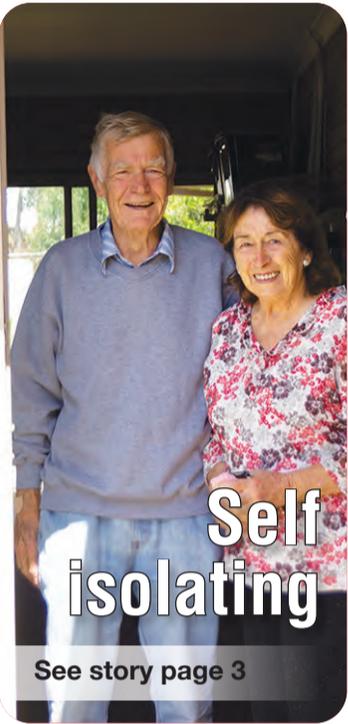


established 1895
Numurkah LEADER
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1, 2020 \$1.30

INSIDE



Self isolating

See story page 3



Bear hunt

See story page 7



Corona wedding

See story page 8



World first at Katunga

GENOMIC testing has revealed a previously undiscovered protein in cows on the Stammers Katunga dairy farm.

See story page 11.

Seven COVID-19 cases confirmed in Moira

THE Department of Health and Human Services has confirmed that, as of yesterday afternoon, there were seven Moira Shire residents confirmed to have COVID-19.

NCN Health told the *Leader* that although none of the cases were diagnosed at NCN Health facilities, it was reasonable to assume that some were residents in NCN Health communities.

A statement from NCN Health said that the five most recent cases may have been tested at a GP clinic, at GV Health's Acute Respiratory Clinic (ARC), an NCN Health facility or other location.

As of yesterday morning, Greater Shepparton also

had six confirmed cases - which represented a doubling of the three confirmed cases it reported on Monday.

One inpatient at Goulburn Valley health was among that number.

Mirroring the situation of the first confirmed case, as reported in last week's *Leader*, the second Moira Shire case was confirmed at Yarrawonga Health in a person who had recently returned from overseas and was following mandatory isolation requirements.

All confirmed cases and close contacts are notified and monitored by the Department of Health and Human Services. It is understood these people have

been self-isolating and are now in quarantine.

NCN Health CEO, Jacque Phillips said it is incredibly important that people in our communities follow the directions from the Victorian Government and health care clinicians when self-isolating and in quarantine.

"Social distancing is everyone's responsibility for limiting the spread of coronavirus," she said.

"It is important that people stay at home when they can, only go out for essential items, practice social distancing (keeping 1.5m apart from others), avoid social gatherings and follow good hygiene – wash hands regularly, and cough or sneeze into your elbow."

**PETER COX & SONS
FUNERAL DIRECTORS**

Professional service tailored to your needs

Locally owned & operated 24 hours - 7 days a week

Funeral calls and information
5862 3047

Cnr Meiklejohn & Quinn Streets

ACCREDITED MEMBER OF THE AUSTRALIAN FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

**END OF
DAYLIGHT SAVINGS
THIS SUNDAY**
DONT FORGET TO PUT YOUR
CLOCKS **BACK 1 HOUR**



**Make sure
you keep up
with all the
local news**

**Digital
subscriptions
now available**

www.numurkahleader.net.au

1 months \$5.95

12 months \$54.95

NumurkahLEADER

Ph. 5862 1034
88 Melville St, Numurkah

Message from the Mayor

COUNCIL is working hard to support our communities across the shire as we work to provide essential services and deal with the changing world of COVID-19.

As this situation is unprecedented, we need to be adaptable and responsible – our pandemic planning team are continuing to meet daily to review any new information that comes to hand and respond accordingly.

Everyone has a role to play in protecting yourself and your family, and, indeed, the community at large, and there is no better way than to start with your personal health and stay at home except for essential trips for food and medical provisions.

As many of our residents are living alone, and in some cases are isolated, please be a good citizen and do the right thing, check on your neighbour or the elderly and let them know they are not alone.

Our Economic Development, Maternal and Child Health and Community teams are speaking directly with businesses, health centres and residents and working hard to put measures in place to buffer the impact this pandemic is causing where we can.

Council is actively working with ratepayers who have requested payment plans be put in place to assist with rates and other charges. We are also working with people who already have payment plans in place and revising those plans if required. We are encouraging anyone who



Unprecedented ...
Mayor Libro Mustica
urges us all to abide
by restrictions.

would like to discuss setting up a payment plan or who is in financial difficulty to call us and we will work with you to achieve a satisfactory result.

We are hoping that other levels of government will respond to calls for rate relief packages so that council can continue to fund the many services and facilities that we all rely on.

Our Customer Service Centres in Cobram and Yarrawonga are now closed for the foreseeable future,

however you can still easily contact us in several ways – request a service or pay a bill via our website www.moiravic.gov.au, email us at info@moiravic.gov.au or give us a call on (03) 5871 9222.

Unfortunately, council buildings, reserves and infrastructure have had to close including the sports stadium in Cobram, the Numurkah Aquatic and Fitness Centre, the Yarrawonga Splash Park, recreation reserves, playgrounds, skate parks and public barbecues.

Three of our smaller transfer stations have also closed for the foreseeable future – Tungamah, Yabba and Strathmerton.

The latest advice is we have potentially months of restrictions as we head towards winter, so if we all play our part we will be better placed to recover from the health and economic impacts that are now unfolding globally and locally.

For all council updates please go to our website www.moiravic.gov.au.

Operation bushfire assist concludes

THE Australian Defence Force formally ceased Operation Bushfire Assist 2019-2020 last Thursday, having completed the emergency and recovery tasks requested by state and local authorities.

Defence had been assisting with the bushfire efforts since early September 2019, by providing wide-ranging support as part of the national response.

Operation Bushfire Assist commenced on December 31, 2019, to support state fire and emergency services across NSW, Victoria and Queensland and later provided support to the Australian Capital Territory, South Australia and Tasmania.

At its peak, more than 6,500 ADF members provided support as part of emergency relief, response and recovery operations. This included around 3,000 Reserve forces.

During the operation Defence contributed to the response and recovery efforts through the delivery of the following support:

- Clearance of over 4,850 kilometres of roads;
- Clearance and repair of over 1,285 kilometres of fences;
- Clearance of over 240 kilometres of fire breaks;
- Production of nearly 10 million

litres of drinking water for Kangaroo Island and Bega; and

- Provision of over 77,000 meals on Defence bases to emergency services personnel and evacuees.

Minister for Defence Linda Reynolds CSC said it marked the largest mobilisation of the ADF for domestic disaster relief in Australia's history.

"I am so proud of the service our permanent and part-time ADF members provided as part of this response," Minister Reynolds said.

"I am also very grateful for the support provided by the many additional international defence force partners from Canada, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, and the United States. Their support demonstrates the strength of our relationships.

"Finally, I acknowledge and thank the families and employers of our Reservists for their understanding and support that has made this response possible."

Defence will continue to provide support to non-emergency recovery operations.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison thanked all personnel who provided direct support in the fire.

POLICE BEAT

Cannabis plants found

A 52 year-old Numurkah man has been charged with cultivating a narcotic plant after police discovered two large cannabis plants whilst searching a Numurkah address on an unrelated matter on Monday.

He has bailed to appear at the Shepparton Magistrates Court in

June.

Police were called to a Tweddle St address where a number of people known to police were involved in an affray in the early hours of Sunday.

If anyone has any information please contact Numurkah Police Station.

Ban on sale of guns and ammo

THE sale of firearms and ammunition for sporting or recreational purposes will be temporarily banned, following deliberations by the National Cabinet.

A statement issued yesterday by the office of Victoria's Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Lisa Neville, said the new measures are designed to protect licensed firearm owners and dealers as well as the broader community.

"We're responding to an increase in demand for firearms and ammunition across the country by doing what we can to protect licensed firearm owners and dealers as well as the broader community," Minis-

ter Neville said.

To prevent potential stockpiling, and the risk that firearms and ammunition could fall into criminal hands or dealers could be targeted by organised crime, licensed dealers will now be prohibited from selling firearms and ammunition for sporting or recreational purposes for the duration of the coronavirus outbreak.

Those with a need to access firearms and ammunition for essential services, like farmers and rural landholders, professional vermin control and armed guards will still be able to access them for these purposes.

NumurkahLEADER

88 Melville Street, Numurkah VIC 3636

Phone: 03 5862 1034

www.numurkahleader.net.au

Published by Jinki Sixteen Pty. Ltd.
and printed by Newsprinters Pty Ltd
Registered by Australia Post - Print Post publication no. 100002644



Beverley Hutchins
Editor



James Sutton
Graphic Designer



Dominique Cosgriff
Journalist



Heather Kelly
Sales



Melinda Scott
Admin



Karen Harper
Sports Journalist



Sheryl Elliott
Sports Photographer

printads@leader.net.au

design@leader.net.au

editorial@leader.net.au

sales@leader.net.au

printads@leader.net.au

sport@leader.net.au

Backyard camp-fire ignites shed, causes explosions



Backyard camping trip gone wrong ... Numerous explosions were heard after a camp-fire that wasn't extinguished properly ignited a garden shed at a McCarthy Ave property.

LOCAL CFA brigades have had a busy week, responding to five incidents, including two shed fires.

Katunga, Numurkah and Strathmerton brigades turned out to a property at Spences Road, Katunga, between North Road and Gunns Lane at 1pm last Thursday, after a fire started in the switch board of a large dairy that had about 90 solar panels on the roof.

