



# All warmth and wobbles, their Poppy comes home

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# WARRANDYTE DIARY

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This is a lovely story, a far cry from the scurrilous and smutty stuff which too often taints this column. It's about Poppy the dog and, if you live within about a kilometre radius of Somers Road in North Warrandyte, you'll probably know she got herself lost. Owner Ben Robertson, who shares Poppy's boundless affection with his partner Lisa Young and young Banjo, hopped on his pushbike when the pooch disappeared and letterboxed the area with the following computer print-out: "Have you seen Poppy? Our dog Poppy is lost. She is a very wobbly black (white collar) two-year-old kelpie cross. She is a bit disabled and can't walk properly. She is wearing a studded collar and a red flea collar. Please let us know if you saw her yesterday (Sunday, November 29) when she went missing. We would really, really appreciate it. Our phone number is 9844 4275. Many thanks from Ben, Lisa and Banjo." Ben then rode home and the family sat by the phone and waited. And waited. And waited.

Three-and-a-bit days on, hope had been all but abandoned. Then bingo! A call from a Nillumbik ranger. Yeah, Poppy was there, alive and well. And the story unfolded. A bloke we know only as Chris, of Wonga Road, Warranwood, had seen a dog that Sunday lying on her back with her legs in the air in the middle of Research Road, near Bradleys Lane. Traffic was whizzing by and Chris assumed she'd been hit by a car. He picked her up, put her in his truck and drove her to a mate's place—a mate who just happens to be a vet. A thorough medical revealed no physical damage, just a case of the wobbles. Poppy, you see, has a lesion in the cerebellum, that part of the brain which coordinates movements. The vet put Poppy up for a couple of nights while a search for her owners was mounted. The trail led, via Nillumbik council's dog registration records, to a joyful, tearful reunion in Somers Road.



## IN RED & WHITE



No prizes for guessing, but want to take a stab at the gender of this koala photographed in the state park at Pound Bend? Okay, we'll give you a clue: you'd have to be nuts to say it's a girl.

Right, now back to that smut we were talking about. Having recently retired, a benign couple of this town (a couple who shall be nameless to protect the innocent) decided that golf would be a nice healthy pursuit to pursue in their now-copious leisure hours. And as luck would have it, as they browsed the Lions Club Op Shop one day last month they came across a golf video called Classic Swings. Just the sort of beginner's manual they needed! So they paid their \$5, took their video home and decided they'd invite another couple (of similar age and interests, and pillars of one of the local churches) over to watch it with them. Oh dear. The video turned out to be a dirty wolf in sheep's clothing, a very blue movie called Hot Bodies. Glenyse Riches had no hesitation refunding the \$5 when the couple returned the flick to the Op Shop next day.



Inspired by that misadventure, we furtively browsed the Op Shop shelves on the off (very off) chance that someone had slipped a copy of that porn classic Debbie Does Dallas (or Debbie Does Salad, it's sequel for dyslexic vegetarians) into a cover as innocuous as, say, Synchronised Swimming Without Waterwings. No luck.

Stage One of a crusade to give local police-woman Kim Dixon a very expensive haircut is up and running. And, if you'll pardon a pathetic attempt at a pun, it's a corker! Warrandyte RSL Club, which has actively contributed to the last two Crop A Cop campaigns for the cancer kids, has bottled a very fine Rutherglen port, sales of which will be the basis of the appeal for the \$10,000 price Senior Constable Dixon has put on her head to be shorn next year. The port is on sale now at Warrandyte Cellars and Goldfields Cellars at just \$9.50 a bottle. Any cheaper and they'd be giving it away. The bottle itself is a genuine collector's item, Kim's "mugshot" appearing on a magnificent label designed and produced by North Warrandyte graphic artist Carl Hammond. So let's all drink to Kim and one of the worthiest of all causes.

When their women's midweek tennis final at the local courts was washed out, Sue Shepherd's Warrandyte team decided they'd knock off the celebratory bottle of wine they'd brought along even if they had nothing to celebrate. Unfortunately, they had no corkscrew. They could see one through the grille of the unmanned bar, but how to get to it without a key? Well, being the slimmest of her lot, Sue would squeeze between the bars and fetch it. Or would she? Or would she get stuck halfway and see herself on the TV news that night being cut free by some

kindly fireman? Very nearly, but Sue must have been pretty thirsty because she took on those bars and made it. Just. And as they sipped the last of that wine another team walked in, one of whose number pushed open the unlocked half-door beneath the grille, ducked under into the bar and came out with another corkscrew to open the bottle she'd brought. Sue will try it that way next time.

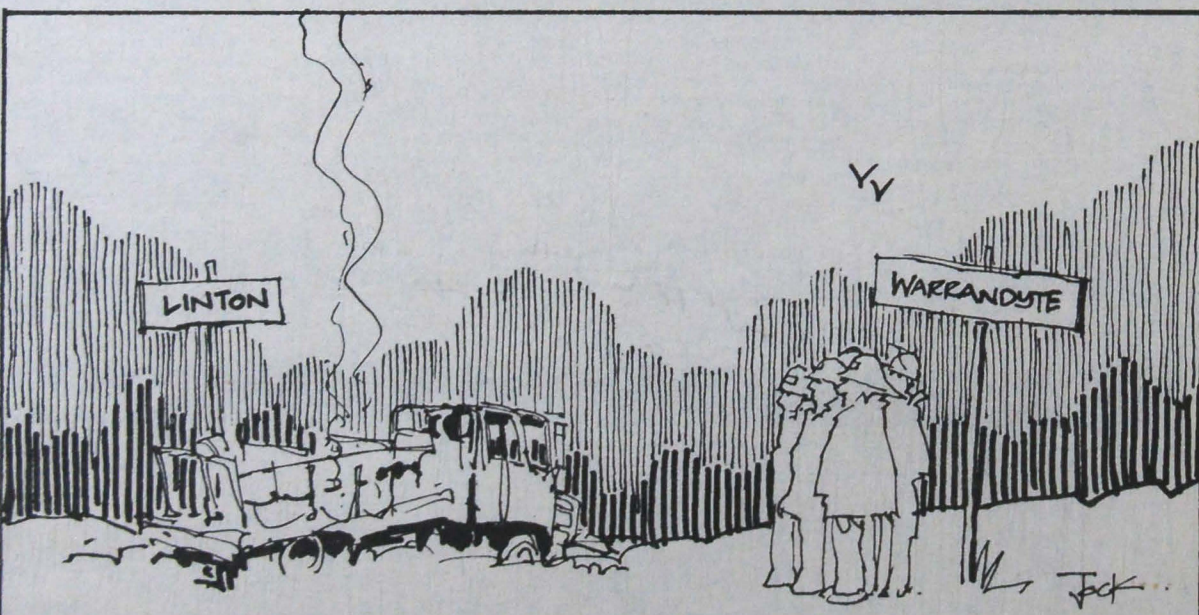
Joan MacMahon is quite excited about developments in the native garden she so lovingly nurtures at the community centre. "For the last few years I've been encouraging local native grasses," she says. "One patch I'm particularly proud of started with a few small tussocks of Poa and Kangaroo Grass. It's now enormously enlarged by self-generation, and I'm even finding other native grasses have invited themselves in. Imagine this on a larger scale and you have a picture of what parts of Warrandyte looked like before the ground plants were cleared away. To my delight, Austral Indigo has freely self-sown among the grasses and will soon poke its delicate foliage above the sward." Joan suggests you look left as you drive out of the community centre carpark. If there's a breeze blowing the scene is even more delightful, she says.

Just when we thought we had a Neil Distinguish-free Page 2 up he bobs with a cheque for \$10 to cash over the RSL Club bar for his nephew, Senior Constable Steve Farrar, who'd acquired it on a recent trip to Canada. He pocketed the 10 bucks—even though the Canadian dollar is worth only half of ours. Still, Neil was long overdue for a win.

Good heavens! Is this the end of 1998 as we know it? Afraid so. Bless you all and may your Christmas and New Year be beyond compare. And thanks for your support. We'll always wear it.



## OVER THE HILLS



## THE GRACE OF GOD

By JOCK MACNEISH

# Bushfire preparations —'best yet'

But Linton tragedy brings local fire situation into sharp focus

By CLIFF GREEN

Local CFA officials believe Warrandyte went into the last fire season better prepared than ever before.

"Early seasonal indicators, combined with the El Nino effect, pointed to a severe fire season," CFA liaison officer Jeff Adair told the *Diary*. "However, rain over January and February, coupled with the lack of strong winds contributed significantly in reducing the actual risk."

Jeff also believes that Warrandyte's response, following brigade street meetings and high involvement with Community Fireguard played a decisive role in heightening community awareness.

"And this awareness led to action," Jeff Adair said. "We observed residential properties being cleaner than previous summers and joint endeavour by neighbours in being better prepared for fire, and therefore reducing the risk."

There are now 50 Community Fireguard groups within Warrandyte. This is the highest number of Fireguard groups of any community in Victoria.

"This means Warrandyte is now better positioned to respond to the possibility of a bushfire in surrounding areas," Jeff Adair said.

"This summer we still face a similar risk, due to the below-average rainfall and a general belief that the fire season will not be as severe. Due to the nature of the environment we live in, the overall topography of the area and the complicated and poor road networks, Warrandyte remains a high-risk, fire-prone area.

"Residents must accept that every year is a dangerous year in Warrandyte."

The brigade believes that local people not involved in Fireguard should be seriously considering their plans for safeguarding themselves and their families.

"The recent successful expo at the Warrandyte fire station indicated a high level of interest and concern in fire survival within the local community," Jeff Adair said. "Up to 150 people attended the information sessions aimed at reinforcing information acquired over previous years."

"Many more people obtained equipment and observed simulated demonstrations on fire behaviour. There were a number of enquiries regarding brigade membership and we ex-

pect to gain a number of new volunteers.

"In many parts of Warrandyte, fuel reduction burns are prohibited, so a number of people collected free council fuel reduction tip passes at the expo. These are still available at Warrandyte fire station, Manningham council and Information Warrandyte.

"Perhaps the most urgent task facing residents in the immediate future is reducing fine fuels surrounding their homes. This has a significant positive effect in negating ignition by ember drop during a fire."

CFA research indicates that 80 percent of homes are ignited by

wind-blown embers landing on such "fine fuels" as dead leaves, long grass, twigs and accumulated litter.

"By reducing fine fuels, residents can alter fire behaviour and therefore increase their personal safety and preservation of their home. The importance of this simple precaution cannot be stressed enough," Jeff Adair said.

● Warrandyte CFA still offers free home safety evaluations and advice on summer preparations and can be contacted on 9844 3375 or 0419 877 574.

● A time of death and destruction—Page 13

## HOT TIPS FROM THE FIREFRONT

● Review your plan in the event of a total fire ban day. Are your children clear on what to do to protect themselves?

● If your children are at school during a local fire, they are safe and will remain under the care of school staff until the incident has passed.

● Remove door mats and place them inside or in the middle of the driveway on days of total fire ban or days of high fire danger.

● Consider how you might help assist others with special needs on days of high risk—the elderly, single parents, families with spouses at work.

● Move pets and other animals to safer locations on days of high fire risk.

● Remove winter debris from beneath your decking.

● Block your chimney over summer to reduce the entry of blowflies and embers.

● Fill gaps in timber work and wall spaces with metal flywire.

● If you cannot burn or remove fine fuels, store them well away from your home and cover them so they cannot be windblown.

● Store woollen blankets and water in your car over the summer period.

● Obtain plastic buckets, 44 gallon drums, wine barrels, drinking troughs for storage of water in the event of a water shortage.

● Purchase mops and super-soaker water pistols for the hard-to-get-to places.

● Cover your skylights with wire meshing or protective guards.



All that remained of Victoria's historic first youth hostel at Pound Bend, Warrandyte, following the 1991 bushfire. (Picture by Jan Tindale)

# To stay or go? You decide

By CLIFF GREEN

The CFA believes that deciding whether to stay or leave early on a day of high fire risk could be the most important decision anyone can make.

"By leaving early, residents have the time to make informed decisions," Jeff Adair said. "Rather than a last-minute, panic-stricken flight into uncertain conditions, people will be able to assess the situation, gather cherished possessions, take pets to safety and secure their homes with time on their side."

"The alternative could be horrific."

