

Plan for super park

Police paddock for community garden project

By RACHEL BAKER

A community garden, similar to English village allotments, is being established in Forbes Street, on vacant land behind Warrandyte police station.

Permission to establish the garden on the land, known locally as the police paddock, was gained from Victoria Police command last month.

The project, an initiative of the local Police Community Consultative Committee (PCCC), will include the installation of garden beds, greenhouse, shed, rotunda and a small playground for children. Local businesses and service clubs are being urged to offer their support for the supply of necessary resources. Several experts, including local landscape designer Bev Hanson, are being consulted.

"The garden will be made available to all members of the community to grow fruit, vegetables and flowers, in a social environment," police sergeant Keith Walker told the *Diary*. "Gardeners will be able to meet others and share advice as they make the most of the impressive

facilities that will be on offer."

Residents of the area, as well as people from other suburbs, along with schools, elderly citizens' centres, nursing homes and other special needs groups are being invited to participate.

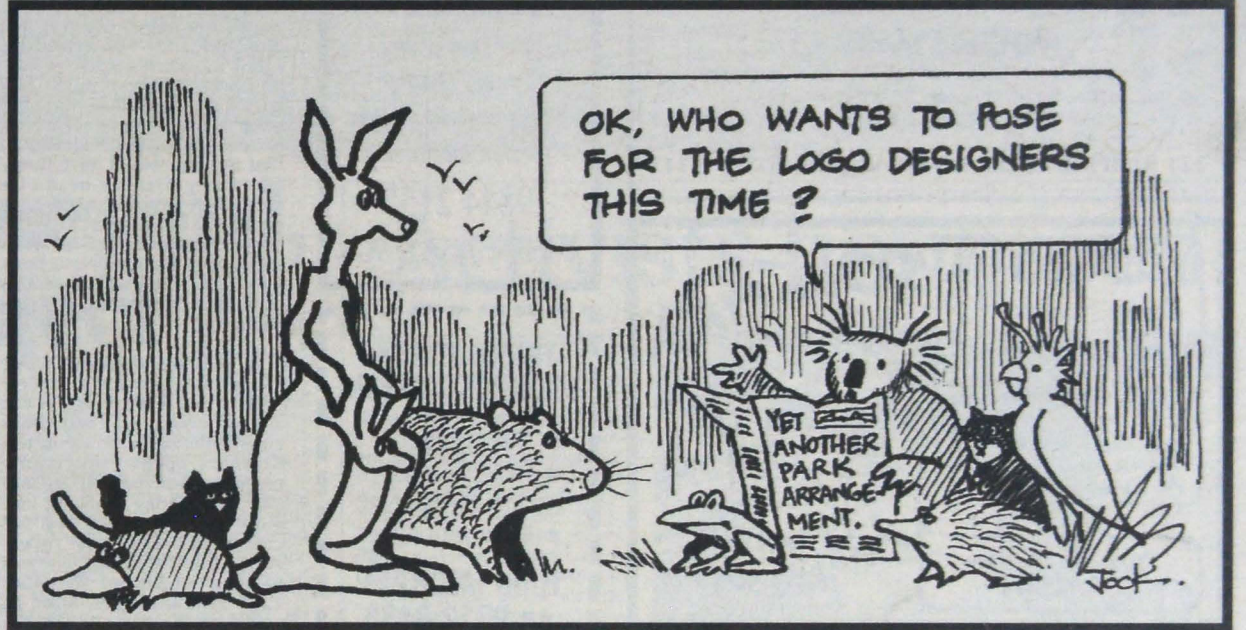
A lot of interest has already been received, but the PCCC are keen to hear from others who wish to be involved. They can contact Keith Walker on 9844 3231.



Sgt Keith Walker: come into the garden, folks.



Soon to be a community garden: old grazing land behind Warrandyte police station. (Picture by Jan Tindale)



Future of depot unclear

By DAVID WYMAN

Government-owned bushland reserves and parks along the Yarra—from Yarra Bend to Sugarloaf—are to be linked under one overall management.

The future of Warrandyte State Park under the new Parks Victoria regime is unclear, but rationalisation of park assets and services along the Yarra seems certain.

Parks Victoria, announced on December 12, is the new organisation which merges the operational activities of the National Parks Service and Melbourne Parks and Waterways.

Warrandyte State Park will join parks like Westerfolds, Yarra Bend, Banksia and Sugarloaf to form the Lower Yarra district of Melbourne West, Parks Victoria, embracing all parks from Yarra Bend to Sugarloaf.

While all National Parks Service policy issues on park management will remain intact, it is the rationalisation of certain

park assets like depots and such services as firefighting which are a worry in the future for Warrandyte State Park.

There are 10 parks in the Lower Yarra district, all along or near the Yarra River, in close proximity to each other.

A spokesman for Parks Victoria, Stewart Ord, acting regional manager, Melbourne West, admitted to the *Diary* that there "obviously would be rationalisation of certain park facilities". This could result in more services being available to Warrandyte State Park, he said.

But he would not give an answer on the future of Warrandyte's depot, saying that the use of park assets collectively was being looked at.

The secretary of the Friends of Warrandyte State Park, Cathy Willis, said it was too early to predict any future changes in the operation of the park under the new Parks Victoria.

"A particular concern in the future would be the park depot at Pound Bend. This has an important firefighting facility

which at times of bushfires impinges on the whole town and outlying properties, because the Warrandyte park is so disjointed," Cathy Willis said.

"We have always been concerned about staffing at the park and the direction of conservation in the park. We hope that these will not change and that there will be some extra funding for conservation in Warrandyte."

Mr Ord told the *Diary*: "Obviously there is going to be a look at rationalisation of depots and there is no answer for Warrandyte."

"That is one of many transitional issues that are being looked at now by various project teams. There will be no immediate change."

"I must admit I haven't been to the Warrandyte depot but I've been told that apparently it is reasonably old in comparison with some other assets within Parks Victoria. We will be looking at where it's best to base an operational crew."

On the subject of bushfire con-

trol, Mr Ord said that each of the parks would carry out their fire control responsibilities in the current season "as if the merger had not occurred".

"In the future, potentially, places like Warrandyte will have access to more resources closer to the scene," he said.

"We would expect in the future that there would be more trained people and equipment available on Warrandyte's doorstep to help fight fires."

"That's a real positive of the merger. We recognise that Warrandyte is one of the most fire dangerous areas in the state and our park is right there in the middle of it."

Mr Ord said that, for the current fire season, there were about four extra fire crew at Warrandyte State Park and he thought that would probably continue.

He said that the Mount Lofty area, upstream of Warrandyte, was in the process of being purchased by the National Parks Service and would be part of the Lower Yarra district.

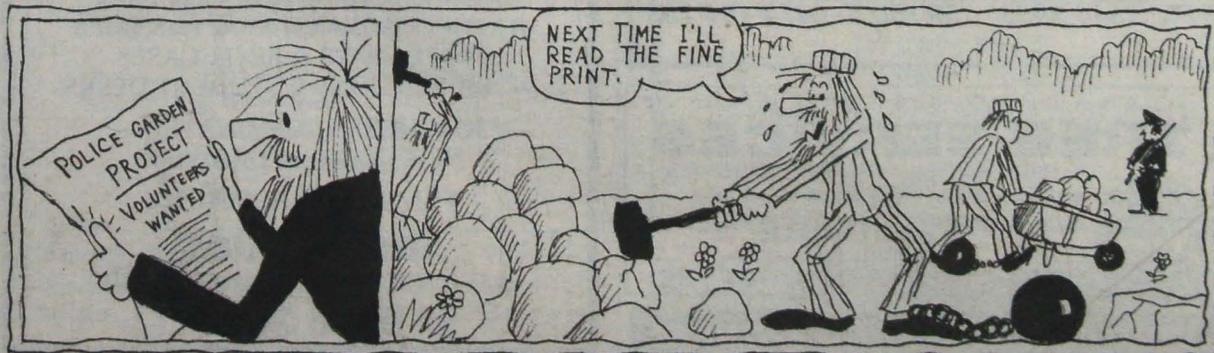
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FIRE FEATURES — pages 4 & 5

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By PAUL WILLIAMS



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Judith's slice of bad luck for the law!



We are unable to detail the golfing achievements of Judith Woods in terms of pars, birdies, eagles et cetera, but we can tell you that only last month she scored a 6ft 6in policeman. And knocked him right out! Judith and hubby Len, of North Warrandyte, have a holiday place at Bonnie Doon and play the odd round at Mansfield (odd in this case being the operative word). The awesome tee shot she played there last month was hard, wide and unhandy, a rank slice into the adjoining fairway where the local giant policeman knew what hit him on the head only after he'd come to. He wasn't too happy about it but stopped short of arresting Judith for causing grievous bodily harm. Neither was he too happy about the observation of his playing partner that it was his own fault for being so tall, that the ball would have flown harmlessly over the head of a shorter bloke. And what happened to the ball that KO'd the copper? It bounced off his head and looped high in the air back into Judith's fairway. Judith is obviously very good at trick shots.



Bob and Paddy Cox, of Brackenbury Street, see a lot of things in the course of their daily constitutional walk along the riverbank, but they were unprepared for what they strolled into one Wednesday morning last month. There were two art classes in session just downstream from the bridge. One was painting riverscapes, the other a naked woman. Yes, folks, as naked as the day she left the womb. Estimated to be in her late 20s and not at all unattractive—or, as Coxie put it, "very satisfactory for a bloke pushing 73". Having taken in the scene, Bob and Paddy continued their walk and on the return leg met a busload of Japanese tourists who had just passed the art classes. The visitors were talking very animatedly and you didn't need a grasp of the Japanese language to know what they were talking about. Later that day, Bob bumped into local police chief Keith Walker and, out of sheer curiosity asked was it strictly legal to pose nude on the banks of the Yarra. Sergeant Walker said it was an interesting one and pointed out that what might offend, say, a busload of nuns might not necessarily offend a busload of Japanese tourists. Further, he said, the local police were disappointed they were not given notice of this particular painting session so they could strategically position themselves with binoculars and judge for themselves the legalities or otherwise.



As Neil Dusting was backing the car out to start a Queensland holiday with the family, he asked wife Pauline if she'd turned off the hot-water system. He probably appended the question with the word "darling" because that's the sort of fellow he is. Pauline said she hadn't but would do so. Unfortunately, she

IN RED & WHITE



flicked the wrong switch and turned off the entire power supply—and if you've ever left a packed freezer off for a month in mid-summer you'll have an idea of the disaster area the Dustings walked into when they arrived back at Osborne Road. Of particular interest was a black pudding which had grown legs and hair. Quizzed about his immediate reaction to the debacle, Neil swore he just looked at Pauline and said "Dear". And we believe him because that's the sort of fellow he is.



Irish Les, the car salesman of Yarra Street, lives within a short walk of the Grand Hotel, which is very convenient because he is not at all averse to a drop of the singing syrup. The other early evening he had a topside roast in the oven and was commuting between the kitchen and the pub, checking on his dinner's progress and having a pot or three. Which inspired his mates Geoff Feltham and Greg Dawson to a dastardly deed. When Les returned to the bar from his latest inspection, they said they were going home but instead went straight to his place, let themselves in, turned on the lights and the tele, took the roast from the oven, put it on a plate with a couple of raw potatoes and an egg and stuck it in his bed. It took Les quite a while to find that topside when he arrived home with his buddy Little Joe, but having done so, he popped it back in the oven, completed the cooking process and deemed it delicious.



We're not quite finished yet with the adventures of Irish Les. He had possums in his ceiling, see, and they were costing him a lot of sleep. He reckoned they were tap-dancing up there every night. So he borrowed a couple of traps, caught a pair of the pesky varmints that very night and released them—very gingerly, because they'd taken quite a dislike to him—at Mullum Mullum Creek next day on his way to work. Les was relishing the prospect of uninterrupted sleep when he turned in that night, but it wasn't to be. Bloody possums in the ceiling again. He reckons they were not the same possums he'd released that morning, but where's the romance in the man? We prefer to believe that those two possums walked all the way from Mullum Mullum Creek to the ceiling they called home. Which is a story to knock the socks off Lassie Come Home.



Geoff Feltham (yes, he of the Irish Les roast dinner caper) is a tiler by trade, so the re-tiling of his toilet floor should have

been a pushover. It wasn't. Having lifted the old tiles, Geoff found the floorboards had rotted, so he called his builder mate Alan (Coatsy) Koetsveld to cut them out. Which Coatsy did, cutting through an electrical cable in the process, which required the expertise of electrician Greg Dawson, Geoff's accomplice in the aforementioned topside outrage. That fixed, somebody smelt a smell, a strong smell deemed to be gas. So Gas and Fuel was contacted and a plumber sent to sniff it out. He dug, he probed, he sniffed many, many times, but the source of the gas leak remained a mystery. So the Gas and Fuel heavies came in with all sorts of gear and gizmos and spent a couple of fruitless hours doing their thing. Just as Geoff's place was about to be declared a potential disaster area, someone lifted the lid of the Sulo bin which had stood there all the time and there was the "gas leak". A bottle of take-your-breath-away garlic sauce which Margaret, the lady of the house, had decided was too pungent for human consumption and thrown out.



