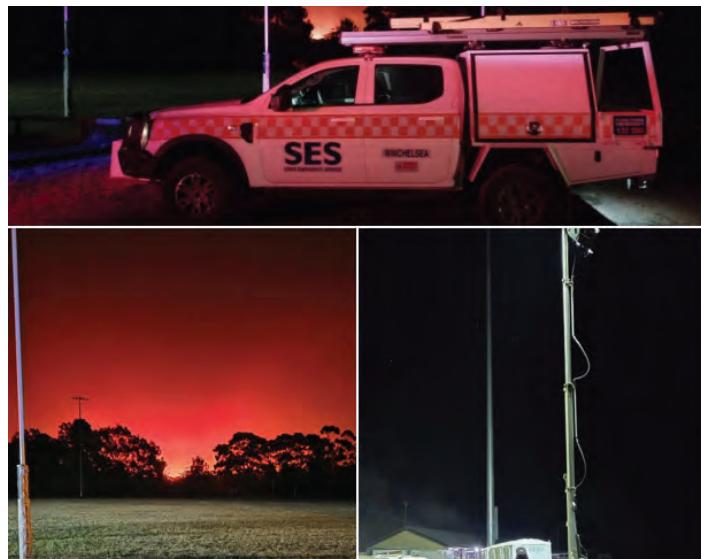


Winchelsea SES volunteers at the Otways fireground

SES Winchelsea

This fire just keeps on giving for the Otway complex. Jason and Terry went and assisted in ground support over the weekend. Lou and another Terry are off again tonight to assist with our light tower at base camp.

Our thoughts are with everyone on the ground and the community, particularly with the forecasts Tuesday. Please heed the Vic Emergency warnings and check in on your friends and family in the area.



CFA has been starved of funds for far too long

Victorian Farmers Federation

The Victorian Farmers Federation has slammed the State Government's continued underfunding of the Country Fire Authority.

VFF analysis shows that despite a nominal uplift in the past 12 months, the CFA's real purchasing power has been gutted by nearly 14% since 2020-21. In 2024-25, the CFA recorded a \$51.8 million deficit, the fourth in five years, bringing the cumulative funding shortfall to over \$145 million.

Meanwhile, volunteers responded to 41,925 incidents last year, the busiest year since the Fire Services Reform. Activity is up 36% over five years while funding has gone backwards.

"The maths doesn't add up. You can't do 36% more work, while funding is cut by 14%. The only way that works is by pushing volunteers to breaking point," Mr Hosking explained.

"Our volunteer firefighters don't ask for much. They give their time freely, put their bodies on the line, and ask only that they have the equipment, training and support they need to do the job. Right now, the funding is failing them."



What to do if you are evacuating

Forest Fire Management Victoria

YOU SHOULD PACK:

- Cash
- Clothing for three days
- Medicine for three days
- Phone and chargers
- Toiletries
- Important documents
- Momentos and photos
- Pet essentials, including leash and carriers.

If possible, make sure your **NEIGHBOURS** are aware of the situation and check if they need help.

Check the VicRoads website for **ROAD CLOSURES**. When you are ready, you should leave immediately. Don't wait to be told when to leave.

WHERE TO GO:

Go to friends or family in a safer location or to a community Emergency Centre.

Sage and Ted

Julia Holohan

Does anyone else have such wonderful, multi-purpose friends? What a lovely relationship between Julia and Paul and their "therapists" Ted and Sage.'

Please let me introduce you to our horses, Sage and Ted. Our best friends, confidantes, therapists, assistant lawn mowers and wonderful suppliers of manure.



Sage is Ted's mum. She's the paddock boss and Ted is subservient. Every now and then Ted will try some dominance but he is quickly put in his place by his mother. Sage is an old girl, she'll be 19 this year and Ted will be turning 11.

We have always had a horse or two.

They are wonderful animals with their deep dreamy eyes, warm horsey breath, and warmth of contact.

They have a wonderful affinity with us humans. They are excellent best friends, confidantes and therapists. You know you can nestle into their neck and tell them everything and anything, they will not judge you or ever discuss or tell any one what you've spoken to them about and all this will make you feel so much better.

Riding them may be a trifle different when sometimes they'd rather do what they want rather than what you want. This takes time, experience and dedication to reach an amicable compromise.

These days we settle for "sedate old people's rides". A gentle ride down the paddock, around our bush paddocks where we keep an eagle eye out for bouncing kangaroos and the terrifying to the horses, those quietly shuffling, scratching echidnas that curl up into a spiky ball in defence or is it in the hope of not being noticed. Then maybe, if there's not too much fast traffic, we'll have a quick trot along the gravel road, such a lovely sound that clip clop, clip clop. Then it's back home, unsaddled, some carrots to munch before it's back to their easy paddock life.

Their manure is invaluable for the veggie garden. A layer of straw topped with manure on the fallow plots, under the fruit trees, around the berries and generally around all the veg which not only fertilises them but helps to keep in moisture in the warmer months and helps keep them warm in the cooler months.



Paul and Julia

The best time to gather their manure is during the spring. This is when the grass grows rapidly and can become extremely rich for the horses. We keep the horses in a smaller paddock so they can't eat too much of this "super" pasture or they run the risk of getting: too fat, too frisky and we can keep a sharp eye on them so they don't founder. Founder is a painful condition that affects the structure of the hoof and can be caused from obesity and overeating lush green pasture.

In the smaller paddock it's quicker to pick up the manure than when they roam the big paddocks. Picking up their manure when they're in the smaller paddock will help keep the paddock clean for them.



When they're in the big paddocks, Paul will use tractor and smudger to spread the manure. In the small paddock I'll trot around with a wheelbarrow attempting to pick it up with a shovel. I've never become very adept at this and usually reverting to picking up with well gloved hands, then into the wheelbarrow and then onto the garden.

With the heat of summer, the dung beetles will appear and manure collection comes to a halt as the dung beetles chomp away at breaking up the manure where it crumbles and dissipates into the ground.

By then we'll have enough on the garden and the manure gathering can cease and the horses can happily return to roam and graze in the big paddocks.



This is a place for passionate foodies. Here we celebrate local produce, seasonal ingredients, simple yet remarkable recipes we've tried, tested and loved.

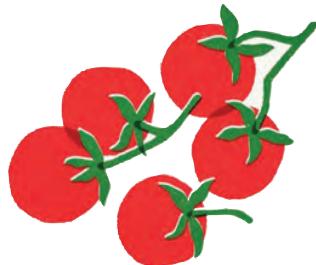


If you have a recipe you'd like to share, a local product to shout out or a suggestion for an upcoming ingredient of the month - we'd love to hear from you.

Email editor@winchelseastar.org.au.

January Ingredient of the Month

Tomato



Recipe of the Week

Fried Green Tomatoes

From 'Southern Living'

www.southernliving.com/recipes/fried-green-tomatoes

Submitted by Alice Cloake



Ingredients

1 egg, lightly beaten
1/2 cup all-purpose flour, divided
1/2 cup buttermilk
1/2 cup cornmeal
1 tsp. Salt
1/2 tsp. Pepper
3 green tomatoes, cut into 1/3-inch slices
Vegetable oil

Method

1. Mix together egg and buttermilk; set aside. Combine 1/4 cup all-purpose flour, cornmeal, 1 teaspoon salt, and pepper in a shallow bowl or pan.
2. Coat green tomato slices. Dredge tomato slices in remaining 1/4 cup flour; dip in egg mixture, and dredge in cornmeal mixture.
3. Fry tomatoes: pour oil to a depth of 1/4 to 1/2 inch in a large cast-iron skillet; heat to 375°F. Drop tomatoes, in batches, into hot oil, and cook 2 minutes on each side or until golden.
4. Drain on paper towels or a rack. Sprinkle hot tomatoes with salt.

About the recipe

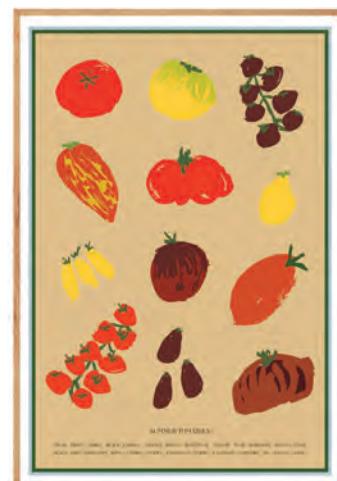
Inspired by the movie of the same name which I watched recently ('Fried Green Tomatoes' is free on SBS to watch if you're interested), this week I decided to try something a little different. Now associated with America's deep south, fried green tomatoes are a delicious, if perhaps a little unhealthy, appetiser. When I decided to make it, I only thought of one supplier, a little tomato stand that frequents the weekly Torquay markets. I chose this recipe from Southern Living in an attempt to get as close to the original as possible.

The recipe says to use large, unripe tomatoes that are pale green all over and very solid to the touch. There is a type of tomato that is green when fully ripe, but it has vertical stripes or other variations in its coloring and will feel soft when you press it. I made it with a Remoulade sauce, which for pickle lovers is a divine concoction of mayonnaise, dijon mustard, hot sauce, capers, cayenne peppers and some other fun ingredients - Google it, you'll love it.

In honour of tomatoes

Our month of tomatoes has come to an end but the season isn't over. I for one will be continuing with many tomato heavy foods including Gazpacho, Puttanesca and Panzanella (Italian tomato & bread salad). I will also be honoring this wonderful ingredient permanently, with the long awaited hanging of my 'Summer Tomatoes' print from Food For Everyone.

If you don't know them, Food for Everyone is a culinary poster shop that collaborates with renowned chefs and contemporary artists to turn recipes into artworks. Plus, for every poster sold, they donate to charities to help feed people in need. They recently did a piece for our neighbouring restaurant - Brae!





WINCHELSEA LIONS CLUB
In conjunction with
Winchelsea Primary School
Are holding a
FREE PICNIC
At Winchelsea Primary School Grounds
SATURDAY 28TH FEBRUARY 2026
12 - 3PM

For all children under 12 who reside in 3241
Must be accompanied by a responsible adult
This is a free picnic but you must have a ticket to receive your food
Enquiries: Alan 0476 475 422

TRAIN RIDES **PETTING ZOO** **FACE PAINTING**
CHUCK WAGON **COFFEE VAN**

FOR TICKET BOOKINGS go to – www.trybooking.com/DIAZC



YOU ARE INVITED TO
WINCHELSEA
COMMUNITY DINNERS

LAST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH

February 28th	July 25th
March 28th	August 29th
April 25th	September 26th
May 30th	October 24th
June 27th	November 28th

6.30PM HALL ON CORNER OF MERCER & HARDING STREETS

PRODUCE SWAP TABLE
CHILDRENS ACTIVITIES

PLEASE BRING FOOD TO SHARE
IF YOU ARE ABLE
GOLD COIN DONATION AT DOOR
MORE INFO- JESS 0409536752

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Authorised by the Victorian Government,
1 Treasury Place, Melbourne





Zinaida Campion

To share your stories and inspire the community, please contact Zinaida. 0428 403 784 zinaidacampion@gmail.com



Tess McGair: A Life in Music

The life of a mystery soprano (c1930–2011)

So who is Tess McGair, a seemingly successful Australian soprano, whom we know absolutely nothing about? She had a career, toured Australia and Europe, retired to conduct a small amateur singing group, and was probably forgotten well before her death in 2011.