Late evacuation is fraught with stress, danger and uncertainties. Past fire experience

has shown that many will leave at the last moment—when smoke and fire is on their doorstep.

"By leaving late, they may be driving into the fire area. Poor visibility and an uncertainty as to where the fire is coming from could result in death. They could be involved in a motor vehicle accident due to chaotic driver behaviour or debris or fire over the road and may not know whether the road is even open."

"The roads will be crowded with emergency vehicles. These will be given priority," Jeff Adair said.

A properly prepared home, well equipped with static water supplies and firefighting tools,

will offer protection from "the primary killer—radiant heat".

"Many people have lost their lives being exposed to radiant heat. We have witnessed individuals attempting to fight fires dressed in shorts, t-shirts and thongs. This is a recipe for disaster. Those intending to stay and defend their homes should ensure they wear protective clothing."

"Radiant heat is at its most extreme during the passage of the fire front. It is at this time that people intending to stay and defend their homes must take cover inside their homes as radiant heat cannot travel through solid objects, such as walls."

Residents who have ignored

all the warnings and failed to prepare their homes and properties against fire may need to seek refuge elsewhere. This may be a well-prepared neighbour's home or, as a last resort, one of the designated council refuge and emergency relief centres.

"However, there is no guarantee that these centres will be open when expected. They may not be able to offer the degree of safety that residents anticipate."

"If people decide not to stay and defend their homes, their next best option is to leave early, before a fire starts. The key 'trigger point' in making this decision is the weather forecast: days of total fire ban

or forecasts of high temperature and high wind should be heeded."

## Approved refuges

If you decide to evacuate, do it well before the fire reaches your home. The approved refuges are:

● Box Hill Institute of TAFE, Doncaster Campus, Deep Creek Drive, East Doncaster.

● St Anne's School, Knees Road, Park Orchards.

● Whitefriars College, Park Road, Donvale.

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# In memory of a milk bar

We at the Village Milk Bar closed our doors on Remembrance Day after 10 years of service to the Warrandyte community. It is a sad ending to a milk bar that has been here since my childhood and possibly long before. The town once supported six milk bars with only one tenth the population. Only one remains.

Over the 10 years we have experienced with our customers—births, deaths, weddings, teenagers going for Learners and P plates, people moving into the town and leaving. We have also acted on more than numerous occasions as an information centre, directing lost visitors to Warrandyte landmarks.

People speak with pride that they live in Warrandyte, on the Yarra, with the bush, and large properties, but they forget to support the local traders. For some now, running out of milk or bread and/or other essentials will mean a longer trip. The convenience of popping down while the kids are getting ready for school, or while their dinners are on, is gone.

Much more than a milk bar, we undertook many community functions—issuing and receiving keys for Information Warrandyte, Neighbourhood House, the community centre, historical society, the op shop and the Lions Club tennis



courts. We tolerated being abused by people who had booked function rooms and the previous booking had not returned keys, lost keys etc. These keys were issued two and three times a day, often at the most inopportune times. Our reward for this 10 year service was one bottle of champagne and three dinners from the Lions Club.

Our regrets are to the diminishing faithful few who supported us year after year, and the many who we have done favours for and "put it on tick 'till payday" and some have not remembered to return, perhaps not realising that our narrow margin is the difference between survival or not.

Perhaps most of all, we shall miss the children who spend their 20c and 50c on lollies etc with such concentration and sincerity for their purchase, and the primary school children that are thirsty for a drink or icy pole on hot days or just a glass of water to get them home after playing on the walk from school.

Shame, shame Warrandyte residents, you are so proud of

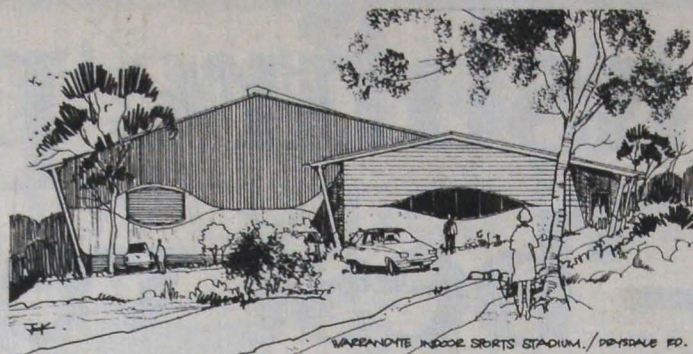
your town that you cannot see it dying around you. Shame on you for cursing the weekend visitors (tourists). While you shop elsewhere they are the ones that are keeping the remaining few in business. For you to remember and something to ponder on when your children ask you, "Why is my shop not there anymore?"

Rob Buckworth  
Yarra Street

## CLYDE & OCKER



"I remember when they used to count hundreds and thousands out by hand, Ock!"



## Credit where credit's due

In reference to an article by your reporter, Mr Clinton Grybas, on the latest developments of the multi-purpose stadium to be built at Andersons Creek Primary School. As the president of the school council at the beginning of this project, I am disappointed with Mr Grybas's continual misrepresentation of the contributions by Anderson's Creek Primary School. Every time I read an article on this project either written by Mr Grybas or reported by a spokesperson from the basketball club, the club appeared to be solely responsible for this achievement. Yes, the Warrandyte Basketball Club has been advocating for an extra stadium in Warrandyte for a number of years, albeit without much success, but it is only due

to the foresight, persistence and hard work by Andersons Creek Primary School that this project is finally going ahead. Mr Grybas's articles have relegated Andersons Creek Primary School's contribution to just the allocation of "unused" land for the stadium.

To set the record straight, the primary school has been the lead agency on this project from the beginning. The principal, Mr Des McKenzie, and the school council have been pivotal in establishing this project through countless hours of lobbying, consultations with government, both local and state and submissions to the Victorian government Community Support Fund.

Let's give credit where credit is due and not confine the

school's efforts on this project to the allocation of land. The school, with the basketball club and other community groups, is a stakeholder, however, it is the senior partner in this arrangement and it would be beneficial to the continued goodwill if Mr Grybas, in his reporting, acknowledged the school's major contribution to this worthwhile community project.

Jim Pasinis  
Mopoke Hill Road

● The Diary rejects these imputations. Clinton Grybas has been accurately and objectively reporting this campaign since 1991. We have referred to the site as "unused land" to allay community fears that playing space was being alienated for the proposed stadium.

## Thanks

I would like to sincerely thank everyone for their cards, condolences and attendance at the funeral of my loved wife Fiona (Fuzz), passed away September 1, 1998. Once again, thank you all.

Doug Gow  
East Doncaster

Fondly remembered:  
Fiona Gow



Letters to the Diary on local topics are most welcome. Real names are preferred. Pen names can only be used if actual names and addresses are included, even if not for publication.

## Collision at crash corner

There was once again another crash on the corner of Stiggant and Yarra streets this weekend (22 November) between a Commodore (Ringwood bound) and a Magna (Melbourne bound).

The incident occurred in similar conditions to the previous crash, except it was only 3pm.

Once again the Commodore lost control on the slippery surface and careered into the Magna. Again no-one was seriously injured.

Kerry Cleaves  
(by e-mail)



## Season's greetings

While the giving and receiving of gifts is one of the joys of Christmas, it sometimes seems to put more pressure on our already busy way of life. But Christmas is a very special time for many of us as we celebrate the birth of Christ. It is also a wonderful opportunity to catch up with, and enjoy, the company of loved ones and friends.

Not everyone has a loving family and we must not forget those in our community who are less fortunate. Christmas can be a time when the aged, the poor, the sick and lonely can feel very alone.

It is also important that we hold on to our hope and continue to support efforts for peace in countries where death and destruction has, unfortunately, become a way of life.

Together with my family, I extend to all residents throughout the Warrandyte electorate a safe and happy Christmas, and a New Year filled with renewed optimism.

Phil Honeywood  
MP for Warrandyte

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# Green Wedge threatened through council sackings

By FIA CLENDINNEN

Green Wedge land is under direct threat, following the recent sacking of the elected Nillumbik council.

Planning Minister Rob Maclellan's recent push for an amendment to Nillumbik's planning scheme was sharply criticised by Kahn Franke, chairman of the Green Wedge Protection Group.

Mr Franke said Mr Maclellan was revealing himself as "pandering to vested interests".

He said it now appeared landowners whose development proposals were rejected by their local councils would "eventually get their subdivision allowed" if they put enough pressure on the minister. The controversial amendment refers to six hectares in the Green Wedge on the edge of Diamond Creek.

Earlier this year Nillumbik councillors voted without dis-

sent against further development in the area.

"We felt very strongly that Diamond Creek township should maintain its township space and that there not be seen to be a link, in terms of housing, that would then make Diamond Creek a suburb.

In other words that it was important to keep some land between Eltham and Diamond Creek," Margaret Jennings, one of the sacked Nillumbik councillors, told the *Diary*.

"What concerns me is that we are not getting the support of the state government in backing up our municipal strategic statement and our planning scheme," Mr Franke said. "The community worked together, they came up with the municipal strategic statement (MSS) they wanted and they came up with their planning scheme. And the land in Dia-

mond Creek was knocked

back, it was decided it wasn't suitable for subdivision. And yet once again Mr Maclellan steps in and over-rides it."

The minister's proposed amendment has alarmed other local conservation groups.

Friends of Warrandyte State Park were involved in the MSS consultation process, but secretary Cathy Willis said she now wondered if this hadn't been a waste of time.

"It seems to me a bit ridiculous that we can go through this whole process and then it gets turned on its head. If you make some rules you have got to stick to them. It shouldn't be that anyone, whether it's the owner, the minister or whatever can go against all that expert advice and go ahead and subdivide."

Ms Willis also pointed out that although the six hectares under review were not within the Warrandyte area, a change

in the planning scheme had disturbing local implications.

"These little incremental bits of development are a real worry. Simply, any threat to the Green Wedge is a serious threat to the whole area."

Doug Seymour, former president of the Warrandyte Environment League, expressed similar concerns. "It's always worrying to see a minister over-ruling decisions of the local council. And it does appear on the face of it to be a selected erosion of the Green Wedge, which could be precedent forming."

However a spokeswoman from the Department of Infrastructure defended Mr Maclellan's position.

"A panel will be appointed and the panel will report to the minister. The minister will consider the panel's report in making his decision, but he has no predetermined view."

# Nine councillors for Nillumbik?

By FIA CLENDINNEN

Nillumbik's administrator has recommended to the Minister for Local Government that Nillumbik be served by nine councillors after council elections in March next year.

Late last month administrator Don Gillies announced the results of the survey on electoral options which was sent to all households in the shire.

A majority of the community favoured option A, consisting of five ward councillors and four at-large (municipality-wide) councillors. The existing ward boundaries remain unchanged.

Mr Gillies said, "The strength of sentiment for option A made my decision easy". But it is the minister who will finally choose Nillumbik's new electoral system.

"Mr Maclellan will consider the commissioner's recommendation and make a decision in the coming weeks," a spokeswoman for the Office of Local Government said.

Robert Marshall, sacked shire president, told the *Diary* he was delighted with the results of the survey.

"Option A is not an ideal option, but it's still by far the best of those that were offered. I think it's the best because it provides for the largest possible number of councillors. And I'm very pleased that wards have been maintained."

Mr Marshall said he strongly supported the existing ward system because he believed it made for a good relationship between residents and councillors.

"If there are no wards we are in danger of ending up without representation from all

parts of the municipality, so that there's a great danger that local government would cease to be local. The major strength of local government is its local nature and its close proximity to the voters."

Mr Marshall stressed the importance of the upcoming council elections.

"Many times I have said, 'this is the most important election of all time'. But this time it really is, because we have been sacked. There is no valid reason for the sacking of the council and we can only assume that we have been sacked because of our obstruction to development of the Green Wedge. And the government has therefore called an election."

"They will listen very clearly to the result of this election. If a majority of people say they wish to see the Green Wedge subdivided that is what will happen. And if a majority say that the Green Wedge should remain an exciting non-urban part of greater Melbourne well into the future, then that is what will happen."

Mr Marshall said there was certain to be a large field of candidates at Nillumbik's next council elections and he warned the community to choose carefully.

"All candidates will say they support the Green Wedge, because they know they can't be elected if they state they do not support it."