Old habits really do die hard and it's going to take some people some time to get used to the fact that what used to be the chemist shop in the main drag is now Spencer Martin Real Estate. Like the dear old lady who tottered in the other day and put a prescription on the counter. "Sorry," said Glenn Martin, "we don't sell drugs here any more."



Intrepid Warrandyte lad Scott (Noddy) Colquhoun was one of about 2500 death-defying adventure-seekers who braved the elements, sharks and jellyfish in the pier-to-pub swim at Portsea last month. Noddy finished midfield and was happy with his time of 38 minutes. He was also happy (as was the Portsea publican) that it was pier to pub and not the other way around.



We'd seen the car around town quite a bit, but always parked and unoccupied. But the registration plate "RAMJET" told us the owner had to be a Roger and a fan of the ABC TV cartoon series. Right on both counts. It's Roger Drew.



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West End centre gets another chance

By CLINTON GRVBAS

Warrandyte's dilapidated West End shopping area will undergo a \$429,000 face-lift in a major upgrade as part of Manningham council's local centre enhancement scheme.

Everything from the roads, trees, car parking, furniture and lighting around the centre will be altered in a bid to clean up the area and make it more appealing to shoppers.

At least four new shops are likely to be built, two located behind the fish and chip shop and another two behind the former Golden Gate milk bar, with a paved outdoor "cafe-style" seating area planned for Goldfields Plaza, in front of the supermarket.

The cost for the project will be shared on an equal basis between council and the traders.

Unfortunately the extensive walkway plan originally devised three years ago to link the centre's various areas appears to have been scrapped. Shoppers will have to dodge cars with emphasis being placed on vehicle traffic in the area. Car parking will abut all shops except those inside the plaza.

A feature of the upgrade is the relocation of the main entry and exit point for Goldfields Plaza shopping centre 15 metres to the east (towards Harris Gully Road) at a cost of \$43,000. This is expected to clear the bottleneck that develops near the petrol station.

Also planned is a new vehicle ramp behind the former Golden Gate milk bar linking Colin Avenue and the Goldfields Plaza carpark. The six metre wide two-way ramp will include a footpath and be on a gradual slope to make it wheelchair accessible. It is expected to cost

\$100,000 to construct. The ramp is hoped to help unite the two sides of the shopping area without motorists having to travel on Warrandyte Road.

The frontage of Goldfields Plaza will also be altered with the bushy shrubs removed so the centre can be better seen from Warrandyte Road in the hope of attracting passing traffic.

The dilapidated state of the road at the entry to the shopping precinct from Melbourne Hill Road will be upgraded at a cost of \$71,000 and the confusing traffic situation formalised.

According to Manningham council spokesperson Kim Behringer, the road is of a "very poor standard of construction. It is proposed to formally construct this intersection so that vehicle routes are more clearly defined. Provision has been made for vehicles which need to

collect materials from the hardware store to pull up in a loading bay arrangement," she said. "This is suitable for cars with trailers and small commercial vehicles."

Part of the grassy area opposite the Melbourne Hill Road shops will be replaced by bitumen car parking spaces. Concern had been expressed about the dust in summer and potholes and mud during winter.

Kim Behringer said the rest of the grassy area will be landscaped at a cost of \$35,000, which includes new drainage. "At the moment this area is affected by an open drain and it is not considered that its appearance is worthy of its role as a shop-front to the centre. It is proposed to landscape the village green area to improve its appearance and to contribute to the enhancement of the centre."

The proposal for the entire area

includes "the installation of co-ordinated street furniture and public lighting in a theme which enhances the character and local amenity of the Warrandyte West End".

Four thousand dollars worth of new signs will be put up around the centre.

The plan to upgrade the West End area is not a new one. The West End Working Party began a six month study for public comment in 1993. After several council meetings with local owners and traders they decided to proceed with the plan in May 1995 but, according to council minutes, "During this phase of work it became apparent there were significant inherent practical difficulties associated with the proposed option."

The scheme is expected to be implemented in August this year.

Trees go for vineyard, restaurant project

By DAVID WYMAN

The clearing of trees and future establishment of a "bed and breakfast, vineyard, dam, wholesale nursery and wine tasting/restaurant" on a property in South Warrandyte has shocked and surprised local environmentalists.

The property is in the triangle formed by Croydon Road, Warrandyte-Ringwood Road and Hall Road. The land in front of the "homestead" has been almost fully cleared of vegetation and construction of a dam and trellis work for vines has begun.

Local planning professionals think the property is too exposed for such a development, possibly increasing traffic problems on a narrow road (Croydon Road) and introducing potential hazards—spraying vines with fungicides and the other proc-

esses of viticulture so close to houses and public roads.

The owners received a permit for the development on December 4, 1996. Again no consultation was made by Manningham council to Warrandyte environment groups, notably the Warrandyte Advisory Committee.

WAC chairman, Alan King, told the *Diary*: "Obviously we are concerned that it is not a precedent for the wholesale clearing of Warrandyte for the growing of grapes. Spraying of vines is a concern. The reason why orchardists have left the area was the residential pressure placed on them to minimise or stop spraying their trees."

In a statement to the *Diary*, council's planning manager, Marco Negri, said the owner's permit application was advertised by way of letters to nearby properties and two large signs on the site. One objection had been received but this had been subsequently withdrawn.

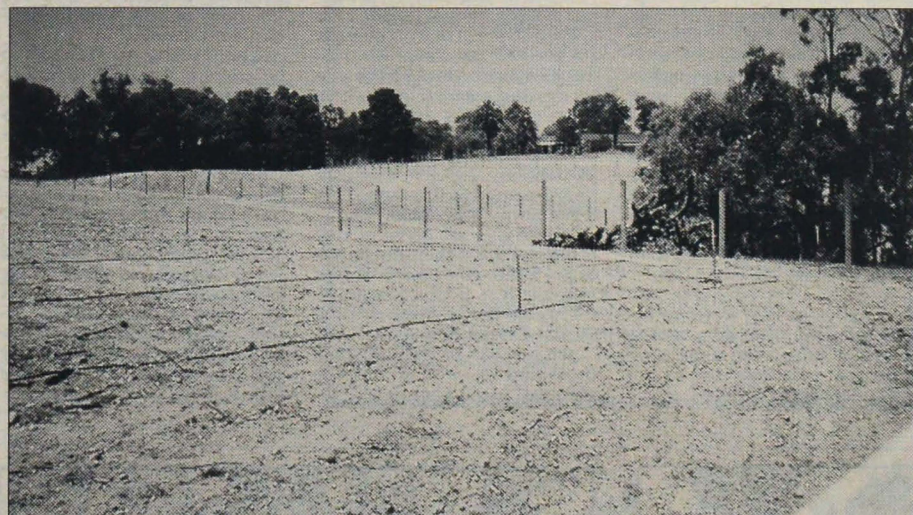
Council had issued a permit subject to 32 conditions including a landscape plan, landscape bond and extensive planting of indigenous plants.

"The permit was issued for buildings, works and vegetation removal associated with the use and development of a bed and breakfast, vineyard, dam, wholesale plant nursery and winetasting/restaurant," Mr Negri said.

"Each of the uses is permitted in the zone either as 'as-of-right' (in the case of vineyard-agricultural use) or require a planning permit."

WAC's Alan King commented: "We were surprised that the community and particularly WAC were not informed about the permit application."

"There were a number of mature native trees removed in the total clearing and if the chippings on the side of property are from trees on the site, then there were a lot of trees felled."



"A number of mature native trees removed in the total clearing" for a proposed South Warrandyte vineyard. (Picture by Jan Tindale)

Activists honoured

Four Warrandyte residents were recognised for their contributions to the local community with an Australia Day Award at a ceremony on January 26. The awards were presented by the Federal Member for Menzies, Kevin Andrews, at the Great Hall in Heidelberg.

Jean Chapman, Gail Dick, Peggy Dunnett and Barry Phillips were all recognised for their significant contributions. "The purpose of the awards is to recognise the valued contribution that many people make to the local community," Mr Andrews said.

Jean Chapman has a long history of serving the Warrandyte community. She helped found the Warrandyte Community Workshop Co-op 15 years ago. This was the springboard for the development of many local services, including job exchange, family support, a wood-fuel yard, mudbrick yard, youth drop-in coffee shop, after-school care and community information and advice.

Many of these enterprises developed into viable separate organisations. When Warrandyte Neighbourhood House found itself in a crisis situation last year due to the restructuring of funding and committee changes, Jean leapt in to give more of her time to help keep the house alive.

Gail Dick has been a member of the Manningham City Council Disability Advisory Committee for a number of years. As past chairman and committee member she has worked for the establishment of recreation opportunities, support services and employment training within Manningham for young adults with intellectual disabilities.

Working at Bulleen Heights school in the work education area, she has formed many networks in the local community to encourage and facilitate transition employment. As a



Flashback: Jean Chapman at her Warrandyte Community Workshop Co-op desk.

member of the committee for REAL (Rights, Employment, Accommodation and Leisure), Gail is working to establish a centre in Manningham to provide work transition opportunities for school leavers.

Peggy Dunnett is an original member of the committee formed in 1970 to assess the possibility of the formation of an independent Meals on Wheels service for the elderly citizens of Warrandyte.

She was an honorary administrator with the Warrandyte and District Welfare Service for 16 years. This involved the ordering of meals and completion of day sheets for delivering meals by volunteers. She combined this with the position of treasurer.

After 25 years she is still a committee member and treasurer and still delivers meals on wheels to the elderly citizens of Warrandyte.

Barry Phillips has been involved in Little Athletics for 13 years. In 1987 he was elected

track and field manager of the Rieschiecks Reserve centre management, a position he held for three years. He later became president of the centre for three years, followed by a two year term as president of the Doncaster club.

He became a qualified athletics coach and was appointed assistant team manager for the state Little Athletics team which successfully competed in Canberra in 1991.

His interests extend from coaching and training to involvement with the development of the athletic track reserve.

He became chairman of the Rieschiecks Reserve Combined Athletic Advisory Committee for the future planning and development of the reserve. This committee's deliberations and Barry's perseverance with track improvements are largely responsible for the present work to upgrade the track to a modern synthetic surface.

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These Warrandyte firefighters and their trucks helped save Ferny Creek. (Picture by Jan Tindale)

A bad couple of days

RICHARD WARWICK was called out to the Ferny Creek fires. This is his story.

You could tell it was going to be a bad couple of days by the weather forecast—temperatures of 40 degrees and strong northerly winds, reminiscent of the days before Ash Wednesday in 1983.

Our worst fears were realised on the Monday evening when a large fire started on Mt Martha overlooking Port Phillip Bay near Dromana. The CFA were so concerned about it that they deployed three units from the Warrandyte area (North, South and Warrandyte) in addition to many others from around Melbourne to help fight the blaze.

Tuesday dawned as another 40 degree day with very strong northerly winds, not many people in Warrandyte had a good sleep that night. Many of us were so concerned at the prospects of a bad day in Warrandyte that we took the day off or at least came home from work before lunch. Once home, we prepared our own homes by last minute cleaning up, filling baths with water, laying out the garden hoses and going over what the family would do in the event of a fire around our home.

At around 10.30am the CFA called for assistance from each of the three Warrandyte brigades to send trucks with five person crews to Montrose to help fight the first of the fires there and at Kalorama. As each brigade has two units, there were still sufficient resources available within Warrandyte in case a fire broke out here.



WILDFIRE FEATURE

For those of us left in Warrandyte, we were kept busy with a number of calls throughout the afternoon of smoke sightings in the area. Fortunately there was nothing serious and all were quickly controlled. As the afternoon wore on, we could clearly see the large plumes of smoke in the Dandenongs and realised that they were in real trouble. The three Warrandyte units were later deployed to Ferny Creek as that was the fire that was causing the most concern to the CFA.

A relief crew was despatched by bus to Ferny Creek to take over from the first crews at 7pm. On the journey in the bus one had many mixed feelings about what to expect when we got there. At that stage it was not known how extensive the damage was nor whether there was any loss of life. Also, a cool change with strong winds from the south-west was predicted and that could make the situation worse if the wrong conditions were present.