So why is she relevant, and why does your columnist even know about her?

Well, to the faithful among you that read last week's ArtsRural, you already know the answer to that. Tess McGair is currently relevant because her music scores donated by Justin Gummer, all marked with her name, will be an important part of the proposed Historic Music Scores Archive in the Globe Theatre, if the council gives permission. And I know a bit about the operatic enigma because tucked away in a first edition score that was autographed by the composer, was an extraordinary treasure. A roughly typed first draft of a short autobiography, scribbled all over in what must surely be Tess's writing! And to think how easily it could all have been lost.

I would date the bio to around 2005. I'm also guessing from the frequent mentions of Adelaide music institutions that she was born there. It appears that she lived there her entire life, barring two years in Sydney, two and a half years in London, and five and a half years in Naples. There is no mention of a marriage or children. Pretty much all the information in this article is sourced from this one document.

Tess McGair's musical journey began at the age of five, seated at the piano. By seven, she was playing the harmonium at Mass at St Margaret Mary's in Croydon—a commitment that continued until after she left school. Even in primary school, her talent was evident: in Grade 5, she accompanied Irish dancers from Grade 7, and soon joined Hindmarsh Choir under conductor Thomas Shanahan. He encouraged her to audition for the ABC's Adelaide Philharmonic Choir, conducted by Norman Chinner, where she sang for eight years.

As a teenager, Tess's Sundays were a whirlwind of devotion and music. She played and sang at the 9:00 AM Mass at St Margaret Mary's, sang again at 10:00 AM mass at Hindmarsh, and then

Zinaida Campion is a classical soprano, vocal coach, artist and model raised in Winchelsea. She is an alumna of VOYCE Victorian Opera, a Windfire Vocal Scholar, and Co President of Geelong City Opera. She has a strong background in languages, a love of local history, and an all-consuming passion for promoting the arts in rural areas.

joined the choir at St Francis Xavier's Cathedral for the noon Mass. At the urging of Fr Ray Campbell MSC, parish priest at Hindmarsh, she became—reluctantly—President of the new Croydon branch of the Junior Catholic Women's League. During this time, she continued piano studies with Edna Munn and joined the Junior Catholic Women's League Choir, later renamed the National Catholic Girls' Movement, under Father Thomas Horgan. It was Fr Horgan who introduced her to Harold Wylde, Musical Director at the Cathedral, where Tess became a regular wedding soloist.

At 22, she began vocal studies with Marjorie Hartley, and later Reginald C. South. She competed with some success in the Eisteddfod in Adelaide, winning the Oratorio section and placing in Art Song, Ballad, and Australian Song at various times. In 1954, Tess with two friends co founded the Adelaide Opera Group because, in her words, "there was little chance at the time for vocal students not studying at the Elder Conservatorium to gain experience singing in an Opera". (I feel it's the same these days for young Melbourne singers not studying at the Con, as we call it). The ensemble was later renamed The SA National Opera Company.

In 1955, she moved to Sydney to study at the NSW Conservatorium, achieving some success at the Sydney competitions, and also in Bathurst and Canberra. She sang as a chorister with the NSW National Opera Company for two tours of country towns, one of them during a production of *Madame Butterfly*. "On both these tours we lived on a train. On arrival in the chosen town the props and costumes were unloaded then our train was shunted on to a siding, then we were free until the performance. At these performances, not only was I a member of the chorus of 4 (!) but also Property Mistress".

Returning to Adelaide in 1957, she sang Violetta in "La Traviata" with the SA National Opera Company, followed by roles in

"The Gypsy Baron" and "La Sonnambula". In 1958, she placed third in the Advertiser Aria before departing for London to study with Professor Clive Carey.

In London, Tess joined the St Gabriel Singers, conducted by Father Wilfred Purney, and performing live with them in "Epilogue" on BBC Radio and Television. She also joined the BBC Chorale Society, her favourite performance with them being the memorable 1959 Good Friday performance of Bach's "St Matthew Passion" in German at the Royal Albert Hall, conducted by the legendary Lorin Maazel.

In 1960, after two years in London, Tess was invited to Naples in Italy by the family of Tom De Tullio, with whom she had sung "La Traviata". She was introduced to the musical director of an orchestra in Bari and engaged to sing in concerts across towns and villages for their Patron Saints' Days. This work she continued for five and a half years, performing in more than 300 concerts from Rome to Sicily. Her repertoire included excerpts from "Lucia di Lammermoor" "La Traviata," "Rigoletto," "Il Barbiere di Siviglia," and "Il Trovatore". This is highly difficult repertoire which the Italians pride themselves on specialising in, so they must have had a lot of respect for her voice and technique. Her speciality was the fiendishly challenging Mad Scene from "Lucia di Lammermoor". She studied with the famous Enzo Aita (1903-1971) in Naples and sang in choir led by Padre Stefano Romano. In 1966, Tess returned to Adelaide, where she was asked to give her first ever speech about her time overseas. "For 10 days I was a nervous wreck!! I had never made a speech in my life. Didn't know how to start or what to tell them. However, when the time came I didn't know how to stop!"

In 1969, Tess is mentioned in the records of Burnside Symphony Orchestra in Adelaide as a soloist in a concert on 22 July. She sang pieces from her core repertoire - Regnava Nel Silenzio from "Lucia di Lammermoor", Susanna's Aria from the "Marriage of Figaro", and "Una Voce Poco Fa" from "The Barber of Seville".

Tess joined the Cathedral Choir under James Govelock, remaining active until 2001—a remarkable 49 years of service. During this time, she toured Europe and performed at Saint Peter's Basilica for Pope John Paul, a deeply meaningful moment in her career.

In her later years, Tess continued to share her love of music through "The Marianne Entertainers," a group performing at senior villages and nursing homes. As of 2006, they had already booked 13 concerts, continuing her lifelong commitment to bringing music to others.

Tess McGair's life was a tapestry of devotion, artistry, and service—woven through churches, concert halls, and opera stages across Australia and Europe. Her legacy lives on in the communities she enriched, the hearts she touched, and the music she gave so generously. There are many questions yet to be answered, including how her music library ended up in Geelong, we have made a start. One day I hope, as an arts writer and fellow soprano, that I can do her story true justice.

Ciao!

Would you like this formatted for print, a commemorative booklet, or a digital archive? I can also help design a timeline, program insert, or tribute page.

New housing commencements well below needed numbers

HIA

"Lower interest rates have seen the volume of new homes commencing construction increase, but they still remain well below the government's target," stated HIA Senior Economist, Maurice Tapang.

The ABS has released its Building Activity data for the September quarter 2025. This data provides estimates of the value of building work and number of dwellings commenced, completed and under construction across Australia and its states and territories.

"Dwelling commencements in the 12 months to September 2025 increased by 11.2 per cent compared to the previous year to 184,460," added Mr Tapang.

"The volume of home commencements remains below the 240,000 new homes per annum needed to build to the Australian Government's target of 1.2 million homes over five years. They also remain below the average volume commenced over the past decade.

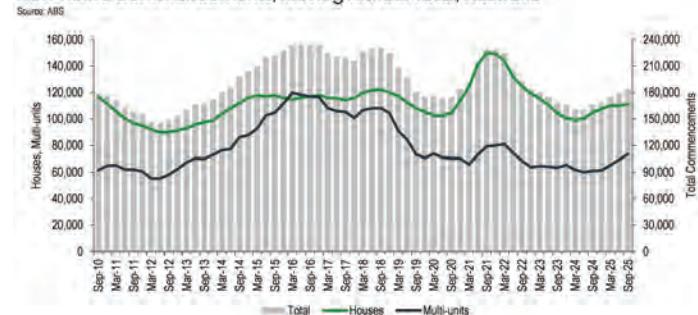
"These are positive signs that confirm our expectation that the number of homes commencing construction will see steady, not explosive, growth over the next couple of years.

"This growth is expected to come from a resurgence in apartment construction. Apartment construction remains well below the volume commencing construction a decade ago and is one of the keys to increasing supply.

"In order to increase the supply of homes, governments need to help lower the cost of delivering new homes to market.

"Demand is not the challenge. Delivery is. Land supply, infrastructure timing, planning bottlenecks and workforce capacity will shape the 2026 experience more than interest rates..," concluded Mr Tapang.

New Home Commencements, Moving Annual Total, Australia



Residential Dwelling Commencements

	AUS	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS	NT	ACT
12 months to Sep-25	184,463	47,198	55,227	38,726	14,022	22,608	2,313	546	3,729
12 months to Sep-24	165,917	43,012	53,721	34,614	11,106	17,362	2,301	384	3,521
% Change	11.2%	9.7%	2.8%	11.9%	26.3%	30.2%	0.5%	42.2%	5.5%

Source: ABS Building Activity (September quarter 2025)



Winchelsea Community House Inc. A6247K

28 Hesse Street, PO BOX 75, WINCHELSEA, Vic. 3241

Phone: (03) 5267 2028

Email: manager@winchhouse.org.au

ABN: 48 932 340 254



in the Winchelsea Shire Hall

Term 1 Starts This Thursday Jan 29th

Register for term one **ASAP**

email: shirehall@winchhouse.org.au

Yoga & Mat Pilates in the Winchelsea Shire Hall

Term one 2026

Mat Pilates 6.45pm Tuesdays - First class 3rd Feb

Pilates original style, on the Mat. Guided movement that supports strength and postural alignment, with a strong focus on building core, balance and flexibility. Move with intention, build resilience, and feel stronger in your body.

Wednesdays Yoga Flow 6.30pm - First class 4th Feb

Inclusive, all levels of experience are welcome and encouraged. You will not be limited by age, shape or by being a beginner. Lisa invites you to unlock the ancient wisdom stored in your being. Build strength, clarity and bliss as you move through a dynamic whole body experience. Expect a playful, powerful class that leaves you feeling refreshed.

Thursdays Vinyasa Yoga 7pm - First Class 29th Jan

Kate offers dynamic vinyasa-style class with a strong focus on core strength and balance building. Each session weaves together pranayama (breathwork), meditation, yoga philosophy, and mindful movement. Students can expect to learn something new in every class, enhancing their practice and deepening their connection to yoga.