"But it's a matter of what sort of support. If the community votes for a majority of candidates who will subdivide their land down to one acre or five acre blocks, then the Green Wedge is gone."

Mr Marshall said he had every confidence in Nillumbik residents.

"The community has shown on many, many occasions that it supports the concept of the Green Wedge as being vital to the future of greater Melbourne. And I therefore firmly believe the community will once again state that at the ballot box."

But Dr John Jago, president of the Victorian Local Government Association, cautioned that having two kinds of councillors, ward councillors and at-large councillors, was far from perfect.

Dr Jago, who is also a councillor at Wellington shire in Gippsland, said, "The problem with the system is that you get two classes of councillors, a first class and a second class. The municipality-wide councillors will have relief from having to be at the beck and call of their residents. They will be able to give their minds more to policy issues. But the ward representatives, who will have been left with all the nitty gritty of rate-payers' and residents' concerns, will be seen to be inferior."

He said there was already evidence of this trend in other councils with the two-tier system of councillors. "You ask any Melbourne City councillor who's a ward councillor and it's acknowledged their work load is considerably higher than the councillors-at-large. And it's a cause of real friction."

Cr Dr Jago strongly recommended that, "about two years down the track, the council and the community evaluate the system, as to whether they are going to continue it at the end of the term. Because you may have enough experience at the end of two years to know whether it works for you or whether it doesn't."

SO — !

By SYD TUNN



## EPA claims new freeway risks Green Wedge

The Environment Protection Authority has declared that the proposed Scoresby Freeway is a threat to the Green Wedge.

In its submission to panel hearings on the Scoresby Transport Corridor environmental effects statement, the EPA has stated that "environmentally sensitive" areas "namely the Nillumbik Green Wedge" will be threatened by the transport pressures of the Scoresby Freeway development.

The EPA notes that the environmental effects statement supports urban planning solutions which require public transport servicing, but says the EES has failed to investigate this option.



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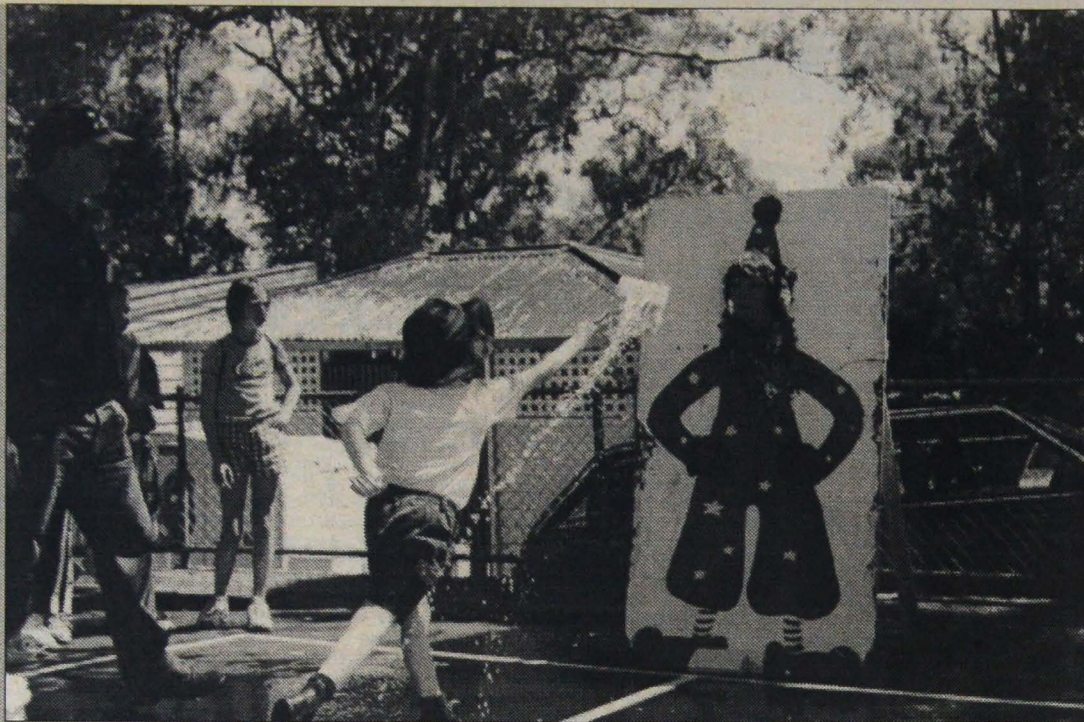
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# All the fun of the fete

The community turned out on a day of perfect weather to support Warrandyte Primary School at their Christmas fete last month.

Home-made preserves, candy floss, white elephant stalls, pony rides and lots of other attractions combined to give the school a "very good" result. BRONWYN ELMORE went along and took these pictures.



MANNINGHAM

### CULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

#### Expressions of Interest

Council is calling for expressions of interest to establish a Cultural Advisory Committee.

The Committee will provide advice to Council on matters concerning cultural development, and facilitate communication between Council, users, and the community concerning strategic planning, development, marketing and evaluation of cultural development in the City of Manningham.

The scope of the Committee is broad and will encompass the following areas:

- cultural policy and strategic planning
- cultural programming and community grants program
- collections management and acquisition program
- cultural facilities
- cultural community organisations
- access, education and equity to cultural opportunities
- cultural industry and individual artists
- heritage and environment

Membership is sought on the basis of broad interest, understanding and commitment to cultural development, in addition to specific expertise and interest in at least one of the areas.

For further information and a copy of the Terms of Reference please call Ingrid Birkner, Customer Service Officer, on 9840 9393.

Please indicate your interest by completing and returning this form to the Customer Service Officer, Cultural & Leisure Services Unit, Manningham City Council, PO Box 1, Doncaster 3108.

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MANNINGHAM

### DRAFT DOMESTIC ANIMALS STRATEGY

The Council and the Domestic Animals Steering Committee have developed a draft domestic animals strategy in consultation with the community.

The draft strategy will be on public exhibition from 17 November to the 17th December, 1998 and Council invites submissions on the strategy. People who wish to make a submission on the strategy need to forward their written submission to the Manager, Health and Local Laws, Manningham City Council, PO Box 1, Doncaster 3108 no later than the 17th December 1998.

The Committee will consider submissions received on the strategy prior to recommending to Council a strategy for adoption.

The draft strategy aims to:

- promote responsible dog and cat ownership;
- provide for the welfare and safety of dogs and cats;
- ensure public safety and enhance the amenity and environment; harness the benefits of dog and cat ownership; and
- ensure that the expenditure of registration fees addresses domestic animal issues.

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Off on his first adventure: Corey looks down on his newly discovered, natural world. (Picture by Chris Pryor)

## How many koalas?

By RACHEL BAKER

There is a "healthy population" of koalas in Warrandyte and surrounding areas, according to Koala Count '98, an annual survey of our local koala population, which was conducted last month.

The count found 34 koalas in Warrandyte State Park, which, although representing a healthy level, is the largest number the park can support, and it is important that no more koalas are relocated to this area, according to ranger-in-charge, David Ferrar.

Koala Watch, operated by Wonga Park environmentalist Julie Pryor, also conducted a survey—in suburban areas over two weeks—which found 19 koalas.

The state park survey was organised by Parks Victoria and Friends of Warrandyte State Park, with help from Eastern TAFE stu-

dents and other community volunteers.

"Everyone lined up together and walked through their allotted sections," Brenda Hunter of FOWSP told the *Diary*. "Koalas can be very hard to see, so that way we covered all their possible positions."

The greatest number were found in Pound Bend, which had 24 koalas. Gold Memorial and Blue Tongue Walk both had two each, and Stane Brae had one, while no koalas were found in Mount Lofty or the Bend of Isles.

In all, Koala Watch surveyed 15 locations, covering areas such as Mitcham, Tremont, North Ringwood and Wonga Park, with the greatest number found along Mullum Mullum Creek in Donvale, where there was a male, female, and joey koala.

The state park survey showed that the koala population is "holding its own", Brenda Hunter said. The animals

are strong and healthy, and there is no sign of disease.

However, there has been some damage to the trees—mainly stripping of leaves—which means "we have to look carefully at the treatment of the area," Brenda said.

Current threats to koalas are encroaching urbanisation, especially the possibility of a freeway extension through the area, and cats and dogs, which are a danger when their owners do not contain them.

Fine weather greeted the surveyors and it was "a great day". The only improvement could have been more people joining in. "The more community support, the better," Brenda said.

Although the koala count is over for another 12 months, residents can do their bit for the local koala population by reporting any koala sightings to the Warrandyte State Park, telephone 9844 2659, or Koala Watch, on 9722 1117.

## Free Corey!

By RACHEL BAKER

After a year of cuddles, milk formula, aviaries and hand-fed gumleaves, Corey the Koala has been released back into the bush.

Corey was found near the chapel on Yarra Street in October last year. Julie Pryor, who runs the shelter in Wonga Park that adopted him, estimates that he was around seven months old and, because he was found on the ground with no mother in sight, he had to be taken in and looked after until he was mature enough for release.

"When I first took him in he was on my body (in a backpack) 24 hours a day," Julie said.

As he developed, Corey spent time in an aviary inside the house, then he moved outside, until virtually all human contact ceased.

"He would sit out in his aviary, looking out into the bush, and he

would call out at night, and pace up and down," Julie explained.

He also started scratching and biting, which, believe it or not, pleased Julie, because it indicated that he was becoming independent and aggressive, and would be able to defend himself in the wild.

Those signs, along with the fact that Corey had reached a mature age (about 18 months), showed that he was ready for release.

Julie admits being sad when she let him go, but she was pleased to see him independent and free.

Corey has been micro-chipped, so he can be identified if he shows up again.



## Information Warrandyte takes out tourism award

Information Warrandyte has received an award for its role in promoting tourism in the area. Presented by Mr Keith Richardson from the Marketing Specialists, on behalf of the Small Business Network Group, the award recognises "an outstanding contribution to small business in Manningham".

The bureau is now one of seven finalists from various categories for an overall award to be announced in early December.

"Information Warrandyte has always provided tourist and community information as part of its service as a Citizens Advice Bureau, but only on weekdays from 10am to 4pm," Joyce Wilks told the *Diary*.

In October 1995 the Warrandyte Business Association applied to Manningham council

for 12 months funding to keep the bureau open at weekends and on public holidays with a tourism officer.

The position was funded under the Local Enhancement Scheme with half the money the coming from Manningham city council and half from the Warrandyte Business Association.

The funding was approved but did not become available until two years later.

"After interviewing several applicants, one of our volunteers, Julie Cooper, was appointed tourism worker and commenced in August 1997," Joyce Wilks said.

"She worked very successfully in association with WBA and local traders".

Over a period of 125 days during the previous 12 months, In-

formation Warrandyte had answered the requests of 5,468 people, which resulted in 8,319 enquiries about Warrandyte.

Presenting the award, Keith Richardson told the gathering, "This group of volunteers needs to be encouraged and recognised for their efforts."

Ironically, funding for the weekend tourism information service has finished and the service has ceased.

"All those who benefit should provide some funding to keep this office open," Mr Richardson said.

Cr Patricia Young receives the award from Keith Richardson on behalf of Information Warrandyte volunteers Ron Golding, Julie Cooper, Pat Adlam, and Louise Joy. (Picture by Jan Tindale)



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Family fun day at Yarra Warra kindergarten, North Warrandyte.

## North kinder's good news

A late surge of enrolments at Yarra Warra Pre-School means there will be two four-year-old groups at the kindergarten in 1999.

Outgoing president Ms Francesca Longfield told the *Diary* there were 34 four-year-olds already enrolled and 25

three-year-olds.

"We extended one session for the older children to three and a half hours and it filled immediately because of the demands on working mothers," she said.

The pre-school offers enrichment classes after normal ses-

sions and a music program provided by Warrandyte Primary School.

It has recently won a \$6500 capital works grant from Nillumbik shire to build a foyer for baby pushers and coats. This will also improve the centre's safety.

## Dumped kittens worry vet

By RACHEL BAKER

Two kittens were dumped in as many days within close proximity of each other in Warrandyte late last month, pre-empting the usual post-Christmas spate, and prompting a call for people to "ask first" if considering giving pets as presents. Both were taken to Dr Derek Fairley's veterinary practice in West End.

