

established 1895

Numurkah LEADER

WEDNESDAY, MAY 13, 2020 \$1.30

INSIDE



A cuppa with Lorna

See story page 12&13



Numurkah gets tested

See story page 5

Katunga crash



IT was a miracle there were no life-threatening injuries when these two cars collided at Katunga on Sunday morning. See story page 2.

22 years for Strathy murder

STRATHMERTON man Robert Strucelj has been sentenced to 22 years jail for the murder of Peter James Doyle at Strathmerton in January 2018.

The sentence was handed down at the Supreme Court in Shepparton last Friday, almost a year to the day after Strucelj was found guilty of one count of murder by a jury in the same court, following a trial in which he pleaded not guilty, claiming that he had acted in self defence.

The sentencing judge, Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth Hollingworth, ordered that 48 year-old Strucelj serve at least 18 years before being eligible for parole.

Strucelj fatally stabbed 32 year-old Mr Doyle, from Bearii, at 1.40am on January 8, 2018, at a property at Williams Road Strathmerton.

Mr Doyle was stabbed when he intervened in an altercation between his friend Adrian Walley, who was a tenant at the property, and Strucelj.

Continued page 5.

Restrictions eased - but only a little

VICTORIANS are breathing a sigh of relief this morning as an easing of some COVID-19 restrictions came into effect as of 11.59pm last night.

Though Victorians are still being urged to stay at home for the most part, we are now allowed to have five visitors to those homes at any one time, and gather in groups of up to 10 people for any purpose outdoors - as long as we maintain social distancing.

The big winners are those who have been chaffing against the ban on fishing and golfing, as well as those hold-

ing a wedding or funeral.

Though club rooms will remain closed, golfers can again take to the green in groups of four or less, and fishers can cast a line in groups of no more than 10 - once again at a safe social distance.

Weddings will now be allowed to consist of the couple plus celebrant and up to 10 guests, whilst funerals can now have up to 20 mourners if held indoors, plus those required to conduct the funeral, or up to 30 mourners if held outdoors.

JSI

AUTOMOTIVE

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Details page 9

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A message from Moira Shire mayor Libro Mustica

THE COVID-19 pandemic is continuing and I would like to congratulate our local residents who have played their part by staying at home.

We understand these are tough times, and we are encouraging individuals and businesses to call us so we can work through the options together.

Payment arrangements for rates are available, so just call our friendly customer service team.

Our COVID-19 financial hardship policy is just one of many initiatives we have put in place and this policy applies to all rateable properties within the shire.

We are not charging user fees to all sporting clubs that use municipal land or buildings and whose seasons have been affected by this health

crisis.

The rent for the June quarter has also been waived for enterprises that operate from council owned or managed land which have been affected by the enforced business closures.

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.

We are hoping the state and federal governments 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.

We are continuing to assist food, public health

and accommodation businesses during this difficult period.

Our environmental health officers are providing advice on implementing good hygiene practices for businesses that have transitioned from eat-in to take away food establishments, and continue to deliver other crucial public health services including food safety and public health matters, food sampling, food recalls, domestic wastewater management and investigations of foodborne and infectious disease outbreaks.

We are also speaking with all food, public health and accommodation businesses about announcements and directions made by the Federal and Victorian governments which impact on their business operations.

We are all in this together - stay safe.

Fuel and vehicle thefts across the district

THERE has been a spate of thefts and attempted thefts of and from vehicles across the district in the past week, as well as some actual, and attempted, thefts of fuel.

A silver Fairlane sedan, registration TJJ 351, was stolen from an address in Wasers Rd, Strathmerton between May 5 and 7, and has since been used in petrol drive-offs at service stations in Tallygaroopna and Strathmerton.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Leading Senior Constable Warr at Cobram police station.

At around 1.10pm on Friday, witnesses observed two males in a quarry off Hancocks Bridge Rd, Kotupna, one of whom was attempting to steal fuel from a prime mover, whilst the other was attempting to steal batteries from an excavator.

The witnesses began driving towards the men, who then got in their vehicle and attempted to drive away.

As the two offenders attempted to drive past the witnesses the two vehicles collided. As a result of the collision, the offenders' front bumper was ripped off and left at the scene. The offenders then continued driving away, apparently having failed to steal anything from the scene.

At approximately 11.15am on Tuesday, May 5, an offender drove his vehicle into a private property located on Singapore Road, Muckatah. It appears the offender may have initially

POLICE BEAT

entered the property with the intent to steal fuel, however was disturbed by a witness who saw the vehicle at the property.

The offender has then stolen a red and white dirt bike from the address and taken off, leaving his vehicle behind.

Police attended a short time later and processed the scene, towing the offender's vehicle away. The stolen dirt bike was located undamaged at a property in Waaia the following day although it had been spray painted.

Approximately \$200 worth of damage was done to a rear door at Capri Pizza in Numurkah during an attempted burglary overnight last Wednesday.