CHATTY CAFÉ

Friday's 10.30am – 12.30pm
from Feb 16th.

"Sip, Chat, Share, Care"

Winchelsea Shire Hall.

Everyone Welcome,

Gold coin donation.



Winchelsea Community House Inc. A6247K

28 Hesse Street, PO BOX 75, WINCHELSEA, Vic. 3241

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Stitch it,

Don't ditch it!

Wednesday's from 4th of Feb 2026

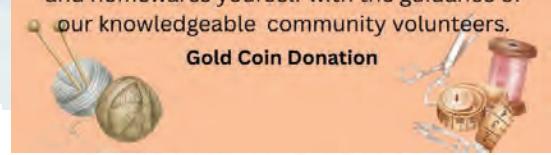
9.30am - 4pm

Winchelsea Community House 'Star Room'

SEWING MACHINE & OVERLOCKER available.

Bring along a craft project you'd like help with, learn to sew, knit, crochet or repair clothing and homewares yourself with the guidance of our knowledgeable community volunteers.

Gold Coin Donation



WINCHELSEA KNITTING GROUP

Thursday Mornings 10.30 - 12.00

Winchelsea community house.

Returning Thursday 5th Feb, 2026

All Welcome, Learn to knit or bring a project to work on while you enjoy a cuppa and a chat



TAI CHI

Friday Mornings

Winchelsea Community house

9am - 10am

\$10 Per Class

Originating in China, Tai Chi and Qigong (Chi Kung) is the practice of slow meditative physical exercise designed for relaxation, balance and health suitable for all ages.

[Winchelsea Tai Chi](#)

Returning February 6th

Craft & Crochet Group

\$5 per person.



1pm, every second Saturday
in the Winchelsea community house.

Register your interest at
reception@winchhouse.org.au

Next session: Saturday 7th of Feb

Please take some time to fill out the community survey and share your ideas for Winch House in 2026! Enter the link into your browser to complete the survey:

<https://forms.gle/EnrxZVTMfEPEG8ap9>



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The Climate Report

Compiled by Judy Cameron

Half the world's 100 largest cities are in high water stress areas

By Rachel Salvidge, The Guardian UK

- ... with 38 of these sitting in regions of "extremely high water stress"
- Beijing, Delhi, Los Angeles and Rio de Janeiro among worst affected, with demand close to exceeding supply, while London, Bangkok and Jakarta are classed as being highly stressed
- Water stress means that water withdrawals for public water supply and industry are close to exceeding available supplies
- Now in its sixth year of drought, Tehran is perilously close to "day zero" when no water will be available for its citizens
- The UN announced that the world had entered a state of water bankruptcy where deterioration of some water resources had become permanent and irreversible.
- Separate analysis of Nasa satellite data, compiled by scientists at University College London, shows which of the largest 100 cities have been drying or getting wetter over two decades

Full story <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/jan/22/half-world-100-largest-cities-in-high-water-stress-areas-analysis-finds>

Australian summer is undergoing a 'total transformation', scientists warn

SBS News

- Scientists say climate change made this summer's blistering heatwave five times more likely and cities need to adapt urgently.
- Extreme heat is known as a "silent killer" that causes more deaths than floods, bushfires, cyclones and storms combined in Australia.
- The elderly, those in poor-quality housing or without cooling, and people with pre-existing health conditions will be the worst affected
- "We urgently need to adapt our cities and our health systems to this new reality," said Emmanuel Raju, director of the Copenhagen Centre for Disaster Research

Full story: <https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/the-australian-summer-undergoing-a-total-transformation-scientists-warn/fh4xbqnke>

Canberra won't back down from banning new petrol, diesel cars

by Jordan Mulach, Torquecafe

- The ACT was the first Australian jurisdiction to transition to 100 per cent renewable electricity in 2020
- "The ACT Government remains committed to reducing transport emissions, to create a healthier and more sustainable future for the ACT"
- As part of its Zero Emissions Vehicles Strategy 2022-30, the territory government said it intended to cease registration of new light internal combustion engine vehicles by 2035

Full story: <https://torquecafe.com/act-news-2035-ice-car-petrol-diesel-ban-not-changing/>

Biodiversity collapse threatens UK security, intelligence chiefs warn

Fiona Harvey, The Guardian UK

- The global attack on nature is threatening the UK's national security, government intelligence chiefs have warned

- Ecosystem destruction will increase food shortages, disorder and mass migration, with effects already being felt
- Some vital ecosystems could face collapse within five years, threatening the UK's national security and prosperity, according to the 14-page report.
- The report is unusual in applying military intelligence techniques to examine the biodiversity crisis unfolding across the world. "Critical ecosystems that support major food production areas and impact global climate, water and weather cycles are the most important for UK national security," the report says.
- Some of these, including coral reefs and boreal forests, are likely to start to collapse from 2030
- "Severe degradation or collapse of these would highly likely result in water insecurity, severely reduced crop yields, a global reduction in arable land, fisheries collapse, changes to global weather patterns, release of trapped carbon exacerbating climate change, novel zoonotic disease and loss of pharmaceutical resources."

Full report: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/jan/20/biodiversity-collapse-threatens-uk-security-intelligence-chiefs-warn?CMP=share_btn_url

Ocean impacts nearly double economic cost of climate change, study finds

by University of California - San Diego

- For the first time, a study by researchers at Scripps Institution of Oceanography at the University of California, San Diego integrates climate-related damages to the ocean into the social cost of carbon—a measure of economic harm caused by greenhouse gas emissions.
- Human-generated carbon dioxide emissions in the atmosphere cause damage by warming ocean temperatures, altering the chemistry of the ocean, reducing the ocean's ability to hold oxygen necessary for species survival while increasing the severity of extreme weather, as rising temperatures provide more energy to feed extreme storms.
- These changes are altering the distribution of species and damaging ecosystems like coral reefs, mangroves, seagrass beds and kelp forests. There are also impacts to infrastructure like ports, which can be damaged by increased flooding and storms.

Full story: https://phys.org/news/2026-01-ocean-impacts-economic-climate.html#google_vignette

Extreme heat returning to southeastern Australia

Anthony Sharwood, Weatherzone

"This heatwave is being driven by a slow-moving weather pattern over southern Australia," Weatherzone meteorologist Yoska Hernandez explains.

"With minimal change expected in the overall circulation, hot air continues to spread across southeastern parts of the country, allowing the extreme heat to persist."

"At the same time, a tropical low in the eastern Indian Ocean is forecast to strengthen, with a possible tropical cyclone approaching the Kimberley coast late this week."

"This tropical system is influencing large-scale atmospheric circulation, helping sustain upper-level ridging and reinforcing the pattern that is keeping extreme heat entrenched across southeastern Australia."

Full story: <https://www.weatherzone.com.au/news/extreme-heat-returning-to-southeastern-australia/1891151>

'Tap and Go' now being trialed

Victorian Government

Once testing is finalised, full fare paying passengers will be able to touch on using credit and debit cards, smartphones and smartwatches, starting on trains, followed by buses and trams.

After installing nearly 3,000 new ticket readers at more than 280 myki-enabled train stations, a small number of trials will begin early next month.

This next phase will involve technical testing in a laboratory with Department of Transport and Planning staff across three days, testing the system across a range of bank cards and smart devices.

Further tests at a small number of train stations will ensure the new system performs reliably in real-world conditions.

The trial will test refunds, customer support and contact center processes.

Public trials will begin over coming months, allowing passengers at selected stations to take part and provide feedback ahead of contactless payments being switched on for full fare paying passengers on myki enabled train lines soon after.

Installation of new readers in trains was completed late last year, with buses and trams early this year.

More information can be found at transport.vic.gov.au/news-and-resources/projects/myki-upgrade.

Perhaps Moneycare can give you the financial advice and support you need

Salvation Army

9.7 million Australians started 2026 in debt, 45% feel pressure to spend more than they can afford - Salvos encourage financial health check this Moneycare Week

Most Australians have never heard of one of the most effective forms of financial support available to them — and The Salvation Army says that needs to change: Moneycare is the organisation's free and confidential financial counselling service.

Moneycare is "one of Australia's best-kept secrets", despite providing more than 48,000 sessions of care last financial year. The service supports people to get on top of debt, create realistic budgets, navigate financial stress and build long-term stability — at no cost.

Kristen Hartnett, The Salvation Army's Head of Moneycare, says the research shows Australians are carrying heavy financial burdens, often in silence.

"This Moneycare Week, we want people across the country to do a financial reset. The New Year is the perfect moment to take control of your financial situation, and Moneycare is here to help you do that. Financial counselling is free, confidential and incredibly effective — but many people don't realise it exists."

The Road Safety message will be delivered by new ambassadors this January

Victorian Government

Victorian basketballers unite for road safety message

Thousands of Victorian basketballers – from grassroots juniors to elite stars - will step up as road safety ambassadors this month, as Basketball Victoria partners with the TAC.

From now until 1 February, players, coaches and supporters will don 'Band Together' armbands to honour lives lost on Victorian roads and show their commitment to safe driving.

The campaign is part of a new partnership between the TAC and Basketball Victoria. **This year's focus is on the dangers of speed. Clubs will spread the message – 'Be the Difference' and 'Make the right choice. Slow down on the road'.**

This is part of a new sports engagement program launched by the TAC to strengthen road safety advocacy among more than 1,700 clubs and offer community clubs the opportunity to receive merchandise and vouchers worth \$40,000 per sport by promoting road safety.

Elite teams are also throwing their support behind Basketball Road Safety Round, with NBL's Melbourne United and Brisbane Bullets playing a Road Safety Round game in Bendigo, while WNBL's Bendigo Spirit will host the UC Capitals in the name of road safety.

For more information, visit tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety/currrent-sponsorships/sports-program.

The Salvos' national survey of 2,005 people found:

- 45% feel pressure to spend more than they can afford. Of those, 43% say embarrassment about their financial situation drives that pressure and 31% cite cultural or societal expectations
- 24% find it difficult to create a budget
- 20% struggle to prepare a tax return
- Among those starting 2026 in debt, 52% have credit card debt and 26% have Buy Now, Pay Later debt
- 23% never speak to family or friends about their financial situation
- 32% feel uncomfortable discussing money at all with their family or friends

One community member supported by Moneycare said the service changed their life: "The help you've given me has given me a reason to get out of bed and get moving. The financial side of things is no longer in the forefront of my mind and I can't thank you enough for that."

Hartnett says this is exactly why Moneycare exists. "Whether you need help creating a budget, support getting out of debt, or someone to talk to about realistic money plans, Moneycare is here for you. You are not alone, and there is no shame in reaching out."