As we drove through the Dandenongs one couldn't help but observe a number of strange things. Firstly, the number of fire trucks that had been deployed

to the area and the diversity of origins, places such as Edi, Eldorado, Shepparton (north-east Victoria), Geelong, Lara, Werribee (west coast), Yinnar South, Callignee, Lang Lang (Gippsland) in addition to many from the Dandenongs and the Lower Yarra area. This is indicative of the CFA's policy to hit it as hard as possible as early as possible.

The second observation was how green it appeared in comparison with the Warrandyte area. This was obviously a false impression when one observed how ferocious the fires had burned the bush on the western side of the mountains.

Thirdly, one observed the large number of homes in the unburnt area that had all the wrong things—spouts chock-a-block with dry leaves, trees hanging over homes, no clearing at all done around the house.

Finally, the police had closed the whole area to all but emergency vehicles. This created an eerie feel to the place as there was hardly anyone around.

When we arrived at Ferny Creek we were taken to the oval where there were about 60 fire trucks parked and ready for the changeover crews. The women's auxiliary of the local brigades were hard at work feeding the hungry hordes, the St Johns Ambulance were tending to minor injuries (mainly smoke in the eyes) and the CFA radio command units were doing an excellent job controlling the deployment of all these resources. The immediate observation was one of calm control—we all knew what we had to do and we knew we had the backing of the locals and other support agencies.

Having been well fed (it

amazed us how they were able to arrange such a large volume of food and drink) our brigades were sent to the One Tree Hill area to assist with blacking out. At the time we did not realise it, but we were literally around the corner from where three people lost their lives and many homes were destroyed.

After an hour or so, we were then sent to Tobruk Avenue near the base of the mountain just off Mountain Highway. This was the location where Arson Squad police later discovered evidence that one of the fires had been deliberately lit. It reminded us a little of driving along Gold Memorial Road with thick bush surrounding the road.

By this time it was very dark and all that could be seen were the flames of burning tree stumps. Whilst blacking out in this area we found that the fire had burned everything and that all was left was the bare rock of this very steeply sloping land.

An hour or so later we were sent further into the bush to stop another fire that had started and was once again rapidly going up the hill towards One Tree Hill. During the battle to stop this fire, it was evident that the undergrowth was very thick and tinder dry.

We kept this up for most of the night and were relieved when the call came to go back to the Ferny Creek oval for breakfast. This turned out to be a magnificent cooked meal of eggs and bacon and quite a few of us went back for seconds.

Shortly after breakfast we were advised that we were being released from duty as the weather had cooled sufficiently and that rain was due to fall within a couple of hours.

Lots of lessons to be learned

By FIA CLENDINEN

Warrandyte has a lot in common with the Dandenongs. They are both hilly, beautiful places. There is a lot of natural bush and the locals want to keep it that way. In both areas there is a strong sense of community and people feel pretty passionate about living there.

But Warrandyte and the Dandenongs have something more worrying in common—they're vulnerable to bushfires. On January 21 probably everyone in Warrandyte was anxiously monitoring the progress of the fires. We were lucky, the fires came nowhere near us. The people in the Dandenongs were not so lucky. They lost 41 houses and three people died.

There are very good reasons to be frightened of bushfires but to survive you need more than fear. One thing that can help you survive is knowledge.

Two years ago I set up a Community Fireguard Group in my street because I wanted to learn about bushfires from the experts—the Country Fire Authority. At our meetings we were told what actually happens during a bushfire. We were shown videos. Our houses were given a bush fire survival rating, using a meter developed by the CSIRO. The captain of the local brigade warned us not to expect much

assistance from the CFA.

We heard some incredible stories from the Ash Wednesday fires: about the couple who packed their bags and waited for "someone" to come and save them. No one did; they died. Then there was the little old lady who put out the spot fires around her house, using a bucket filled from her grandchildren's wading pool. She saved her house, all by herself.

I think we all felt the meetings were valuable and we learned something. Now, when we have to decide what to do in a fire, that decision will be based more on facts and less on panic.

Stephen Pascoe, the Community Fireguard Facilitator, provides vital information. "The aim of Community Fireguard is to give people the information to develop their own survival strategy," he said.

"This can range from simply being out of the area, right through to preparing your house and staying with it through the fire."

He also stressed that there are no blanket rules about how to prepare for a fire. "Everyone is different, everyone has different abilities and expectations. Each house is a different situation."

For more information about Community Fireguard contact Stephen Pascoe on 9735 0511.

High risk street sets example

By CLINTON GRYPAS

The CFA announcement in December that fire trucks would not go into Osborne Road in the event of a major bushfire came as little surprise to residents of the thickly vegetated street.

"We have known almost since as far back as the Ash Wednesday fires that the CFA will not help us in a major wildfire," said Ruth Rankin, member of the Osborne Road Community Fireguard Group.

"Ever since the CFA lost the Pantom Hill tanker in the Ash Wednesday fires we have been aware they will not come down here."

"A lot of Warrandyte people lost friends on that tanker."

While living in one of the highest fire risk streets in the state has its delights through the winter months, summer means constant awareness and nervous days watching the sky.

"On a total fire ban day, people who are going to evacuate their homes in a fire are told to leave town," Mrs Rankin said.

"Those who are going to stay to try and save their house are urged not to go to work. This is because it is impossible to either get in or out of Warrandyte during a major fire."

"We saw this in 1991. My husband had to swim across the river just to get back here."

Fifteen homes in the group are currently undertaking another fire training session under the guidance of the CFA. The group are expecting the delivery of a CFA pager shortly which will give them early warning of any fire and the location and description of it.

Also providing vital information is a 'phone tree', which is set off immediately a resident becomes aware of a fire.

"One of the things we are taught in training is that virtually every fire that starts can initially be put out with a cup of water. Most homes that are lost can be saved quite easily, but once the small fire catches on it becomes almost impossible," Mrs Rankin said.

"The training teaches you to be aware of the small fires. The information you glean from training is invaluable, like bringing in your doormat. All of the hints help."

And she has stern advice for the other streets labelled as ones which the CFA would not enter in the case of a major fire.

"They must get a fireguard group together, absolutely. They have to be prepared. We won't be relying on the CFA and neither can these people. But unfortunately most people simply don't understand the risks they take in living here."

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Brigade addresses concerns

Warrandyte Fire Brigade captain Bob Bird has sent a letter to all homes in his brigade's area warning that some streets may not receive help in the event of a major wildfire.

"The brigade is not prepared to risk the lives of its volunteer firefighters or risk losing fire fighting appliances," he wrote.

"I would like to reassure residents that the brigade is not about to abandon them at the first sign of smoke and will respond as quickly as possible to all fire and other emergency calls."

"(But) in accordance with CFA policy, the brigade must always place the safety of its fire crews first."

He said that while the brigade recognises that some people do their own fire prevention work, others live close to high risk areas like the state park over which they have no control.

"There are some streets and areas where there is a build-up of grass and scrub (overplanting) close to and overhanging the road."

"This makes it hazardous to enter these streets when they are involved in or threatened by extreme fire conditions."

He added, however, that these conditions occur very infrequently, despite having the capacity to take place at any time in the fire season.

Fire retardant plants

No plant is fireproof, but some features which help to make a plant more tolerant to fire include broad sappy leaves and thick bark with little resin. Young trees, if well-watered, burn less readily than old trees. Fruit trees, ferns and vegetables are all good plants to grow near the house.

Fire retardant plants indigenous to Warrandyte include—Silver Wattle, Blackwood Wattle, Myrtle Wattle, Golden Wattle, Blanket Leaf, Sweet Bursaria, Flax Lilies, Hop Goodenia (only if well-watered), Running Postman, Variable Sword Sedge, Musk Daisy Bush, Snowy Daisy Bush, Wonga Vine, Native Geranium, Hazel Pomaderris, Slender Pomaderris, Muttonwood, Dusty Miller, Water Ferns, Rough Tree Fern, Mother Sheils Fern.

Plants to avoid include—Pine Trees, Boronia, Tea-trees, Paperbarks, Bottlebrush and Eucalypts with hanging bark.

CFA stands ready for all

The Country Fire Authority has dismissed claims by some Warrandyte residents that the CFA has "let them down" by refusing to enter some local streets in the event of a major wildfire.

Residents were responding to news broken in the December issue of the *Diary*, and subsequently followed by most major media outlets, that the CFA had a list of Warrandyte streets which they would instruct their trucks not to enter in the event of a major fire.

"We cannot do everything. The residents must accept responsibility for their own safety during major wildfires," said Michael Hill, the CFA's Yarra Area Risk Manager.

"This is not about the CFA brigades abandoning the residents, but about the community accepting responsibility for their own safety during major wildfires which occur infrequently," he told the *Diary*.

Mr Hill stressed that the CFA brigades are manned by residents who volunteer to provide fire protection to their community.

"They are extremely proficient at stopping smaller wildfires and house fires. People who believe that they are being 'let down' should recognise that for the vast majority of time the local brigades will provide excellent response to their calls for assistance."

The CFA also provide assistance to residents who develop their own fire survival strategies, recognising that in a major fire they will not be able to help.

"People living in these areas need to consider what they need to do to survive the passage of a wildfire, as they may be on their own. It is simply not possible to provide a fire truck for every house."

Mr Hill reacted angrily to claims by some residents that they had done their share of fire prevention, mainly cleaning up around the house.

"Simply 'cleaning up' around your house is not enough," he said.

"The experience of Ash Wednesday showed that most people who died made poor decisions in a state of panic. It is essential that residents have taken all of the proper precautions around their home and developed survival strategies based on the best information and their own particular circumstances."

"If a house is well prepared then it can survive a major fire and offer residents protection. The alternative may be to leave the area early on a high fire danger day."

Residents can contact the CFA on 9735 0511 to arrange an assessment of their property and the opportunity to discuss fire safety.



Councils put onus on local residents

By CLIFF GREEN and CLINTON GRYPAS

Warrandyte residents are concerned that Manningham council regulations make difficult the reduction of fire hazards on most residential blocks in the township.

Council forbids lighting incinerators or burning off in the open air on any land smaller than 2500 square metres. Permits are required for incinerators and open air burning on blocks having a total of 2500 square metres or larger.

Most residential allotments in the township are larger than average suburban blocks and through the winter accumulate considerable volumes of inflammable plant material.

Although mulching facilities are provided at the council depot, many residents face difficulty gathering together this material on steep sites and transporting it to the depot.

Residents believe that if Manningham council permitted smaller block holders one or two controlled garden rubbish burnings during the winter or spring, much of the fire hazard would be eliminated.

Since October, council has issued 1900 fire prevention notices to property owners requesting them to remove fire hazards. Two hundred owners failed to comply with the notice and could face prosecution.

"Council views this as a serious matter and will consider prosecuting those property owners who do not comply with the notice as it is an offence for a property to be a fire hazard," Bob Seiffert, council's chief executive officer, told the *Diary*.

"Council sees this as a top priority, even more so following the savage fires in the Dandenong Ranges." He said that if people fail to respond to the notices council can get contractors in to



clear the property of hazards and then charge the owners.

Residents are asking, however, how many of these properties would be fire hazards if limited winter burning was permitted, or if Manningham introduced a pick-up service for garden waste as exists in the Shire of Nillumbik.

About 60 percent of Nillumbik shire has been designated "bushfire prone", including North Warrandyte, Christmas Hills and Plenty Gorge. While fire outbreaks in the area so far this summer have been minimal, CFA Whittlesea-Diamond Valley Group Officer Adrian Hem said the worst of the season is yet to be experienced.

"Property owners might get a last chance over the next few days to complete fire prevention work because it is likely to be a long summer," he told the *Diary*.

"If we don't get substantial rain the fire risk could continue for up to another two months."

Nillumbik council's chief executive officer, Barry Rochford, said of the 2000 fire prevention notices issued on Nillumbik property owners which expired on December 23, more than 90 percent had been complied with to date.

He said this fire prevention work is not carried out on days of total fire ban due to the pos-

sibility of machinery starting a fire.

Land owners who did not comply with the notices were issued \$200 on-the-spot fines. Council then ordered contractors to clean-up the properties concerned. The landholders then received an invoice for the costs.

In the worst case, if an owner fails to comply with a direction notice and creates a very serious fire risk, they can be prosecuted through the courts with the maximum penalty being a \$5000 fine or 12 months imprisonment.

Council began a municipal-wide fire hazard removal program in early December, which began on private property and included the slashing of 100 kilometres of roadsides and park reserves.

The fire danger period was declared in the Nillumbik Shire on January 13. All fires in open areas require permits from council's Municipal Fire Prevention Officer, who can be contacted on 9433 3309.

"The Nillumbik community has prepared itself for the worst, and each household is reminded it needs to take responsibility for its own safety," Mr Rochford said.