Offenders ripped open metal mesh on the door of the shop to gain access to the door handle, but did not manage to gain access to the shop.

Residents are being reminded to lock their vehicles, after a spate of thefts from vehicles in McGregor Street, Numurkah last Wednesday night.

A jerry can of fuel was stolen from the back of a ute, and around \$10 in change was stolen from another vehicle. The owner of a third vehicle only became aware that their car had been accessed when they received a call from their bank reporting suspicious credit card activity the following day.

Two unsuccessful attempts to steal vehicles were also made.

Collisions cause damage and injury

A DRIVER was temporarily trapped in their vehicle on Sunday, following a two car collision at the intersection of Spences and Labuan Roads, Katunga at around 11.45am.

It is believed that the driver of a Toyota wagon travelling east on Spences Road failed to give way at the intersection, clipping the front driver side of a silver Commodore sedan travelling south on Labuan Road, causing the Commodore to flip over an irrigation channel.

The driver of the Commodore was trapped in their vehicle for a short time, before being freed by members of the Numurkah SES unit.

The air ambulance attended the scene but was not required, and both drivers were taken to Goulburn Valley Health with non life-threatening injuries, and kept overnight for observation.

Two pre-school aged children who were passengers in the Toyota were taken to GV Health by a family member who attended the scene following the incident.

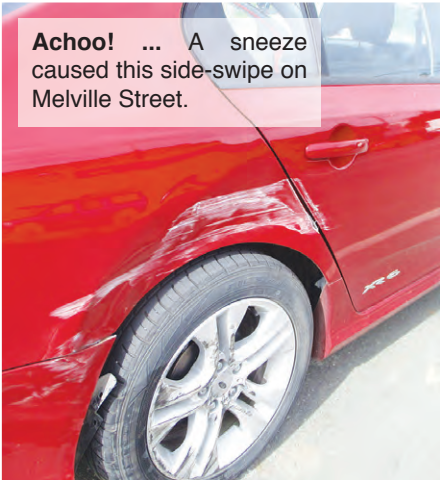
The fire brigade also attended.

Police are also seeking any witnesses to a collision between a silver Mitsubishi sedan and a gold Torago at the intersection of Tweddle and Exhibition Streets, Numurkah at around 3.20pm last Wednesday, May 6. Anyone with information is asked to contact Leading Senior Constable Damien Duggan at Numurkah police station.

The driver of a Ford Falcon parked on Melville Street at lunchtime last Thursday received a nasty fright when his vehicle was side swiped by a large white ute with a bull-bar.

The driver of the ute said their vehicle lurched into the Ford when they sneezed unexpectedly.

Nobody was injured in the incident, and it was not reported to the police.



Letter to the Editor

Now's the time to be RV friendly

WE all should congratulate the Numurkah Caravan Park for its clean amenities, friendly service and beautifully kept grounds, a perfect location alongside the Broken Creek and only a couple of minutes from the main street.

If I was choosing a caravan park to stay at, it ticks all the boxes.

But there are many who prefer to free camp, especially those who are totally self contained (water, toilet and electricity), prefer the solitude of free camping, are on the road for months at a time and cannot justify the cost of caravan parks every night.

The status of RV friendly and free camping was removed by the Moira Shire a few years ago. But to travellers who wish to free camp, Numurkah is now considered to be an RV unfriendly town and are not welcome.

When COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, assuming that overseas travel will be banned for the next year or two, Numurkah and other rural towns have a fantastic opportunity to recover and boom during the forecast recession.

Those who previously travelled overseas, the retired who cruised, baby boomers, grey haired nomads and families will all be travelling around Australia. We would be very foolish not to take advantage, it will be huge.

The Numurkah Caravan Park will be booked to the max even with free camping. The pubs, supermarkets, chemists, gift shops, clothing, sporting stores, garages, tyres service and cafes will all benefit and recover with the influx of visitors to Numurkah.

I ask Numurkah residents to support for the reinstatement of an RV friendly town. Take away the invisible sign saying RVs unwelcome.

Dianne Hill
Numurkah

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Numurkah Secondary College

Our kids, our community, our school



We commit to giving every child every chance to develop their skills and talents.

We are passionate about providing every opportunity for our students.

We exist to change lives for the students in our community.



We are focused on building community

Check out our **Facebook page** to see for yourself: facebook.com/NumurkahSecondaryCollege

Talented staff for talented students Meet some of our team...



Amber Bock

Performing Arts & Alternative Pathways Program Teacher

- Leadership Development Program, Teach For Australia
- Bachelor of Performing Arts (Hons), Monash University
- Diploma of Languages (German) at Monash University
- 5 years' experience working in theatre in Melbourne and Adelaide
- Personal Trainer, Yoga Instructor, and Running Coach, Vision Personal Training

"Guiding our students through their learning and seeing them become passionate about their future is what I love about NSC."