The fire burnt out of the switch board and started to burn up the solar panel feed line. Dry powder extinguishers were used to extinguish the fire.

Powercor disconnected the electrici-

ty supply and an electrician, with help from Powercor and its bucket truck, switched off the power from the solar panels. No solar panels caught fire.

A fairly large incident took place on Sunday, after a McCarthy Avenue, Numurkah family substituted a camping trip to the Murray, which was cancelled due to coronavirus restrictions, with one in the backyard, but failed to properly extinguish their camp-fire.

Nearby firefighters notified VicFire at around 10.20am on Sunday, after hearing explosions and seeing the large plume of smoke, and were on their way to the fire station before the

siren sounded.

Numerous other residents also notified VicFire.

Because the fire plug in that area in McCarthy Avenue could not be located, the fire brigade had to use a fire plug at the corner of Paterson and O'Connor Streets. Police controlled traffic and an ambulance also attended but was not required.

Numurkah's pumper, tanker and forward control vehicle (FCV) attended the blaze along with Katunga, Wunghnu and Strathmerton tankers and Shepparton's pumper and hazardous materials truck.

The fire destroyed the shed and equipment in the shed; fuel in petrol motors was the probable cause of the explosions. The hazardous materials van supplied additional breathing apparatus for the firefighters.

Water should always be used to extinguish camp fires.

At 11.27am on Sunday, while the fire brigade was still at the McCarthy Avenue fire, an alarm was activated at the GrainCorp plant on McDonald Street.

Numurkah, Shepparton, Katunga and Tallygaroopna brigades were called; Numurkah's FCV and tanker and Shepparton pumper attended. Katunga and Tallygaroopna were not required.

Numurkah pumper and Wunghnu tanker remained at McCarthy Avenue.

The cause of the alarm was a circuit breaker that did its job and switched off, there was no fire. Numurkah and Shepparton returned to the O'Connor Street location to complete blacking out the McCarthy Avenue fire.

Yesterday at 5.35am, Yarroweyah, Strathmerton and Cobram brigades were called to a hay stack fire at Kokoda Road Yarroweyah, between Murray Valley Highway and MacArthur Road.

Sixteen large square hay bales were on fire, caused by spontaneous combustion. The area was made safe and the hay is being allowed to burn out.

Then, at 8.03am yesterday, Numurkah, Wunghnu and Shepparton brigades were called to another alarm at GrainCorp.

A thermal detector operated in the shower room where a truckie had taken a very hot shower, the heat activating the detector. Shepparton was stopped enroute.

At 3.20pm on Saturday, Strathmerton and Yarroweyah brigades were called to assist Cobram at an alarm at

Cobram Hospital, Broadway Street, Cobram. There was no fire and both Strathmerton and Yarroweyah were stopped enroute.

The 2019/2020 fire danger period ended in Moira and Greater Shepparton Shires at 1am Monday, March 30.

If you want to conduct a burn-off, you still need to take necessary precautions and abide by local council regulations. Ring Vicfire on 1800 668 511 to register your burn, so that firefighters are not called out unnecessarily.



COVID-19 Community Update

The Federal Government shut down of all 'non-essential' activities to combat the threat of COVID-19 is continuing as well as the physical distancing rules relating to indoor gatherings where people need to be at least four square metres apart.

What is Council doing?

As this situation is unprecedented, we are all needing to be flexible and responsible – we are meeting daily to review any new information that comes to hand and make decisions accordingly.

Council places the highest priority on the health and wellbeing of our staff and community and as such we have put the following measures in place –

- Our Customer Service Centres in Cobram and Yarrowonga are now closed for face-to-face enquiries however you can still contact us a number of ways – visit our website www.moira.vic.gov.au, email us at info@moira.vic.gov.au or phone us on (03) 5871 9222.
- Our visitor information centres are now closed.
- Council facilities including the sports stadium in Cobram, the Numurkah Aquatic and Fitness Centre, recreation

reserves, playgrounds, skate parks, public barbecues and the Yarrowonga Splash Park are now closed.

Transfer Stations Update

The Tungamah, Strathmerton and Yabba Transfer stations have closed due to the continuing COVID-19 health emergency.

All other transfer stations, as well as the Cobram Landfill Site, are still open however we are urging residents to only come if **ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY**; please follow the Victoria Government messaging and "stay at home".

Also, remember to download the Waste App if you haven't done so already, with notifications going out regularly, updating the community on any changes to our waste facilities.

Rate relief and payment plans

We are actively working with ratepayers who have requested payment plans be put in place to assist with rates and other charges and are encouraging

anyone who would like to discuss setting up a payment plan or who is in financial difficulty to give us a call.

Immunisation Update

Our immunisation sessions have ceased to be drop-in sessions and have moved to scheduled appointment times.

This arrangement will continue for the foreseeable future.

Importantly, only those receiving a vaccine and their parent/carer are to attend their scheduled appointment – **DO NOT** attend if you or your child is unwell.

Please contact us on (03) 5871 9222 to book your appointment.

More information

For the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19 please go to our website or www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

 **Phone**
Call us on 5871 9222

 **Email**
info@moira.vic.gov.au

 **NRS**
133 677

 **Mail**
PO Box 578, Cobram VIC 3643

www.moira.vic.gov.au

find us on 

To report service issues and emergencies after hours call (03) 5871 9222.

An important message from the Victorian Government

STAGE 3 RESTRICTIONS ARE NOW IN PLACE.

That means there are only four reasons to be out.



Shopping
for food and
supplies.



Exercise.



Medical care
and caregiving.



Work and
education –
if necessary.

Stay informed at coronavirus.vic.gov.au



Managing this *together*

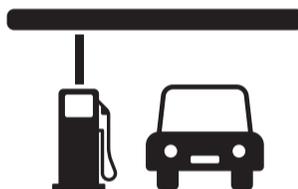
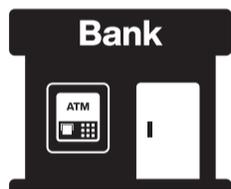


Australian Government

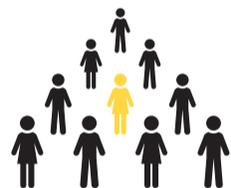
OFFICIAL MEDICAL ADVICE

Coronavirus: You must take action to save lives in your community.

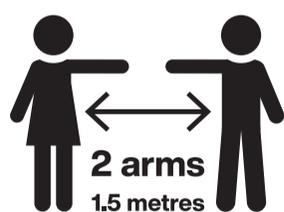
Stay at home unless absolutely necessary. Banks, supermarkets/groceries, petrol stations, medical services and suppliers will remain open. You must avoid non-essential travel.



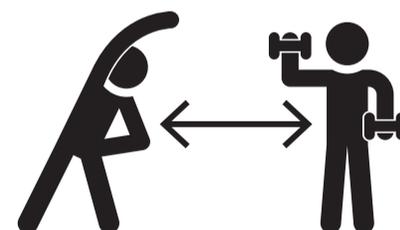
If you can, work from home. If going to work, avoid groups. Use phones for meetings and stop handshaking. Tap to pay where possible instead of using cash.



You must stay 2 arms lengths away from others and wash your hands for 20 seconds.



Exercise away from others.



Make sure you stay informed by visiting australia.gov.au

Authorised by the Australian Government, Canberra



CUT OUT AND KEEP

Super scam warning

AUSTRALIANS are being warned about scams involving the newly-announced early-release superannuation measures.

The Australian Institute of Superannuation Trustees (AIST) said it is aware that unscrupulous operators have already begun targeting super fund members and offering to assist them in taking up the new early release super measures announced last Sunday.

The new measures – part of the government's COVID-19 economic support package – allow qualifying individuals suffering financial hardship to access up to \$10,000 of their superannuation in 2019-20 and a further \$10,000 in 2020-21.

AIST CEO Eva Scheerlinck said everybody needed to be on their guard if they receive unsolicited calls about their superannuation.

"Unfortunately, as we've seen before with any early release super measure, there are unscrupulous operators who take advantage of people in financial hardship, either through outright fraud in an attempt to steal their super or by offering unnecessary services for which a fee is charged," Ms Scheerlinck said.

"The ATO is managing the new early-release process through its MyGov website. There is no need to involve a third party and there are no fees involved. Nor is there a need to panic and rush through an application.

"Anyone who is considering applying for early release superannuation under the new financial hardship provisions should be aware the scheme does not commence until mid-April."

Ms Scheerlinck suggested that, in the interim, those who were planning to apply through MyGov for early release should firstly ensure their personal details were up to date by visiting their super fund's website.

AIST is urging people suffering financial hardship to explore all the various government income-support measures available before accessing their superannuation through an early release measure, which should be a last resort.

Any suspicious behaviour relating to superannuation can be reported to Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) through its online complaint form.



Going on a bear hunt ... Leanne and Caylee Rawson are enjoying their daily expeditions to locate local bears.

Sssh, be very quiet, We're hunting bears

WHILST adults across the world are living through times the likes of which most of can't remember experiencing ever before, Australia's children are experiencing school holidays they're unlikely to ever forget.

Shut in the house - no trips to the cinema or skatepark, no sleepovers, no visits to the indoor pool - the Easter 2020 school holidays would be a bleak affair indeed if it weren't for bear hunting.

That's right, bear hunting. Inspired by the much-loved children's picture book *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury, people in communities across the world are putting out their teddy bears to bring a little entertainment to children in these trying times.

And Numurkah is among them. Adrienne Gledhill told the *Leader* she was inspired to start the Numurkah Teddy Bear Hunt Facebook page by a friend in Geelong.

"They are doing it down there and she sent me some photos and I just thought it was such a great idea," she said.