If you or someone you know needs support from The Salvation Army's Moneycare, please visit salvationarmy.org.au/moneycare or call 1800 722 363.

history of winchelsea

The former Wesleyan Mission Chapel at 37 Austin Street Winchelsea

Have you ever driven along Austin Street, Winchelsea and noticed that across from the Top Pub, someone's house has an old gothic bluestone section that looks like part of an old church? Have you ever wondered what that building was?

37 Austin Street Winchelsea was the Wesleyan Mission Chapel in Winchelsea. Wesleyan Methodists were among the first European colonists to arrive in the lands of the Kulin nations in 1835. The first church service in the colony in 1835 was ministered by Wesleyan clergyman Joseph Orton.

The Wesleyan Methodist Church was as a reform movement within the Church of England, rooted in the 18th century teachings of brothers John and Charles Wesley. They sought to promote a disciplined approach to Christian faith, focusing on personal piety and emphasizing holiness and social justice. Winchelsea was visited by Joseph Orton in 1839, who stopped at the Barwon Hotel (the bottom pub) in May 1839 on his way to Bunting Dale Mission near Birregurra, the mission to Wadawurrung, Gulidjan, and Gadabanud peoples, who worked with missionary Francis Tuckfield.

Buntingdale was one of the first attempts by the Colonial government to reserve Aboriginal land for Aboriginal people, and was administered by the Wesleyan Methodist Church. At Buntingdale, Tuckfield translated the bible into the Wadawurrung Language, however only one copy was written, which was destroyed in a fire in 1840, scarcely a year after the mission was established, the Black Thursday fire destroyed the remainder of the mission buildings in 1851.

The Wesleyan Mission Chapel at 37 Austin Street, Winchelsea, was built in c. 1863. It is one of only three known surviving mid 19th century chapel buildings surviving in the Surf Coast Shire, along with the one on Considines Road, Modewarre, built in 1858, the earliest known surviving Bible Christian Chapel in Victoria. ‘

The Methodist Chapel on Austin Street, Winchelsea initially served as the chapel for the local Wesleyan (A.K.A. Primitive) Methodist Church. The Government Gazette of April 1864 announced James Lee, Thomas Road, Almiger Richmond, James Sayors and Robert Gent, to be trustees of the land reserved for Primitive Methodist Church purposes at Winchelsea, although the church failed to take hold in Winchelsea. The building subsequently became the location of Edward Carse's school between 1867 and c. 1876. The history of local schools has been examined here in previous weeks.

The Chapel is historically significant at a local level. Although the building has been altered, it is a physical legacy of the early cultural development of Winchelsea from the mid 19th century. The original timber gabled wing was removed at some point in the 20th century and replaced with the current weatherboard extension, which is architecturally sympathetic. The original Victorian Primitive Gothic Revival design is still visible in the stone portion of the building. These design qualities include the steeply pitched gable roof form, narrow eaves, timber bargeboards and the front pointed arched window.



37 Austin Street Winchelsea



Former Wesleyan Mission School
37 Austin St, Winchelsea

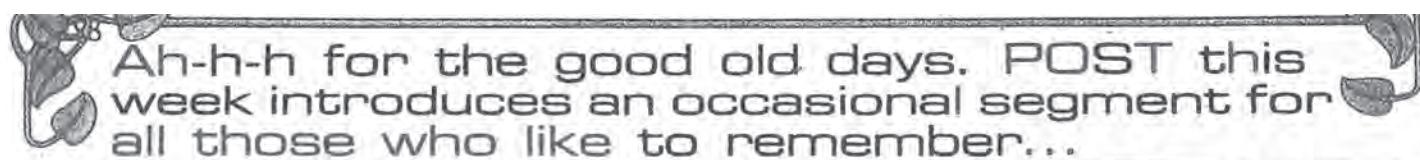


Micheál P O'Dhonnabháin has lived in the Winchelsea area since 2010.

Michael completed a Bachelor in History and Anthropology and a Master of Cultural Heritage at Deakin University, then went on to complete a PhD at Federation University, focusing on colonial and European collections of Indigenous Australian Cultural Heritage. Michael lectured at Federation and Monash Universities, lecturing in World History, Folklore Studies, Indigenous Studies and literary studies. Michael has worked in museums and cultural collections across Victoria, and can usually be seen in and about Winchelsea with his wolfhound.

Memories of Saturday night dances

Ray Jones, former resident of Winchelsea



* THE command shot out across the indecipherable roar of voices and the well-worn wooden floor of the old Mechanics' Hall, its ceiling a mass of streamers: "FOXTROT PLEASE!" And instantly, the three-piece band launched into action.

The sound, like some primitive mating call, sent well-groomed men in ties and jackets and youths in open-necked shirts, and less-desirable creatures, thundering unceremoniously towards the corner of the hall where the girls lined up along wooden pew-like seats, or gathered in clutches, chatting, laughing, preening, waiting.

Meanwhile on stage, Dafney Drewbaker thumped mercilessly at the piano, her large bosom bouncing to the beat. Behind her, old Cecil, eyes closed and oblivious to it all, gently stroked a Stradivarius tucked under his chin, while young Hewie at the back was beating hell out of the drums and enjoying every moment. They could quite rightly claim to have a sound all of their own.

Memories fade, but I recall that when the notice went up in the window of the local shop: "DANCE. Sat. Nite, Taylor's Band. Supper. Ladies a plate," the starting time of 8.30 was understood — but no one got there until 9.30.

The girls got in free because they brought the supper. The men fronted up to a small hole in the wall

Hop to it!

behind which a skinny bloke in a pin-striped suit beamed, "Six bob!" Then you'd hang around the door with your hands in your pockets, scraping and stomping like restless cattle.

There were certain rituals at country dances. Bush protocol, call it what you will. For a start, nobody brought anybody to the dance unless he was married, engaged, or heavily committed. The boys came on their own or in groups, the girls came with their brothers. This was the place where boy met girl. So, it might seem strange then that there was a form of compulsory segregation.

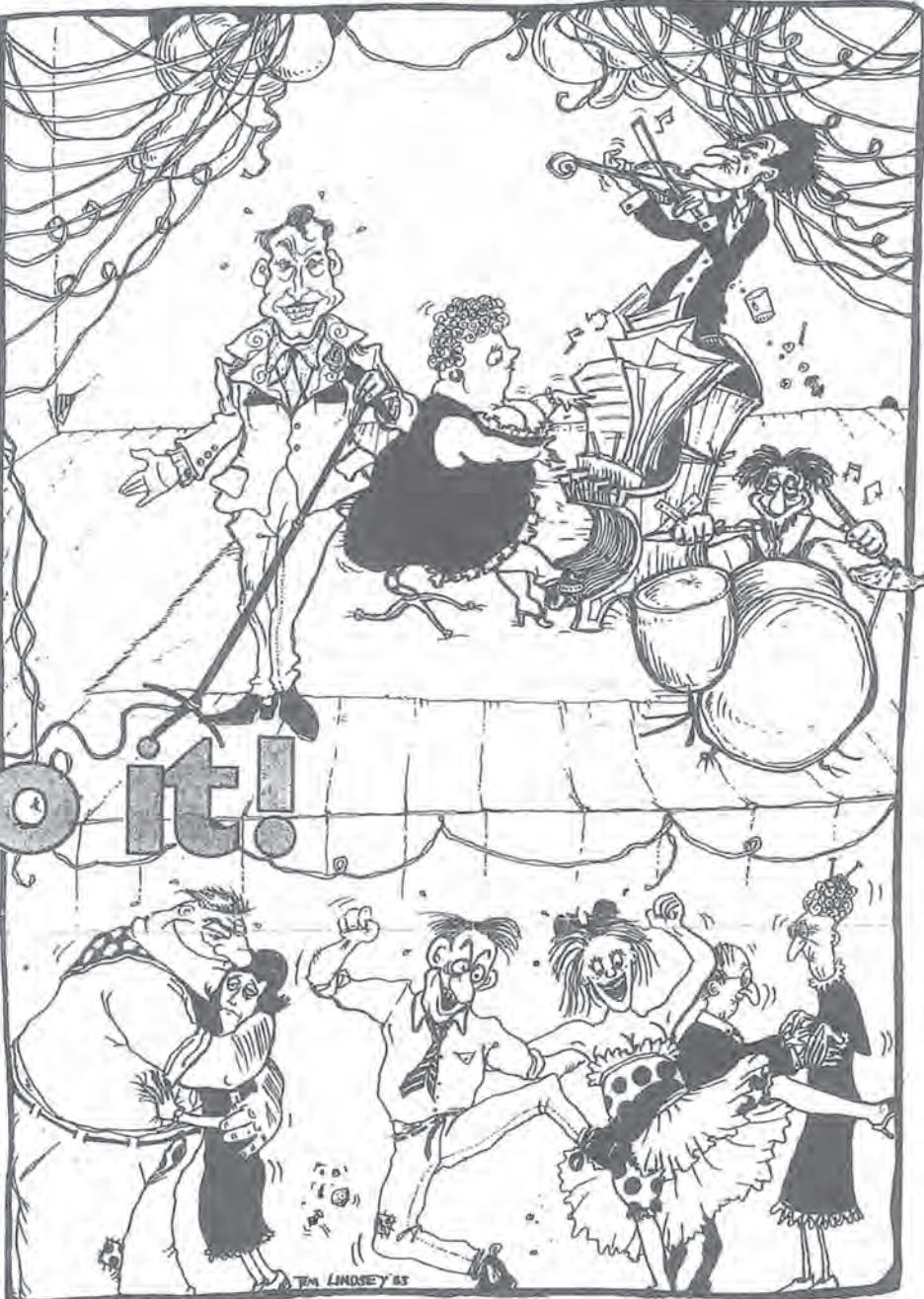
The girls went first to what was known as "the ante room", to powder their noses or to do whatever girls do. Then they'd line up along the seat on one side of the hall. The pecking order was thus: the most popular girls (usually the good lookers and best dancers) sat along the seat nearest the door, hence, nearer the boys, and so it went until the end of the line where the younger girls (who couldn't dance) sat.

The oldies, marrieds and strangers sat along the seat on the opposite side of the hall. Then this fellow whom the town had dubbed the MC, liaised with the band where the backdrop was the honor roll of the town's war dead and, in a voice only an MC has, roared "TAKE YOUR PARTNERS FOR ..." whatever dance it was.

That meant division of the sexes no longer applied. After the first *coup de main*, there was a hesitancy by the shyer boys to ask for a dance. So they'd go in pairs, after some discussion, then join the rest of the side-stepping, two-stepping bourgeoisie.

Now there were good dancers, bad dancers and others, shall we say, with a more unusual talent. One was "Fred Astaire", so named because of his obvious command of the dance floor.

The style was unorthodox, but his own. He held his



by KEVIN NORBURY

partner at arm's length as if either he, or she, had a bad case of BO. When it came to the waltz, he ran around her like a dog rounding up sheep, then confidently steered her down the floor as if at the wheel of his old David Brown tractor.