Troy Lowe

Leading Teacher, Teaching & Learning

- Teach to Lead Program, Teach for Australia
- Leadership Development Program, Teach for Australia
- Lectured and researched at KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden
- 10 years' experience at BHP and BlueScope Steel
- PhD in Physical Chemistry, University of Wollongong
- Bachelor of Science (Hons), University of Wollongong

"I want NSC students to grow into amazing adults that never give up, stand up for what they believe in, and look after others around them."



Chris Deitch

VCE Co-Leader, English & Humanities Teacher

- Teaching for Understanding, Harvard University
- Community Athletics Coach, Athletics Australia
- Leadership Development Program, Teach For Australia
- Grad. Cert. (Literature), Australian National University
- 5 years' experience in China-based startup companies
- Bachelor of Laws/Arts, University of Queensland

"I want to empower the next generation of Numurkah kids to achieve their dreams."



Anna Corazza

Technology, Arts, PE & Health KLA Leader, Teacher

- Leading Literacy, Bastow Institute of Educational Leadership
- Question Formula Technique, Harvard University
- Women in Leadership Program, NESLI
- Qualified Chef with over 10 years' experience
- Grad. Dip. (Technology Education), La Trobe University
- Leading Community Partnerships with the Numurkah Rotary Club, Soup Kitchen & Numurkah Hospital

"I enjoy helping our students develop an intrinsic motivation for learning and aspiring to be the best person they can be."



Emma O'Keeffe

Transition & Year 7 Leader, Health & PE Teacher

- Bachelor of Education (PE), University of Ballarat
- Personal Trainer and Fitness Coach
- 11-Time Australian Aerobics Champion
- Keen Sports Aerobics World Champion Competitor
- Ninja Warrior, Season 2
- AUSLAN

"After joining the NSC community last year, I've now realised I'm exactly where I'm supposed to be."

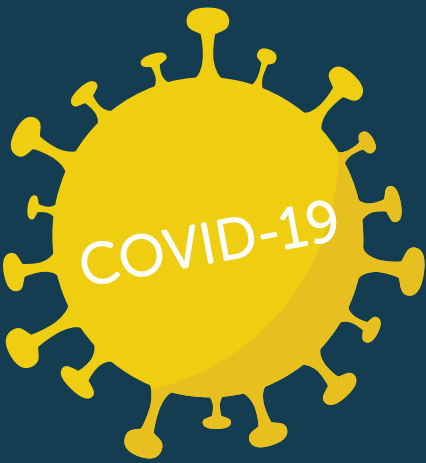


Pete Smyth

Educational Support & Sports Coordinator

- Committee Member & Former Treasurer, Numurkah Football & Netball Club
- Numurkah Business Owner, Brostace Café
- 20 years' experience as a Bank Manager with the Commonwealth Bank
- Father of three NSC alumni

"I love Numurkah Secondary College. It is our school. It is where our children were educated and an important step in their journey of becoming the next generation of Numurkah adults."



Latest Information



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

ECONOMIC SUPPORT

The COVID-19 Financial Hardship Policy is just one of many initiatives we are putting in place and will apply to all rateable properties in Moira Shire.

We are not charging user fees to sporting clubs that use municipal land and buildings whose seasons are affected.

We have also waived the rent for the June quarter on enterprises that operate from Council-owned or managed land.

We understand these are tough times, please give us a call on 5871 9222 if you would like to chat about your situation, we can work together to see what options are available



MOIRA JOBS LINK

Our Jobs Link connects job seekers to local employers. With this free online service you can advertise jobs, search and apply for local jobs, and it has a resume builder with lots of handy tips.

For more information go to our website.

DRAFT 2020/21 BUDGET



We are seeking your feedback on our draft 2020/21 Budget and Strategic Resource Plan. The draft budget contains a detailed explanation of the funding allocated to enable the delivery of more than 100 council services including rubbish collection, immunisations, sport and recreation facilities, town planning and tourism development. There is also a comprehensive list of identified capital works projects and programs encompassing maintaining and renewing roads, bridges and footpaths, sporting facilities and playgrounds, irrigation and drainage. Feedback closes 5pm Wednesday 27 May.



SHOP LOCAL, BUY LOCAL

During this unprecedented health crisis, we can all do our bit to support the local community by shopping local and even though you might not be able to 'dine out' there are multiple options for 'take away' food.

Many businesses are looking to adapt and use new ways to do business, so if you are shopping online why not try a local business first.