"I started the page and invited a few friends with kids and it just took off from there."

As of Monday, the group had 198 members and featured a map of over 40 known bear locations

to make expeditions a little easier for hunters.

"We know there are more out there that people haven't let us know about, so some hunters are discovering new ones on their trips," Adrienne said.

"Some people are changing their bear displays around every day, which is great because it gives you something new to look at and talk about every day."

For daily bear hunters Leanne and Caylee Rawson, the initiative is providing a much-needed distraction.

"We go out on our bikes and try to take a different route each day and not repeat the same ones. The most we've found so far on one trip is 21," Leanne said.

Having just started school this year, Caylee is experiencing her first school holidays, so has nothing to compare current conditions to.

"It's been kind of nice being at home and going at a slower pace because, now Caylee is at school, we are up and out early and she is busy all day," Leanne said.

"She doesn't have a huge understanding of what's going on with the virus; she just knows that we are stuck at home because lots of people are sick.

"She still asks though 'can we go to the park' or

'can we go and visit someone' and I always have to say no, we can't.

"The bear hunt has given us something we can do outside the house which is safe, but fun, and we're loving it."

Leanne said that with more and more people joining in, it was an activity they could do daily and still see something new each time - yesterday the pair of avid bear-spotters saw bears at 15 locations whilst riding just 1.7kms.

Tania Altoft, who has set up a teddy bears' picnic on the front lawn of her Paterson Street home, said the movement provided a good distraction for adults and children alike.

"We hear people stop out the front and look and you can hear how much they're enjoying it," she said.

"I take my kids out bear-spotting as well - the map on the Facebook page is a godsend, because you always know where to find some."

As for Caylee, she loves the daily bear-spotting trips.

"My favourite part is sometimes we get to count the ones at our house as well," she said.

"I like staying at home but I want to go to the playground as well, but we have to wait until everyone gets better."

Guide to help dementia sufferers and carers

RECENTLY updated figures show that in 2020 the number of Australians estimated to be living with dementia has increased to 459,000 - 118,000 of whom are in Victoria.

Without a medical breakthrough that number is expected to rise to more than one million by 2058.

As the number of people living with dementia in Australia increases, so too does the number of people who provide support. Today, almost 1.6 million people are estimated to be involved in the care of someone living with dementia.

To support people living with dementia, their families and carers, Dementia Australia, the national

peak body and charity for people, of all ages, living with all forms of dementia, their families and carers, has launched the second edition of *The Dementia Guide*.

The *Dementia Guide* is a comprehensive resource which is relevant for people of all ages living with all forms of dementia and those impacted by dementia.

Initially produced and distributed in 2016 by Alzheimer's Australia Vic., in close consultation with an advisory panel comprised of health, social and aged care professionals, people living with dementia and their families, the guide can assist everyone to learn about dementia,

treatments, and available support and services.

Bobby Redman, who lives with dementia and is a member of the Dementia Australia Advisory Committee, said the guide is a great resource for anyone, and a great starting point for anyone living with or caring for someone with dementia.

"It is especially useful for the newly diagnosed to help to gain an understanding of how to continue to lead a productive life," Ms Redman said.

Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe said, with the prevalence of dementia growing every year, there will be increased demand for under-

standing this disease and what we can all do to support people living with dementia.

"If you have been diagnosed with dementia, there are many ways you can plan for your future, including how to access services to support you, and to live well for as long as possible," Ms McCabe said.

"This guide can assist in finding the right path and it may also be useful for friends, families and carers of people living with dementia, as it contains information about the impact dementia may have on a person, the support and services they may need, and the support and services available to anyone taking on a car-

ing role."

Phil Hazell, the chair of the Dementia Australia Advisory Committee, said if *The Dementia Guide* had been around when he was diagnosed, it would have helped him better understand the disease and its impacts.

"I so wish I had this resource when I was diagnosed with younger onset dementia. It makes it easy to understand my dementia and live well," he said.

The *Dementia Guide* is available to download for free online, or for readers to request a printed copy, at dementia.org.au/resources/the-dementia-guide.

SUZANNA SHEED MP

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR SHEPPARTON DISTRICT



Information on the Victorian State Government's Economic Response to Coronavirus to date

1. Support for Businesses

• \$100m Commercial tenants in government buildings can apply for rent relief

The Victorian Government will waive businesses payroll tax for the 2019-20 financial year for those with an annual taxable wages up to \$3 million. Eligible businesses who have already paid their payroll tax for the financial year will be directly contact for reimbursement.

For further information:

www.sro.vic.gov.au/frequently-asked-questions-response-covid-19

• \$30m waiving liquor licensing fees

The Victorian Government will waive 2020 renewable liquor licence fees. Reimbursements will occur if fees have already been paid.

For more information:

www.vcglr.vic.gov.au/news/coronavirus-covid-19-information-licensees

• \$550m for full payroll tax refunds for the 2019-20

The Victorian Government will waive payroll tax for the 2019-20 financial year for businesses with annual taxable wages up to \$3 million. Eligible businesses must continue to lodge returns but do not need to make further payments for this financial year.

The State Revenue Office will directly contact eligible businesses in relation to reimbursement for payroll tax already paid in the financial year. The same businesses will also be able to defer any payroll tax for the first three months of the 2020/21 financial year until 1 January 2021.

Further information:

www.sro.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

• \$500m to establish a Business Support Fund

The Victorian Government will work with the Victorian Chamber, Australian Hotels Association and Ai Group to administer the fund to help businesses survive and keep people in work.

To register your interest in receiving more details of the program please provide your contact information on the form found click this link:

www.business.vic.gov.au/support-for-your-business/grants-and-assistance/economic-survival-and-jobs-package

2. Employment support

• \$500m Working for Victoria Fund

The Victorian Government in consultation with the Victorian Council of Social Services and Victorian Trades Hall Council will assist those who have lost their jobs find new opportunities.

To register your interest in receiving more information click this link:

www.vic.gov.au/workingforvictoria

3. Other measures

• Government will pay all outstanding supplier invoices within five business days

• Emergency Relief Packages

The Victorian Government will provide emergency relief packages for those in mandatory self-isolation who have little or no food, and no network of family and friends to support them. This will be coordinated by the Red Cross in partnership with Foodbank Victoria and under the direction of the State Relief Coordinator.

Each eligible household will receive a two-week supply of essential goods. Packages can be accessed through the Coronavirus Hotline: **1800 675 398**

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on the Victorian Government's Economic Response to Coronavirus visit:

www.premier.vic.gov.au/economic-survival-package-to-support-businesses-and-jobs

For more information on the Australian Government's Economic Response to Coronavirus visit:

<https://treasury.gov.au/coronavirus>



A beautiful day ... Zoe and Nick Ludington celebrate on the banks of the Murray river at Echuca.

Love in the time of corona

ZOE Ludington, nee Davies, said she and new husband Nick were initially disappointed that they'd have to cull over 20 names from their wedding guest list, but now they can't believe how lucky they really were.

Zoe and Nick celebrated their wedding at Morrison's Winery Moama on March 21 - three days after the government announced the first lot of coronavirus restrictions, which limited gatherings to no more than 100 people.

With 128 guests having RSVP'd 'yes', that presented a bit of a problem, but Zoe told the *Leader* it wasn't completely unexpected.

"There'd been rumours for a few days that it would happen, and when I first heard them I said that if it did happen we'd cancel," she said.

"By the time the announcement was made I'd gotten used to the idea, and I didn't want to cancel so we just had to work out how to reduce our numbers.

"The venue was so accommo-

dating and suggested we have some tables indoors and some out so that we didn't have to cull as many guests to allow for the staff, but it was still hard."

Fortunately, the situation itself presented a reasonable criteria for the couple and their families to work with.

"We had four guests who'd recently returned from overseas and were self-isolating, even though they weren't required to yet, so they got crossed off," Zoe said.

"Then anyone who was at risk, such as my grandparents, which was a real shame but made sense.

"Then we had a few interstate guests who decided to pull out rather than take the risk that the borders would close and they'd get stuck.

"It was difficult, and there were a few arguments, but it didn't turn out too badly in the end. It could have been much worse."

Indeed it could - the event was originally booked for this Saturday, which would have meant that no more than five

people could have attended.

"We always wanted it in March but originally the venue thought they were booked out, so we took the earliest April booking we could get," Zoe said.

"They rang back a couple of weeks later and said that March 21 was free so we took that - thank God!"

Zoe said if they had been faced with making the decision with current restrictions in place, they would definitely have postponed.

"We could have done it with 20 people because then you at least can have your immediate family there, but with five you can't even have both sets of parents. We'd rather have waited months so that we could have people there than go through with it like that."

In the end, though there were some people who should have been there that weren't, the Ludingtons have no regrets.

"It was a beautiful day, that we'll always remember and we feel really lucky that we got to get married after all."

RSPCA seeks clarity on essential services definition

THE RSPCA has written to Health Minister Greg Hunt and other public health officials seeking urgent confirmation that vital animal care and protection services will be able to continue as 'essential services' under increasing pandemic control measures.

RSPCA Australia CEO Richard Mussell said the organisation was advocating out of concern for its own critical operations, as well as on behalf of all those involved in the care of animals.

"We're concerned with ensuring that animals are included in the conversations about the impact of tightening virus control measures across the community," he said.

"RSPCAs across Australia are responsible for delivering essential frontline animal care and protection services - including our inspectors, animal care centres, and veterinary clinics - and we're already implementing all recommended health, hygiene and risk management protocols.