"It is very important for everyone to have a plan of response should there be a fire in their area, and not leave it to the last minute."

Mr Rochford said that during the period of extreme fire danger it is crucial that people recognise that most bushfires are caused by the actions of people, whether it be accidental or intentional.

"It only takes one spark to start a fire in the existing tinder dry countryside. When added to hot and windy weather with low humidity it is a recipe for disaster."

FIRE REFUGES

If you decide to evacuate do it well before the fire reaches your home. Refuges in our area are:

- Box Hill Institute of TAFE, Doncaster Campus, Deep Creek Drive, East Doncaster (off Warrandyte Road, just beyond Crystal Brook Caravan Park).
- St Anne's School, Knees Road, Park Orchards.
- Whitefriars College, Park Road, Donvale.
- CFA Centre, Kangaroo Ground, near corner of Wattle Glen Road and Kangaroo Ground Road.
- North Warrandyte Community Centre, Research Road. (Kindergarten children and absolute emergency only.)



Browns Gully, North Warrandyte, was devastated in February 1991.

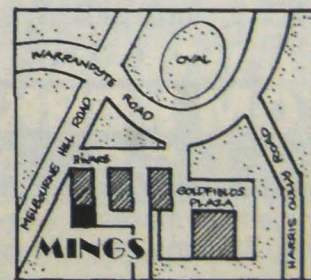
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Signs of the times

Just how many signs does it take to sell some books? For those Warrandytians on holidays, you've been spared a visual disaster this weekend (January 18 and 19) and Thursday last week, when about six huge, boldly scribbled signs in red on white, complete with balloons, were festooning the historic Mechanics Hall, as well as other strategic positions near the hall on the roadside. My 20 year old daughter said "It makes Warrandyte look cheap".

In the January edition of The Local Paper there is an article titled Illegal Street Signs a Sorry Sight. It is a warning from Maroondah City Council after "an increasing number of complaints" about "unsightly advertising posters on poles and walls throughout the municipality". Maroondah will fine people who put up signs without a permit \$2000.

I have not yet contacted Manningham about our regulations on such matters, but would hope they match Maroondah at least. I suspect the people responsible to enforce the rules are either on holidays also or else nobody has complained.

I see a gradual proliferation of signs around Warrandyte that I doubt are legal—garage sale notices for one and the art gallery opposite the police station seems to need about four signs saying the same thing to draw the attention of the passer-by. Happy birthday signs are fun and show a sense of community and I usually see the people responsible for them have them removed once the occasion is over. It is commercial signs that need to be watched. A standard of artistry in the presentation of a sign that shows some creativity would be welcome.



DEAR DIARY

Being in tourism, I am aware of how a visitor sees the environment they travel through. Signage is vital to keep a tourist who is self-navigating our roads on course, and currently there is a statewide strategy being developed by Vic Roads to provide uniformity throughout the state. Warrandyte will eventually be included in this. Those of us affected by our environment's visual quality will try to be aware of the developments of this strategy.

However, the signs currently being displayed are not the concern of Vic Roads and therefore, as a local community, we need to be vigilant that these ugly signs aren't the thin end of the wedge that eventually sees the replacement of our Australian bush scenery with unsightly signs.

Jenny Grinlington
McPherson Road

Thanks

On behalf of the senior citizens, many thanks to Margory Lapworth and the many wonderful staff volunteers of the Warrandyte House and Support Services. Thanks to everyone who assisted with food, donations and toys for Christmas hampers for the needy.

Thanks also to Manningham council for being well organised and the home help ladies for being so caring. Thanks again.

Wishing you all lots of joy times during 1997.

Darrell Digby Elvery
Stiggant Street

Games thrilled

The Pacific School Games were very exciting, something I never imagined I might have the opportunity to be part of. To see all the athletes from so many countries was thrilling.

All the uniforms showed the colours of the countries and states. I met people from New Caledonia, Malaysia, South Africa and all the Australian states. We made friends with the team from New South Wales and I swapped a T-shirt with a competitor from the Northern Territory.

In the disabled events Victoria really did well and everyone tried their best.

The crowds were great and all of Perth was talking about the games. Our bus got caught in the Perth Christmas parade traffic so the police just waved us into the parade and we followed behind the floats as if we were in the parade with all the crowds cheering.

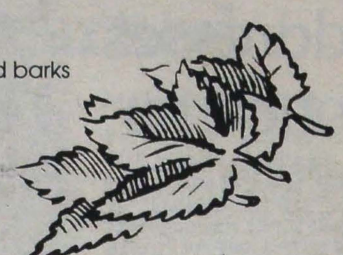
The organisation was excellent and all the staff with us worked very hard to make the team have such a great time.

I would especially like to thank Warrandyte High School for financial support, the Warrandyte Lions and the teachers who helped coach and encourage me, particularly Mrs Vomero and Mr Graham. It was great to win the medals and march in the Victorian team in the closing ceremony. I hope lots of other students at our school get a chance like me.

Jeremy Coates
Warrandyte High School

Autumn's Tears

Iron railings, like Ash Wednesday's charred barks jar shaved lawns into green cells. Studded collars clash with angry chains.



Lace curtains hang still— as they have always done. Pale faces move within— with the hands of the clocks.

The full moon spoke: Awaken to your senses! Listen and let go with the calls of the wind!

The rustle of sun-scorched leaves stirs something inside you. Autumn's tears, they touch the moon's silvery watershed and slip away between the gums' pale barks which scribble the riverbank.

Reflections drift under waning stars; curling mist collides with riverbank— avalanche mystique.

The wind lies still.

His smell comes strong— mould and dung come to air. A red earth tunnel he makes his entry— and our flightless birds' exit to their graves.

The warmth of my sleep leaves the pink of my pyjamas. I stand stock still in the chill morning air—

Paralytic after-fear:

The locked coop,

The hens huddled—

Waiting their turn

In silence

In terror

At his jaws breaking the vertebrae of their sisters.

My clumsy gummies

rainbowed in dew and blood and feather-soaked grass.

Shovel facing the rising sun.

Dismembered corpses in a common grave

—Whereabouts of some unknown:

He had killed others for fun.

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Eltham awaits minister's 'pleasure'

By FIA CLENDINNEN

Robert Marshall, former councillor with the Shire of Eltham, has reacted angrily to the planning minister's calling in of the proposed development at the site of the old Eltham Shire offices.

The planning application for the development, a 24-hour petrol station, Hungry Jacks restaurant and a video store, was passed by the Nillumbik commissioners at a highly emotional council meeting in October last year.

Eltham Gateway Action Group (EGAG) lodged an appeal with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) to request the commissioners' decision be overturned with a hearing date set for March. But

in December the Minister for Planning, Rob McClellan, called in the planning application. Now the decision rests solely with the minister.

"It is a great shame that the minister considers interfering in a proper planning process," Mr Marshall told the *Diary*. "The minister's interference is frequently on an ad hoc basis and this is a great shame."

Mr Marshall conceded that there was a chance the minister would decide against the development, described by Mr Marshall as a "glitzy, garish monstrosity".

"If the minister does reject this, I'll be the first to congratulate him. I'll apologise profusely for having

doubted him," Mr Marshall said.

The minister's calling in of the comparatively minor development has raised many questions in the community. "It's a local issue and not of state-wide interest. As the minister, he should only be concerning himself with state issues," said Russell Yeoman.

Mr Yeoman worked in the planning department of Eltham council for 30 years. He is also an active member of EGAG.

Jenni Mitchell, EGAG president, shared Mr Yeoman's concerns. "Under normal circumstances I wouldn't have expected the minister to call in this particular development. It appears to be very much a local issue," Ms Mitchell said.

Despite the minister's actions, Ms Mitchell described EGAG's morale as "cautiously optimistic". The minister had asked for submissions on the development to be in by January 31. He is expected to make a decision late this month or early next month.

"We are treating this as the appeal we were preparing to put before the AAT," Ms Mitchell said. "EGAG is employing town planners and traffic engineers to prepare a report. We are extremely pleased with the work they have done. It is a professional, precise, factual document to go before the minister."

EGAG's art exhibition at Montsalvat late last year raised \$7000. "These funds were raised to

fight our case and are being used to pay the professional consultants who are preparing our submission," Ms Mitchell said.

"This is the only opportunity we've got and we've got to make the best of it," Mr Yeoman said. "We have overwhelming advice that on a number of aspects it would defy logic to grant a permit."

Gavin Clancy, spokesperson for the Minister for Planning, declined to give the reasons for the minister's actions.

"I can't say anything specific about why the planning application was called in. The minister decided it was a matter of planning policy," Mr Clancy said.

Nillumbik poll probe

By FIA CLENDINNEN

Local branches of the Greens and Democrats will be working together to support candidates for the first time at the upcoming Nillumbik Council elections.

"The Yarra Plenty Greens and the Jagajaga Democrats have jointly prepared a list of 15 questions that we will be sending to all prospective councillors," said John Siddons, a Democrats member since 1977 and a senator from 1980 to 1987.

"We will be looking at the answers very carefully and we hope to endorse a candidate in each of Nillumbik's five wards. The two parties will be joining forces to help those candidates in whatever way we can."

Mr Siddons was enthusiastic about the new level of co-operation. "This is incredibly positive for the environment and for the world, where the Greens and the Democrats work together, instead of fighting each other," he said.

The council elections are on March 15. The last time elections were held in the Shire of Eltham was in August 1993. In December 1994 the Shire of Nillumbik was created and government appointed commissioners replaced elected councillors. The commissioners have been administering Nillumbik for the last two years.

The upcoming council elections are seen as particularly important by the two political parties, which is why they have decided to work together.

"For the first time we have all of the Green Wedge in one shire and we need candidates who will stand up and protect the Green Wedge at all costs," said Karin Geradts, convener of the St Andrews Greens.

The St Andrews Greens will be

Rob Marshall rides again

Long-time former councillor Robert Marshall has nominated for election to the Sugarloaf Ward of Nillumbik Council.

Prior to municipal restructure Mr Marshall had represented the North Riding of Eltham Shire for 19 years. In that time he is credited with fighting successfully for the creation of Green Wedge zones, bringing in environmental controls and establishing a policy of enhancing the individual characters of local townships (such as Professor's Hill).

"My main aims are to ensure that Nillumbik achieves its full potential, that lifestyles are maintained and that the environment is nurtured," he told the *Diary*.

"I campaigned for several years for the creation of a new municipality which embraces the whole of the Green Wedge and all of its community."

"I argued strongly for the creation of Nillumbik and am pleased that piecemeal policies can now be left behind in favour of a coherent approach to addressing the needs of the community and of the natural environment."

A vocal critic against the ring road, Mr Marshall also argued that the preservation of the Green Wedge was critical for the future of the area.

"I support the continuing of rural balance, where farms and bushland exist together. Above all, however, I want to see the



community in charge of its own development and destiny, promising full communication between councillor and residents."

He says that in order for Nillumbik to achieve its potential, council finances must be open to full public scrutiny.

Mr Marshall grew up in Pantom Hill and now lives in St Andrews, where he combines farming and conservation practices. He also runs an architecture business from Hurstbridge.

● At the time of going to press, the *Diary* had received no other information on prospective council candidates.

working with the Jagajaga Democrats to support an independent candidate in the Sugarloaf ward, which includes North Warrandyte.

Both parties are keen to see the return of elected representatives.

"Democracy has been destroyed by unelected commissioners," Lois Loftus-Hills, secretary of the Jagajaga branch of the Democrats, told the *Diary*. "The Greens and the Democrats hold very similar objectives and

it's only natural we should work together."

The Greens and the Democrats will not be standing their own candidates in the council elections, according to Maree Krohn, secretary of the Yarra Plenty Greens. "We have decided to back community representatives already well known," she said. "Given the very poor record of the Nillumbik commissioners, I would see this joint action as particularly valuable in ensuring that candidates really

do care about democracy."

There has been widespread speculation in the media about an alliance between the Greens and the Democrats. Supporting independent candidates in the Nillumbik council elections is historically significant as the first co-operative work between the two parties.

The reason for this step taking place in Nillumbik has to do with the unique nature of the shire. "We live in an environmentally sensitive area," Ms Geradts said.

"People who live here, Greens, Democrats and others, are generally protective of our community and of the environment. The Greens and the Democrats have been looking at ways in which we can co-operate. We have an affinity in this shire and decided to combine forces to highlight candidates who have the same values."

The state leaders of the Greens and the Democrats welcomed the move but were reluctant to say that it heralded the beginning of an alliance.

Felicity Wishart, co-convener of the Victorian Greens, told the *Diary* she was unsure how the partnership would develop.