KEEPING SHEPPARTON PROUDLY INDEPENDENT



Corellas

Concerns raised by Moira Shire and constituents regarding the damage done by corellas to community infrastructure, particularly the Numurkah Recreation Reserve, have been brought to the attention of the Minister for the Environment Lily D'Ambrosio by my office. This is a somewhat complex issue as one of the offending species, Little Corellas, are protected under the Wildlife Act. Minister D'Ambrosio has informed me that since the Act was brought into law in the 1970s, Little Corellas have expanded their range across our state and her department is investigating the new distribution patterns which may lead to changes in control permissions. In the meantime, the Minister's department is working with the Numurkah community to explore novel non-lethal control options. I will continue to watch this issue closely and report back State Government responses.

Lower Lakes — Webinar

An investigation of the science that underpins South Australia's Lower Lakes led by the CSIRO has been finalised and the findings made available online in the form of a "webinar". This has been a controversial issue with many of my constituents asking that claims by Professor Peter Gell that the Lower Lakes natural state is saline be examined. Should Professor Gell's work be accurate, many assumptions underpinning the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and the delivery of fresh water from the Murray to South Australia need to be re-examined. I encourage all interested parties to view the finding which will be available at the website below. The same site can be used to ask questions and submit feedback between Wednesday, May 13 and Friday, May 15. mdba.gov.au/basin-plan-roll-out/monitoring-evaluation/lower-lakes-independent-science-review

Suzanna Sheed



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Suzanna Sheed MP
INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR SHEPPARTON DISTRICT

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Doing their bit ... NCN Health staff members Taylah Shanahan and Ann Padgett talk to community members Brenda and Ross Ingamells outside the pop-up testing centre on Melville Street last Friday.

Testing times as Numurkah contributes

NUMURKAH residents took part in the State Government's COVID-19 testing blitz last week, as Victorians with no, or very mild symptoms, were encouraged to get tested to add to the pool of data which would inform the government of the viral load in the community ahead of its review of stage three restrictions. While testing was conducted at the main entrance of NCN Health's Numurkah campus on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons, it also came to the CBD on Friday morning, with the community kiosk on Melville Street being transformed into a pop-up testing clinic. Across the week, approximately 180 staff and community members were tested in Numurkah, and approximately 550 staff and community members were tested across Nathalia, Cobram

and Numurkah in total. NCN Health CEO Jacque Phillips said staff were happy with the support from the community. "This is a fantastic result that will give us a great point-in-time understanding of where we are with COVID-19 cases and community transmission," she said. "We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who attended for testing, and all levels of staff who facilitated the community sessions." Ms Phillips said current advice from the government and the Department of Health and Human Services is that Victoria is scaling down asymptomatic testing, however the state is looking to take a targeted approach to high risk facilities and business.

"The end of the blitz means that testing people who do not meet the symptomatic case definition and testing criteria will cease. There may be some exceptions to this as part of targeted responses and outbreaks." Ms Phillips reminded the community that now is not the time for complacency. "As we see some restrictions easing for Victorians in the coming weeks, it will be tempting to resume life as normal. "However, we need to be vigilant and adhere to the guidelines set out by the Department of Health and Human Services and the State Government." For the latest information and updates visit the Department of Health and Human Services website: www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus.



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The Victorian Government is proudly supporting The Country Women's Association of Victoria (CWA) Drought Relief Program. The program offers payments of up to \$3000 to assist eligible farming families to pay household expenses such as food, household and medical bills.

The program is available to eligible irrigation farm businesses, including those that have transitioned from irrigation production systems to dryland production since 1 July 2018, located in the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District. For more information and to apply contact the CWA online at cwaofvic.org.au or email drought@cwaofvic.org.au. For more information about the program and other available drought support visit agriculture.vic.gov.au/dryseasons or call 136 186.



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne



22 years
for Strathy
murder

Continued from page 1. Mr Strucelj's trial heard there had been an ongoing noise dispute between himself and his neighbour Mr Walley, and that Strucelj had attended the property that night after being disturbed by noise he believed was coming from the property. Another witness who was present when the altercation occurred testified that he heard Strucelj tell Mr Walley that he had warned him about playing loud music. Strucelj told his trial that he had picked up a large knife off a boat in the carport in the property in case someone reacted badly to his presence. He said that Mr Doyle threw a punch at him, and was stabbed when Strucelj threw a punch in return, with the knife in his hand. Despite attempts by Mr Walley to save him, Mr Doyle died at the scene. After the stabbing, Strucelj ran to a friend's house and asked him to call the police before going home and drinking in his spa. During sentencing, Justice Hollingworth said that it was clear that Strucelj intended some sort of confrontation when he attended Mr Walley's property, and that he was aggressive from the beginning. Justice Hollingworth said that Strucelj has shown no remorse for his actions and continues to blame others, including Mr Doyle, for what happened. Strucelj has a history of mental health problems, as well as alcohol and drug abuse and problem gambling, and has previously spent time in prison, including for charges arising from a 1997 crash that killed his best friend.