"In addition, we're seeking confirmation that other primary animal carers will be able to access the premises where animals are kept and continue to provide them with food, water, attention and medical care.

"These include, for example, zoos and aquariums, stables for racing and recreational horses, animal management services and local pounds, research facilities, and other breeding, housing and boarding facilities.

"And this includes if and when these facilities are no longer open to the public.

"There could be disastrous consequences for human health and welfare as well as animal health and welfare, if people are unable to care for, and are forced to abandon, the animals that depend on them for survival.

"In these times of great uncertainty, Australian animal and pet owners need to know they will be able to keep caring for their animals."



Doing their job, but keeping a distance Tyler Cox, Johnny Decker, Jason Cox, BronwynMcKenzie and Tim Mallon.

Trying to keep safe on the front line

IT'S been a challenging start to 2020 for all Australians, none more so than our emergency services personnel.

Whilst the rest of us grapple to take on board the new, potentially life-saving habits of social distancing, emergency services staff and volunteers grapple with how to do the vital work their communities depend upon whilst remaining safe themselves.

So how do the CFA, SES and ambos respond to emergencies whilst doing the things we've all been told to do to keep ourselves and our communities safe from the scourge of COVID-19.

Numurkah CFA Captain Jason Cox said it was mostly about common sense and logic.

"We've been provided with new protocols by CFA management, which

we're implementing, and beyond that we are using our own judgement about the best and safest way to approach each incident individually," he said.

"Instead of turning out every active service member who responds to an alarm, the officer in charge selects a crew from who turns up and we limit our crews to four per truck - two in the front and two in the back - instead of five or six.

"Our response depends on the job, and we assess each job individually and maintain social distancing as best we can."

Numurkah SES unit deputy controller Linda Howard echoed Mr Cox's sentiments.

"Our duty officer assesses each sit-

uation and we respond accordingly," she said.

"We've been told not to turn out if we're unwell in any way and we obviously keep our distance from others as much as we can.

"It's difficult, but we are there to meet the needs of the community and we will continue to do that."

Ambulance Victoria Hume Regional Director Matt Chadban said safety is always the service's number one priority.

"Our paramedics are practising social distancing where possible and following our standard and additional precautions for infectious diseases," he said.

"This includes use of personal protection equipment (PPE) such as goggles,

face masks and white infection control suits.

"They are also following hand hygiene and vehicle cleaning practices on a regular basis. Please be assured that we are keeping our people safe and well so they can continue to do their job of caring for the community."

The need to maintain adequate supplies of a whole new type of personal protective equipment is one of the biggest challenges for Numurkah's volunteer emergency services.

"Hand sanitiser, equipment sanitiser, gloves and face masks are essential equipment now and we are running pretty low on some of those," Mr Cox said.

"We have to be able to protect ourselves, and if we run out of those it

may impact on our ability to respond to incidents.

"If we didn't have enough of those things and we were called to an incident where we knew there was an infected person, then I would need to make a decision in the same way you would if you knew there was a person in there with a gun.

"I need to protect my crew first and foremost."

Until then, it is business slightly-different-to usual.

"We will still be responding to incidents, it's just how we go about it that will look a little different," Mr Cox said.

"From a CFA perspective, the situation may not have a great impact on us, but I suppose we're about to find out."

Now more than ever, it's important we look out for one another.

Just fill out this form to let your neighbours know you're here to help.

HERE TO HELP

G'day neighbour

I'm

If you are self-isolating, I can help with:

Ways to help: picking up shopping/prescriptions/mail, providing urgent supplies, a frendly phone call, etc.

Call or text me on

brought to you by

NumurkahLEADER

Ph. 5862 1304

88 Melville Street, Numurkah

The Numurkah Leader

GOULBURN VALLEY FARMERS AND FRUIT GROWERS GAZETTE

100 years ago

This week in 1920 ...

To celebrate the State Library of Victoria's digitising of the war years editions of the Numurkah Leader, each week we will include the news of the week, 100 years ago.

To view these editions online go to trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/title/591.

WHERE IS NUMURKAH ON THE IRRIGATION QUESTION?

While districts round are actively engaged in holding meetings and preparing for the presentation of a strong case to the Water Supply Commission for a share of the irrigation waters that will be allotted in the near future, the town of Numurkah sits supinely by, and to judge by the present attitude of the townsfolk it does not seem to matter in the least whether the district never gets a drop of the water. Inaction such as this spells disaster, for there is nothing more certain than that if a supply of water is to be sent to these parts, every atom of influence that can be used must be exerted. It cannot be too strongly impressed upon the minds of the people that we in this district are in a somewhat unfortunate position. Our natural right to a full share of the water cannot be controverted, but there are the sins of the past to answer for, and only persistent and determined advocacy of our rights can expiate those past sins. When the Commission would give us the water we turned up our noses at it: we were not going to be "turned into Chinamen" or "potter around a five-acre allotment with a hoe over our shoulder." And the Commission took us at our word. It sent the water along to the districts that did not object to be "turned into Chinamen," and we will have to use every persuasion possible to make the Commission realise that we have changed our mind, and that our desire for water is now as strong as was our opposition to it in days gone by.

Our refusal of the gift is the sin we have to expiate, and like all sins it can only be erased by constant endeavor and many manifestations that we have fully repented and determined never again to do those things that we ought not to have done. We do not intend discussing here the advantages of irrigation to the district: they are only too manifest, but it might not be out of place to point out that the townships along the creek would deprive incalculable benefit from the fact that the "tall" waters of the irrigation scheme would be run into the creek, giving a never ending domestic supply, and making possible the establishment of innumerable irrigation plots, orchards, etc. that would mean wealth to the business men of the towns. At the present time, too, the supply in the various township reservoirs is getting perilously low, and it would be a disaster if the watering of gardens had to be discontinued and years of effort ruined.

All fears of this sort of thing happening would be removed under an irrigation system, and we cannot for a moment believe that the people in Numurkah are so dead to their own interests; as not to concern themselves in a movement that means so much to the district and to them.

We are certain that all that is needed is for somebody to call a meeting, when there is no doubt that all the weight of public opinion of which this town is capable will be put behind the larger movement. Not until this has been done will we be able to say that we have done our best to secure the inestimable advantages that an irrigation supply would bring in its train. The district people are working tooth and nail to secure an allotment of water, and if the townspeople fail to lend their aid, then they will be laying themselves open to a very serious charge of inaction in a most important manner.

Who will take the lead?

GOULBURN FLOOD PROTECTION SCHEME BALLOT CLOSES ON APRIL 10

An important question to those interested will be contained in the ballot paper to be sent to landholders in what is known as the "flood protection districts." The ballot to be taken is on the question: "Are you in favor of carrying out the proposed scheme?" The scheme is briefly, to reinstate the existing levees in the main, with regulator outlets to permit of equitable distribution of flood waters in excess of that represented by a reading on the Shepparton of 32 feet. Additional works will probably comprise an embankment around Loch Garry, in lieu of the present line along the frontage; embankments at Bishop and Grousch's bend, and a cut across Kotupna bend to avoid the "bottleneck" at McCoy's bridge. The total cost, including £30,000 already expended is estimated at £5,000, and the annual rate proposed is 1/9 per acre on about 120,000 acres.



Q and A ... Visitors and staff undergo screening before they are allowed to enter NDHS.

NCN screening all comers

WITH health centres and health care workers on the front line of the current COVID-19 crisis, NCN Health has implemented screening protocols for anyone - staff, visitor or patient - wishing to enter any of its campuses.

NCN Health CEO, Jacque Phillips said the service is taking advice from the Department of Health and Human Services and working closely with other health services and experts.

"NCN Health is working hard to protect the health and safety of staff, residents, patients, clients and the community from the spread of coronavirus across the region," she said.

Anybody wishing to visit NDHS, for any purpose, is now required to pass through a screening point at the front end of the entrance ramp where they will be asked a series of questions and have their temperature taken.

Visitors will be denied entry if they answer yes to any of the three questions below, or if they have a temperature over 37.5 degrees, or symptoms of acute respiratory infection.

1. Have you been diagnosed with coronavirus and have not been discharged from isolation?
2. Have you arrived in Australia within the last 14 days?
3. Have you recently come into

contact with a person who has a confirmed case of coronavirus?

Ms Phillips said a pandemic plan is being implemented across Nathalia, Cobram and Numurkah campuses.

"We have vigilant infection control processes, plus we are screening patients, visitors and staff. We are also making preparations for the coming weeks and months ahead," she said.

All NCN Health campuses have also recently introduced a number of restrictions on visitors, including:

- Visitors to the hospital may stay for a maximum of 2 hours and practice social distancing of 1.5m.

- Children under the age of 16 are not permitted.

- Residential Aged Care may have two visitors per resident per day.

- Inpatient ward patients may have one visitor per patient, per day.

- Patients and residents are not permitted to go on outings with family or friends.

Visiting hours have also been changed across the three campuses, variations of which will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Visiting hours at NDHS are now 10.30am to 7pm every day, with the front entrance being closed from 5pm daily and admittance via the urgent care after hours entrance.

Time to make an advance care plan

LAST week, March 23-27 was National Advance Care Plan Week and, as numerous coronavirus cases are confirmed in regional and rural Australia, the Rural Doctors Association of Australia (RDAA) is telling older rural Australians that there has never been a better time to create an advance care plan.

An advance care directive (or plan) enables a person to plan and document - usually with their family - the extent of medical intervention they would like to receive should they be in critical care or approaching the end of their life.

The plan enables them to communicate their own wishes about their care, at a time when they may not be able to communicate themselves.

The RDAA's key message is that an advance care plan doesn't need to be complicated, but it does need to be done.