"The philosophy of the Greens is a collaborating one. We encourage people to work for social justice and the environment, and you don't achieve that by fighting," she said.

"But I wouldn't endorse a view that this is a first step towards an alliance between the Democrats and the Greens. It's a positive step at a local level and how it develops is an unknown."

The state president of the Democrats, John McLaren, was equally cautious. "It's a very good sign that people who oppose economic rationalism can combine for specific campaigns," he said.

"It's good for the community right across the board. The two political parties could be called 'ideological cousins' and it indicates that they are willing to exercise leadership in pulling community groups together."

"But I don't think this is the first step towards a coalition. I think the most we will see is a series of ad hoc arrangements like this."

The Greens and the Democrats will be standing candidates in other municipalities across Victoria but the two parties have agreed not to compete for wards.

CLYDE & OCKER



"I'd stand for council meself, if the Footy Show wasn't back on telly, Ock!"

MPs won't back road

A petition of MPs calling on the federal government to build the \$550 million Eastern Ring Road is not being supported by two local representatives.

State Member for Warrandyte, Phil Honeywood, and Federal Member for Menzies, Kevin Andrews, have refused to sign.

When contacted by the *Diary*, Phil Honeywood said: "The proposal for the road only refers to a link from Maroondah Highway at Ringwood down to Frankston. As Kevin Andrews and I are keen to protect the Warrandyte-Park Orchards area from any flow-on potential, we declined to endorse the document."

The push for the north-south link from Frankston to Ringwood is coming from local councils and MPs in southeastern suburbs. They want a rapid route for heavy vehicles down from the Hume Highway to their industrial areas, avoiding the city.

Mr Honeywood said he is confident that if the Eastern Ring Road ever comes to be built, "then it will be able to join up with existing south-west roads, such as the Eastern Freeway, rather than requiring a further link from Greensborough down to Ringwood", through environmentally-sensitive Warrandyte.

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(Red Wine of the Month) \$15.95 (\$175 per doz)
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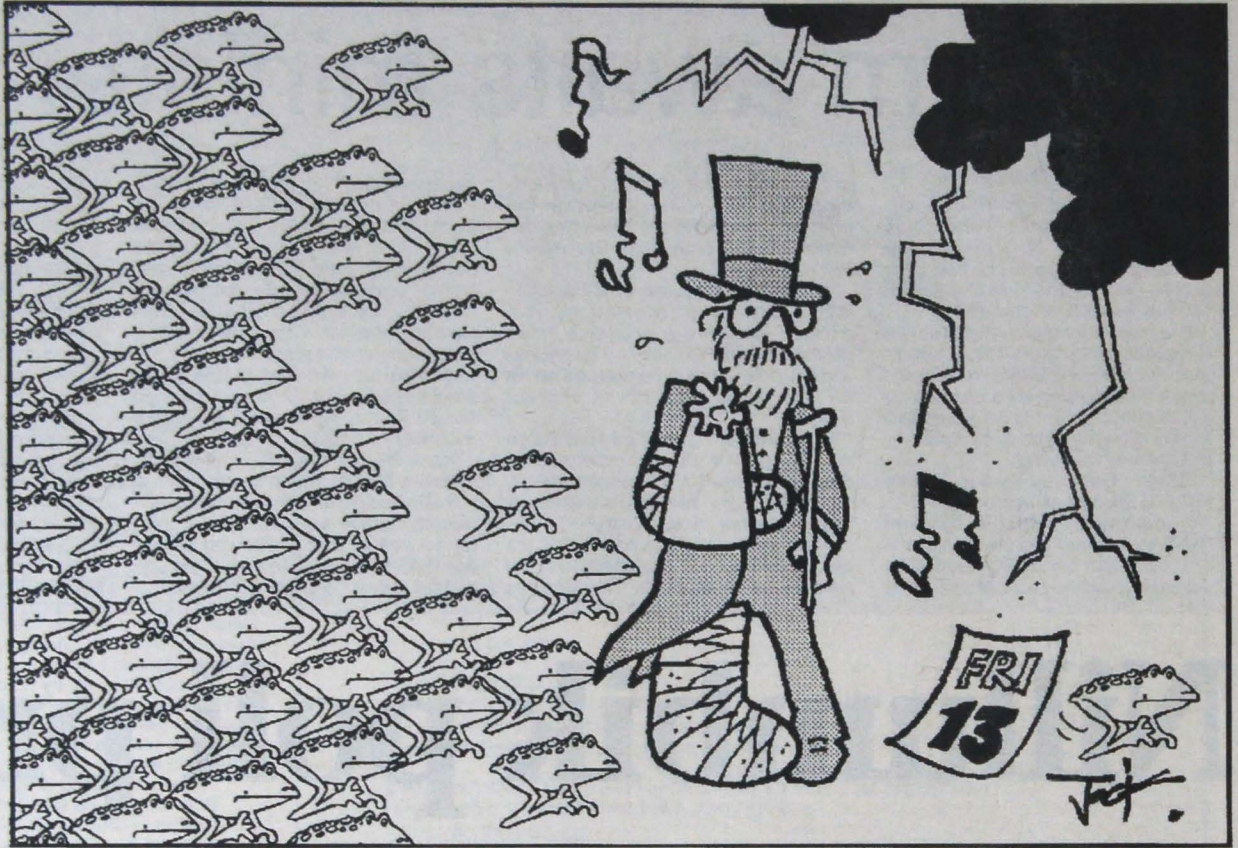


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I'M STILL not sure about omens. Omens like black cats, four-leaf clovers, broken mirrors and spilt salt. Embedded deep in our collective ancestral consciousness is the knowledge that before goodness reigned on earth there was chaos, just like Get Smart. The focus of evil and bad luck were ever present, lurking ubiquitously, ready to catch the unwary human foolish enough to tempt fate.

The consequences of failing to heed omens are obvious—plagues of toads, boils, broken limbs, elevator music and storms and tempests.

It was with some naive wilfulness, therefore, that Herself and I were married on Friday, January 13.

KIBBLED

"... relatively good health and successful cohabitation with a series of witches' familiars disguised as cats."

Now we all know why 13 is unlucky but the Friday bit has me a little puzzled. Has it something to do with the Norse god Frei, who must have been the patron saint of bloody-mindedness? Otherwise, how could the last day or the working week—for most I hasten to add—be anything but good? Anyway, the conjunction of 13 and Friday is known to be disastrous. Some people are reputed to stay in bed on that day and I hear Crown Casino's patronage is down by two or three. In Warrandyte, you can be assured of being first in line at the Jewel check-out and it's a black day for the McDougall Spencers of the world.

So what was it that led us to commit the ultimate stupidity and get hitched on the blackest day of the year? Neither was into

it's dangerous to become complacent about your happiness in life.

Take Oedipus for example. Despite his best efforts, he ended up marrying his mum, siring his sibling-children and then, finding the whole thing a bit much, gouged out his eyes so he wouldn't have to look at his own stuff-ups—literally and metaphorically.

Now all this would have been understandable if Oedipus had been a decadent youth who had had the benefit of a good education and yet had deliberately given the finger to the gods. True, he had some inkling of the prophecy and his parents had thought they'd done the right thing in giving their baby to the nurse to get rid of. The fact that she didn't despatch him was not Oedipus' fault. But still, a prophecy is a prophecy and it behoves me to take any sign very seriously. So what were the signs that led to the black day and our inevitable fate?

Firstly, the range of coincidences in our lives. Both Herself and I were the same age; we had two siblings and both families had the same two-tone, caramel top and white bottom Holdens. We both attended Monash University and we liked the same things. All danger signs, you'll agree.

The next set of omens was how we first went out and how we got engaged. Our first outing and our engagement were the result of misunderstandings and confusions—a portent again.

I had some tickets for the Beatles' Melbourne concert. We

were in a lecture and I turned around and behind me were three conspicuous females. Innocently I asked, "Would you like to go to the Beatles concert with me?" I was sure that I'd asked Herself but the three were unsure and all brought a change of clothing on the day, just in case—the only time in my life I had a choice—and I didn't know about it!

Similarly, the engagement was ominously confusing. We had been parking in the blue mini and one thing led to another and the conversation naturally was about jewellery. Innocently, I asked the academic question, "Well, what type of engagement ring do you like?". Herself's answer of "Yes of course!" left me somewhat puzzled and still ignorant about her aesthetic preferences. So, it seems, we were engaged.

And the last ominous sign—January 13—a Friday? Once Herself had crashed through the mini door and was inside the house organising wedding plans with her mother, I realised the wedding day would be sooner rather than later.

Secretly, I consulted the State Bank oracle about the wisdom of the event and was told that a negative bank balance was not portentous. By this time, however, we had discovered that there was a gap in the bookings for Friday, January 13. Evidently everyone knew better than we, that Friday the 13th, 1967, was a portent that the marriage wouldn't last.

ROGER KIBELL

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COPY CLOSES ON THE LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH

A magical billabong at the heart of our river

THE carpet is emerald green, the underlay a sort of oyster grey. But this is a carpet too delicate to walk on. Its soft shag pile would crush even under the lightest step. Manufactured in the open air from all natural materials, each strand of carpet is composed of a single, spindle-shaped plant called Milfoil, growing ankle high on a bed of fine-grained silt.

Beyond the emerald carpet is a dark pool—a veritable water garden filled with an assortment of plants unique to this aquatic environment. Floating on the water, a maze of finger nail-sized, triangular-shaped, bronze-colored ferns. The unusual thing about these ferns is that their tiny roots are not attached to any substrate, but instead dangle like threads of cotton just beneath the surface of the water. The ferns are called Azolla from the Greek 'azo' to dry and 'ollo' to kill. It is no surprise, then, that out of water these plants die.

A large component of the water garden are the clumps of water ribbons. This strongly tuberous plant is equally at home in fast flowing rivers—where its long strap-like leaves are forced horizontal by the current—as in still pools where the leaves emerge erect from the water along with its cylindrical flower spike.

Wetlands are among the world's most threatened ecosystems. Drained, bulldozed, filled and finally reincarnated as farm-



NATURE

By PAT COUPAR
Drawn by MELANIE COUPAR

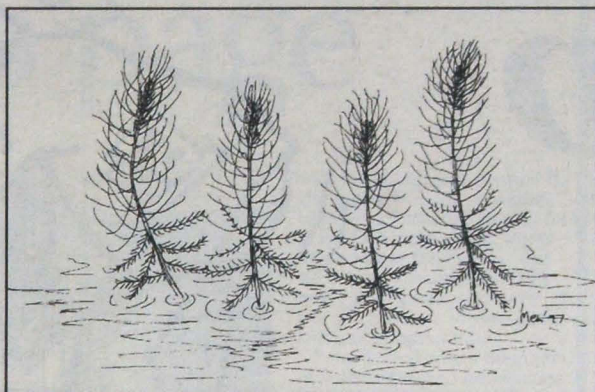
land, car parks and municipal tips, they are dying by the day. In America alone, 60 acres of wetland are destroyed every hour.

The billabong, which became part of Australia folklore through the words of Banjo Patterson's *Waltzing Matilda*, is as much at risk as any wetland.

Strictly speaking, a billabong refers to any body of still water, from a large oxbow lake to a small waterhole, cut off from a river or other wetland system but still linked to that system from time to time by flooding. Billabongs are a fertile reservoir of plant and animal life—whenever they flood the source of their creation is replenished with new life. If creeks are the arteries of rivers then the billabong is its heart.

Billabongs are primeval places containing green strands and brown blobs of simple, one-celled algae that convert sunlight to food and energy. Lurking in the dark water is a bounty of micro organisms and a smorgasbord of aquatic invertebrates.

Then there are the animals that feed on them. Wetlands are prime habitat for frogs. Is it any wonder that these amphibians



are declining disastrously? Frogs themselves are choice tucker for snakes: red-bellied, tiger and, in the cooler months, copperheads. All of them shy creatures rarely seen and, if disturbed, slither gracefully out of sight. Their desire to escape is far, far greater than any urge to attack.

The nearest natural wetland to Warrandyte is at Mount Lofty in Wonga Park; the emerald carpet and floating ferns are part of that. There are other billabongs upstream. One only has to look at the map to see the old abandoned meanders of the Yarra strung out like disjointed sausages on both sides of the river, all the way up to Yarra Glen and beyond. But almost every one of them is on private land which long ago has been converted to paddocks for cows and a haven

for weeds.

The Mount Lofty wetlands are precious. Fenced two years ago, already the area is showing the benefit from lack of trampling by horses and lack of grazing by rabbits. The water garden is now a repository for rare aquatic plants, some of which are unknown anywhere else in Greater Melbourne. This wetland is a natural resource that demands conservation.