THANK

YOU

For the way we've faced these past few weeks.
With courage. With humility. And with hope.
We've kept our distance, we've looked out for each other
and we've kept our cool.
Thank you especially to those who have been tested.
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Thanks to you, we are finding out more about the
spread of coronavirus in our community.
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Living and learning in the COVID world

THIS week’s announcement that Victorian schools will return to face-to-face learning over the next month has been welcomed joyously.

Victorian students in years prep, one, two, 11 and 12 can return to school on May 26, with all year levels back by June 9 - and it’s not a minute too soon for some.

St Joseph’s Primary School Numurkah principal Paul Arnel said the burden of combining family, home, school, and in many cases work, is beginning to take its toll.

“Everyone has certainly taken this on positively and I am so proud of how we have worked as a community to help each other, but we are all so very much looking forward to life returning to normal,” he said.

There is no denying that COVID-19 isolation has been a time of great challenge, requiring much flexibility and an ability to adapt and respond to each need as it presents.

Mr Arnel said there is no precedent for the current situation, so the response has been genuinely unique.

“The community at St Joseph’s has been resilient in responding to crisis,” he said.

“Families have rallied to support each other, while staff have stepped up to present the new world of home learning.

Like all schools, St Joe’s is very quiet at the moment, with the vast majority of children working from home, and just a skeleton staff on site to support the students whose parents are still working outside the home during school hours.

Most teachers are working from home, using online tools to meet with children and set daily tasks. Staff are then available through the day to support the kids, and parents and carers, in completing work.

Year six student Andrew Barnden said having to work from home was abrupt and sudden, and it was a change he adapted to slowly. “I was surprised to find that I missed school,” he said.

“I especially miss sport and being in the classroom. I also miss being able to mess around with my friends.

“The good thing about home school is that I can spend more time with my siblings and with my parents, but I feel that while being at home, my work isn’t as good as in the class-



Challenging but enlightening ... Leah and Eva Laidlaw working their way through the unique experience of learning and teaching from home.

room.

“I would love to go back to school and for it to be normal.”

Mr Arnel said the school community has welcomed the news of preps to year two stu-

dents returning on May 26, with years three to six joining in on June 9.

“We will surely have a more appreciative mind set about what we have taken for granted,” he said.

Three sides of the story

St Joseph’s year six student Eva Laidlaw, her mother Leah and junior school teacher Rachael Morrison offer their perspective on learning and teaching from home.

Eva

Living and learning at home has definitely been a bit different.

I’ve particularly enjoyed having online class calls with all of the senior students and teachers and not racing the clock to be out the door every morning.

I’ve enjoyed spending time with my parents and sisters - but there is such a thing as spending too much time with your family!

I’m really missing seeing in person all of my extended family and amazing friends, as well as my dance classes, netball and out-of-school activities.

This crazy time will definitely be remembered for a while to come yet!

Leah

Never did I believe I’d be able to ‘teach’ my kids or get by without regular coffee dates... but here I am after six weeks, still alive, and with some valuable lessons learnt along the way!

With three primary-schoolers learning remotely, running a business, study, a part-time job, plus all the usual commitments happening daily under one roof, it’s safe to say things have been quite challenging.

However, much greater than the challenge, has been the learning; gratitude for the small things, an enriched appreciation for our amazing school community and deeper love and appreciation for our beautiful family and friends.

Rachael

Living and learning in COVID-19 has required teachers to take our profession to new heights. In a short amount of time we have been required to adjust our thoughts and refocus our actions in order to effectively navigate a new, changing and uncertain situation. We have been flexible in our thinking about how students can learn online and how technology can be harnessed in teaching like never before. For me, maintaining strong communication with parents and carers to create a supportive online community for our students has been a key focus in supporting overall learning and wellbeing.

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SMOTA SPARK, Banding together

AS the St Mary of the Angels (SMOTA) Secondary College cohort continues to navigate the journey of online learning together, the most valuable lessons are being learnt and not all of these lessons are necessarily part of the prescribed curriculum. Together SMOTA staff, students and families are learning what community really looks like, how to cope in a time of unforeseen crisis and how to band together when things get hard to stay well and achieve set goals. St Mary of the Angels Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing and Development, John Wilkinson said, “As we approach the midpoint of the ‘Online Term’ it is essential that we take some time to disconnect, unwind, recharge and reinvigorate. For what has been a very challenging term so far, I would like to send my congratulations to all parents, carers students and staff. The way

that all have adapted, responded and worked tirelessly to ensure this term is productive; and the wellbeing of fellow community members nurtured, has truly been inspiring to observe.” St Mary of the Angels Assistant to the Principal Learning and Teaching, Bev Thorp said, “It is an absolute credit to our entire College community the way students have been managing our online learning program this term. Our staff are working extremely hard to create engaging and appropriate learning materials; we are still seeing excellent online attendance as our students have been navigating an unfamiliar learning environment, and our parents and carers have been doing an amazing job to provide wonderful support under very trying circumstances. “It has been very exciting to see so many students engaging in practical

activities while learning from home, and that learning does not only take place on their computers. Together we can ensure that our College community stays active and safe throughout this period, whilst still maintaining learning continuity. “At all times, the College is just a phone call away. Parents, students and staff working together will hold us in good stead for when we resume face to face classes.”