RDAA President, Dr John Hall, said that as a rural doctor, he has seen the enormous benefit to patients, their families and health professionals if they have an advance care plan to refer to.

"With coronavirus now starting to impact regional and rural Australia, it is critical that older rural Australians move as soon as possible to develop an advance care plan with their families," he said.

"We understand that these are difficult conversations for families to have, particularly at a time like this, but they are important conversations.

"It is best to discuss an advance care plan with your doctor - we recommend this is done via telehealth at the present time, to ensure you are not put at further risk of being infected with coronavirus.

"You do not need a lawyer to complete the plan.

Dr Hall said having an advance care plan in place will help fami-

lies and medical professionals to be mindful of a person's wishes should they need to be treated in hospital for COVID-19 or other complications.

"An advance care plan can let health professionals know whether they want to be put on a ventilator or life support, for example, or whether they would prefer to be kept comfortable, be given palliative care, and allowed to die with dignity. It would be a tragedy if an older patient was put through the trauma of resuscitation and ventilation when they didn't want that," he said.

"While decisions cannot always be made in line with a patient's wishes due to the availability of clinical resources and other factors, an advance care plan provides direct guidance to the health professional as to the patient's preferences for care - and this is incredibly important.

"It is important to include in the

plan the name and contact details of the person (or people) who will be your substitute decision-maker should you no longer be able to make decisions yourself.

"Forms are available to guide the content of your plan, but it does not have to be written on one of these forms (except for South Australia).

"Once it is finalised, it should be signed and dated by you (and preferably also by your substitute decision-maker and doctor). It should be given to your family, substitute decision-maker, local doctor, hospital, ambulance service and anyone else you feel is appropriate.

"Importantly, your plan can be changed at any time, but it is important you send the updated plan to all the people who received it the first time.

Find more information on Advance Care Directives at www.advancerecording.org.au.

EXCLUSIVE: World first on Katunga farm

AN incredible, world-first discovery has been made among a herd of cows on a seemingly ordinary Katunga farm, and it's set to change the face of dairying forever.

In anticipation of selling off their dairy herd, Bud and Sarah Stammers sent samples from each of their cows to a laboratory in the US for genomic testing.

The results were like nothing the testers - or any testers - had ever seen before.

Whilst a positive test for the presence of A2 protein in milk will return a result of A2/A2, 10% of the Stammers' herd returned results of A2/C3 - indicating the presence of a protein that, as far as anyone knew, didn't actually exist.

Bud told the *Leader* the laboratory technicians thought there had been a mistake.

"They retested a couple of times and the results were the same, so they brought in all new equipment and tested on that, and they were still the same," he said.

"Then they thought the samples were faulty, so we sent them new ones and those were the same too.

"Then they thought we must have been doing something to the samples so two guys flew over and took new samples and took them back to the States and re-tested them."

When the test results didn't change, the scientists were forced to admit that some of Bud's cows were producing something never seen before from that source.

The 'C' in C3 stands for cocoa - the Stammers' cows were producing chocolate milk.

"We had noticed that some of the cows had milk that came out slightly darker, but when the milk from the whole herd was mixed together there was no noticeable difference in colour or taste so we didn't really question it," Bud said.

"Now that we've isolated those cows and fine-tuned their diets to include a particular balance



Game-changing bovines and one happy farmer ... Bud Stammers and daughters Joss and Pippa enjoy the fruits of their herd's labours.

of cocoa-meal, they are very noticeably producing chocolate milk.

"It's an absolute game-changer.

"It is 100% natural, contains no added sugars, but tastes exactly like commercially mixed chocolate milk.

The Stammers still plan to sell their 'ordinary'

cows, but are not letting go of their chocolate ones.

"We've had some unbelievable offers from farmers and companies wanting either the cows themselves or their genetic products for breeding, but at this stage we're keeping them all to ourselves."

"We're investing in a pasteurisation plant so that we can process the milk ourselves and sell directly to retailers, it's really exciting."

"We've got absolutely no idea how it happened, how or why these cows are different, but we're absolutely stoked."

Happy April Fool's day everyone!

REVIEW Netflix and what the?

WITH even the most social of butterflies forced to stay at home at the moment, the television has never been a more valuable source of entertainment.

Fortunately, streaming services - which provide instant access to a huge array of movies and TV series - are now a thing and there is plenty to choose from.

But who hasn't done the thing where they spend so long flicking through the available options that they no longer have time to actually watch something before bed?

The *Leader* can solve that problem for you right now with just two words: Tiger King.

Okay, so it's official title is actually Tiger King: Murder, Mayhem and Madness - which is a very accurate description of the seven episode docu-series - but you get our drift.

If you're not among the million plus people who have already discovered the Tiger King, you are in for an absolute treat.

The Tiger King of the title is Joe Exotic, a man with 227 tigers, a unique world view and a pen-

chant for carrying a gun and filming every thing he does every day.

Joe's nemesis is animal activist Carole Baskin, who may just be as shady as he is, but in a more socially acceptable way.

Just when you think you've got your head around who these two - and the supporting cast of variously dubious peeps - are, and what they're up to, a twist comes along that makes you question everything you thought you knew.

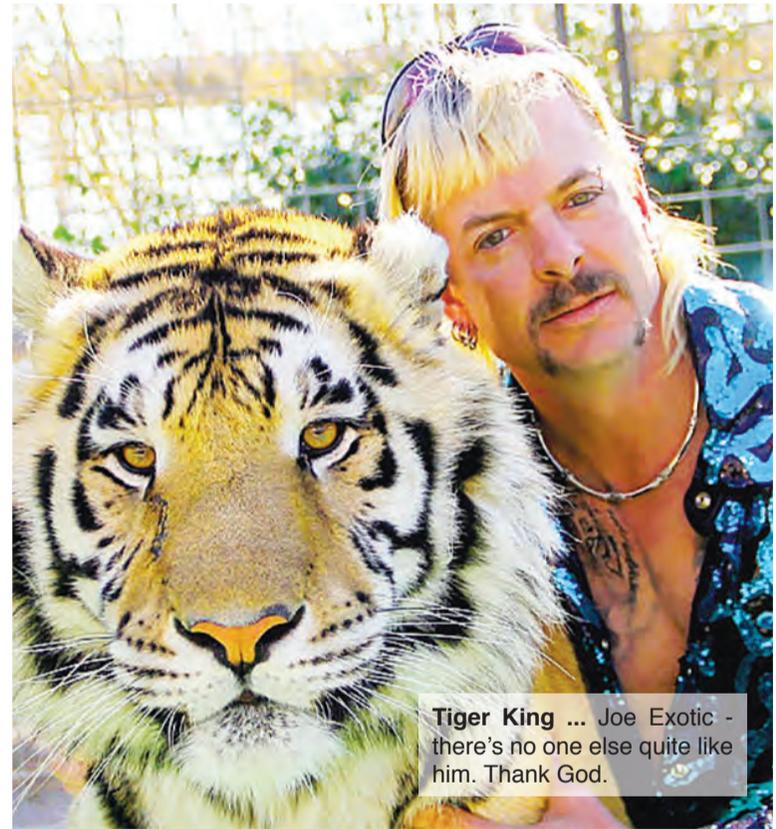
Murder, mayhem and madness ensue.

That's all I'm telling you - this is one you have to see for yourself to believe.

Tiger King is absolute escapism - a tale which will take you so thoroughly into a world you never knew existed, and away from the modern horror show that is the nightly news, that no matter what you think of the cast of dubious characters, you will be thankful for their existence.

And more thankful they don't live anywhere near you.

Enjoy!



Tiger King ... Joe Exotic - there's no one else quite like him. Thank God.

Trades & Services

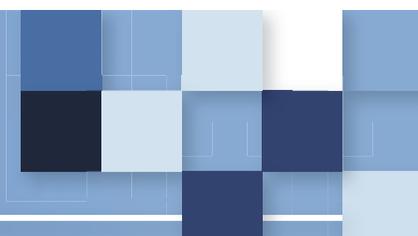
GEOFF EDDY BUILDER
Buildings & Alterations of Quality Homes
Bathroom & Kitchen Renovations
MOBILE
0418 326 478
Numurkah




KRIS LEE EARTHWORKS
Numurkah Sand and Gravel
Ph: Kris - 0437 073 244 Ash - 0418 879 636
NEW LOCATION 2046 NATHALIA RD, NUMURKAH
Truck and dogs • Water truck hire • Loader hire • Road grader at 140m
1xgps • Excavator 2x20t 1x30t gps • White rock • Cream and red granite
• Hill rock • 20mm - 40mm brown rock • Blue rock (various sizes) •
Stone dust • Washed pebbles (various sizes) • Agg rock and Septic
rock • Garden topsoil • Packing sand • Lawn sand • Washed river sand •
Commix • Compost • Mulch and barks

Numurkah Building & Plumbing P/L
Reg No DBU24094
Specialising in:
• New Homes • Pergolas • Reroofing
Specialising in septic systems
ONE CALL DOES IT ALL
Matt: 0407 046 331 Phil: 0419 360 905
Mark: 0427 646 231

Numurkah LEADER Classifieds



PUBLIC NOTICES

St Vincent de Paul Conference Numurkah

The following new arrangements apply for people needing assistance commencing Friday, 27th March, 2020.

- We are no longer permitted to conduct person to person interviews.
- Please either phone 5862 2650 and leave a message or email numurkah.conf@svdp-vis.org.au if you need assistance.
- your message must state -
 - Full name
 - Phone number
 - Are you an existing client or new client

You will be phoned back on Monday or Friday between 10am and 10.30am to make necessary arrangements.