It appears certain that the kittens were dumped rather than running away, as there was no sign of a search for the missing animals, and, says Mrs Kerri Fairley, the veterinary nurse at the West End practice, "kittens don't run far".

The dumpings have started much earlier than usual this year, as they usually peak during the holidays after Christmas, Mrs Fairley said.

The high number of gifts that become unwanted and dumped pets has driven Mrs Fairley to "hate and loathe Christmas and Easter".

She advises anyone considering giving an animal as a Christmas present to first ask the recipient if they want it.

Her husband, Dr Fairley, joined her in urging unwilling pet owners to surrender their animals to proper institutions, such as the RSPCA, the Blue Cross, and the Cat Protection Society, rather than dumping them.

When cats are dumped they will either die a miserable death of starvation and fear, or survive to become feral, killing wildlife and procreating.

Mrs Fairley said animal dumping is "a major problem" which is occurring in all areas. The best way to solve the problem, she believes, is to have all non-breeding pets de-sexed, which is an issue she thinks should be legislated.

Both of the kittens are being nursed back to health at the veterinary practice, and potential owners are welcome to come and see them.

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presents

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MARY CAROLINE AUMANN

# Tireless toiler in the orchard of life

By HAZEL HOLLY

**M**ARY was born in Warrandyte on May 26, 1910, the youngest child of Friedrich Wilhelm (Bill) and Maria Catherina (Mary nee Pump). Her brothers and sister were Herbert, Eric and Ada.

Mary worked at home on their orchard situated at the corner of Tindals and Harris Gully Roads where her tasks were many and varied—from fruit picking and packing to carrying out a billy of tea with sandwiches or cakes to the workmen for morning and afternoon tea, known then as “taking out the lunch”.

Her life centred around this property, her family, her church and her friends.

Mary would have liked to have been a school teacher, however she put her teaching skills to great use becoming a Sunday school teacher at St Philips Church of England, continuing in this role for 44 years.

While Mary was at school, then known as Warrandyte State School, she learnt to play the piano and was later able to teach music to pupils in Warrandyte and Doncaster East, travelling to their homes by bicycle or pony and jinker—this also led to Mary playing the organ for Sunday school, also for church when required.

After the death of their brother Eric in 1946, Mary and her sister Ada learnt to drive. Their first vehicle was a 1926 Chev truck—with fruit cases in the back for seats. Many a child had a ride to Sunday school or were taken on a family picnic.

When Mary's sister-in-law (Herbert's wife) died in 1951, Mary and Ada took on the task of caring for the younger members of Bobbie's family, creating a loving home for nephews Richard and Barry,



who lived there until they married.

Mary was an avid reader of mystery novels and also enjoyed doing crossword puzzles. She was a keen Bible student, with a large library of reference books.

Mary's niece Gwen Mahoney, in her home

at Whittlesea, had a room known as Mary's room, and it was here she enjoyed many a visit during the last years of her life.

Former Sunday school students were amongst the large congregation of family and friends who attended the funeral service for Mary, conducted by Rev Drew Mellor at St Philips Deep Creek Anglican Church on November 10, 1998. He spoke of Mary's strong faith in God.

Mary had formerly held the positions of secretary and treasurer at St Philips and was a foundation member of the Ladies' Guild where she was loved and held in high regard by all.

Nephew Barry spoke on behalf of the Aumann family, telling of their love for a wonderful lady. He concluded with the words, “Some may say that Mary never travelled far, but Mary's journey through life touched and influenced many people”.

Great-niece Jenny provided a lighter moment. After speaking on behalf of the younger generation, about the love they too had for Mary, she produced a well-worn tin containing sweets. This she handed around the congregation, inviting them, as Mary had so often done, to take a lolly from the tin. Somewhere one could feel Mary nodding in approval.

The cortege travelled from St Philips to Warrandyte cemetery via Harris Gully Road, past the home she loved, and following the route she had walked so many times from home to school all those years ago.

Mary will be remembered as a person with a sharp wit, with a wonderful memory that could recall times past. In some ways an “old fashioned lady”, she was never afraid of progress or new ideas.

# Artists' work set in stone

By RACHEL BAKER

One of Warrandyte's best-known landmarks and tourist spots has clocked up a quarter of a century.

The Stonehouse, the quintessentially Warrandyte building on Ringwood-Warrandyte Road, which sells art and craft of all descriptions, turned 26 earlier this year.

The original group of eight potters moved into the stone building on 24 June 1972, which was built in the 1940s as a housekeeper's dwelling, before being used as a local milkbar and eventually the art gallery.

The group of artists pooled their works and shared the tasks involved in running the shop. It was part of the Stonehouse philosophy to have the artists in the gallery, to meet customers and explain the process of the art's production.

“Some of the members had been able to combine their potting with their duties at Stonehouse, teaching and raising their own families,” Joy van der Heyden, a current member of Stonehouse, told the *Diary*.

Two of the original members, Dulcie Herd and Penelope Cearns, are part of the current group, which includes 15 potters and one textile artist.



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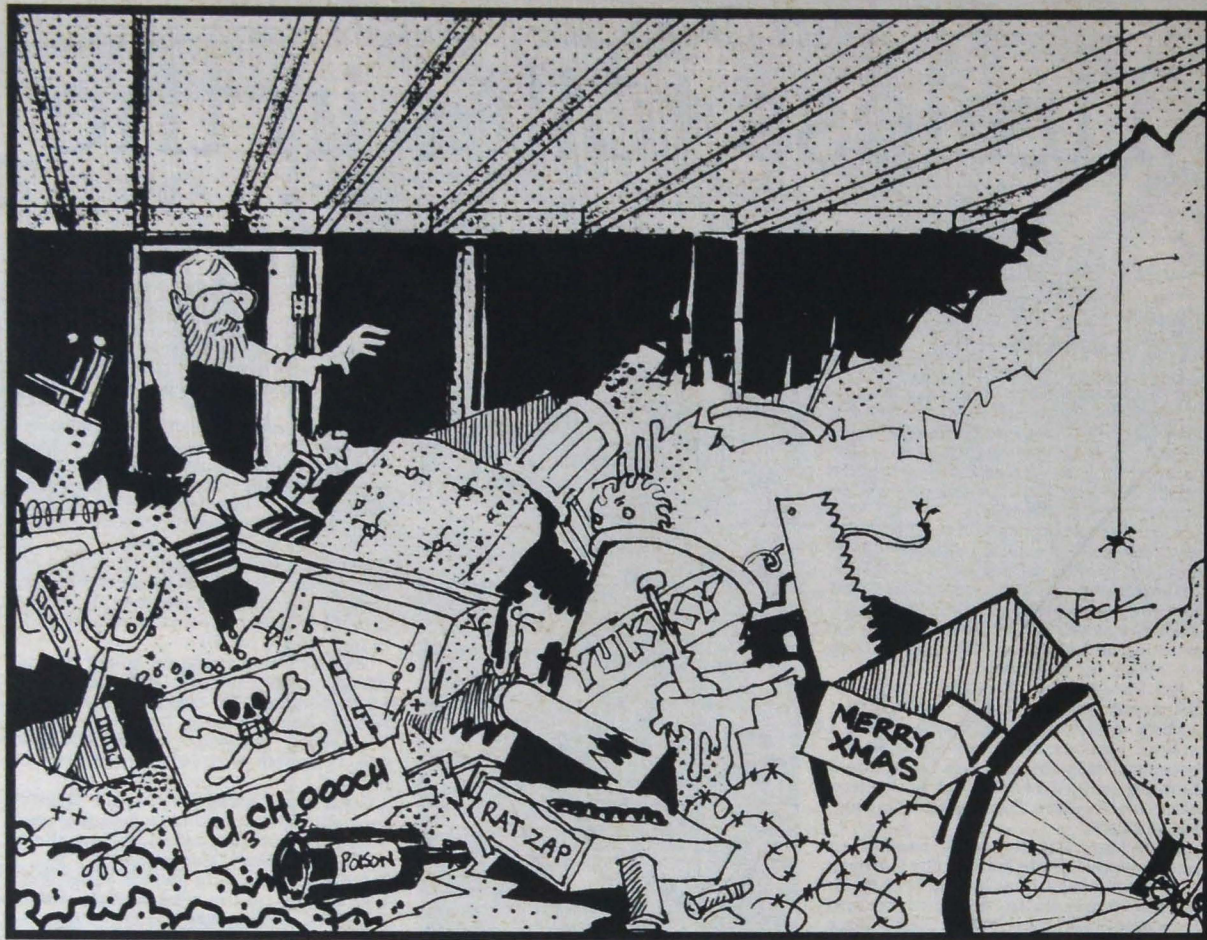
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# Going underground, on Christmas terror mission

66 **I**T was the night before Christmas and all through the house, nothing was stirring, not even a mouse." Bollocks! Often, on the night before Christmas, all hell breaks loose. Not metaphorically, but literally.

I remember when we had Smalls, that Christmas Eve was fraught with complications. There were presents to be rescued from hiding places, without the Smalls seeing them. This was no mean feat when the present the old-man-in-red was going to bring was anything big like a doll's house or a bicycle or anything that had loose bits that jingled, clattered and generally made sleeping difficult for uptight kids.



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**"...carols about peace, joy and goodwill... and all you can think about is mass extermination."**

built, it was at the time when chlordane cocktails were the rage. Now we know how dangerous those treatments are, I wonder why the UN are so concerned about Iraq's chemical weapons of mass destruction when a handful of the soil from under our house discreetly dropped into the air conditioning system of the Pentagon would probably be more dangerous than an Exocet missile or a busload of armed and suicidal fundamentalists.

As well as the lurking chemical quicksand, there was an added complication. When we had the house extended, we sensibly had an access door installed but we didn't have the light switch moved. Consequently, a midnight mission under the house necessitated a

leap of faith from the outside door to the light switch, now a cut-lunch journey from the perimeter of the house.

Imagine the scene. You've been out shopping at one of those shopping malls because you've left everything until the last minute. Fortunately, the big presents were sensibly purchased a month before and are safely stored in the chemical bunker, wrapped in a camouflage of old blankets and sheets.

You arrive home in a less than Tiny Tim frame of mind. Every radio station has been playing carols and hymns about peace, joy and goodwill to all men, and all you can think about is mass extermination.

The car is stinking hot and just as you turn into the driveway you remember you have forgotten Herself's present. With only 40 minutes to go you crunch the gears into reverse and, in a cloud of ungraded road dust, you point the car in the direction of the Scrooge Shopping Complex and plant the foot.

By seven o'clock, all you want is for it to be December 27. Instead, it's fun time! The kids have made you promise to help them wrap all their presents you have graciously first bought and Herself reminds you that you've promised to attend a neighbour's Christmas party. And you still haven't got the presents from under the house, nor have you any idea when you can get them.

Herself, the kids and you ring the neighbour's bell slightly unsure whether crying and

threats are coming from the happy hosts or some macabre TV show.

The red-eyed hostess ushers you into a Christmas set from Mad Max Noel. When the other guests arrive there is first a little tension when all the mothers want the families to share the real spirit of Christmas by watching Carols By Candlelight whilst the fathers slink off to the kitchen and the kids argue that they'd rather watch a pirated version of The Return Of Star Wars.

By 11.30pm you all return home. The kids are still hyper-active and are pleading to stay up all night to catch Santa eating the biscuits and drinking the Scotch. Herself calms them and manages to get them to bed and asleep.

It's then that the trip down under is inevitable. Slightly staggered from too much practising to be Santa, you unlock the access door and stare into pitch blackness. Between you and the light switch are unmarked stumps, rubbish and polluted soil.

The Smalls must have been very tired and a visiting bullock driver blanched. I've been assured otherwise, but in my mind I'm sure I yelled out "Merry Christmas" as I hit the first obstacle.

But that was then. Now, Christmas Eve is quieter. Yet, at times, I wish that there could be a little more than a mouse stirring, not under the house, but in my soul.

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# A lily, lost from the wild, goes bushland walkabout

**C**HRISTMAS shopping is not something I particularly enjoy. But I had a couple of spare hours and could postpone it no longer. So here I was driving into the car park of Eastland shopping centre.

The first hurdle was finding somewhere to park. Treat it like a game, I thought, just follow the arrows and play musical parking spots. Isn't it funny how aggressive some people can be when stressed or in competition with one another—even if the prize is only an empty space? Simpler to park elsewhere and walk, but I prefer to do my walking in the bush. With patient resignation, I turned up the radio and joined in the game. And I won. Eventually.