SMOTA launches first Careers Newsletter

THIS week St Mary of the Angels Secondary College launched the first edition of their dedicated Careers Newsletter providing regular updates on careers events and information direct to students undergoing their senior pathways. St Mary of the Angels Secondary College Careers Pathways Officer, Sherry Atkins said, “The Careers Newsletter provides further opportunities to communicate with our senior students and their families about employment opportunities, pathway options and events that may be of benefit to them in navigating their tertiary and practical career opportunities.

“An important feature of this first edition is the announcement of the ‘VCE & Beyond Virtual Careers Expo’. Each year our Year 10 students have the opportunity to attend Careers Expo and it is an invaluable opportunity to speak to industry experts and gauge opportunities that may be of interest to them. “With our current circumstances, we are thrilled that the Careers Expo will go ahead on an online platform and we encourage students and families to register.”



ENROLMENTS ARE NOW OPEN

ST Mary of the Angels (SMOTA) Secondary College welcomes current Grade 6 families to the beginning of their enrolment journey. Enrolment packs are currently being distributed directly to parents via Primary Schools in the catchment area as well as direct mail out and via the SMOTA website. Prospective families are invited to get in touch if they have any questions and later in the year we hope to offer a number of mini Open Day experiences at the College to answer any questions which families may have. Details of these events will be published once there is more certainty in the coming months. Enrolments close on Friday, 26th of June 2020. Scholarship applications are also now open and must be submitted prior to Monday, 1st of June 2020. For more information, parents can contact St Mary of the Angels Secondary College on (03) 5866 2222, email principal@smotanathalia.catholic.edu.au or via our website www.smotanathalia.catholic.edu.au

Come and explore your opportunities



ENROLMENTS ARE NOW OPEN

Enrolment Closing Date: Friday, 26th of June 2020

Scholarships are now available
Scholarship Application Closing Date:
Monday, 1st of June 2020

For an enrolment pack, enquire at:
St Mary of the Angels Secondary College, Ph: 03 5866 2222
Email: principal@smotanathalia.catholic.edu.au
Or visit us at www.smotanathalia.catholic.edu.au
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It's all go and grow at JSI Auto

WITH the range of services they offer growing all the time - and the demand for their services growing along with it - Numurkah's JSI Automotive are very glad to have had a large empty shed right next door.

Justin McGraw, who owns and runs the business alongside wife Kerri, said it has made expanding the business much easier.

"It's meant we've been able to do things pretty seamlessly," he said.

"We've started doing wheel alignments, which meant bringing in new equipment, so we didn't have to worry about crowding the existing workshop, and it's given us scope to expand into other things as well."

As an essential service, JSI has continued operating throughout the restriction period, adding a range of measures to protect themselves and their customers in the current conditions.

"We sanitise the workshop regularly, as well as all the vehicles we work on," Kerri said.

"We're also happy to pick up and drop off vehicles for anyone who prefers not to leave home."

JSI has been more grateful than ever for the extra space in the past week, as locals booked their vehicles in for servicing ahead of anticipated easing of restrictions.

Those vehicles haven't just been cars either - the JSI team has been kept busy working on cars, motorbikes, caravans, trailers and even boats.

"The work has been across the board really," Justin said.

"From brakes and wheel bearings on caravans and trailers, to engine work on boats - on top of the usual warranty servicing and other work on cars - the extra space has been essential."

"Because we do everything now - batteries, tyres, accessory fitting, you name it - it was definitely time to grow."

There is one project very close to the hearts of the JSI team that they recently finished but haven't yet been able to test - and they are chomping at the bit to do so.

"We'd been building a race car for around 18 months, fitting the work in after hours, and we'd just finished it, four days ahead of the first race, then all of the races were cancelled," Justin said.

"We can't wait to get it on the speedway track and test it out, but that will come."

In the meantime, the team has plenty to keep it busy - including one job they haven't quite had time for yet.

"We haven't had a chance to paint the new shed purple to match the other workshop, but we'll get there."



Busy team with their new toy ... Tristan McGraw, Nathan James, Wayde Little, Zoe, Kerri and Justin McGraw at their purple, and not yet purple, workshops.

A CRISIS OUT THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR VIOLENCE IN HERE.

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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.

**THE NATIONAL FEDERATION.
MEETING AT NUMURKAH.**

There was a fair attendance at the Shire Hall on Monday night, when Mr J. T. Barnes delivered a fine address on the political problems confronting Australia Cr. W. A. Campbell presided, and introduced the speaker in a few appropriate remarks.