One mousy-haired youth never once looked at the girl but down at his feet, so dazzled was he by his fancy footwork.

Others pumped the girl's arm vigorously while pushing her around the hall at an extraordinary speed, quite oblivious to the beat of the music.

There were more, variously talented. One could only conclude, due to similarity of style, that "Fred" gave dancing lessons between runs at shearing time.

artwork: TIM LINDSEY

Among the most noticeable on the floor were locals Morrie and Muriel, both great dancers, as were all the oldies. Except Morrie had this strange habit of bouncing Muriel (in perfect time to the music, of course) as if she were a bag of oranges and he had just one more to get in.

The dance concluded when the MC called, "That'll be all, thank you!" whereupon the men would sneak outside to stand at the back of the cars to have a beer.

There was a ritual here, too. They stood in lots of three, four or five. After each man took a drink, he wiped the flat palm of his hand over the neck (a sort of cleansing rite) before passing it on to the next. The continued overleaf

P.T.O.

Hop to it!



★ A TYPICAL public hall where Saturday night dances were held.
Tickets for the dances were sold at the small window in front.

empty bottle was thrown against a tree and another opened on somebody's tobacco tin.

When the music started again, they dawdled back inside to stand again in groups at the door, to be beckoned by girlfriends and frowned at by wives, while the MC strutted the floor muttering, "C'mon, up yer get you lot." Which reminds me of a Pride of Erin competition one night.

The finalists were two old foes who had been competing at local dances for years. Resplendent in dark suits and dancing pumps, they drifted the floor, putting on side.

When the winner was announced, the loser cupped his hands and hissed and boozed him. The winner took umbrage and challenged the loser to take off his coat, which he promptly did.

For a few moments they pranced around each other like two roosters and would have come to blows had the MC not stepped in.

The most popular dance was the Barn Dance where everyone played swaps. It was usually the duty dance you had with your aunt or your sister, because in a couple of twirls you got rid of her. Three steps forward, three steps back to a good old jerky tune, with a quick pirouette in the middle, was standard.

Conversation was brief. "Hello!" Or, "Hello, how are you?" Or, "Good crowd tonight." Or, if the person was a total stranger, a nod was appropriate.

The Monte Carlo card dance was also popular. The MC divided the hall into four, each corner represented by a card. When the cards couldn't be found, a beer bottle was called for and the MC spun in the middle of the hall. If the neck of the bottle pointed to your corner, you were out.

In the event of a "liner", the MC called "Everybody up!" and you started all over again. Finally, only one couple was left standing and won the prize of a box of chocolates.

Just before midnight, the boys jostled for position, edging their way along the hall to be nearer to the girls for the MC's final call — "FOXTROT ... LAST DANCE!" Then they dived on their prey, for this was the dance they'd ask to take the girl home.

They waited for a while, then said something

quick, such as "Do ya wanna come out?" Or, "Can I take you home?" Or, "What about comin' out?" If the girl said no, they waited then asked again.

When the music stopped, everyone stood where they were for the band to play "God Save The Queen", then they all made a dash for the back room where they stood around and ate sandwiches and cakes.

Two men brought around large cans like 44-gallon drums with handles and spouts, one shouting "White, white!" the other shouting, "Black, Black!" And everyone held out their cups for tea.

Boys with girls then wandered back through the hall and disappeared into the night, to snuggle in the back seat of the old FJ.

After that, the lights in the hall went out. The stragglers stood around still drinking from bottles until they were the only ones left.

Yeah, they were great times, those old Saturday night hops.



★ "FIRST snooker, then jogging ... now flashdancing."

What's on Weekly

MONDAY-FRIDAY

WINCHELSEA COMMUNITY HOUSE

9am-2pm, 28 Hesse St, Winchelsea
(03) 5267 2028

WINCHELSEA TOY LIBRARY

9am-2pm (03) 5267 2028
Winch Community House,
28 Hesse St, Winchelsea

MONDAY-SATURDAY

WINCHELSEA HEALTH CLUB

Accessible - 24 hours
Eastern Reserve, 70 Hopkins St
5267 2336

MONDAY

SURF COAST SHIRE FIRE DANGER PERIOD

24/11/2025 - 01/05/2026

CO-WORKING & STUDYING SPACE

Mon and Thurs 9am-2pm \$10
Winchelsea Community House
28 Hesse St, Winchelsea
(03) 5267 2028

MAINLY MUSIC

10-11am (school terms)
Interactive Music 0-4yrs
St Thomas' 25 Barwon Tce 0407838256

WINCHELSEA GIRL GUIDES



4.30pm-6pm (School term)
St John's, Mercer /Harding St
Yvonne Orchard 0448 672 630
Lily Dell Rennie 0428 936 441

1ST MODDAWARRE SCOUT GROUP

Cub Scouts 6:30-8pm (school term)
Modewarre Hall, Cape Otway Rd,
Marie McPadden 0409330147

VINYASA YOGA

7pm \$25 Winchelsea Shire Hall,
28 Hesse St, Winchelsea
(03) 5267 2028

TUESDAY



Senior Citizens Centre,
36 Harding St, Winchelsea
Elaine Atkinson 0458 009 616

1ST MODDAWARRE SCOUT GROUP

Joeys 5-6pm (School Term)
Scouts 6:30-8:30pm (School Term)
Marie McPadden 0409330147

WEDNESDAY

WINCHELSEA ZUMBA DANCE

Combined Zumba Fitness and Gold class.
6:30-7:30pm @The Globe Theatre.
Simone Dunmore: 0468 375 036

WINCHELSEA MEN'S SHED

9.30am 51 Hesse St, Winchelsea
Ray Atkinson 0407839139
winchmenshed@gmail.com

SENIOR CITIZENS CENTRE

Wednesdays 1- 3.00 pm
36 Harding St, Winchelsea
Jean Shinners 52672263, 0427672263
jeanshinners@gmail.com

MOTHER GOOSE SONG & RHYME

2pm (School term) FREE
Winchelsea Community House,
28 Hesse St, Winchelsea

WINCHELSEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Wednesday 1-4:pm, Friday 10am-3pm
Hesse St, Winchelsea

STITCH IT, DON'T DITCH IT!

2-4pm Wednesdays
Winch Community House, Hesse St
SEWING MACHINE & OVERLOCKER
AVAILABLE
Gold Coin donation

KIDS ART & CRAFT SESSIONS

4-4.45pm fortnightly Age 5+
\$15 per session or \$60 term
Winchelsea Community House
28 Hesse St, Winchelsea 5267 2028

MEL'S DANCE CENTRAL

Afternoons/evenings Pre-school - teens
Winch Senior Citizens Club
www.melsdancecentral.com.au

CWA WINCHELSEA

7-8.30pm 2nd Wed monthly
Senior Citizens, Harding St
winchelsea.cwa@gmail.com



SES WINCHELSEA

7.30pm 132500
323 Mousley Dr, Winchelsea



THURSDAY

CHAT WITH YOUR COUNCILLOR

10am-12pm First Thursday of month
Winchelsea Shire Hall 28 Hesse St,

Winchelsea Community Market

First Sunday on the Month (except November)



Upcoming Dates:

July 6th
August 3rd
Sept 7th
Oct 5th
Nov 9th
(2nd Sunday)
Dec 7th
Jan 4th
Feb 1st

Food, Produce, Coffee, Plants, Crafts
Homewares, Candles, Bags, Skincare
Jewellery, Soap + Baby Goods

Stallholders - Contact via Growing Winchelsea Inc Website
(Scroll Down to Market)

What's On

January/February 2026

This is a recurring calendar. Please confirm event details with the organiser/venue if you'd like to attend.

To add an event to the calendar, please email news@winchelseastar.org.au

COWORKING & STUDYING SPACE

9am-2pm \$10 5267 2028

Winch Community House, 28 Hesse St

WINCHELSEA PLAYGROUP

10am-12pm (School term) \$5
St Thomas Hall, 27 Barwon Tce
winchelseaplaygroup@gmail.com

WINCHELSEA PICKLEBALL

10-11.30am

Leisure Time Centre, Gosney St
Lesley Mathison 0438 672 197

WINCHELSEA KNITTING GROUP

10.30am-12pm FREE

Winchelsea Community House,
28 Hesse St, Winchelsea
(03) 5267 2028 (03) 5267 2028

MAT PILATES

6.45pm \$25 Winchelsea Shire Hall,
28 Hesse St, Winchelsea
(03) 5267 2028

WINCHELSEA MOVIE CLUB

7.30 (3rd Thurs each month)
Globe Theatre, Main St, Winchelsea
[growingwinchelsea.com/project/
winchelsea-movie-club/](http://growingwinchelsea.com/project/winchelsea-movie-club/)

FRIDAY

TAI CHI

9am-10am \$10 5267 2028
Winch Community House, 28 Hesse St

**PAPER
RECYCLING**
Paper depot rear of
Senior Citizens
Rooms
Harding Street
**NEWSPAPERS
MAGAZINES
PHONE BOOKS**



All money raised used
for local community
4224 0226

COMMUNITY FOODBANK

12-2pm 30 Hesse St, Winchelsea
0417 848 292

PHONICS WITH ROBOT REG

10.30am (1-3 yrs) 11.30am (3-5 yrs)
(School terms)
www.robotreg.com.au/pages/shae

CHATTY CAFÉ



10.30am-12.30pm, Gold Coin Donation
Winch Shire Hall, 28 Hesse St, Winchelsea
5267 2028

WINCHELSEA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Friday 10am-3pm
Hesse St, Winchelsea

WINCHELSEA SENIOR CITIZENS

Fridays 1.00 pm - 3.00 pm
36 Harding Street, Winchelsea
Jean Shinners 52672263, 0427672263
jeanshinners@gmail.com

WINCHELSEA RSL

Winchelsea Men's Shed,
Hesse St, Winchelsea
David Loone 0488 165 109

GEELONG REGIONAL LIBRARY

(MOBILE) 2-5pm
Old Shire Hall, 28 Hesse Street
0408384331 (During scheduled stops)

SATURDAY

PARKRUN



8am Trebeck Reserve
Sussex St, Winchelsea
www.parkrun.com.au/trebeckreserve/

WINCHELSEA LIONS CLUB IGA BBQs

9 -12pm first Sat of month outside IGA.
Proceeds to IGA Community Chest.