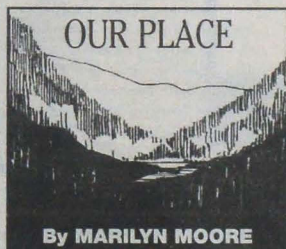
Billabongs do not have the instant appeal of a tropical rainforest or a coral reef. Some see them only as snake-infested swamps or mosquito-plagued backwaters. But you don't have to like them to appreciate their value or to understand that wetlands, with their rich concentration of life, are as necessary to the health of our planet as the sun itself.

Dreaming dreams of ratbag vitality in a holiday paradise

BLANK paper, glaring white in strong sunlight, promises nothing, yet everything. As long as the pencil lies idle, a latent masterpiece remains within its beautifully dappled texture.

Across the bay from where I sit, rugged granite battlements soar skyward, tumbled peaks radiate character and legend. Over more than a century, adventurers and fortune hunters have met with unpleasant fates whilst attempting to prise secrets from this mountain. Many still perilously seek its riches, even on the adjacent sea bed. The dive is marked by a dramatic outcrop piercing the blue turquoise waters of the bay.

One day we too will try our luck. But not yet. First one must sit and dream, soak up the vision, the sun, the legends. To approach those mysterious gullies now would dissolve the illusion in the same way that the advancing tide melts the children's sand fortress at the water's edge. The long trek around the bay must wait.



By MARILYN MOORE

Not so the pristine watercolour paper, neatly blocked and spiralbound, blindingly blank on my lap. The miserly collection of pencils littering the bleached timbers of the lobster crate beneath me doesn't offer much inspiration. A thousand colours would not suffice in this open-air Aladdin's cave.

Hesitation prevails. If only one could emulate the kids' reckless abandon with pencil and paper! For them a clean sheet begs to be splashed with colour so that waves and rocks are distorted into caricatures of ratbag vitality.

It's amazing how kids barely

comprehend the significance of newness. It must be a sign of old age that I look forward more and more to the New Year. It signifies the finish of the end-of-year madness, the beginning of the annual clean-up, the ritual wiping of the slate, the real start to the holidays. Each year we make a host of resolutions, knowing full well they will never escape from the realm of good intentions. For a brief week or two we live life as it's meant to be lived—sitting outside with little to do, sharing a bottle of wine with friends—until moonlight casts long shadows. Terrorized by mosquitoes, the kids disappear indoors. Peace reigns.

All too soon the school term starts afresh with new faces, a new schedule, a new school. The months ahead are eager blanks, awaiting adventure, achievement, colour; "and don't forget the ratbaggery" pipes up villainous pipsqueak Dora.

Don't worry Dora, everything's cool. I'm psyching up for a bit of ratbaggery. Just think, we could be at home right now, wallowing in the mother-of-all-clean-ups,

throwing a few simple truths at the council, offloading a resident rabble of feral cats, rushing off a submission or two to the state government (now that could be a full-time job these days), tackling the ever-mounting jungle outdoors, begging various companies to sell their products in recyclable containers, or even making a reluctant start on last year's tax return.

Instead here we are on this perfect beach, basking under the bluest of skies. Late-afternoon sunlight caresses granite peaks.

A red-shirted fisherman rhythmically oars his way to an anchored vessel laden with lobster pots. The kids have given up on the fortress, their little friend for the day has gone home, and they are now engrossed in burying themselves in sand further up the beach. The sense of peace is overwhelming; it's unthinkable that we must shortly leave.

So it's now or never. Time to invoke a spot of the proverbial, pick up the old 8B, and put paid to that fantasy of a masterpiece.

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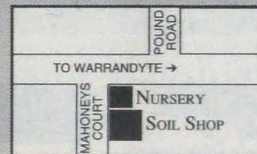
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Warrandyte After School Care Program: 9844 3537
Warrandyte Community Church Playgroup: 9844 2528
Warrandyte Child Care & Pre School Centre: 9844 1205
Warrandyte Maternal & Child Health Centre: 9844 3297
Warrandyte Occasional Childcare Service: 9844 1839
Warrandyte Pre-School: 9844 3363
Warrandyte Toy Library: 9844 3459
Yarra Warra Pre-Schol: 9844 1038

CHURCHES

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Catholic: 9876 1509
Community: 9844 4148
Uniting: 9844 3476



COMMUNITY SERVICES

Andersons Creek Cemetery: 9844 3850
Information Warrandyte: 9844 3082
Sole Parent Support Group: 9844 2769
Warrandyte Advisory Committee: 9844 3622
Warrandyte Community Centre Management Group: 9844 4503

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Dr John Dunning: 9844 2000
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Dr Gail Dixon: 9844 1943

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Warrandyte Festival Committee: 9844 3120
Warrandyte Food Bank: 9844 4495
Warrandyte Housing and Support Service: 9844 4495
Warrandyte Neighbourhood House: 9844 1839
Warrandyte Senior Citizens Club: 9844 2437

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Shire of Nillumbik: 9433 3111

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Warrandyte State Park: 9844 2659



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Warrandyte High School: 9844 2749

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Warrandyte Cricket Club: 9844 1213
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Warrandyte Football Club: 9844 3565
Warrandyte Netball Club: 9844 2088
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Warrandyte Youth Group (Uniting Church): 9844 2038
Warrandyte Youth Services: 9844 2985



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Wonga Park: 9722 1486
Warrandyte Fire Social Club: 9844 3661

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Warrandyte Community Centre: 9844 4503
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Information Warrandyte: 9844 3082

with assistance from Warrandyte Cricket Club Directory: 9844 3326

PETER LOVETT

A good life set large on life's page

PETER LOVETT, one of the *Diary's* early editors, died on Sunday, December 1, at his home in Portarlington. He was aged 68 years.

Born in Kew in 1928, Peter had a long and distinguished career in the Australian newspaper industry, dating back to 1946 when he began as a copy boy at Australian United Press. The following twelve years saw him working on newspapers in Melbourne, Brisbane and Adelaide. He returned to Melbourne in 1958 as sports sub-editor on the Herald.

The young Lovett family—wife Pat, son Michael (4) and daughter Jenny (3) came to live in Warrandyte on Peter's 32nd birthday—in September 1960. Their first home was in David Road, but following the disastrous 1962 bushfires they shifted into a new brick house, further down the hill in Webb Street. Their second son Richard was born in 1963.

Peter played a major role in the Warrandyte community in the years that followed, becoming active in the Taroon Avenue kindergarten, the old infant welfare centre in Yarra Street and the cricket and football clubs. He was keenly involved in a number of council election campaigns.

When Cliff Green founded the *Diary* in December 1970, his neighbour Peter Lovett took a deep interest in the fledgling little newspaper, and by Number 5—May 1971—he was associate editor. Peter's influence on the paper was soon evident. News coverage took on a more immediate quality, layout and format improved and community issues began to be tackled with that combination of fearless good fun and bare-faced cheek that has become *Diary* style.



In those far-off halcyon days, editorial duties were sustained with copious quantities of cheap red wine. On copy-closing Friday, Peter and Cliff would meet. "Well, Cliffy," Peter would boom across one of their side fences, "what is she this month, a one-flagon (eight page) or a two-flagon (12 page) issue?" Cliff stood back in 1974 when Lee Tindale joined Peter as co-editor.

After more than a decade with the Herald, Peter Lovett was appointed Melbourne correspondent for the Brisbane Telegraph.

In 1979 the Lovetts left Warrandyte for Portarlington, on the Bellarine Peninsula. Peter took work with the Geelong Advertiser group, initially as features editor, then as editor of their regional weekly, *The Echo*. Peter's time

with *The Echo* was marked by the paper winning a number of industry awards. During his period with the group, Peter looked after the cadets, and he is fondly remembered by many young journalists for his compassion, professionalism and sense of fun.

Peter Lovett was a member of a distinguished newspaper family "with printer's ink running through their veins". His father Harry was editor of the Melbourne Argus and his brother (also Harry) was a news editor with ABC Radio and, as "Harry the Horse", was a Melbourne journalistic legend.

Peter's son Michael, well-known as a sporting writer, former editor of Australian Basketball Weekly, then Inside Football, is now Australian Football League publications editor.

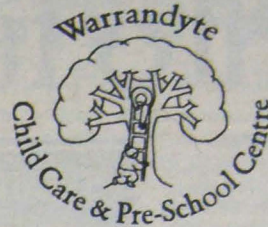
Peter's involvement with community affairs did not cease when the family left Warrandyte.

He was an active member of the Portarlington Golf Club and Portarlington Lions Club and was a volunteer for Ann Nichol House in Portarlington.

Peter's daughter Jenny (Southall) still lives in Warrandyte.

Peter loved his family and his work—he also loved his football. A long-time supporter and member of the Geelong Football Club his greatest joy was to stand on the terraces at Kardinia Park cheering on the Cats. Under the pen-name Bloodhound, Peter wrote the *Diary's* first football page.

Peter Lovett is survived by wife Pat, sons Michael and Richard, daughter Jenny, grandchildren Nicholas, Travis, Simon, Andrew, Jessica and Kate, daughter-in-law Jan and son-in-law Harry. He will long be fondly remembered by his many Warrandyte friends and readers.



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Panto fun

By NICK PARSONS

Warrandyte Theatre Company put on a short and very sweet pantomime Little Red Riding Hood, designed to attract all the family before the mad Christmas rush. Lynne Bartlett produced and directed this little gem and chose to introduce many new talents to our own theatre, supported by some of the stalwarts of the company.

The audience comprised citizens of all ages, toddlers to granies. The cast did their best to ensure that not only were we going to enjoy the experience, but were included in the show. This interactive style of direction was helped by the great sets, which extended to the side walls to give the feeling of sitting inside a forest. All the action surrounded the audience and there was something for everyone—dancing, singing, a heroine, a big bad wolf. The cast was energetic, the costumes were colourful and the pace lively.

The characters were straight out of the children's story books: Goldilocks, wicked witches, Jack and his bean stalk, elves, the gingerbread man, Red Riding and Robin Hood and Granny. Others were invented, such as Bearishnickoff, Humphrey and Lauren Bacall Beargart as the three bears. The blend of familiar characters allowed the smaller children to understand what was happening, even if they did not get some of the jokes which gave the bigger humans a chuckle.

The cast spoke clearly and the whole storyline was easy to listen to. This was a happy group of actors whose happiness was contagious. The songs were a lit-



THEATRE

tle challenging to many of the untrained voices, but the delivery excused some of the flatter notes as we moved on to the next. The Mechanics Hall is not easy for musicals and at times the background music was muffled. But the pace continued, and as the whole experience lasted a little over an hour or so, even the little ones were kept on full alert—no easy feat.

David and June Buck, together with Meggs Medley, provided the senior talent to the cast. But there was some great new additions to the hall's floorboards; Erin O'Mara, Laura Roso, Caitlin McKimm, Lara Coolidge, Katie Throssell, Bobby Barker, Laell Recovalis, Vanessa Haynes, Aleks Rowe and Jess Leehy all helped to make the show a success. It was refreshing to see all this new talent.

The story by Celia Meehan and Shirley Sydenham was clever in the way it brought so many well-known figures together and used them to lead into the next song and dance routine. The music was lively and aimed at the whole audience, easy to understand and integrated well into the storylines.

The finale was used by the cast to bring in all the children in the audience to share the fun. The effect was to finish on a very high note; sad that it had to end so quickly, but the timing did allow everyone to experience a wonderful time together without any loss of interest.



1997 WARRANDYTE VILLAGE FESTIVAL

THURSDAY 20 TO SUNDAY 23 MARCH

Festival show 'a goer'

By CLINTON GRYBAS

The ambitious Albedo Acoustica project will go ahead at next month's festival but in a reduced form following the committee's failure in obtaining the full \$45,000 originally required.

They received only \$12,000 but spokesperson Marilyn Parsons says this will not detract from what is expected to be the highlight of the festival weekend.

"We are delighted that the project is able to go ahead and are really looking forward to it," she said.

"It will show off Warrandyte in the best fashion possible. Barry McKimm has produced a stunning 30 minute music package which really captures the mood of Warrandyte."

The light and sound project will span the river from behind the bakery to the river near Whipstick Gully.

The music score, carried by a bank of huge speakers, will accompany a dazzling lighting program illuminating the river and surrounding bushland.

Spectators will be able to walk along the town side of the river or sit in the one spot for the show. Commencing at dusk, it will be repeated three times on Friday night and then three times again on Saturday.

The show will be free to all festival goers.

● The complete festival program will be published in next month's Diary.