In opening Mr Barnes referred to the industrial and social unrest not only in Australia but all over the world, and he had been sent out to endeavor to assist in bringing peace to Australia by preaching the gospel of nationalism. It should be the duty of every man, whether he was a Liberal or Conservative, or a member of any other party, to work for the stoppage of the industrial unrest. In the past that had been caused by the capacity of the employers, and the Arbitration Court, which had been established to stop that sort of thing, had failed utterly. He himself had been concerned in the Arbitration Court, with a case which took four years to get a verdict, and then because one man among the employers entered an objection to that verdict the workers had to wait another eleven months before they could obtain the increase of wages granted. That sort of thing must stop.

The day had gone by when the workers of any country, and by worker he meant those who labored with brain as well as those who used their brawn, could be looked upon as mere cogs in the wheels of industry.

DOOKIE COLLEGE

A short course of instruction for farmers and farmers' sons has been arranged to be held at the Dookie Agricultural College, commencing on 2nd August and continuing for a period of two weeks. The programme is being arranged in two sections—Agriculture and livestock—with the object of enabling those who may not be able to attend the full course to obtain instruction in either section.

Preference is to be given this year to applicants who were enrolled for last year's classes, which had to be abandoned owing to an outbreak of influenza. The number to be admitted will, however, be limited by the accommodation available.

NATHALIA

During the week the town was visited by the chief architect of the Public Works Department, with a view to making a start with the building for the new elementary high school. After consultation with the parties the architect returned to the city, and it is understood that such steps will be taken as will enable the building to be started.

**GOULBURN VALLEY FOOTBALL
ASSOCIATION
MEETING OF DELEGATES**

A meeting of delegates to the above was held on Monday evening when there were present:—Messrs H. V. Howell (President) and Dudley (Wunghnu), Cohen and Willcox (Numurkah), Reynolds and Miller (Strathmerton) Ross and Hearn (Tocumwal), Mulcahy and Tyres (Dru-manure), Burgess and Galt (Bunbartha), P. and J. Parnell (Muckatah), McKenzie and Cumming (Tallygaroopna), Mead and O'Kane (Katamatite), Allan and O'Dwyer (Boomanoomanah), Shadforth and Teitz (Cobram).

The application of the Tocumwal and Boomanoomanah clubs for admission was endorsed, Mr P. Parnell expressing the hope that Tocumwal would fulfil their engagements, and would not allow matches to lapse, as had been the case in the past.—Mr Ross gave the necessary assurance.

Only one application, that of Mr Les Dockery, Wunghnu, was received for the position of secretary, and he was appointed.



New arrivals ... FJ Harris saw several new additions to the family with the hatching of these Muscovy ducklings.



Here's cheers ... Glenda and Rob Elliott celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary and Mother's Day on the same day, with a special dinner, roses and champagne.



Wish granted ... Alice, Edward, Mathilda and Lizzie Trimble spoil mum Sarah as part of St Joe's 'do what your parent wishes for a day' challenge, which came just in time for Mother's Day.



Happy Mothers Day ... A visit to the Nathalia cemetery to leave flowers was also on the cards for the Elliotts, where they enjoyed coffee and a bit of hedgehog slice, just like Glenda's mum always enjoyed.

Mother's Day with a difference

WHILE Victorians were still unable to get together with their families on Sunday for Mother's Day 2020 style, we asked readers to send

in their photos to show us how they celebrated their day.

Rob and Glenda Elliott had a big day, also cel-

ebrating their 40th wedding anniversary on the same day, while FJ Harris welcomed some new additions to the family.

Rotary drought program doing a world of good

THE COVID-19 pandemic is affecting us all, and dominating the news cycle, but work has been quietly continuing behind the scenes to help those who were already doing it tough.

Recent rains - though incredibly welcome and helpful - haven't undone the effects of years of drought, and the Rotary Club of North Balwyn's Numurkah Drought Relief Project, delivered in cooperation with the Rotary clubs of Balwyn and Numurkah, has been bridging the gap for local farmers and farm workers.

Chair of the program, Geoff Kneale from the Rotary Club of North Balwyn said the crippling effects of COVID-19 have made the importance of the drought relief program even more critical.

The program is aimed at bringing both financial and well-being support to the local farming community, specifically under drought afflicted stress.

The central part of the program is vouchers for exclusive use at selected local businesses offering essential goods.

Since mid-March, when the vouchers were delivered to rural financial planners (RFPs) for distribution to families in need of assistance, to the end of April, \$28,000 of vouchers had been distributed.

The impact of the vouchers is undeniable, with recipients' comments including statements such as "This is the first time I have filled my pantry

in 12 months", and "I have one less thing to worry about now".

As the vouchers circulate through the local economy, they represent an injection of over \$140,000 into Numurkah.

In recognition of the fact that wellbeing is about much more than money, the vouchers are just one element of the program.