SITUATIONS VACANT



CASUAL SCHOOL BUS DRIVER

20 hours per week (school terms) with opportunity for extra work. Prefer person with relevant licences, Victorian Drivers Certificate and Working With Children Card. Above award wages and excellent working conditions. Immediate start. **Ph. 03 5872 1800 to apply or for more information.**



NCN Health has the following vacancies:

Food Services

Assistant

Numurkah Campus
Casual

Housekeeper

Numurkah Campus
Casual

Nurse Unit Manager (Acute Ward)

Cobram Campus
1.0 EFT - Full Time Permanent

Associate Nurse Unit Manager (Aged Care)

Numurkah Campus
0.7 EFT - Part Time Permanent

Visit our website for further information including position descriptions, contact details, closing dates and the application process.

www.cobramdistricthealth.org.au

PUBLIC NOTICES



Classified Line Ads:
12 noon Tuesday

Display Ads:
Bookings by
12 noon Monday

Ph: 5862 1034
88 Melville St Numurkah

THANKS

NUMURKAH 2020 GOULBURN VALLEY BEEF FESTIVAL

The President, Bev Patrick and Members of the Committee of the Numurkah Agricultural and Pastoral Society Inc., would like to extend to their Sponsors, Donors, Volunteers, Exhibitors and all who attended, their sincere thanks for making the 2020 Inaugural Goulburn Valley Autumn Beef Festival so successful.

The support we received for this Show endorsed our decision to conduct this specialised event and we will be looking positively towards 2021. We hope to see you all again next year.

Sue Aldridge, Secretary

FOR SALE

REAL. CUSTOM. SHEDS.

Looking for a custom built shed... Give Telfords a call today.



Shepparton (Head Office)
(03) 5821 4399
telfords.com.au



TENDERS



C050/19

Detailed Design of Yarrowonga Library, Events and Performance Precinct

Tender closes 4pm Wednesday
29 April 2020

Specification documents can be obtained by visiting www.moirá.vic.gov.au/our-council/tenders

All submissions are to be lodged electronically. Late, hard copy, e-mailed or facsimile submissions will not be accepted. *Lowest or any tender not necessarily accepted.*

Mark Henderson
Chief Executive Officer

IN MEMORIAM

CHANDLER — Fiona Louise.
22.5.73 ~ 5.4.92
Aged 18 years
28 years have passed since you were tragically taken with Susan. We all miss you so much, our beautiful Fiona.
Loved forever.
Mum, Scott, Ross and Ainsley.

COMENSOLI — Leslie John
"Lucky"
12.5.1935 — 29.3.2020
Late of Strathmerton. Passed away at G.V. Health, Shepparton. Aged 84 years. Loving father of Irene, Brenda and Keith (dec.). Grandfather of 4 and great grandfather of 3.
Rest in Peace.

Due to the Coronavirus a private cremation will occur, a public memorial service will be arranged at a later date.

Brian Walsh
Funerals
51 Broadway Street
Cobram
03 58711499

FUNERAL NOTICES

PRINGLE (Lawless) — Wendy. Due to the government's new health restrictions, Wendy's funeral service was cancelled on Thursday, March 26, 2020. Our family will hold a celebration of Wendy's life at a later date.

Privately cremated



FUNERAL DIRECTORS



Classifieds

03 5862 1034

DEATHS

GREALY (Land) — Margaret Ellen (Peggy).
9.1.1925 - 23.3.2020
Passed away peacefully at Pioneer's Memorial Lodge, Numurkah. Loving wife of Cliff (dec.). Loved mother of Marilyn (dec.), Jim and Bambi (dec.). Adored Grandma to Danielle, Andre, Adam, Jane, and William. Great Grandma to 11.

We miss you heaps, our hearts are sore, As time goes on, we miss you more. Your loving smile, your beautiful face, No-one can fill your vacant space. We cannot bring the old day back, or try to change what's been done, But we know in our hearts, you will always be number one.

A private service for Margret (Peggy) was held at Numurkah Lawn Cemerty on Monday, March 30, 2020.

A big thank you to the staff at Pioneers Memorial Lodge for your wonderful care and support to Margaret (Peggy).



FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Peter Cox & Sons Funeral Directors P/L

Cnr Meiklejohn and Quinn Sts., Numurkah
CARING, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE,
TAILORED TO YOUR NEEDS

Phone 5862 3047
24 hours - 7 days a week

TUTTLES

— FUNERAL SERVICES —
Phone 1300 858 333

Caring 24 hour service

Inc. Binger & Tuttle, Limbrick & Tuttle, Numurkah Funeral Services

DEATHS

HENDY — Kyllie Maree (nee Paterson). It's with great sadness and heartache that we announce the passing of Kyllie Hendy (Paterson). Passed away on March 28th, 2020. Aged 25 years. Loving wife of Nathaniel and mother of Odin, beloved daughter of Darryl Paterson and Tere Paterson, and favourite sister of Donnelle Paterson. Loving daughter-in-law of Graeme and Margo Hendy.

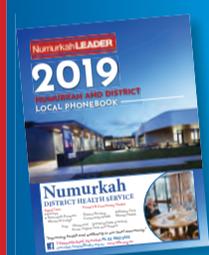
The Hendy and Paterson family thank you for all your love and support during this time.

Sadly, due to COVID-19, there will not be a public funeral service but we will hold a private family service to celebrate the life of Mrs Kyllie Hendy.

Please remember although we would love to see people at this time, please respect the current lockdown laws enforced, isolation rules and social distancing to keep our family and community safe.

Brian Walsh
Funerals
51 Broadway Street
Cobram
(03) 5871 1499

Have your Local Phone Book details changed?



Please let us know before this year's edition so that we can ensure that all the information is correct

Numurkah LEADER
88 Melville Street
Ph 5862 1034
printads@leader.net.au

Numurkah LEADER

Leader photos available for purchase in full colour

Phone 5862 1034
88 Melville St
Numurkah

TROPHIES & ENGRAVING
NUMURKAH LEADER

Sometimes, you've just gotta do it

by "Bev Hutchins"

WITH no sport to report on in this world gone mad, it was with some delight that I spotted an email on Monday morning headed "Chick run results".

Now, that may not mean much to most of you, but the email contained a spreadsheet attachment with the results of the Numurkah women golfers' nine hole competition.

Each week of the summer season, everyone who played received one point, and there were points for winning, coming runner-up, or winning a nearest the pin.

But my elation soon turned to disappointment, when I noticed my name at the top of the list. Damn!

Why was I not happy to win? In any other circumstances I would have been delighted, but I really wanted a sport story to include in this week's edition.

If it was anyone else ... but I couldn't write a whole story just about myself winning something as unimportant as this., even though it was two-in-a-row for me.

As I lay awake in bed at 5am on Tuesday, the concerns I had been having at work the previous afternoon soon filled my thoughts. I don't think we can fit everything we have for this week's paper into the current layout. But could we go an extra four pages?

Well, desperate times call for desperate measures, and I found myself sitting at the breakfast table writing a story in my head.

When I got to work and Dominique, our journalist, also voiced her opinion that we needed to go extra pages, it was done.

And so, the story goes...

For those of you who don't know, I'm a fanatical golfer, so I always have a head start in this event, seeing as I accumulate a point every time I play, and something awful has to happen to stop me heading out on a Thursday after work, or even early in the morning, if the weather forecast is too hot to allow play after 10am.

I got off to a great start, while I was managing to play some good golf, and led at the Christmas break by six shots, sitting on 30 points, ahead of Merren Carr, 24, Jeanette Adams, 23, and Lorraine Craig, 21. Note, I hadn't missed a game at that point, along with Lorraine Craig and Kath Hepworth.

By the end of February, Merren Carr had made gains on my lead, not helped by my having missed a game somewhere in that time, and now trailed me by just two points, me on 35 and Merren 33.

Gayle Smith had become comfortable with a golf club in her hands, and now sat in third spot with 32 points, one ahead of Nola Dalton.

But the wheels had well and truly fallen off my golf buggy (or my game to be more precise) while I tried to reinvent my swing - why I had to tinker with it when it seemed to be working okay, I will never know.

My regular playing partner Nola Dalton was showing some great form, as was Gayle, and I knew I had let the voucher slip out of my hand.

Well, until Coronavirus hit, that is.

With the final round called off last Thursday, I managed to finish just one point ahead of Nola and Gayle. Jeanette Adams and Merren Carr both finished a further two points behind, with 34 points.



Kath Hepworth won the attendance prize, playing 21 games, while I was

next, missing two rounds. Nola and Gayle were very unlucky not to win, as both were coming home with a full head of steam, but will both take home a runner-up voucher, when

we are eventually allowed back on the course and in the clubhouse. Maybe we need to pool our winnings and divide them up between the three of us. Now there's an idea.



Golf's premiership side ... (From left): Yvonne Clark, Jan Niven, Lyn Browning, Linda Isted, Katrina Glover, Joe Luci, Des Staggard, Robyn Hodgkin, Kaye Hocking, Jenny Sutcliffe, Butch Browning, Ian Hocking, Loris Houlihan.

Golfers finish off a great season

THE season just finished couldn't have been much more successful for the Numurkah Golf and Bowls Club's lady bowlers.

The club's midweek pennant sides (which are made up mostly of the lady bowlers) both made finals, and the division one side took out the ultimate prize.

The Golfers finished the season on top of the ladder, with only one defeat against their name for the season, and went into the final against Barooga quietly confident, with wins in both of their encounters during the season.