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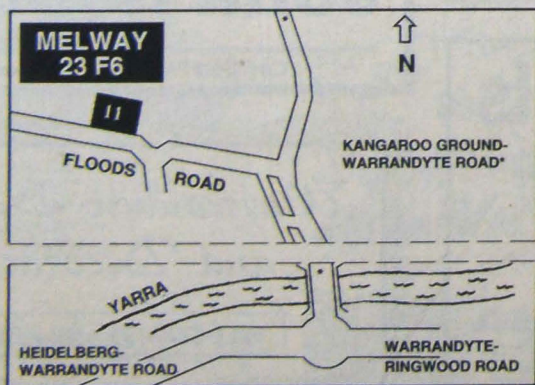
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"Development through drama!"

Remembering Alice

A celebration of the life of well-known local identity Alice Watson will be held in the Warrandyte Community Centre foyer on Wednesday, February 19 at 7.30 pm. Alice, who died last November, would have celebrated her 90th birthday on this day. Children are welcome. Please bring a plate and bottle, glasses provided. Further information from Jean Chapman on 9844 3326 or Louise Joy, 9844 3600.

Carols

More than a thousand people attended the carols by candlelight celebration on Stiggants Reserve in December. The interchurch council has asked us to thank the community for their support and their generous donations, totalling \$640, for the Christmas Bowl Appeal to help less fortunate folk.

Lions

The Warrandyte Lions Club have already signed up six new members in their current membership drive. The club, which celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, still has a number of its founding members actively involved. They meet twice each month at Kellybrook Winery Restaurant in Wonga Park and visitors are always welcome. President Terry Oakley may be contacted on 9844 4501, after hours.

Badminton

Social badminton is being held each Monday night in the Warrandyte Uniting Church hall in Taroona Avenue. Cost is \$2 per player per night, commencing on February 17. Players of all ages and standards are welcome and coaching will be available. For further information, call John Hanson on 9844 3906.

Redbacks

The Grand Hotel's first fundraiser function for 1997 will be in aid of the Warrandyte Basketball Redbacks. It will be a Back To The 70s night with Paperdolls—a trio of talented girls. Tickets are \$13 each, including supper, to be collected one week prior to the event. For bookings ring 9844 3202.

Variety

Warrandyte Senior Citizens will hold a variety night on Friday, February 28 at 7.30pm at their centre in Taroona Avenue. BYO food and drink. For table bookings ring Helen Ward on 9844 2671. There will be a \$5 per head donation.

Sundays

Children and teenagers are invited to a friendly and creative Sunday School group at the Warrandyte Uniting Church in Taroona Avenue. Sunday School meets at 10.15am each Sunday. A varied program caters for children from two-and-a-half to teenagers. For further information call Mary Clark on 9844 3091.

Bowls

The finals of the Warrandyte Senior Citizens' carpet bowls championship was played on Saturday, January 18. President,



President Isabelle Bradford presents Warrandyte Seniors' bowling champions Madge Gauntlett and Fred Knibbs with their trophies.

Student successes at high

Fifty of Warrandyte High School's 54 VCE students received their certificate in 1996. Five students earned a tertiary entrance score of more than 90 percent while another nine were higher than 80 percent. Lachlan Poustie was the school's top student with a 96.85 percent score.

Several students were honoured with awards at the school's various presentation assemblies. Katrina Guerin received the award for scholastic excellence for Year 11. She earned 47 marks out of 50 for a Year 12 subject that she studied together with her Year 11 subjects.

Amee George won the scholastic excellence award for Year 10 while Stuart Ralston received the Year 9 award.

Students were awarded for learning excellence in different subject areas while others won awards for endeavour, citizenship and sport. Jeremy Coates, who won seven gold medals at the Pacific School Games in Perth, won both the endeavour and sportsperson awards for Year 7.

Computers for schools



Phil Honeywood: subsidies

Warrandyte district schools are set to benefit from government subsidies to provide new computers and information technology resources.

Phil Honeywood, MP for Warrandyte, told the *Diary* that "the state government has allocated \$8.3 million to be spent on computer subsidies for the 1997 school year.

"The government will provide a \$1 computer subsidy for every \$3 provided by schools. Schools in the electorate will receive subsidies totalling \$111,228.50. Local recipient schools include Warrandyte, Andersons Creek and Warranwood primary schools and Warrandyte High School.

"Students need to develop new skills to deal with the knowledge revolution and make the most of new opportunities," Phil Honeywood said.

Hearing

Better Hearing Australia conducts courses to help those with hearing loss to learn new skills and better cope with the situation. These interesting and stimulating sessions are conducted by trained tutors. Local courses commenced at Eltham on Friday, February 7, but late enrolments are welcome. The course is held at 1.30pm in the Community Health Centre at 917 Main Road. Contact 9510 1577 for further information.

Abreast

Breastscreen provides free breast x-rays for women over 40 at the Whitehorse Plaza in Box Hill. The centre is open Monday to Friday, with evening appointments available on Fridays. Appointments can be made by phoning 132 050. X-rays are taken by female technicians and only take 15 to 30 minutes.



Conducted by JUDY GREEN

Drop your news in the letterbox in the front door of our office at the Community Centre, fax it to 9844 4168, or post it to PO Box 209, Warrandyte, 3113, by the last Friday in the month.

Mrs Isabelle Bradford, presented the winner's trophy to Mrs Madge Gauntlett. Runner-up was Mr Fred Knibbs. The carpet bowls are organised by Mr Bill Ward.

Recognition

At the Warrandyte Tennis Club's annual Christmas dinner, attended by 120 people late last year, Brian Dunn was honoured as Clubperson Of The Year. President Frank Waites presented the award in recognition of Brian's work, both with the juniors and on clubhouse bar management.

Birthday

Rodney Edwards celebrated his 40th birthday with family and friends at the Warrandyte Senior Citizens Centre on Sunday, January 26. Rodney, who has been a member at the centre for a number of years, is part of the concert party and a keen bowler. The hall was decorated in his favourite Carlton football colours.

CLYDE & OCKER

"Bar manager at the tennis club is my kind of job, Ock."

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The Redbacks' new image

By CLINTON GRYPBAS

Warrandyte Redbacks Basketball Club have an exciting new logo designed by one of their young players.

Clayton Hawley, 15, produced the outstanding piece in response to an invitation for ideas in the club newsletter.

The outer circle is bright red with white writing while a red strip adorns the spider's back. The spider is circling a basketball.

Hawley came up with the design while on a week's work experience with Stu Art, a graphic design company in Doncaster.

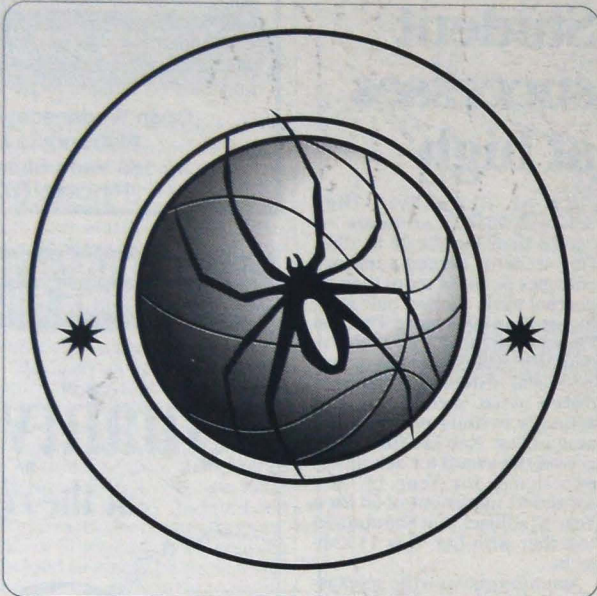
"They asked me what I wanted to do in my week's work experience with them and I told them about the logo," he said. "Stuart McRobert and the other staff members there all helped me produce it."

Redbacks president Bruce Macdonald was delighted with the finished product, which was endorsed at the club's February committee meeting.

"It is a fantastic design and a full credit to Clayton," he said. "It takes us towards the new century in a bright new way and we will be looking to use this wherever possible."

This is expected to include all club merchandise and uniforms and will be painted on the court at any new stadium for the club.

The push for the approval of a new court, meanwhile, appears to be nearing completion with a



The Redbacks' new logo and (right) its creator, Clayton Hawley.

confidential report to the Manningham commissioners believed to recommend a two-court stadium be built at Andersons Creek Primary School.

But Warrandyte High School is also trying to snare new facilities, putting in a proposal to council for two new courts to join the existing indoor court there.

The club took home one pre-

miership from the Eltham Australia Day tournament, the largest in Australasia.

Graham Drake's 18C boys, one of 13 Warrandyte teams in the event, had a stunning 48-25 grand final win over Sherbourne. The victory was set up by Rick Templeton's 17 points and Nathan Kerr's 12.

Jarrod Dick's 18B1 boys lost to Diamond Valley 29-32 after being reduced to just four players over the closing minutes. Callum Anderson topscored with 14 points.

Gavin Whitmore's 14B3 boys lost to Hawthorn 32-40, despite 12 points from Hayden Wall.

The Redbacks' registration day for the coming season is on Saturday, February 15, between 10am and 6pm at Warrandyte High School stadium.

In the senior finals in December, the Hitmen made it back-to-back Greyburn Cups when they edged out the North Ringwood Hooters 56-53.

Simon Appleby scored 14 points, David Thwaites 13 and Doug Harding 10 as the Hitmen hung on after letting slip a 10-point lead with one minute left.

In the over-30 section, the Plastics won their seventh crown with a thrilling 46-42 win over Andersons Creek. Captain Steve Doyle piled in 17 points but Stan Slabon's 16 for the Creek pulled them back to within a shot after trailing by nine with one minute left.

In the women's Grand Hotel Cup, Gemma McMillan scored an amazing three-point basket on the siren to steal the trophy 44-42 for the Chuckles from the holders, the PP Champs.

While Suzi Edwards scored 22 points, it was McMillan's shot which won the day. The Chuck-



Warrandyte's young champs on their way to a resounding South Pacific junior title triumph in Fiji.

Local girls a sensation in paradise

By CLINTON GRYPBAS

While it may have been difficult for them to concentrate on basketball in such idyllic surroundings, Warrandyte's champion under-15 girls swept all before them to win the South Pacific Junior Basketball Championship in Fiji in December.

Coached by Redbacks' coaching director Gavin Whitmore, the girls won all seven games comfortably to bring home the prizes—individual medals and a local engraved kava bowl.

Whitmore said the success of the trip could only further the girls' talents and experience and had also been an excellent promotion for local basketball.

"It was a great experience for all of the girls," he told the *Diary*. "While the opposition's standard was not as high as what we were expecting, it was very beneficial to play in surroundings that we were not familiar with."

"I have no hesitation in saying that the club should be looking to send more teams in the future. I'm looking forward to going back this year with another side."

The team comprised Dionetta Arsenis, Jazmine Borella, Jacque Dick, Courtney Leigh, Alicia Ricato, Kym Swain and Lisa Troyahn. They were in Fiji from December 15 to 22 and combined shopping, trips to

cultural centres and plenty of swimming at their resort pool and the beach with their basketball.

They played local teams Lautoka Excelsior, McDonalds Junior Jets and Raiwaqa twice in the round-robin section, with their closest winning margin being 25-6. The grand final against Raiwaqa was a huge win, 71-29.

Team manager Con Arsenis said the tournament was big news in Fiji, with the Sports, Youth and Employment Minister opening the event.

"Their national newspaper, the *Fiji Times*, ran results and news on the back page each day," he said. "The girls had a fabulous time and we hope more Redback teams will be able to enjoy this or similar tournaments in the future."

"We certainly appreciated the sponsorship and support of the local organisations which helped get us there."

"The weather throughout the week was hot and very humid with the temperature around 32 degrees each day. While we were sometimes referred to as the Warrandyte Red Backs we found the hospitality fantastic and enjoyed the entire experience."

When they arrived home, the girls unanimously told their parents: "We are definitely going back!"

Families come out to play



It was truly a family affair at Warrandyte Tennis Club late last year. Mums and dads, sons and daughters took to the courts in a parent/child novelty tournament. It didn't matter who won or lost because fun was the name of this game. Pictured here—party hats, balloons and all—are (left to right) Kirsty Moegerlein, Mandy Smith, Nanda Waterham and Esther Waterham.

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AFTERNOON TEA IN THE BISTRO OR ON THE TERRACE

Bloods are on the run and looking good

One for Snowy

Warrandyte Football Club have recognised the great service of the late Tracy "Snowy" Prior by renaming one of its most prestigious awards in his honour.

"In recognition of his service as player, coach, runner, committee person, supporter and a great mate to all those who had the pleasure of knowing him, the WFC committee has decided to rename in Snowy's honour what many at the club perceive to be the most notable of all out trophies," president Jeff Evans told the *Diary*.