WINCHELSEA LAND AND RIVERCARE

Citizen Scientists Working Bee

First Saturday of the month 9am
Meet at Guye Reserve, Barwon Terrace
Rod Atone 0428 549318
Stewart Mathison 0428 672054

WINCHELSEA STAR PRODUCTION/COFFEE MEETING

9-11am (Last Sat monthly)
La Hoot Cafe, Main Street
www.winchelseastar.org.au

WINCHELSEA CROCHET GROUP

1.30pm Every 2nd Saturday \$5
Winch Community House, 28 Hesse St,
Vee 0467 219 227

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH

Mass 6pm each week
Harding St, Winchelsea 0404598558

WINCHELSEA COMMUNITY DINNER

6.30pm last Sat monthly, except Nov/Dec
Hall, Harding St Winchelsea
Bring plate & gold coin donation if you can

SUNDAY



WINCHELSEA COMMUNITY MARKET

9-1pm, 1st Sunday monthly
CWA FUNDRAISER 1 FEB MARKET
Shire Hall car park, Main St Winch
[growingwinchelsea.com/project/
winchelsea-community-market/](http://growingwinchelsea.com/project/winchelsea-community-market/)

WINCHELSEA UNITING CHURCH

Service 9.30am each week
Hesse St, Winchelsea 0475 777 301
uca.winchelsea@gmail.com



Fun, Interactive music sessions for
pre-school children (0-4 y.o.) and
parents/caregivers

When: Mondays from 10 to 11 am
(runs during school terms)

Where: St Thomas' Hall
25 Barwon Tce.

To Enquire ring: 0407838256

Winchelsea Churches

Winchelsea Uniting Church

0475 777 301
uca.winchelsea@gmail.com
Hesse St, Winchelsea 3241
Services 9.30am Sundays

St John the Baptist Catholic Church

0404 598 558
Father Joseph Panackal
Harding St, Winchelsea 3241
Mass @ 6pm Sat. Jan. 17, 24, 31

St Thomas' Anglican Church

0448 687 588
Rev Christopher Duff
Barwon Tce, Winchelsea
Service 10am Sundays



Thought of the Week

"Prayer are the stairs
we must climb every day
if we would reach God.
There is no other way,
for we learn to know God.
When we meet Him in prayer,
ask him to lighten
our burden of care."

Have a Blessed week.

John Bader
(Christian Pastoral Carer)

Knuckey's Winchelsea

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www.allaboutmowers.com.au
accounts@allaboutmowers.com.au



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HIP-HOP - CONTEMPORARY DANCE

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WWW.MELSDANCECENTRAL.COM.AU

Register now for Climate Risk Forum

25 February

Geelong Sustainability



We're inviting you to an important community event - one that feels more essential than ever.

Clifton Springs Curlewis Coastcare and Geelong Sustainability are hosting a Climate Risk Forum, an evening dedicated to understanding what climate change means for our region and how we can strengthen local resilience together. There will be a deep dive into climate impacts on the Bellarine based around the draft Bellarine Coastal Adaptation Plan.

We'll be unpacking the National Climate Risk Assessment released last year, alongside the latest insights into coastal adaptation planning and emergency preparedness for our region. You'll hear from leading experts and local practitioners about what's changing, what's planned, and how our community can be better prepared.

Speakers include:

Neil Plummer: Climatologist and climate services expert

Judith Brooks: Community activist, educator and writer

Allison Elsey: Coastal Planning & Programs Coordinator, Bellarine Bayside

Nicole Shortis: Unit Controller, Bellarine SES

There will also be information stalls, practical resources, space to connect with others - and a light supper provided.

Date & Time: Tuesday 25 February, 6.30pm-8.30pm

Location: Springdale Neighbourhood House, Drysdale

This event is FREE but registrations are essential.

Rural Aid calls for farmer registrations as disasters escalate nationwide

Rural Aid

Let us help you - register with us now

Farmers across Australia – particularly those in disaster-impacted regions – are strongly encouraged to register with Rural Aid now, as ongoing natural disasters and worsening weather conditions continue to threaten rural communities.

Large areas of Victoria are currently battling bushfires, while North Queensland continues to experience flooding and cyclone impacts, and parts of NSW face storms, heavy rainfall and damaging winds. With further bad weather forecast, conditions are expected to deteriorate in many regions, placing additional strain on farmers already under pressure.

Rural Aid is urging farmers to register immediately to ensure support can be delivered as quickly as possible when it is needed most.

Rural Aid Chief Executive Officer John Warlters said, "Registering with Rural Aid now means we can act fast when conditions worsen, whether that's financial relief, counselling, or delivering hay and water to farmers who need it most."

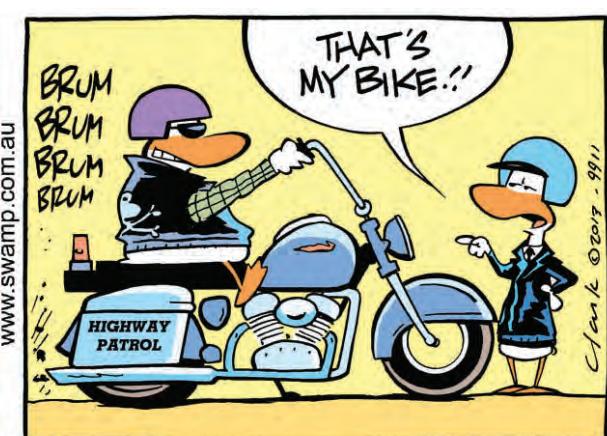
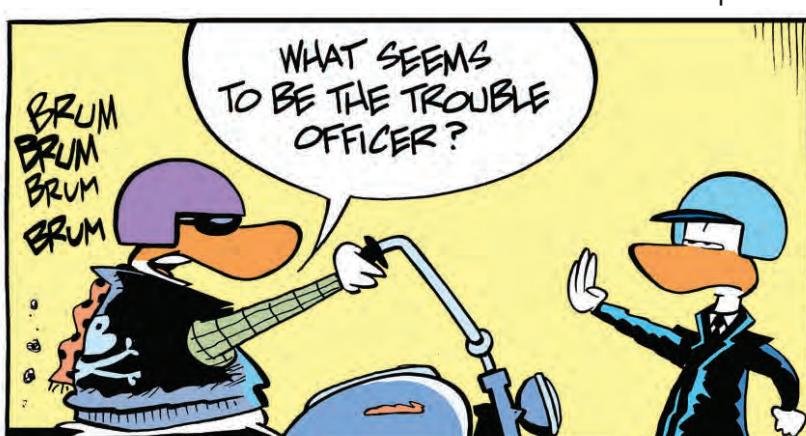
Rural Aid is already responding in disaster-affected regions, providing direct financial assistance to farmers in north-west Queensland and Victoria to help cover urgent and unexpected expenses as they recover from floods, fires and severe weather events.

Rural Aid provides free support to registered farmers and their families, including:

- Financial assistance for urgent and unexpected expenses
- Professional counselling and wellbeing support
- Hay deliveries to feed livestock
- Water deliveries for household needs
- Volunteer assistance through Farm Army and Farm Recovery Event programs

Mr Warlters said, "We strongly encourage every farmer, especially those in high-risk areas, to register now so help can be mobilised immediately when it's needed."

Farmers should register for free immediately at faa.ruralaid.org.au or by calling 1300 327 624.



Used with permission of Gary Clark, Swamp Cartoons
Books available online: swamp.com.au

**FREE
COMMUNITY
NOTICES**



WANTED: UKULELES

Winch House is looking for unwanted ukuleles to support a coming course "Intro to Ukulele". If you have an unloved Uke at home and wish to donate it, pls drop off at Winch House or ph 0408502611 to arrange collection.

THE OP SHOP

The Op Shop cannot accept donations of these articles at the moment.
DVDs, CDs, books, hiking bags, backpacks, duffle bags, suitcases, and cases.

WINCHELSEA TENNIS CLUB

JUNIOR COACHING

Mon 3.30pm

with experienced Nicole Mullen \$10

WINCHELSEA PICKLEBALL

The Tennis Club runs Pickleball every Wednesday 7pm at the Winchelsea Leisure Time Centre! Only \$5 a person All equipment supplied Wear suitable footwear Lesley Mathison 0438 672 197

WINCHELSEA LIONS CLUB

Large bags of pine cones for fire pits \$5
Contact Ray 0406 371 239

HORSES

WANTED Child's riding boots, about size 5.
FOR SALE Honey for horses
Ph: 5267 2987

1ST MODEWARRE SCOUT GROUP

We have exciting programs for Joeys, Cubs & Scouts this year. We have a few vacancies at Joey & Cub levels, and plenty of room at Scouts. Group Leader Marie McPadden 0409 330 147

FREE 6ft CHRISTMAS TREE

Comes in three pieces with stand. Easy to put together and pack up in original box. Very full branches with snow tips. Stunning tree just not required. It's on front veranda 58 Armytage St Or arrange pick up 0409968036



Winchelsea Star



This week's Edition

Editor Cerrie Forgan Designer Susan Corby

**Next Production Coffee Meeting Sat 31 January
9am @ La Hoot All Welcome - come enjoy a coffee!**

send your stories

news@winchelseastar.org.au

LOCAL NEWS and ARTICLES WELCOME

Email news@winchelseastar.org.au
or leave hard copy at IGA supermarket

News Deadline

5pm Fridays

4pm Sundays - hard copy left at IGA

6pm Sundays - sports results and
weekend events

EDITOR 5273 0295

Leave a message

ADVERTISING 5273 0294

advertising@winchelseastar.org.au

free online subscription

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production

Editors: Cerrie Forgan, Yvonne Stevens, Judy Cameron
Advertising: Sasha Gauntlett, Neil McInnes
Design: Susan Corby, Tony Phelps
Printed by: Cromwell Forgansen, Winchelsea Community House
Website by: Winch Websites

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Sasha Gauntlett, Judy Cameron,
Yvonne Stevens, Cerrie Forgan



MEMBER 2026

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winchelseastar.org.au PO Box 5 Winchelsea 3241
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edit or not publish any article.
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Services & Activities In Winchelsea