New bowler to the club, Linda Isted, almost

made a clean sweep of the club events, winning the club championship over previous winner Loris Houlihan.

Linda also won the 100 up event, defeating Yvonne Clark in the final, and paired up with Helen Pickersgill to take out the club pairs event. Lorraine Milner and Marie Ryan were the runners-up.

Kaye Hocking won the ladies' 21 up event, winning a close match against Katrina Glover in the final.

Jan Niven paired up with Gary Edis to win the club's mixed pairs over Lyn Browning and Allan Newby.

Keeping things small

WITH just two teams entered into Murray Bowls Division pennant in season 2019/20, Nathalia didn't have a lot to report when contact by the *Leader* for comment on its season.

The club's two sides were both in division two, one in

the midweek competition, and one on Saturdays.

The Friday side finished just out of the finals, in fifth place on the ladder, while the Saturday team finished sixth.

Club secretary Geoff Ward said they only ran a small

number of club events this season.

Bev Hutchins won the ladies' championship, and Ian Bolton took out the men's event.

Bolton paired up with Ash Hutchins to win the men's pairs.

Good bowls season for Golf

NUMURKAH Golf and Bowls Club has enjoyed a fairly successful 2019-20 bowls season.

The club made a bold decision to field a third side in division four of Murray Bowls Division pennant, in addition to the division one and three sides.

While the fours narrowly missed the finals, they did provide a game of pennant to a number of players who would otherwise have missed out.

Division one finished third on the ladder at the end of the home and away season, with some admirable performances. A solid first semi-final win against a Finley RS side suffering from the loss of popular player David Polkinghorne was followed by a less than acceptable performance against Wunghnu in the preliminary final.

Division three finished in second spot on the ladder, but went out in straight sets, losing narrowly to Jerilderie in the second semi-final, then to eventual premier, Wunghnu, in the preliminary final.

At the beginning of the season there was con-

siderable anxiety about the ability of the club to be competitive, so the eventual outcome was a pleasant surprise. A great deal of credit must go to the positive attitude of club coach, Mark Jones, and his helpers.

Mark had a remarkable season in club events, with wins in the club championship over three-time champion Ian Hocking, the 21 up over Ron Pickersgill and the Silver Shoes pairs, with Sid Roughsedge, defeating Geoff Sutcliffe and Gary Edis in the final.

Gary Edis gained a little revenge, partnering Jan Niven to the mixed pairs championship with a win over Jones and Gayle Smith in the final match of a four game points event. Allan Newby and Lyn Browning took the runners-up prize.

In the final event of the season, the 100 up, Mark again featured in the final, this time lowering his colours to previous three-time winner, Jack Dell.

All in all, the club had a successful season on and off the greens, and is looking forward to the resumption of play when this virus is defeated.



Remarkable ... Mark Jones proved a terrific asset to the Numurkah Golf and Bowls Club's bowls division, and had a very successful season himself.

LOCAL SPORTING LEGENDS

Getting to know our local sporting greats

HERE at the *Leader* we know that for those who start reading the newspaper from the back page, the cancellation of sporting competitions locally, nationally and globally has hit hard. With little to no sport being played

live, there is little to nothing new to report - but that doesn't mean there's nothing at all to report sports-wise. Scratch the surface, and the Numurkah district has a large number of seemingly ordinary residents who have achieved remarkable things in

a wide variety of sporting fields. From today, the *Leader* speaks to one such local each week - at least until sport starts back up. After all, just because we can't get together for a chat doesn't mean we can't get to know each a bit better.

Just a good ordinary footballer

LEIGH Robertson played on some 'fabulous' players in his VFL career and he could beat most of them at times, but there was one he never could - Alex Jesaulenko.

"He was so skilled, and he was like a cat - you'd run at him and he'd just turn off you and spin in mid-air. He was a fabulous fellow as well," Leigh said.

As a 'tagger' for Fitzroy Football Club between 1969 and 1974 - back when the Australian Football League was the Victorian Football League - Leigh not only got to live out his boyhood dreams, but also to follow in the footsteps of his grandfather Tom Corrigan who played in the club's 1922 winning premierships team.

"I grew up footy mad and Fitzroy mad. I grew up in West Heidelberg and played for Olympic Village juniors. I lived and ate football - I couldn't get enough of it," he said.

Leigh got his chance to step up to the next level when, aged 16, he was invited to join Fitzroy's pre-season training by a second cousin who was playing with their thirds.

When the first game of the year rolled around, Leigh turned up to watch even though he wasn't selected in the team. Keen as could be, Leigh took his gear with him just in case.

"One of the players turned up late and the coach asked if any of us had brought our gear and I put my hand up. I got two kicks and my opponent got none."

When the game was over, the coach told Leigh that he had done well but was too young, and should keep training with the team but playing for Olympic Village.

Despite that, and still aged just 16, by mid-season Leigh was regularly taking to the field as part of Fitzroy thirds.

"Because I was training with the team I got better and better, so they started giving me a game," he said.

"I played in the grand final that year where we got beaten by Richmond by five points."

By the following year, as a year 11 student, Leigh was also getting games with the reserves, and played with them right throughout year 12.

The following year, Leigh became the first member of his family to attend university, studying Physical Education at university alongside other VFL players and elite sportsmen from disciplines as diverse as javelin, shot-put and water-polo.

Unfortunately, a Saturday morning physics class meant he was unable to play for the reserves, but, aged just 18, was still able to play for the thirds in the afternoon.

Before long, Leigh moved up to the seniors and was a member of the Fitzroy team which played Geelong in the very first game at the purpose-built VFL Park in Waverley.

"Each of the players and coaches got given a souvenir ball - they only made 42 of them so it's pretty special," he said.

Leigh played 76 games for the firsts, and could have gone further - he would like to have made it to 100 - but for a range of circumstances conspiring against him in 1974.

"I didn't have a magnificent year that year and only played about four senior games, although I did play in the winning reserves premierships team," he said.

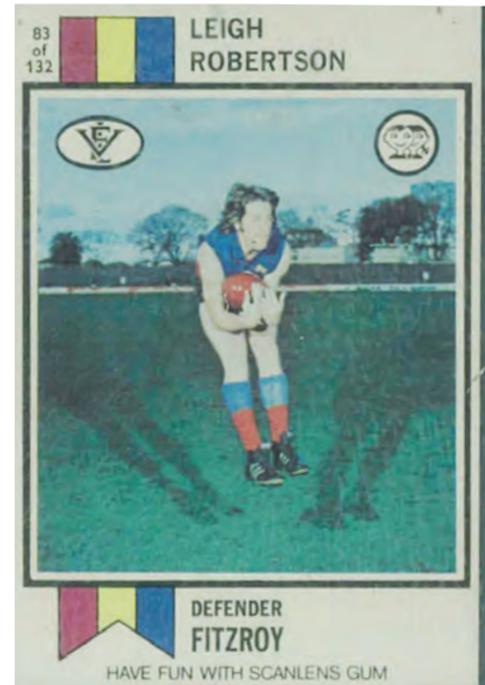
"I kept feeling sick with an upset stomach for months, and they were also forming the players association at the time and I was very active in that. I was the representative for Fitzroy which made me pretty unpopular with some of the



In his prime ... Leigh Robertson in his playing days.



Dreaming of the big game ... A young Leigh Robertson was football mad and dreaming of playing for Fitzroy one day.



Piece of history ... As a VFL player, Leigh Robertson had his own collectible card.

management, including the coach, who didn't like me at all."

One night after the season ended, Leigh's health issues came to a head.

"I felt really ill and I rang up my dad to come and take me to hospital and when we got there we found out my appendix had burst.

"Mum and dad were beside themselves because my grandfather who had also played for Fitzroy had died of a burst appendix."

Having recovered, Leigh started the next season by forging another link with his grandfather - he went to play and coach for second division club Northcote, who Tom had also played for.

But Leigh didn't stay out of hospital for long.

"I loved it at Northcote but the VFA was very rough. I ended up in hospital three or four times because I was the key player so I was always getting targeted. I got king hit so hard once that I nearly lost the sight in one eye."

After a couple of years at Northcote, Leigh

went to play for Coburg for two years, but his career ended at the age of 28 with a busted knee.

"In those days if you did a knee, and did it badly, that was the end of you."

In an era when even the top footballers had day jobs, Leigh had been working as a PE teacher around Melbourne for years before his football career ended.

Deciding that it was time to move his young family out of the city, Leigh applied for positions at 17 schools across the state. He was appointed to number 17 on the list - Numurkah High School.

"When I told my dad we were moving to Numurkah he started crying. I didn't realise it but my dad had spent a bit of time in Numurkah as a kid - my Aunt Patty and Melva McPherson are cousins.

"Our family selected in Numurkah in 1870, so we go right back here. My dad thought it was fantastic that we were coming, and coming to a

LOCAL SPORTING LEGENDS

country town was the best decision I ever made. I've never regretted it."

Not long after arriving in town, Leigh received a phone call from Numurkah coach Tony Morris, who had heard on the grapevine that an ex VFL footballer was coming to town.

"My wife and I thought being part of the footy club would be a good way into the town so I joined the match committee.

"After a couple of years Strathmerton approached me to coach, so I did.

"I absolutely loved it - it was a great community footy club. We only won one game that year - against Numurkah at Numurkah and they hated it.

"I played and coached and I loved it, but I but left after a year. I told them they needed a young player/coach - I was just too old."

With that, Leigh's football career was finally and officially over and he took up recreational golf.

Ultimately, although there are things he would

like to have achieved that he didn't, he has no regrets.