Having claimed my prize, I headed for the shops.

Despite being a relatively new shopping complex, there was nothing new or innovative about the landscaping. It was all regulation sort of stuff. Pairs of palms astride a grand entrance, and in raised beds, forming a guard of honour at their feet, regimented rows of agapanthus. I mentally shuddered. These must be one of the most planted plants in gardens throughout Melbourne, including Warrandyte where fountainous clumps line driveways and fencelines of old established homes and some new ones too. I loathe them.

What is it about these summer-flowering, South African lilies that makes them liked by so many? Is it their shiny strap-like leaves or their blue and white pom-pom flowers held aloft on long stalks, or is it their reputation as a fire retardant? Well, they might perhaps slow down a smouldering, low level grass



## NATURE

By **PAT COUPAR**  
 Drawn by **MELANIE COUPAR**

fire, but no amount of 'aggies' could hold back a rampaging Warrandyte bushfire.

One of the reasons for the ubiquitous status of agapanthus must be their ability to grow in any type of soil, in sun or shade, even in competition with tree roots. And the key to their survival; masses of fleshy roots which enable them to withstand long periods of drought. The tubers multiply readily, giving rise to new individuals. Hence the problem in places like Warrandyte where they have the habit of stepping out of line and going walkabout in the bush, trying to integrate with the native vegetation.

While researching this article I uncovered a botanical tragedy. In a book written in 1976, titled *Wildflowers Of South Africa*, I read: "These handsome flowers, which were once prolific and commonly found on a walk in the countryside, even a generation ago, are now seldom encountered in their natural habitat except in inaccessible places". It went on to say that the plants have been cultivated in nurseries, hybridised, and are commonly grown in gardens all over the country. A situation not dissimilar to our own cootamundra wattle, an immensely popular garden tree, but seriously threatened in the small area near Wagga Wagga in New South Wales, which is its natural habitat.

As if by magic, the glass doors slid open before me. I crossed



the threshold into the human environment and was immediately confronted by a labyrinth of terraces and malls, and assaulted by a confusion of sounds and smells. Hundreds of people, young and old, singles, couples and groups, going purposefully about their own business, seemingly oblivious to each other. The analogy sprang to mind, of being trapped inside an ants' nest.

Some kind of homing instinct led me to the book shops where I did most of my shopping. For

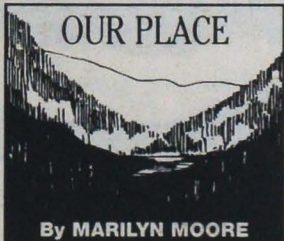
a while I withdrew to a world of words and pictures. Finally, satisfied with my purchases, I made my escape—out through the glass doors—leaving behind the conditioned air and the manufactured light. I passed the palms and stifled a ridiculously juvenile urge to give the fingers-up gesture to the 'aggies'. But I was feeling light-hearted. The sun, giver of light and life, was at my back and I was going home, returning to the sanity of my bushland refuge in Warrandyte.

# School was home away from home

**A**FTER years of treading the well-beaten track, our last journey up the hill to the old primary school will take place with mixed feelings.

It really does seem like only yesterday that we stepped into that playground for the first time. Yet it's hard to believe that so much has been squashed into eight short years, the eight years during which our two little tiddlers somehow grew into teenagers. It's all been a huge adventure, each day a tangled web of excitement, achievement, drama and fun peppered with moments of trepidation and myriad little grizzles. Or sometimes big grizzles, if they're homework-related and the person in question would rather be up a tree or watching *The Bill*.

Some dramas, like the first day at school, turned out to be largely imaginary. Others caught us napping, like the time when our first child's wonderfully kind and gorgeous prep teacher got married. Our three-year-old adored this teacher, and a romantic wedding did nothing to lessen the enchantment. Nothing, that is, until it became evident that the



## OUR PLACE

By **MARILYN MOORE**

teacher had changed her surname. What tears and tantrums we suffered!

At this point I realised that there are things which can never be explained to some children, and I was sincerely thankful that I was not a teacher.

It was a sentiment which arose with increasing frequency. Drumming the three Rs into a roomful of rowdy ratbags is not the only challenge facing teachers these days.

For parents, primary school is certainly not a black hole where kids vanish on weekdays. It's a second home, a base where one gets to spend countless hours supervising computer studies, listening to reading, sewing costumes, typing stories, working on canteen, school committees,

gardening and maintenance, sports sessions, concert rehearsals, going on excursions, and providing everything from musical, choreographic and building expertise to last-minute delights for afternoon teas and fundraising stalls. Some parents spend nearly as much time at school as their kids do.

Now suddenly it will all be over. If the past few years are anything to go by, the last day will be an emotional occasion for most.

By lunchtime the Grade 6s will be huddled in clusters, hysterically sobbing. Many will be wearing school uniform for the first time in years, now autographed boldly in texta. Teachers will be hugged and hugged again. More tears. Even parents will be surreptitiously wiping away the odd trickle. The Grade 5s and little "buddies" usually join in, overcome by the prospect of losing their mentors. Girls and boys alike weep uncontrollably, and many of them remain for hours after the final bell.

Two years ago when we first crossed this threshold, I arrived rather nervously at the school gate at pick-up time, expecting a distraught offspring. But in

the midst of the mass hysteria stood a rather perplexed twelve-year-old with not a tear in sight.

"What's wrong with them?" he wondered. "Aren't they pleased it's the holidays?"

Well, yes, we are pleased it's the holidays. And we're pleased to be moving on, but thankful for the wonderfully creative and stimulating experience our kids have had at this school. We're especially appreciative of the huge effort made by various teachers over the years, despite the chaotic regime.

However it hasn't all been wonderful. My fervent hope is that the professional and ethical standards of primary education can survive the combined onslaughts of competition, under-resourcing and increased demands on teachers. Over-competitiveness seems presently to be leading us down the path of favouritism and selective education, which is very sad to see.

We're going to have to turn over a new leaf ourselves next year. The morning deadline will be at the bus-stop rather than at the school gate, so there is no way we can continue our naughty habit of arriving just after the bell!

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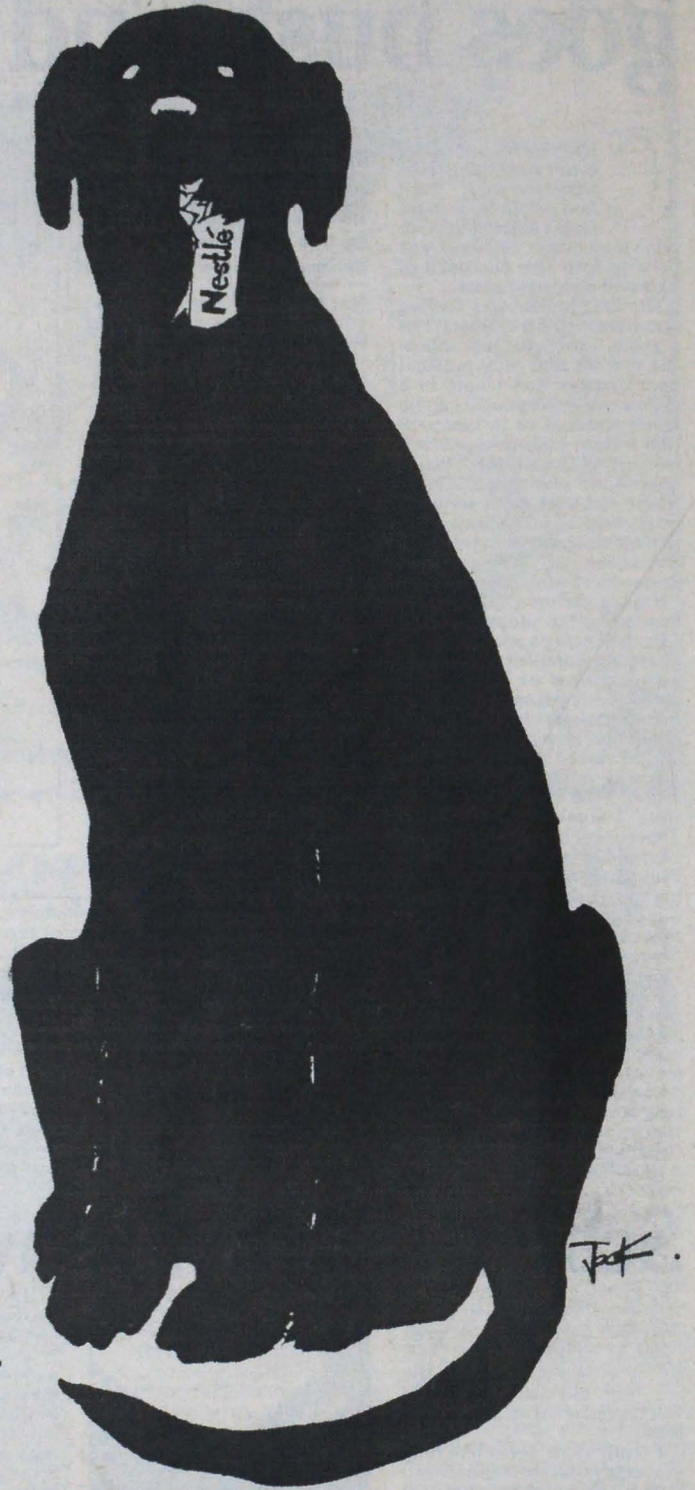
# Tantalising tale of a chocaholic dog

By **DOREEN BURGE**

**O**UR black labrador Bess (her real name was Gaydandy Florence CDX), was born on October 15, 1980. We had her put to sleep at home in her beanbag on September 15, 1993—just a month short of her 13th birthday. Derek Fairley, our vet, had diagnosed a probable brain tumour. Bess was only sick for a very short time as my husband and I made the decision to have her put down before she became too incapacitated. We have never regretted that decision—the ease of her death, with Derek, Graham and myself sitting with her, was a fitting end for a wonderful dog. Her final meal, not long before Derek arrived, was chicken breast and chocolate. In true labrador fashion, she had not lost her appetite, although the actual act of eating was slow and laborious. After Derek left, Bess's body lay in her beanbag just as if she were asleep while poor Graham dug her grave in the pouring rain. We buried her later in the day with flowers and a large block of chocolate between her front paws. Why the chocolate? Well, that's what this story is about. Bess was a chocoholic. As I was blissfully unaware of the dangers of chocolate for dogs at the time, it's a wonder she survived as long as she did. I taught at a kindergarten which Bess considered her second home. She had come to work with me two or three times a week since she was four months old. She was wonderful with the children and taught many fearful ones to trust and enjoy at least one dog. Her favourite place was in the large dolls' bed where she'd curl up on the foam rubber mattress. The children

would cover her with blankets and on several occasions she was so soundly asleep and so well covered that I got out to my car to leave before I remembered her. One Christmas, in the usual fashion, I was given a huge amount of chocolate by the kindergarten children. It was all packed into a box which I brought home and left in a spare room. We always left Bess inside when we went out at night to supposedly guard the house. On this occasion we returned home to find a bloated and very thirsty Bess. She had eaten all the chocolates: a handmade chocolate tree, several boxes of assorted chocolates, after dinner mints—which she'd removed from their envelopes—and even a mug full of handmade chocolates, though her snout didn't allow her to reach the last couple. The mess in the room was incredible—wrapping paper strewn everywhere and the non-chocolate presents discarded all over the place. In my ignorance I wasn't concerned about the effect on Bess, only annoyed that I'd missed out on enjoying the chocolate myself! Bess's next chocolate eating episode also involved the kindergarten. She had accompanied me to work on a hot December day. After the children left, I decided to do some shopping. It was too hot to leave Bess in the car while I shopped, so I left her in the kindergarten as I had to return to prepare for the approaching Christmas festivities. We had sewn crepe paper stockings to use as lolly bags, and each one had a child's name on it in glitter. The children had then decorated them beautifully. As it was only days until the big nativity play and Christmas party, I had filled the lolly bags and

pinned 25 of them to a display board. When I returned after my shopping, Bess had managed to jump up and pull the lowest six bags down off the board, and after ripping the crepe paper apart, had devoured the entire contents: jubes, snakes, clinkers, milk bottles, freckles, bananas and buddies—all children's favourite lollies. That was bad enough, but when I ventured into the storeroom I discovered she had found the box containing the 25 lolly bags belonging to the other group of children. By that stage she had obviously tired of the chewy, sticky varieties and had chosen only her favourites, the chocolate ones. Half-chewed jubes, milk bottles and bananas lay scattered among the crepe paper remnants, but there was not one chocolate remaining. Bess got into trouble of course, but what was the use? It was my own fault again. The children were horrified when I sheepishly informed them the next day. In their eyes, the dog they loved and trusted had committed the ultimate sin. I'll never forget the total silence that followed my admission as the reality of Bess's crime sank in. At home time that day, I'm sure every parent was greeted with, "Do you know what Bess did?" Of course I had to replace the lollies and the children had to remake their stockings, but it did provide lots of discussion among the children and parents. I'd finally learnt my lesson. Never again did I leave any chocolate, however well concealed, within Bess's reach. But her appetite for it never waned and she was always able to hear chocolate being unwrapped in the pantry, no matter how deeply she was sleeping. How, then, could we have denied her her addiction in her final hour?