"The best clubman award becomes the Tracy 'Snowy' Prior Best Clubman Award." Snowy died late last year after a second liver transplant. He was 34.

A family picnic to raise funds for his family was held at the football ground on February 9. Anyone who was unable to attend and would like to make a donation is invited to send a cheque to Dee Prior, 18 Cherry Tree Road, Hurstbridge 3099.

By LEE TINDALE

Warrandyte Football Club are in full training for what is shaping as a much-improved 1997 season.

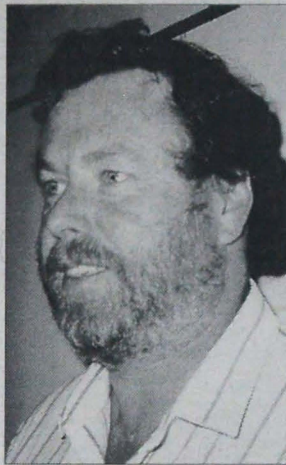
Official training under new playing coach Greg Cole started on January 13 and several senior players have already described it as the Bloods' best pre-season for years.

"The numbers at training have been good and enthusiasm has been high," Cole told the *Diary*.

"The older players are particularly enthusiastic and are looking forward to a good year—and that enthusiasm is flowing on to the younger guys."

The Bloods are spending this weekend (February 14-16) at the Club Reefton training camp outside Warburton. They will play four practice matches—all at home—in their lead-up to the start of the season, away to Montrose on April 12.

The practice games will be against Croydon North (Sunday, March 2), Old Ivanhoe Grammarians (Sunday, March 16), East Doncaster (Sunday, March 23) and Mooroolbark (Saturday, April 5).



Jeff Evans

Warrandyte appear to have recruited well and there will be plenty of pressure on the regular senior players in the new season from the newcomers and the promising crop of emerging juniors.

Missing from the 1996 squad will be Ashley Grybas, who has been transferred to Perth. Doubtful at this stage are Ben Brisbane and Mack Clarkson, who are trying out with East Ringwood and Box

Hill respectively, and champion junior Justin Edwards, who is training with the Preston Knights.

"Of course we'd love to have them back, but if they make the grade with their new clubs we will wish them all the best," said Warrandyte president Jeff Evans.

A priority for the club this year, Evans said, would be to raise an estimated \$20,000 to floodlight the scoreboard side of the Warrandyte ground.

"Our training during winter months has been severely hindered by the lack of adequate lighting," he said.

"The existing lights illuminate only half the oval and this concentrates traffic on the grandstand side, which chops up pretty badly while the scoreboard side is in near-perfect condition even during the wettest months."

"The committee proposes to upgrade the lighting with a debenture issue, interest payable yearly with the balance due in five years. Several people have already expressed interest in \$500 debentures and anyone who would like more details is invited to contact me on 9722 1111."

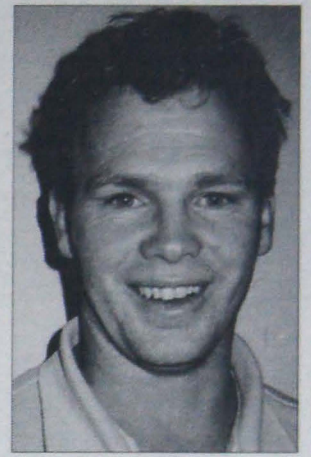
Evans said it must be remembered that both juniors

and seniors used the oval for training and upgraded lighting would be a big bonus for both.

The Bloods' social season is already under way. Andrew "Buck" Rogers is in charge of the social calendar, several functions have already been held and many more are planned.

They include such events as a golf day, trivia night, trots night, karaoke/fancy dress night, a winery tour and a black tie dinner.

Warrandyte Junior Football Club will hold their registration day at the clubrooms on Sunday, February 16, from 10.30am. The club field teams from under-10 through to under-16.



Greg Cole

WARRANDYTE'S 1997 DRAW

(Firsts, Reserves and Under-18s)

April 12: v. Montrose (A)	June 21: v. Montrose (H)
April 19: v. The Basin (H)	June 28: v. The Basin (A)
April 26: v. North Ringwood (A)	July 5: v. North Ringwood (H)
May 3: v. Mooroolbark (H)	July 12: v. Mooroolbark (A)
May 10: v. Blackburn (A)	July 19: v. Blackburn (H)
May 17: v. Boronia (A)	July 26: v. Boronia (H)
May 24: v. Mulgrave (H)	August 2: v. Mulgrave (A)
May 31: v. Croydon (A)	August 9: v. Croydon (H)
June 14: v. Doncaster (H)	August 16: v. Doncaster (A)

One day wonder thwarts born again Bushrangers!

By CLINTON GRYBAS

A dramatic last-ball six from a Parkwood tail-ender to tie the scores could deny Warrandyte Cricket Club's Chandler Shield eleven a finals berth.

The Bushrangers' impressive winning run after the Christmas break came to a halt when the number 10 bat sent Chris Bambury's final delivery sailing high on to the hill at Warrandyte Reserve. The mighty blow tied the scores at 147.

Instead of collecting the eight points for a win the Dytes had to settle for four, putting them a game and a half outside the top four with just three matches left.

Having won just one of their first five games before Christmas Warrandyte seemed destined to be battling to avoid relegation, rather than contesting the finals race, in the latter half of the season.

But an extraordinary turnaround in form and confidence, and some fine individual efforts, have put the rest of the competition on notice that the Bushrangers are fighting back.

"We have certainly had a more positive attitude from more people in recent weeks," captain Tony Sturesteps told the *Diary*. "That has been the key. We now know we can get those wins on the board. This is our best form for two or three years."

"We have to win our last three games to stay a finals chance." The Bushrangers are on track for victory in the first of those remaining matches, bowling Kilsyth out for just 138 on the first day of a two-day home game.

Quicks Gerald Walshe and Chris Snaidero, who are both having outstanding seasons, took the honours. Walshe claimed 4/47 from 22 overs while Snaidero took 4/34 from 18.

Warrandyte will resume their chase this Saturday (February 15) at 3/49, needing only 90 runs to take the points. Unfortunately, they have lost Bambury

SPORT



for 22. Steve Bell for 16 and Shane Baker for one and do not have the services of the injured Sturesteps.

The post-Christmas renaissance started at Croydon North where the Dytes were in disarray at 6/82 chasing the home team's impressive 266. With the top order back in the pavilion and a seemingly brittle tail to come, Warrandyte were on the verge of sinking to last place on the RDCA ladder.

But wicketkeeper Dave Mooney defied the odds to post the highest score ever by a first-grade Warrandyte player, a career-best 184 not out, to steer the Bushrangers home.

Mooney arrived at the crease as a night-watchman late on the first day after Greg Creber was bowled for a duck. He walked off at two minutes past six the following week, his wicket still intact, after belting 28 fours and five sixes in a 290-minute stay.

Mooney, whose batting was so poor just a couple of seasons ago that he won the award for the most ducks by any player at the club, said he had been working hard on his game.

"I have been feeling good keeping and that flows on to the batting side of things," he said.

"It was the best I have ever felt while batting and I was seeing them really well."

While he anchored one end, Warrandyte were 8/155 and still 112 runs adrift when Walshe went for two, with only David Watts and Snaidero to come.

While they might claim to be more than mere "batting bunnies", Snaidero had scored just 29 in his five innings for the season while spin-bowler Watts was returning to the ones for the first time since last summer.

But Snaidero cracked seven boundaries in an innings of 38 before being caught with the score on 252, leaving Watts and Mooney to eke out 15 to steal the

Club merge talk shock

Warrandyte Cricket Club are considering merging with another local club. President Russell Dorning delivered the news in his column in the club's recent newsletter.

Many club veterans were staggered by the announcement and the perilous financial situation of the club, one of the oldest in the state and currently in its 142nd season of competition.

Dorning wrote that the club had to think about "the direction in which we are going to take in the future".

"Because of our finances, or lack of them due to player costs, the club has been looking seriously at a number of options, one of which is

amalgamation with another local club," he wrote.

"If you as a member want your club to survive in the future you must have input around the club and be at our annual meeting on February 20."

The meeting will be held in the club's social rooms at 8.30pm, immediately after senior training in a bid to get all players there. Parents of the junior players are also encouraged to attend.

Senior player numbers are at their lowest level for some time with only four teams playing instead of the usual five. The veterans are also struggling to field a team each week.

CRICKET SCORES

Firsts: Warrandyte 235 (Creber 57, Mooney 54) lost to Ainslie Park 7/257 (Bambury 3/51) and 1/51. Warrandyte 9/322 (Mooney 184 n.o., Snaidero 38) d Croydon North 266 (Watts 3/86). Warrandyte 149 (Mooney 41, Bell 33) and 7/90 (Bambury 42, Mooney 32 n.o.) d Lilydale 84

Mooney 31 as Warrandyte reached 9/147 from their 40 overs.

In reply Parkwood staggered to 5/70 off 27. The equation was a run a ball from the last 10 overs and then 20 to win off the last three.

Parkwood faced the last over at 8/136, which became 9/139 from the third ball when Bambury took a wicket.

A dot ball and then a two came from the next two deliveries, leaving Parkwood in need of an unlikely six off the last ball for a tie.

Sturesteps put seven fieldsmen on the boundary, but Bambury's delivery, pitched well up, was hit hard and high over the mid-wicket fence and landed on the hill.

The team's last two matches are away from home, a one-dayer at Wantirna South on Sunday, February 16 and a two-day game at Wonga Park, starting on Saturday, February 22.

None of the club's lower grade teams are in the finals race. The seconds lie 11th of 12 teams, the thirds are ninth and the fourths 10th.

The club's annual trivia night will be held at the clubrooms from 8pm on Saturday, February 15. Tickets are available from Ann Pascoe on 9844 1213.

(Snaidero 4/37, Walshe 3/34) and 8/213 (Bambury 2/31, Walshe 2/32, Snaidero 2/50). Warrandyte 9/147 (Valentine 36, Sturesteps 33, Mooney 31) tied Parkwood 9/147 (Bambury 3/34, Snaidero 3/45, Walshe 3/62). Warrandyte 3/49 vs Kilsyth 138 (Snaidero 4/34, Walshe 4/47).

Seconds: Warrandyte 202 lost to Ainslie Park 302 (Watts 5/88). Warrandyte 8/218 (Barmby 45, Gee 40) and 1/33 d Croydon North 196. Warrandyte 268 (Edwards 54) and 3/23 d Lilydale 169 (Croft 4/28). Warrandyte 6/146 vs Kilsyth 72.

Thirds: Warrandyte 127 lost to Ainslie Park 9/279 and 1/59. Warrandyte 4/185 (Pascoe 85 n.o., De Leo 47 n.o.) lost to Croydon North 5/265 (Pascoe 4/75). Warrandyte 5/181 (G. Brisbane 46, Sutherland 41 n.o.) and 0/37 lost to Lilydale 227 (Brickhill 6/113). Warrandyte 5/59 vs Kilsyth 210.

Fourths: Warrandyte 61 and 36 lost to Ainslie Park 7/129. Warrandyte 113 lost to Croydon North 3/223. Warrandyte 8/250 (Jarvis 100 n.o.) d Lilydale 179 (Curiale 5/39).

Veterans: Warrandyte 9/152 (Pascoe 36, Sticksles 34) led Croydon 6/152 (Johnston 2/17). Warrandyte 7/122 (Johnston 40) lost to Templeton 4/153 (Pascoe 1/1 from 6 overs). Warrandyte 8/142 (Pascoe 43, McCarthy 42) lost to South Warrandyte 6/233.

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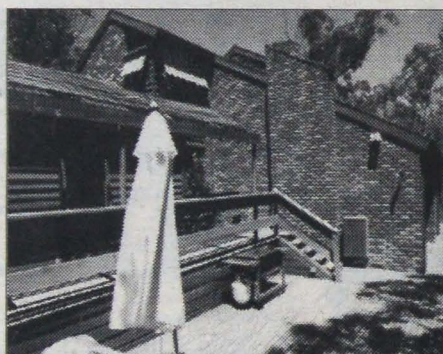
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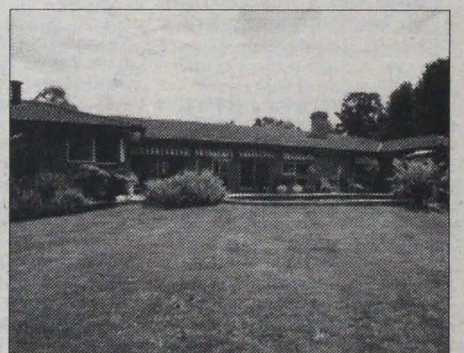
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