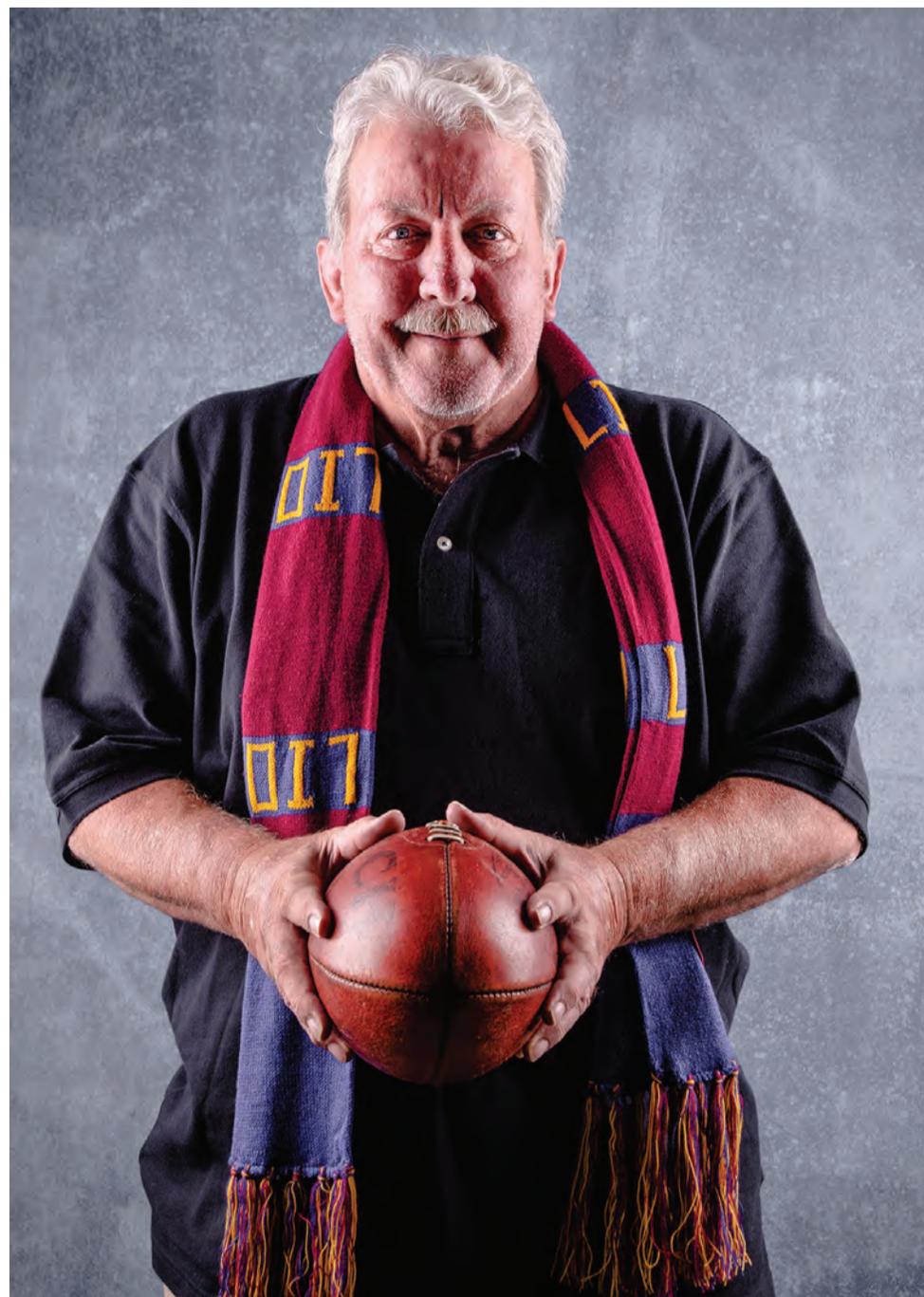
"I'd like to have played 100 senior games but I know, just in playing at that level, I achieved something a lot of people would want to do," he said.

"When I was a kid I wanted to be Kevin Murray, and I got to play with him. He won the Brownlow Medal in 1969 - the first year I played seniors. My locker was three away from his in the locker room and he was the first senior player who really welcomed me and he gave me a lot of support when we were setting up the union. He was my idol and just knowing him was an honour, let alone playing with him.

"I got to do a lot of things and meet a lot of people I never would have dreamed I would.

"Jack Dyer commented on me once as a 'good ordinary footballer' and I thought that was fair enough.

"I was happy with that."



Interesting story ...Did you know that Leigh Robertson had played 76 games with Fitzroy?



On the cusp ... This photo of Leigh Robertson and former member for Benalla Bill Sykes days before they both played their first game for Fitzroy appeared on the back page of *The Age*.



DONT MISS OUT ON YOUR LOCAL NEWS

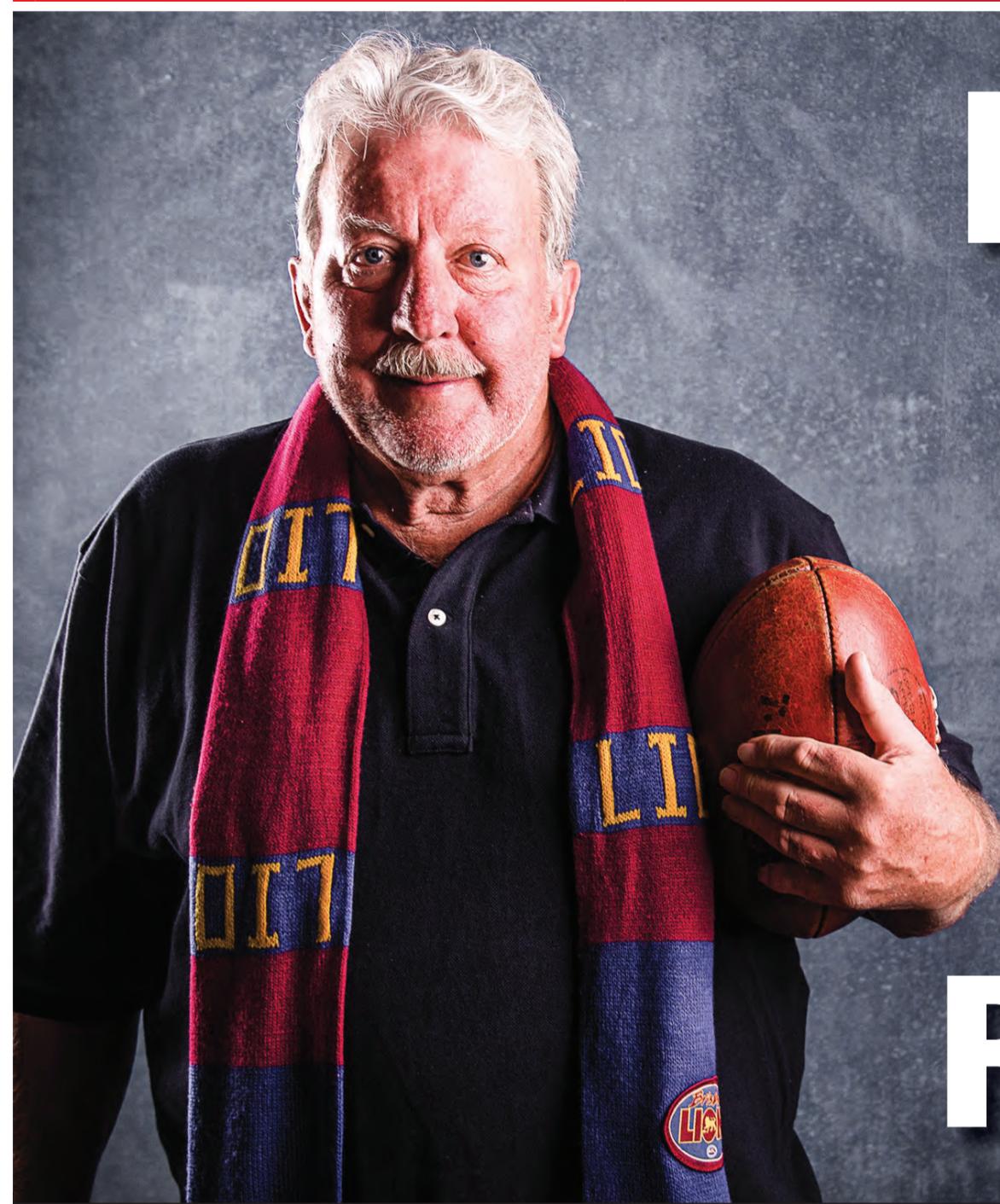
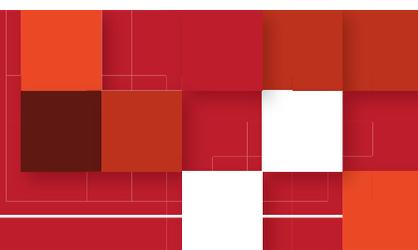
SUBSCRIBE

ONLINE TODAY

www.numurkahleader.net.au

1 month \$5.95 12 months \$54.95

Numurkah LEADER



DID YOU KNOW THIS ABOUT ROBBO?

LEIGH Robertson played on some 'fabulous' players in his VFL career and he could beat most of them at times, but there was one he never could - Alex Jesaulenko ... *Story pages 14 and 15.*

OUR DOORS WILL BE CLOSED

AS OF 12 NOON WEDNESDAY

The Numurkah Leader will be running from behind closed doors due to COVID-19
For all enquiries, ad bookings and classifieds, and our printing, photo and engraving services

please contact us via phone or email
5862 1034 printads@leader.net.au