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# A time of death and destruction

By RICHARD WARWICK

**Y**ET another summer season is upon us, once more bringing with it the threat of fire.

There have been many fires in the Warrandyte area over the years, but by far the worst were those of 1939 and 1962. In January 1962, fires burned through large areas of the surrounding bush, 50 homes were destroyed and two men died.

After the major losses that occurred in 1939, in bushfire terms it was a relatively quiet period up until the early 1960s in the Warrandyte area. Whilst there were serious fires in other parts of the state, there was nothing of any major consequence in the Warrandyte area.

During the period after the 1939 fires, the Country Fire Authority was formed and a major effort occurred, building up resources to fight fires in bushland areas.

In the Warrandyte district, brigades had been formed at Warrandyte, South Warrandyte and North Warrandyte. The brigades of the time were nowhere near as well-equipped as those of today. Warrandyte brigade had a CFA truck and a formal "turn-out" system, whereas the North and South brigades only had beaters and knapsacks and an informal system of turning out to fires. North Warrandyte had a "Furphy Tank" to provide a limited water supply for the firefighters.

As is often the case before a major fire, the countryside in

many parts of Victoria was tinder-dry. January 1962 was no exception.

On Sunday, January 14, a fire started in scrub near Christmas Hills. At about the same time, fires began at Yarra Glen, Healesville and The Basin in the Dandenongs. With all these fires going at the same time, the CFA's limited resources were fully stretched. The Warrandyte truck and crew were dispatched to the Dandenongs on the Sunday and worked there for a while, before being transferred to St Andrews to fight the fires there. They eventually returned to Warrandyte on the Tuesday, just in time to fight the fires here—obviously, the firefighters were exhausted.

The fire that had started at Christmas Hills on the Sunday had gradually built up and burned large areas of Pantom Hill and Kangaroo Ground and with strong northerly winds behind it, was very quickly heading towards Warrandyte.

It came into Warrandyte from the north and witnesses at the time noted that it had an eerie roar to it. There was thick smoke, and sparks were showering onto the town well ahead of the fire. These sparks caused many fires ahead of the main front. Many of these were quickly extinguished by people living in the town, otherwise there would have been even more devastation in the township.

Because of the very dry conditions and the limited resources available, the brigades and other volunteers had little hope of con-

trolling the fire. In North Warrandyte, the whole area east of a line roughly between Glynn's Road and Yeomans Road was completely burned out.

By a stroke of good luck and possibly a combination of wind speed and direction, the fire jumped over the main township area and burned into Fourth Hill and further to the south. The fire was eventually stopped at the Maroondah Highway and near Deep Creek Road later on the Tuesday night. The fire had burned a total area of 22,520 hectares.

The North Warrandyte brigade were fighting the fire near the corner of Blooms Road and Kangaroo Ground Road. Not far from where they were working, two of their members, Leonard Brown and Harold Betton were killed when they took refuge in the water tanks at their homes. Leonard Brown was sheltering in a concrete tank under his house when the house burned down over the top of him. Harold Betton was spraying his house from inside an elevated concrete tank when the tank stand collapsed.

The brigades and other local volunteers spent the following week blacking out the fire as it continued to smoulder and break out for days afterwards.

(Based on research by the late Bruce Bence.)

● Interested in local history? Call in at the Old Post Office Museum any weekend afternoon, or phone the Warrandyte Historical Society on 9844 3662.



Top: One of the 50 houses destroyed in Warrandyte on February 16, 1962.

Above: Leonard Brown died in this concrete tank in Blooms Road, North Warrandyte. (Pictures courtesy Warrandyte Historical Society)

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# Christmas tidings — down through the ages



The *Diary* has seen 28 Christmases come and go. Founding editor CLIFF GREEN wandered through our files to see how Warrandyte has marked Christmas these past 28 years.

**A** PART from the *Diary* itself, which began publication in December 1970, Warrandyte's special Christmas present that year was clear, fresh water. The town was connected to the Board of Works supply and the milk-coloured, chlorinated river water we'd been drinking was a thing of the past.

"Another link with Warrandyte's past washed down our non-existent drains," we wrote. "Did anyone think to put down a souvenir bottling of Warrandyte '70?"

Tolerance and goodwill were in the air in 1971 and that Christmas saw our first combined churches carol service celebrated on the riverbank at Stiggart Reserve.

According to the *Diary*, "the Anglican, Catholic and Presbyterian churches have been holding monthly discussions, open to everyone, and have been discovering that they have a lot more in common than they ever anticipated".

We called, in the December 1972 issue, for the commencement of extensions to the recreation ground pavilion. Warrandyte had to wait 15 years for that particular present. In the same issue, Harry Hudson recalled the Christmas Festival of 1956 when the Warrandyte Arts Association was born.

December 1973 saw us thundering against the Yarra Brae dam (which didn't eventuate) and in December 1974 we were demanding new primary and secondary schools (which did).

Peace and goodwill didn't get much of a go in the political climate of 1975, and December was federal election month. "Attacks on Yarra Valley planning and conservation are the hard face of Fraser Liberalism showing through the environmentalist veneer," wrote sitting ALP member Race Mathews in the

*Diary*. Whew!

We were promised a terrific present in December 1976. The Warrandyte Environment League announced plans for the first Warrandyte Festival. A promise that was delivered and has been kept ever since.

Local sports lovers scored the following two years. The new squash courts were announced in December 1977 (since closed), and a year later the tennis clubhouse was almost finished. The promised pavilion came a little later when plans were announced, in December 1979, for a \$110,000 complex.

Christmas 1980 saw us celebrating the purchase by Doncaster and Templestowe council of the "Getson" land, site for our proposed new community centre. We had to wait more than 10 years for that dream to become reality.

We received another marvellous present in time for Christmas 1981, when the state government announced that it was going to buy 154 hectares of bushland, between Warrandyte and Wonga Park, to add to the State Park.

"This move by the government will ensure that another nine kilometres of natural bushland along the Yarra banks is permanently preserved for the enjoyment of the people," local Liberal MP Norman Lacey told the *Diary*.

By December 1982 we were getting ourselves into a right old lather over plans to put a big kink in Yarra Street, diverting it away from the village and towards the river, straight through the old post office. Fortunately, that was a gift from officialdom we were able to send straight back.

The Warrandyte Elderly Citizens celebrated their 21st birthday in time for Christmas 1983. In 1984 a couple of would-be thieves were foiled when they tried to give themselves a whopping big

present by hauling the safe out of our local State Bank with a stolen tow-truck.

Subdividers were causing concern in December 1985, Smokey reported the classic case of the naked jogger in our issue of December 1986 and in 1987 we were bemoaning proposals for 20 new shops in the township.

The *Diary* celebrated its 20th birthday in December 1990 and, for the first time, fire brigades were suggesting people might be safer if they stayed in their properly prepared homes during a bushfire. We were also hard at it, saving the eagles up on The Chase in North Warrandyte.

People took seriously the CFA's warning that the fire risk in December 1991 was the "worst yet"; earlier that year a swathe of country north of the river was burnt out. In December 1992 a disaster plan for the whole of Warrandyte was underway.

In December 1993, Doncaster-Templestowe council was holding firm against subdivision in the Green Wedge, despite increased agitation from some landowners, but a year later, in December 1994, we issued our first stern warning against the possibility of a ring road through Warrandyte.

We set the media alight right across Melbourne when we were the first to announce, in our December 1996 issue, that fire brigades could refuse to enter certain streets during a bushfire.

"In the event of a major wildfire the local volunteer brigades will consider not entering some streets in Warrandyte and North Warrandyte because they have been identified as extreme fire risk areas," a CFA spokesman told us.

In December last year, the whole town was up in arms about a major threat to our dual occupancy ban and a proposal to erect a new 24-hour petrol station, convenience store and four-bay carwash on the Riverview Motors site in Yarra Street. Thanks to concerted local action the mega-service station proposal has disappeared but the dual occupancy threat still hangs over us.

So what's new under the sun?

## Thank you all for another fun-filled year

It's the time to thank all those hardworking people—most of them volunteers—who have brought you your favourite newspaper during 1998.

News stories were by David Wyman, Fia Clendinnen, Cliff Green, Rachel Baker, Clinton Grybas and Prudence Truby-King. Columnists were Smokey Joe, Pat Coupar, Roger Kibell, Marilyn Moore and Judy Green.

Features were written by Glen Jameson, Richard Warwick, Lorraine Warren, Marion Winton, Don Charlwood and Julie Murray. We published poetry by Hellenia Allan, Janet Foote, Susan Brown and Elisabeth

Gallagher. Sports stories were by Lee Tindale, Rachel Baker, Damien Arsenis and Judy Green.

Occasional contributors included Jacky Law, Doreen Burge, Yvonne Reid, Rhys James, Jason Cameron, Ken Virtue, Gerry Pearce, Lee O'Mahoney, Joy Ness, Joan Golding, Peter Hook, Doug Seymour, Peter Meehan, Jenny Chapman, Hazel Holly and Louise Joy.

Artwork by Jock Macneish, Paul Williams, Melanie Coupar, Wayne Rankin and Syd Tunn. Photographs by Sandy Burgoyne, Jan Tindale, Austin Polley and Greig Ruthven.

The paper was edited and de-

signed by Cliff Green and Lee Tindale and Jan Tindale organised assignments, carried out research and assisted with community liaison. Rachel Schroeder set the type, designed the ads and handled production, assisted by Mark Schroeder. Streamline Press printed our paper and John Ingram delivered press material. Sandy Burgoyne took over as internet editor and sent us back into cyberspace.

Rae Danks charmed our advertisers and kept our accounts and John Roberts looked after our corporate responsibilities. Don Humpreys kept our office spic and span and Peter Norman took our newspaper

out to our many, much-appreciated distribution points.

Last, but certainly not least, we remember the people who make it all financially possible—our advertisers.

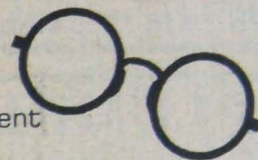
And, finally, heartfelt thanks to you, our loyal and enthusiastic readers, with a special mention for those who contributed to our Dear Diary page.

We won't be around in January, but come the second week of February and we'll be back, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, bringing you all the local news. In the meantime, here's wishing everyone a joyous Christmas and a bright and peaceful 1999.

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## Gigs galore



Warrandyte Youth Services are holding their last band event for the year on Friday, December 18 at Warrandyte Mechanics Hall. The line-up includes local bands Ishedah, The King and I, Rasputin, Undertow as well as Humbug, winners of the Triple J unearthed competition in the Albury region. Cost is \$6 with no passouts. This is a totally supervised drug and alcohol-free event. Everyone welcome. For more information call Cathy or Ken on 9844 2985.

Peirs Brown, lead singer with local band Rasputin, at a previous WYS gig.



High school Big Band trumpets. (Picture by Greig Ruthven)

Music students at Warrandyte High School recently entertained parents and friends at a concert celebrating all they had learned during the year. Improvisation skills demonstrated by

noted musician Don Burrows earlier in the year were evident.