<p>VLINE TRAIN SERVICES</p> <p>TO MELBOURNE:</p> <table> <tr><td>Mon - Fri</td><td>06.41 (coach)</td><td>08.07</td><td>11.10</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>14.04</td><td>16.58</td><td>19.21</td></tr> </table> <p>Sat - Sun</p> <table> <tr><td>08.27</td><td>10.27</td><td>14.04</td><td>16.58</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>19.17</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table> <p>TO WARRNAMBOOL:</p> <table> <tr><td>Mon - Fri</td><td>08.58</td><td>11.51</td><td>14.46</td><td>17.28</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>(coach)</td><td>18.42</td><td>20.52</td><td></td></tr> <tr><td>Sat - Sun</td><td>09.44</td><td>11.41</td><td>14.46</td><td>18.38</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>20.38</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </table>	Mon - Fri	06.41 (coach)	08.07	11.10		14.04	16.58	19.21	08.27	10.27	14.04	16.58		19.17			Mon - Fri	08.58	11.51	14.46	17.28		(coach)	18.42	20.52		Sat - Sun	09.44	11.41	14.46	18.38		20.38				<p>SURF COAST MOBILE LIBRARY</p> <p>Cnr Princes Highway & Hesse St, Fridays, 2pm-5pm</p> <p>Parked in Hesse Street (outside Shire Hall)</p> <p>Fridays 2:00 and 5:00pm unless it is a Public Holiday.</p>	<p>WINCHELSEA GIRLS GUIDES</p> <p>All girls 6yrs-15yrs Welcome! mondays 4.30pm-6pm (school terms) Catholic Church Hall, Harding St Winchelsea</p> <p><i>Fun, friendship, and adventure. Teamwork, leadership skills, achieve goals, improve communities and grow in confidence.</i></p> <p>3 FREE sessions to come along and try. Yvonne 0448 672 630 or Lily 0428 936 441</p>
Mon - Fri	06.41 (coach)	08.07	11.10																																			
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	20.38																																					
 <p>COUNTRY WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION</p> <p>1pm second Wednesday of month Winchelsea Senior Citizens' Hall 36 Harding Street Winchelsea</p>	<p>WINCHELSEA PLAYGROUP</p> <p>Every second Thursday 10am-12pm St Thomas Anglican Church Hall cnr Barwon Tce and Hopkins St, Winchelsea</p> <p>Contact: Danni Menzies 0432019944 winchelseaplaygroup@gmail.com Facebook - Winchelsea Playgroup 2019</p> <p>New families welcome</p>	 <p>1ST MODDAWARRE SCOUT GROUP</p> <p>Modewarre Hall Joeys 5-8yo 5-6pm (school term) Scouts 11-14yo 6:30-8:30pm (school term) Venturers -15-18yo are hosted by Torquay or Highton Units</p> <p>Contact: Marie McPadden 0409330147</p>																																				
 <p>Winchelsea and District COMBINED PROBUS CLUB</p> <p>Senior Citizens Rooms, New members always welcome. Enquiries Lorraine 0417 467 927</p>	<p>WINCHELSEA TRANSFER STATION</p> <p>55 Cressy Road, Winchelsea</p> <table> <tr><td>Tuesday</td><td>2pm-4pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Saturday</td><td>1.30-3.30pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Thursday</td><td>2pm-4pm</td></tr> <tr><td>Sunday</td><td>9.30-12.30pm</td></tr> </table> <p>Closed Christmas Day, but open on other public holidays. www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/disposalsites</p>	Tuesday	2pm-4pm	Saturday	1.30-3.30pm	Thursday	2pm-4pm	Sunday	9.30-12.30pm	 <p>Nationally accredited training to help our community. Pop in to meet your crew Wednesdays 7:30pm</p>  <p>Winchelsea Unit 325 Mousley Drive 132 500</p>																												
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Sunday	9.30-12.30pm																																					



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WANTED



The Winchelsea Community House is seeking a
Dance/Acro/Gymnastics Instructor

Email: shirehall@winchhouse.org.au or call 03 52672028
 for more information.





AT WINCHELSEA
 COMMUNITY HEALTH
 CENTRE
 STARTING 4th FEB
 2PM

'NEW TO TYPE 2' DIABETES PROGRAM

This 4-week program will empower you with the knowledge, tools, and confidence to live well with diabetes. This program is for anyone diagnosed with, or at risk of, diabetes and is run by our experienced multidisciplinary team of health professionals.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

Our sessions cover all aspects of effective self-management, including:

- Understanding diabetes and treatment options
- Food choices and meal planning
- Exercise and movement
- Better sleep and stress management
- Optional free sensor trial or new blood glucose meter.
- The diabetes cycle of care

COST \$6 A SESSION

If you or someone you know would benefit from this program, please contact:
communityintake@hesse.vic.gov.au  (03) 5267 1248



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Winchelsea
Supermarket
 Trading Hours
Monday to Saturday
 8.30am to 7.30pm
Sunday
 10am to 7pm
Ph: 5267 2676
 29 Main St, Winchelsea

Stay safe from mosquito borne diseases this summer

DHHS

Victorians asked to take the sting out of mosquito bites and heat these holidays

Victorians heading to holiday hotspots are being urged to protect themselves from mosquito bites and stay safe in the heat to keep themselves and their families well while enjoying the holidays.

Ross River virus has been detected in mosquitoes in traps around Geelong and Gippsland in recent weeks. Previously, Japanese encephalitis was detected in a mosquito trap in the Horsham area in early December.

The Victorian Arbovirus Disease Control Program found these results through routine monitoring that helps inform the risk of mosquito-borne diseases and helps to keep the public safe. Based on recent results, it's likely mosquitoes in other coastal areas of Victoria are also carrying Ross River virus.

With an increase in travel expected during this period, Chief Health Officer, Dr Caroline McElnay has outlined measures to avoid mosquito bites.

"We've seen an increase in mosquito activity along coastal areas in recent weeks and with detections of Ross River Virus in multiple locations, we're reminding Victorians to do what they can to avoid being bitten."

"Wearing long loose-fitting clothes, using repellent and avoiding the outdoors at dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active can greatly reduce the risk of mosquito-borne disease," Dr McElnay said.

Travellers are advised to pack repellent containing picaridin or DEET before leaving home, ensure accommodation, caravans and tents have intact mosquito screens, use mosquito coils, and camp away from rivers and lakes, where mosquitoes breed.

Symptoms of Ross River virus may include fever, joint pain and swelling, muscle aches, fatigue or rash. Symptoms may not be present in all cases but can last for weeks or months. Anyone who develops symptoms consistent with Ross River virus infection should seek advice from their GP.

With extreme heat forecast for many parts of the state over the coming days, Dr McElnay also advised Victorians to take steps to protect themselves and their loved ones from the heat.

"Extreme heat can affect anyone but people aged 65 or older, young children, people with acute or chronic medical conditions, and those with limited ways to keep cool are more at risk."

"Stay cool and hydrated, schedule activities during cooler times, check in with family, friends and neighbours, and monitor your local weather conditions. And never leave a child unattended in a vehicle, not even for a minute."

More information about Ross River virus and how to protect yourself from mosquito-borne disease is available on the Better Health Channel.

Urban greening may improve mental health and wellbeing

Australians for Mental Health

Australians for Mental Health is calling on state and local governments to sharpen their focus on urban greening, as more hot weather hits areas with less green space especially hard.

Hot weather is forecast for parts of the country over coming days, and places which have fewer green spaces and tree canopy than other areas, are known to get hotter partly due to the urban heat island effect.

Physical health is not the only thing at risk during heatwaves. Heat waves are dangerous for human health overall, especially vulnerable people. Hot weather impacts mood and can exacerbate mental health conditions.

Improving people's homes, especially for renters and people on low incomes, is critical. But an overlooked part of the solution is to dramatically increase the tree canopy and green spaces in our hottest areas.

It's not an abstract idea that nature is good for us. There is overwhelming evidence that having access to green space is good for us. It lowers stress levels, improves our long term resilience and bolsters connection.

We can't treat our way out of Australia's mental health crisis. Psychologists and doctors will always be a part of the solution, but we need to look at community level approaches which can help. Making spaces greener is one way to do that.

HESTAA Excellence Awards nominations open for 2026

HESTAA

The 2026 HESTAA Excellence Awards shine a national spotlight on health professionals and teams making a difference in aged care, allied health, community services, and disability services sectors.

HESTAA CEO Debby Blakey said "Health and community services professionals go above and beyond to improve lives and drive positive change. I encourage everyone to nominate outstanding individuals and teams for a HESTAA award, to recognise their outstanding work and inspire others by sharing their stories."

Nominations are open until midnight (AEST) Sunday April 12, 2026. Employers, colleagues, and individuals are invited to nominate for Individual Leadership or Team Excellence.

Winners will receive a prize to further their personal or professional development, or enhance processes and services within their workplaces.

The HESTAA Excellence Awards are one of three award ceremonies, including HESTAA Nursing & Midwifery Awards and HESTAA Early Childhood Education & Care Awards. Nominations for the 20th HESTAA Nursing & Midwifery Awards close on Sunday 18 January 2026.

For more information, visit <https://www.hestaa.com.au/awards/excellence-awards>

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Managing and treating dams in fire affected areas

Clem Sturmels, Land Management Extension Officer

Farmers in fire affected areas are encouraged to remove floating debris as soon as possible following heavy rain. They should also consider installing sediment traps upstream of their bigger dams. Following fires, many dams became unusable due to pollution from decomposing organic matter or after being filled with soil, sand, and gravel.

Quick action to remove floating materials can be highly effective in maintaining water quality. These floating materials consist of ash, charcoal, straw, grass, leaves, and manure. In a couple of days, debris will sink and break-down causing the water to become unusable for livestock.

There are many ways to remove debris from dams, including dragging material to the bank using a chain mesh boom.

Chain mesh, commonly used to construct tennis court fences, suspended from a series of floats creates a boom which can be dragged across the dam using ropes attached to each end. Once the debris has been dragged to the side, it can be removed using a small cage or with a sieving bucket on an excavator.

When time permits, sediment traps can be installed to prevent debris from entering dams. There are a number of ways, including attaching wire netting upstream of existing fences where they cross the drainage line (to trap the flood debris) or establishing a temporary netting fence across a drainage line.

For more information on organic pollution in farm dams visit the AgVic website <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/water/managing-dams/organic-pollution-in-farm-dams>

For more information on managing stock water impacted by bushfire, ash and debris visit the AgVic website <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/emergency-management/bushfires/what-to-do-after-a-bushfire/stock-water-impacted-by-bushfire-ash-and-debris> or call 136 186.

Things to consider when stubble grazing your sheep

Cathy Bunter, District Veterinary Officer, Ballarat

With the grain harvest wrapping up across the region, sheep producers are considering the benefits of grazing flocks on stubble. Nutritional value of the stubble depends on the amount of residual grain and green plant growth from sprouted grain and summer weeds.

In drier years, the stems and leaves can be quite nutritious as less energy and protein has ended up in the grain. Windy weather can also cause grain to drop to the ground.

When making this decision, it's important to consider paddock size, stocking density, how much grain and green shoots remain and whether the sheep are maintaining their weight.

Stubble is low in calcium, but this can be corrected by providing licks, supplements, or a simple limestone and 5% salt mix. Adding trace elements, vitamins, and urea, along with pellets or

grains such as lupins to boost protein intake, will help address nutritional gaps.

When grazing sheep on stubble, it's important to keep an eye out for animal health issues, including:

- water belly
- grain poisoning
- Polioencephalomalacia or thiamine deficiency
- nitrate and nitrite poisoning from oilseed crops like canola
- Lupinosis from a fungus in lupins that produces a toxin.