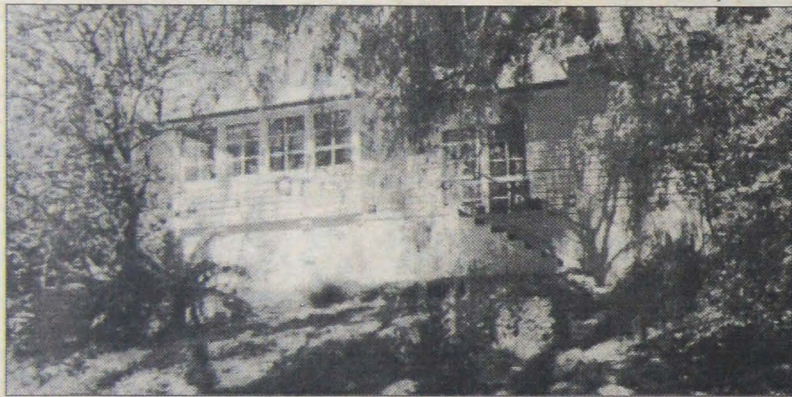
The musical evening combined classical music with jazz and blues, flutes, guitars, saxophones, clarinets and brass in-

struments. Thanks were given to last year's music captains, Drew Hanna and Elise Hodgson. The music captains for 1999, Leisl Keam and Aaron Devitt, were announced.



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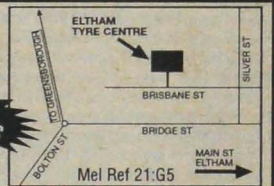
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# Historical calendar

A handsome 1999 calendar, featuring photographs of Warrandyte—then and now—is available from the Warrandyte Historical Society for \$10. They can be purchased at the Old Post Office Museum in Yarra Street, any weekend afternoon, from the Warrandyte Post Office or from Potters Cottage Gallery. Mail orders can be accepted for an extra \$2.50. Call Gina on 9844 3662.

## Fete

St Stephens Anglican Church parish fete was a great success. They have asked us to thank all sponsors and donors who made contributions, Andersons Creek Primary School choir, Warrandyte Primary Gade 2 choir and the adult choir under Lise Moran for their musical performances. Raffle winners were: 1st prize (family hamper) Kenton Molloy, 2nd prize (car package) D. McGeachan, 3rd prize (photography package) Sam Mason.



Warrandyte High School celebrated their 20th anniversary with a banquet auction and reunion. These ex-students from the school's second intake—1979 to 1984—had a thousand memories to share. (Picture by Happy Medium)

## Readings

Marion Winton, who organised the public readings by local authors at the Grand Hotel during the last Warrandyte Festival, is planning on doing it again at the 1999 festival. If you're interested, you can call Marion on 9844 2971.

## Joey scouts

A new joey scout mob, for boys and girls aged 6 and 7, will commence in Warrandyte in the second week in February. Joey scouts are the pre-cub part of the scouting movement. They play games, do crafts, listen to visitors (fire, police and so on) and go on outings. Anyone interested can contact Margaret Randall on 9842 1293.

## Carols

The annual carols by candlelight, presented by the combined local churches, will be held at Stiggants Reserve on Sunday, December 13 at 8.30pm. BYO candles and rugs. Donations to the Christmas Bowl Appeal.

## Complete

John Hanson is attempting to complete a full set of the Warrandyte Diary. He is only missing two issues—number 221 (May 1991) and number 283 (December 1996). If you can help, please call John on 9844 3906.

## Exhibition

An exhibition of contemporary works by Paul Wakim, Olga Waters and May Kalvza is being held at the Manningham Gallery, rear of the municipal offices, 699 Doncaster Road, Doncaster. The exhibition, entitled Reflection Of The Spirit, will run from December 9 to 13. The gallery is open from 9am to



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.

5pm, Tuesday to Friday and from 11am to 5pm, Saturday and Sunday.

## English

A series of free English language classes is being held at the Latrobe University Language Centre, corner Kingsbury Drive and Waterdale Road, Bundoora. Sessions will run from 2 to 4pm, Mondays to Fridays, from Janu-

ary 4 to 29 and February 1 to 26. The course is designed for anyone whose first language is not English. Contact Christine or Katrina on 9479 2417 for further information.

## Overeaters

Overeaters Anonymous meets on Mondays, from 8 to 9.30pm, at the North Ringwood Community House, 120 Oban Road, North Ringwood. For information call Kath on 9725 6470 (after 6pm) or Maureen on 9726 6896.

## Mah jong

Mah jong is played on Thursday evening at 7.30pm at the Templestowe Art Centre, Foote Street, Templestowe. All welcome.

## Unclaimed

Warrandyte Police are holding a small sum of money, found near the bridge in September. Any enquiries to S/C Noel Wilson at the police station, 9844 3231.

## Bridge

A bridge club meets on Mondays at 1pm and Thursdays at 7.30pm. Experienced, new players welcome. Call 9439 2770.

## More carols

The annual Warrandyte Primary School Carols By Torchlight will be held on Thursday, December 10, commencing at 7.45pm. All are invited to attend at the school's open-air stage. BYO rug.

## Local Christmas church services

The annual carols by candlelight service will be held at Stiggants Reserve on Sunday, December 13 at 8.30pm. It is a combined presentation of the local churches. BYO candles and rugs. Donations will go to the Christmas Bowl Appeal.



★ ANGLICAN (9844 3473): Christmas Eve—11.30pm; Christmas Day—8am and 9.30am.

★ CATHOLIC (9876 1509): Christmas Eve—8pm (Park Orchards), Midnight Mass (Warrandyte); Christmas Day—Mass 10am (Park Orchards).

★ COMMUNITY CHURCH (9844 4148): December 20—10am 'Christmas all year round'; Christmas Eve—7.30pm 'Christmas Gifts'; Christmas Day—10am 'Christmas Story'.

★ UNITING (9844 3843): Christmas Eve—7.30pm Carols and 11.30pm; Christmas Day—9am.

People requiring transport or more information should contact the church of their choice on the phone numbers above.

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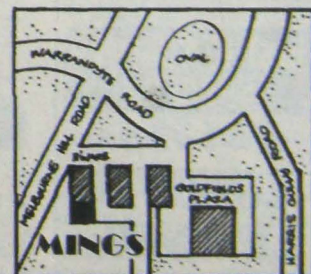
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# Hitmen belted in big basketball cup coup

By **CLINTON GRYBAS**

Callum Anderson entered the 1998 Greyburn Cup summer basketball season with one clear goal in mind: to assemble the best possible team to break the Hitmen's stranglehold on the competition.

On December 2 the mission was accomplished as Anderson's side, the undefeated Teletubbies, belted the Hitmen 73-31 in the most lopsided grand final ever.

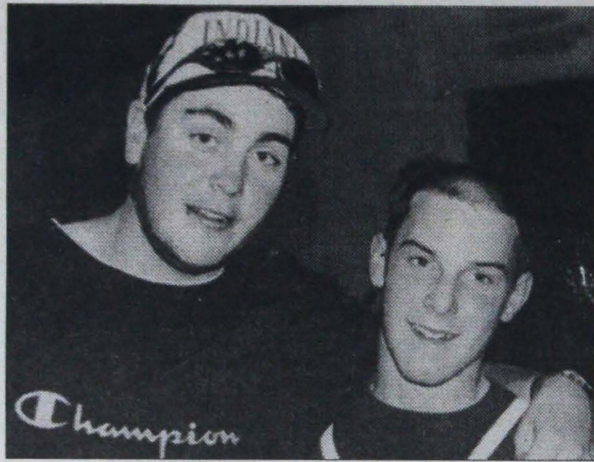
"We went in there expecting to win it but certainly not by that margin," said Anderson after the Teletubbies denied the Hitmen a third straight crown.

"We shot the ball very well over the last couple of games and really played as a team, with good offensive movement."

The emphasis on "team" was not a minor one. They were so well drilled that had the Teletubbies' seven been in charge of Saving Private Ryan instead of Tom Hanks, Steven Spielberg would never have had a movie—it would have been over too soon.

The grand final was close for only the first minute, the Tubs opening with a free-throw before the Hitmen's John Moore dropped in a long three-pointer—suggesting his shooting slump was about to come to a timely end.

But while he collected eight



Winners certainly are grinners. Open section MVP Adam Borwick (left) and Teletubbies 'mastermind' Callum Anderson.

points in the first half he didn't score in the second, a deficiency amplified when back court running mate David Thwaites was held to just seven. Between them they averaged 30 points per game in the regular season. In the play-offs it was just 10.

While no one else stepped up to provide the balance the Tubs had winners in Mark Herring (17 points, including a buzzer beater at half-time which made it 32-14) while Stephen Oakley

had 15 and Jarrod Conley 14. Robert Johnston led the Hitmen with 11.

Anderson had just six but was more than content to take a back seat in the methodical dissection. "The season was always only going to be a one-off for us so we are delighted with the result," he said.

Meanwhile, the biggest crowd of the night saw the Plastics return to the winners circle with a 25-22 win over the River Rats in the Over-30s final.

The Plastics led 14-7 at half-time and pushed ahead after the break with Les Earnshaw (eight points) and Steve Doyle (six) contributing the bulk of the scoring. Max Sommers (eight) led the Rats, who drew within two when Horrie Aldenhoven scored in the last minute.

The women's Grand Hotel Cup again went the way of the PP Champs, who comprehensively beat the Sneakers 27-14.

The Champs led by just four at half-time but wrapped it up early in the second stanza with Amanda McLellan (10 points) and Cathy Lynch (nine) leading the way. Jo Yarwood (six) was best for the Sneakers.

In the Most Valuable Player award voting Adam Borwick pipped David Thwaites 25 votes to 22 to win his first open section award. Aldo Sinni won the Over-30s and Amanda McLellan the women's.

The new senior basketball season starts in February. For entry details contact Steve Doyle on 9434 1385.

**MOST VALUABLE PLAYER VOTING:** Open Section: Adam Borwick 25 votes, David Thwaites 22, Mark Herring 19. Over-30 Section: Aldo Sinni 37, Les Earnshaw 28, David Thermorshuizen 22. Grand Hotel Cup: Amanda McLellan 15, Suzi Edwards 14, Terri Slabon 10.

# Karen takes Redbacks reins

By **DAMIAN ARSENIS**

Warrandyte Basketball Club approach the new millenium with new president Karen Pearce at the helm.

In what proved to be a night of new faces at the recent annual general meeting, Pearce was elected unopposed.

Long-serving outgoing president Bruce Macdonald can reflect on his time with the committee as one of great satisfaction—a time that has secured the Redbacks their long-awaited stadium.

Macdonald will continue to work with the Andersons Creek Stadium management team. Also retiring from the committee were Anne Robinson and Anne Lynch, who have also given invaluable service.

Scott Bradbury is the new vice-president (also unopposed) and has already started work on the new Redback sponsorship packages.

The Redbacks' first Twilight Presentation Day last month

was an outstanding success, an estimated 300 people packing Warrandyte High School stadium to see and hear former South East Melbourne Magic premierships captain Darren Perry present the trophies. ABC broadcaster Clinton Grybas was MC.

A range of activities included a shootout, with the winners receiving the very eye-catching new Redback jackets.

Capping off a memorable day was an exhibition match between the champion U17 A Redback girls team and the famed local Phantoms, who are now part of Warrandyte Basketball Club.

After a tight contest early, the Phantoms used their superior size and strength to record a 33-22 victory.

The Redback girls earned warm applause for their fighting effort. Kelly Pollard topscored for them with 10 points, Allison Aldohaven racking up 12 for the Phantoms.

# Championship kids produce the goods

In a glorious end to a long season, two Warrandyte teams made the grand finals of the Victorian Junior Basketball Championships—for two premierships.

Gavin Whitmore's U12 Metro 1 boys and the U14 Metro 3 boys of Gerry Pearce both triumphed in their respective divisions.

The U12s took the game right up to Doncaster from the start and their exciting brand of basketball took them to a 10-point lead, holding steady until the half.

But the Doncats were not done yet and the second half

was a free-scoring affair, the teams exchanging baskets and James Davis particularly impressive on his way to a team-high 21 points.

The Redbacks held off the spirited but tiring Doncaster, then pulled away for a comfortable victory.

Matched against Keilor Thunder, the U14s played some of their best basketball of the season, grabbing the early ascendancy and dominating the paint.

Led brilliantly by Jake Humble, they answered every challenge to win impressively.

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# Back in business!

By RACHEL BAKER

Consecutive wins have restored the stocks of Warrandyte Cricket Club's first eleven to the right side of the ledger and put them back on course for the RDCA Chandler Shield finals.

Improved performances with the bat have carried the Bushrangers to victory over previously-unbeaten Ainslie Park and last year's finalists South Ringwood.



Paul Montgomery. 'We're playing a bit smarter.'

## Bushrangers on finals course

SPORT

Warrandyte have now won three and lost two. A win over Templeton at home in the next match would have them very well placed going into the Christmas recess.

"We are starting to go along nicely," captain-coach Paul Montgomery said after the South Ringwood game. "Things are looking good—not spectacular, but we're just playing solid cricket."

"We don't get flustered, we stay on top of the game. We're playing a bit smarter," Montgomery said.

"There's been no change to training or playing tactics, but everything's coming together nicely for us."

"The percentages are improving. We're getting the numbers down to training. We've had three wins and two losses and hopefully we can add to that."

Clear signs of improved consistency emerged in the away game against Ainslie Park. "We did very well," Montgomery said. "They were one of two unbeaten teams in the competition so to go to their ground and beat them was a good win."

Warrandyte put together 8/213 in that game, Adam White top-scoring with 50 and Cameron Day and Jon Sharman contributing 45 and 42 respectively.

When their turn at the crease came, Ainslie Park succumbed to the pace of Gerald Walshe and were dismissed for 174.

Walshe finished with 6/40 and Sharman made it a fine double for the match by chipping in with 3/36.

White was again in great touch with the bat against South Ringwood, his 68 leading the way in Warrandyte's 9/217. Montgomery compiled an invaluable 32 and Tony Stursteps 29.

South Ringwood's run chase developed into a real nail-biter, falling just 17 short.

Montgomery led by example, completing a genuine all-rounder's performance by taking the bowling honours with 4/32.

Walshe made it a nine-wicket haul in two innings by taking 3/46 and Greg Tregear's 2/32 was more than just handy.

"South Ringwood played in the finals last season so it was another good win," Montgomery said.

"The seconds also won well today. They've had two wins and three losses, but things

haven't as good in the lower grades (thirds and fourths). They've yet to win.

"But there's a good feel in the club at the moment. The firsts are doing well, so everyone feels good about that. The lower grades just need to get some experience and they should improve as the season progresses."

"If there are any ex-players who'd like to come back, they're welcome to come and play. The lower grades need some experienced players to help out the younger ones."

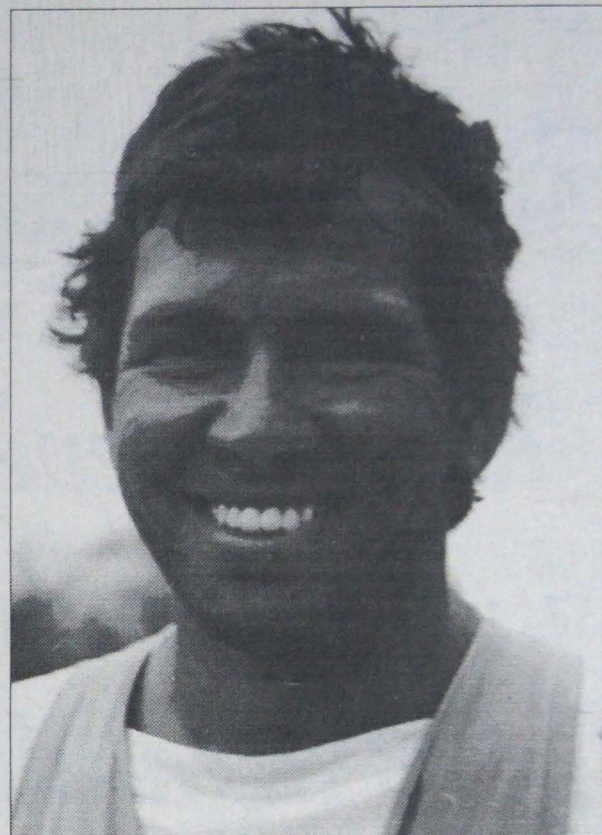
Montgomery, a popular leader who is in his second year as captain-coach, emphasised that the Bushrangers would continue to go "hard at it".

"The firsts are in a good position now, but we've got to work hard. We don't want to ease off," he said.

"If we can win the next one we'll be 4-2 and we'll be pace-setting again."

### Details

Firsts: Warrandyte 8/213 (White 50, Day 45, Sharman 42) and 1/15 d Ainslie Park 174 (Walshe 6/40, Sharman 3/36). Warrandyte 9/217 (White 68, Montgomery 32, Stursteps 29) and 0/13 d South Ringwood 200 (Montgomery 4/32, Walshe 3/46, Tregear 2/32).



Gerald Walshe. A nine-wicket haul in two innings.

# Bloods switch on for the start

## Bye-bye byes and good riddance!

The EFL Third Division competition has been reduced from an unwieldy 11 teams to a far more manageable 10 with the relegation of both Forest Hill and the Whitehorse Pioneers to Division 4.

The introduction of the Box Hill-based Pioneers last season created a bye situation, some clubs (including Warrandyte) having two, others one.

It raised all sorts of permutations as the finals approached. The Pioneers did not win a game. Forest Hill won only three.

Last season, Warrandyte played only 16 games. Next year each club will play 18.

Returning to Division 3 are "old enemies" Templestowe,

whose only victory in 1998 was in their last game.

Warrandyte's 1999 draw:

April 10: v Wantirna South (H, night)

April 17: v Coldstream (A)

April 24: v Kilsyth (H)

May 1: v Templestowe (A)

May 8: v Knox (H)

May 15: v Doncaster East (A)

May 22: v Southern Cobras (H)

May 29: v Mt Evelyn (A)

June 5: v South Croydon (H)

June 19: v Wantirna South (A)

June 26: Coldstream (H)

July 3: v Kilsyth (A)

July 10: v Templestowe (H)

July 17: v Knox (A)

July 24: v Doncaster East (H)

July 31: v Southern Cobras (A)

August 7: v Mt Evelyn (H)

August 14: v South Croydon (A)

By LEE TINDEALE

Warrandyte will be switched on—literally—when the new Eastern Football League season opens on Saturday, April 10.

The Bloods will play Wantirna South at home under lights, the first senior night football match in this town's history and also a first for the EFL.

It will be quite a day, twilight and night. The Under-18s will kick off proceedings in the afternoon, followed by the Reserves, then the Seniors, who will take the field at 7-7.30pm.

The "step into the dark" was prompted by the success of an Under-18s game under lights against Fairpark—its first—on August 17, the recreation reserve having been fully floodlit two months earlier.

That Friday night match attracted a big crowd and Warrandyte Football Club expect the triple-header to draw a bumper one.

The venture has the unqualified blessing of the EFL.

"In what will be a perfect way to start season 1999, the EFL is looking forward to Warrandyte creating club history by playing under lights in Round 1," league media

and events manager Justin Nelson told the *Diary*.

"The EFL actively encourages all clubs to explore every avenue to increase community involvement and interest in football. Night football has become a proven formula in attracting supporters and the Warrandyte move into this arena is welcomed by the league."

Said WFC president Jeff Evans: "Obviously we were delighted by the response to the Under-18s night game and senior football under lights was the logical next step."

"Playing at night is not going to suit all of our players or all of Wantirna South's. But this game will be good for footy, good for the community and good for both clubs."

"It is a great opportunity." The game will be filmed, with commentary, by the EFL media team for its Eastern Footy Show (9-11am on Saturdays on Channel 31).

Highlights will be shown the Saturday morning after the game and copies of the full videotape will be available, at \$30, from the league at short notice.

The EFL sold 800 tapes of various games last season.

● Warrandyte's pre-season training will start on December 14 with a run at the recreation reserve at 6.30pm, followed by a team meeting to discuss the new season. Training will break for Christmas-New Year and resume on January 18.

● Greg Alchin, who has had a long association with junior football in Warrandyte, has been appointed coach of the Under-18s. Alchin coached the Warrandyte Junior Football Club's Under-17 Colts to the Yarra Junior Football League premiership last season. As Under-18s coach in 1999, he will be overseeing the further development of many of those premiership players.

Outstanding senior player Aaron Woolley will be his assistant.

As previously reported, senior coach Lex Munro was reappointed midway through last season—a season in which he piloted the Bloods to second place on the ladder at the end of the home-and-away program (winning 12 of their 16 games), only to see them falter in their two finals.

The Reserves coaching position has not yet been filled. Ashley Grybas, who did the job in 1998, reapplied but then withdrew to concentrate on playing senior football.

# Pokies club 'a year away'

By LEE TINDEALE

Don't expect to see Club Warrandyte—the joint venture by the local football club and the Grand Hotel which would see the return of poker machines to Warrandyte—to be up and running before Christmas next year.

Warrandyte Football Club president Jeff Evans told the Bloods' annual general meeting last month that the project was going ahead, but that it was a long, detailed and slow process.

He nominated Christmas 1999 as a possible launching time.

"We are proceeding slowly and carefully because we do not want to make mistakes," Evans said.

Under the proposal, the football club would lease most of the hotel facilities—including the gaming room, which closed in March when Tattersalls withdrew its

poker machines at the expiration of its contract with the Grand.

Evans sees Club Warrandyte as a means of guaranteeing the long-term viability of WFC and improving local sporting amenities and facilities generally.

The Bloods' AGM put Warrandyte in line with the trend among other sporting clubs by streamlining the executive to just five, to be backed by strong sub-committees.

Evans was returned unopposed for a third term in the chair, Norm Carrington remains treasurer and Robert (Noddy) Ireland secretary.

Making up the five are Jim Yarwood (vice-president, football management) and Andrew (Bucky) Rodgers (vice-president, fund-raising).

Evans told members that 1998 had been a good season on the field for Warrandyte

but not so good off it.

The club traded at a loss of \$8272.79, leaving it with just \$57.80 in the bank but owing nothing.

Treasurer Carrington said the bar trade had been down, the cost of repairs and maintenance had increased considerably and match-day operation expenses ("There are few volunteers any more") had "gone through the roof". Evans said: "We improved a lot on the field, but off the field we did not achieve the results we had expected. Fund-raising efforts lacked support."

"Basically, though, we are heading in the right direction and what we set out to do two or three years ago is now coming to fruition."

"I know the upcoming season will be a very exciting and memorable one for the club."

"However, everyone

around the club must put in that little extra effort to make sure we make things happen rather than sit back and wait for them to happen."

"We need to get more people involved who are not involved in the everyday running of the club to raise funds and get people together to inject new blood into the system."

Evans cited as an example Lilydale's coterie group which he said had presented that club with a cheque for \$35,000 last season. Similar coterie groups existed at other EFL clubs, he said.

He also thanked Manningham council for its grant to fully floodlight the football ground.

"It was something we had been trying to get for many years and we finally have it," he said.

The council provided \$20,000 of the \$30,000 cost, the club the balance.

# Junior coaches sought

Warrandyte Junior Football Club, who brought home two premierships last season, are seeking "innovative and enthusiastic" coaches for 1999.

Under the club's constitution, all coaching jobs must be advertised and applications are invited for positions from Under-9s through to Under-17s.

Warrandyte hope to field at least 10 teams next season in the Yarra Junior Football League. The Under-14s will be resurrected from last year's Under-13s after missing last season for want of numbers.

A major priority will be finding the right person to replace Greg Alchin as coach of the Under-17 Colts. Alchin, who led the Colts to last season's flag (the other Warrandyte premiers were the Under-11s) will coach most of those boys again as Under-18s in 1999 for the senior club.

The new season starts on April 18, with registration day in February.

Coaching applicants are invited to contact coaching coordinator Anthony Mirabella on 9844 2623.

# Tony toast of tennis club

By JUDY GREEN

Tony Sochacki, of Webb Street, is the proud recipient of Warrandyte Tennis Club's Clubperson of the Year Award.

In making the presentation at the club's Christmas dinner, president Mark Bence said Tony "always put in around the club", working for young players in the junior committee.

"He was constantly available for maintenance work on the courts and the clubhouse," Mr Bence said.

Finals in the Midweek Ladies Ferntree Gully and District competition have been completed. Two Warrandyte teams—in sections 1 and 6—finished in the top four but were defeated in the semi-finals.



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