Be careful not to overgraze the paddock and leave 50% ground cover to prevent wind erosion and help retain moisture.

For further information on grazing sheep on stubble see the following resources or contact your consultant nutritionist or veterinarian.

There is more information available on our website: <https://go.vic.gov.au/4aJaU5W>

You can also find out more in the Sheep Drought Feeding Guide. For specific drought management support, visit <https://agriculture.vic.gov.au/farm-management/drought-support> or call 136 186.

Routine tail docking in cattle generally illegal

Gippsland dairy farm manager Peter Hoffman has been fined \$6,500 with costs of \$230.08 after pleading guilty to offending under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986. He was charged with cruelty, doing an act causing unreadable pain or suffering to multiple animals, after the unauthorised tail docking of 192 dairy cows in a herd belonging to a Tinamba dairy farmer.

AgVic Compliance Manager Daniel Bode, said in Victoria the Act doesn't allow routine docking. 'Current legislation doesn't stipulate tail docking of cattle as a prohibited offence, however the act of tail docking, not done in accordance with the Code of Practice is. The procedure may only be performed for udder or herd health and on female cattle under 6 months of age, and with the use of anaesthesia.'

A witness noted the cow tails were short, pus-filled and weeping blood at the wound site and reported the tail docking to his employer and the cattle owner.

AgVic contacted vets in the region who stated that they did not advise Hoffman to dock the cattle tails.

Magistrate Poulter, said this was a serious example of offending and given the significant number of cows involved, the accused should have sought advice. In addition to the fine, her Honour also disqualified Mr Hoffman from owning or being in charge of any cattle for a period of 12 months.

Mr Bode said, 'This is a reminder to all livestock producers that animal cruelty will not be tolerated by the Victorian Government or our community.'

Anyone wishing to make a specific complaint in regard to livestock welfare can contact Agriculture Victoria on 136 186 or aw.complaint@agriculture.vic.gov.au

Supporting Renter Rights

State Government

The new Victorian Renter Rights Program is designed to deliver better, dedicated support to more renters, especially older Victorians and those under financial stress.

It will almost double government funding for renter support to \$98 million over five years. The number of clients assisted annually is expected to double from 12,663 last financial year to around 25,500.

The program includes::

- Renter Rights Service, offering local access to advice, support and advocacy for renters.
- Older Persons Housing Rights Service, an integrated support service for 55s and above living in private rentals, residential parks and retirement living.
- Victorian Renter Helpline, a phone line and website featuring support and advice based on renters' personal circumstances, which will also refer to other services.
- Renter Central Service, supporting frontline workers with advice services, community worker outreach and professional development, legal support for complex issues and community education and support for multicultural communities.

The program will replace the existing rental support service funded through CAV, including the Tenancy Assistance and Advocacy Program, Tenancy Central Service, Retirement Housing Assistance and Advocacy Program, and the temporary funding boost through the Rental Stress Support Package.

The Government will also provide an additional \$16.4 million to continue financial counselling services for a further 12 months.

Community grant helps Birregurra Men's Shed grow

Barwon Water

Men's Sheds play a vital role in building social connection and practical skills in our communities. For the newly formed Birregurra group, finding ways to bring their members together and creating a more inviting space was a top priority.

Through our Community Grants Program, the group has installed raised garden beds, an arbour, and an irrigation system to create an accessible and thriving veggie garden. What was once a modest entrance to the shed has been transformed into a colourful display of veggies, which currently includes strawberries, carrots, tomatoes, basil, and radishes.



"We've got a lot of interest in the garden, and it's getting people involved," says Men's Shed member, Colin. "It's got something for everyone, whether you like working with timber, gardening, or painting. Everyone enjoys it!"

While members are welcome to take home the fruits (and veggies!) of their labour, the real benefits lie in the camaraderie that grows as they plan, plant and tend to the garden together.

A Surf Coast Creative Development Grant may support your career advancement. To find out more, drop in to an information session

Surfcoast Shire

Torquay paint and textile artist Andrea Shaw was a recipient of a Creative Development Grants in 2025 and is now encouraging artists across the shire to help transform wishlist ideas into creative realities by applying for Council's Program. She says it has helped her to explore exciting new boundaries with her work. The grant allowed me time for trialling of new processes and techniques I otherwise might not have, to push my painting practice in new ways."

"I have been able to experiment with batik and wax-resist methods within my paintings, working across second-hand fabrics and unconventional surfaces to see how pattern, texture and colour shift through these processes. The support has given me space to test, adapt and refine these approaches, informing both my studio work and the direction of future projects."



Andrea Shaw

Refreshed from the former DEVELOP Artists and Creatives Grants, the program aligns with the 2025-2029 Council Plan and the 2023-2031 Creative Place Strategy, recognising the role of creativity in supporting community wellbeing, local identity and the regional economy.

Applications for grants of \$3,000 for individuals and \$5,000 for creative collectives open 1 February and close 2 March.

People will be able to attend drop-in information sessions:

- 11am to 1pm on 11 February at Winchelsea Shire Hall
- 2pm to 4pm on 18 February at Lorne Community Connect, 2pm to 4pm on 25 February, Surf Coast Shire Council civic office, Torquay.

The sessions will provide clear understanding of the program, key dates and advice on preparing strong applications.

Creatives can find a link for an online session, more information about the drop-in sessions and information about application criteria via surfcoast.vic.gov.au/creativedevelopmentgrant

People can also contact Council's Arts Development Team via artsteam@surfcoast.vic.gov.au or 5261 0600.

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Community Satisfaction Survey Coming soon



You may be contacted by an independent researcher during February/March as part of the 2026 Local Government Community Satisfaction Survey.

The annual survey, commissioned by the state government, will ask for your perceptions of Council's performance.

Interviews are via phone and online. You'll be asked for basic demographic information, but not personal details such as name and address.

For more information please call 5261 0600.





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Winchelsea Golf Club

Rachel Boddington

Winchelsea Golf Results - and don't forget to check for upcoming events.

21/1/25 - Mid Week/Weekly Stableford. 20 Players.

1st - Rob Wilson (21) 42 Points C/B

2nd - David "Fly" Lewis (23) 42 Points C/B

Bdl - Angus Heathcote (21) 40 Points

Bdl - Stephen Harvey (17) 39 Points C/B

Bdl - Max Bubb (14) 37 Points

Ntp (8th/17th) - Bill Spencer

21/1/25 - Mid Week - Ladies Results - Stableford

Winner: Sue Cuthbert 38 Pts

R/Up: Elizabeth Alston 34 Pts

Ntp 11th: Lyn Batson

Saturday 24/1/26 Stableford

7 Players Braved The Heat!

1st - Bill Spencer (15) 37 Points

Bdl - Nick Stone (8) 36 Points

Ntp - (2nd/11th) Tara Steward

Golden Hole (15th) - Bill Spencer

COMING UP:

Wednesday 28th January - Weekly Stableford

Next Saturday 31st January - Opening Of The Greens - Mixed

Pinehurst And Our First Board Event For 2026! Being A Board Event, At Least 1 Person Must Be A Member.



Winchelsea Tennis Club 21 Armytage St Winchelsea
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/770786371589798>

Winchelsea Tennis Club

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Courts are always available to have a hit on - so come down to Hesse St Reserve! For updates to the Club and competitions, information will be on this page and our Facebook page.



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Winchelsea Bowls Club



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Barefoot Bowls is BACK at Winchelsea Bowls Club!

5:30pm start every Friday night in February starting on the 6th

- FREE sausage sizzle
- Live music
- Kids area
- Bare feet encouraged!

We're excited to welcome back Brooke Robbins Music always a favourite at the club and our community!

Brooke won't be available on Friday the 13th, so stay tuned to see who we line up

Opening night bonus: the Mr Whippy van will be there!

Bring your mates, bring the family and enjoy a great Friday night at the club.

Everyone welcome!



Finalist in CPA Champ of Champs

Congrats to Rhys Jeffs for making the final of the CPA Champ of Champs. Unfortunately going down to narrowly to Lorne's Leigh McIlvenny.

Congrats to City's Hayley Murnane winning the ladies against Apollo Bay's Jodie Bertrand





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Blues News

Janet Fletcher



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9 HOME GAMES ~ Rounds 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 11, 14, 16, & 18. Rounds 2, 3, & potentially 4 will be Twilight games.

A roster will be in place for Footballers and Netballers, and Catering team to assist.

Preparing and operating Canteen duties will include:

- Knowledge and operation of a deep fryer and being familiar with the part it plays on game days is especially important.
- Foods include chips, dim sims, potato cakes, chiko rolls, chicken schnitzels.
- Assembling of ham/chicken salad rolls.
- Monitoring of pies, pasties and sausage rolls in a pie warmer.
- Hot dogs, steamed dim sims, gravy for chips and gravy, beef and gravy rolls.
- Chicken schnitzel burgers.

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Janet Fletcher 0400 783 408

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Seventy one parkrunners walked or ran the course through Trebeck Reserve this week in warm, sunny conditions. There were seven volunteers and we had visitors from Bannockburn, Pambula Wyndham and Traralgon. Five people completed their best time for Trebeck Reserve. Congratulations to Gus Edwards, Joshua Macaulay, Alysha Hill, Jo Fower and Sandra Hill.

This event was made possible by the following volunteers: Kate McInnes, Liz Bennett, Neil McInnes, Don Smith, Maureen Gunson, Ann Jones and Kristen Czerniewicz. Full details of this week's results can be found at

trebeckreserveparkrun.com.au/results or check out our Facebook page for more photos.

If you wish to join us any Saturday morning as a walker, runner or volunteer please complete the simple online registration at parkrun.com.au/register, this is free, only needs to be done once and can be used at any of the 5,000 plus parkrun events worldwide.

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Winchelsea Lions Club has compiled a list of public access defibrillators in Winchelsea.

If you know others, please contact Linda Carter 0439 817 263.

- **Ambulance Victoria** 33 Willis Street
- **Bendigo Bank** 11 Main Street
- **Globe Theatre (Side entrance)** 17 Willis Street
- **Hesse Rural Health** 8 Gosney Street
- **Men's Shed** 51 Hesse Street
- **Netball Courts** Eastern Reserve Hopkins St
- **Senior Citizens Club** 36 Harding Street
- **Uniting Church** 33 Hesse Street
- **Winchelsea Bowls Club** Hesse Street
- **Winchelsea Golf Club** 13 Anderson Street
- **Winchelsea Primary School** Main Street
- **Wurdale Memorial Hall** 220 Wurdale Road



Seatbelts save lives.

Driving unbuckled? If you or your passengers drive without a fastened seatbelt, you could each receive a \$407 fine. The driver will also face 3 demerit points.

If you take risks while driving, chances are you will be caught.

Anywhere. Anytime. Anyone.