Late last week, the Rotary Club of Numurkah had the great pleasure of distributing hundreds of L'Oreal hair and beauty products to Numurkah schools ahead of Mother's Day.

Though the original idea was for students without the means to purchase a present for mum to still have something to give her, the reality of most students now staying home made the plan a little harder to pull off.

Rotary Club of Numurkah president Lorraine Greenwood said that didn't lessen the significance of the gift.

"Staff at all of the schools were very happy to receive the packs to pass on to their students when they have the opportunity, and we all agreed that students will still have mums when school goes back and the gifts will be just as thoughtful then," she said.

Each Numurkah school received multiple boxes of shampoo, conditioner and hairspray, with the remaining boxes given to the Numurkah community house for distribution to families in need through the community house and Numurkah Community Learning Centre.



All donations gratefully received ... Cassandra Willis from Numurkah Secondary College receives the L'Oreal packs from Rotary Club of Numurkah's Kaye Moodie.

A CUPPA WITH DOM



Time for a cuppa

ONE of the many simple pleasures the current social distancing regulations have robbed us of, is the freedom to get together for a cuppa and a chat.

Fortunately, before those regulations kicked in, the *Leader* took the opportunity to sit down with a few well-known locals and to get to know them even better.

Through a mixture of seemingly light-hearted questions, and a few deeper, more specific ones, we gain an insight into these familiar faces and learn some things we might never have otherwise guessed. This week - by popular demand - we have a cuppa with Lorna Morris, former editor of the *Leader*, Member of the Order of Australia and Numurkah community stalwart. Lorna only reluctantly agreed to be featured in this column - she much prefers to be the one asking the questions. Whilst she says she is proud of her awards, she doesn't like talking about herself or how she got them, as she doesn't want to skite. We could have filled the whole paper with Lorna because her life has been so rich and so interesting, but instead we offer you this small snippet of her life so far.

Full name: Lorna Frances Morris

Age: 92

Marital status: Widowed with five children

Schools attended: Strathmerton West primary School and Numurkah Comprehensive Secondary School.

Summer or winter? Summer by default, because I don't like the winter.

Beach or mountains? Mountains.

Oscar the Grouch or Cookie Monster? Cookie Monster.

Crunchie or Violet Crumble? Neither. I don't eat much of anything these days and I'm more a savoury person - if I'm having a snack I'll go for a savoury biscuit.

Elvis or The Beatles? The Beatles.

Favourite colour? Blue.

Favourite song? Amazing Grace. I had a very good friend named Grace and that was her favourite song too, and it reminds me of her.

Favourite TV show? The news. I'm not really a television person, but the kids asked me what I was going to do when I was housebound, and I said I might have to learn to watch television, and they brought a new telly around the next day. It's very good and it's got a lot more chan-

nels, but it's all about coronavirus now anyway.

Favourite movie? Gone With the Wind.

Favourite book? Every book ever printed. I love books! I read a book a week. There's nothing I love better than to read. I'll sit down with a book and before I know it, two hours have gone.

Do you make lists? Yes, all the time. I haven't got a bad memory now- I don't have one at all, so I have to make lists of everything.

When you were a kid, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I would like to have been a school teacher, but we were never given a choice in those days, we were told what we were going to do.

I was at school and I was looking forward to the next year because I loved the sport, and my father just told me I was going to Nagambie to sit an exam to be a telephonist. I didn't even know what a telephonist did because we had

a party line at home. At any rate I got the job and spent four years working at Nagambie and then I transferred back to Numurkah because a girl at the exchange here had gotten married, and women lost their jobs when they got married.

We didn't really think any of that was

“I thought I was drowning, but giving up and walking away wasn't an option.”

unfair at the time because that was how we were brought up, and that was just the way it was.

I always thought I'd probably marry a farmer and live on a farm because that was what my older sisters had done. They left school and stayed at home at the farm with mum and dad

until they married farmers and moved off onto their farm, so that's what I thought would happen to me too.

You married Brian in 1949 and you're first child Carmel was born in 1951 - what was life like in those early years?

It did hurt that I had to leave my job, and I would have liked to have kept working, especially because we built this house and we had so little money that we had a piece of corrugated tin for a front door for the first 18 months, so it would have been nice to be able to bring more money in.

Despite that, life was good. I played a lot of sport and I loved it. I played tennis, badminton and table tennis and it was wonderful. I had a lovely life. We were a very happy young family.

When my oldest started school there was no PE teacher, so I found myself umpiring and coaching netball and tennis and from that day on I was involved in kids sport. I loved it - I don't think there's anything better than helping kids who want to learn. I was given a card thanking me for 36 years of helping at St Joe's - that was from the time my oldest child started until my youngest grandchild left.

You've seen a lot of changes in your life - what changes have been for the better and worse, as far as you're concerned?

It all comes back to IT. It's marvelous what it does and what it allows people to do, but it's also frightening, the effects it can have, and you can't separate those things.

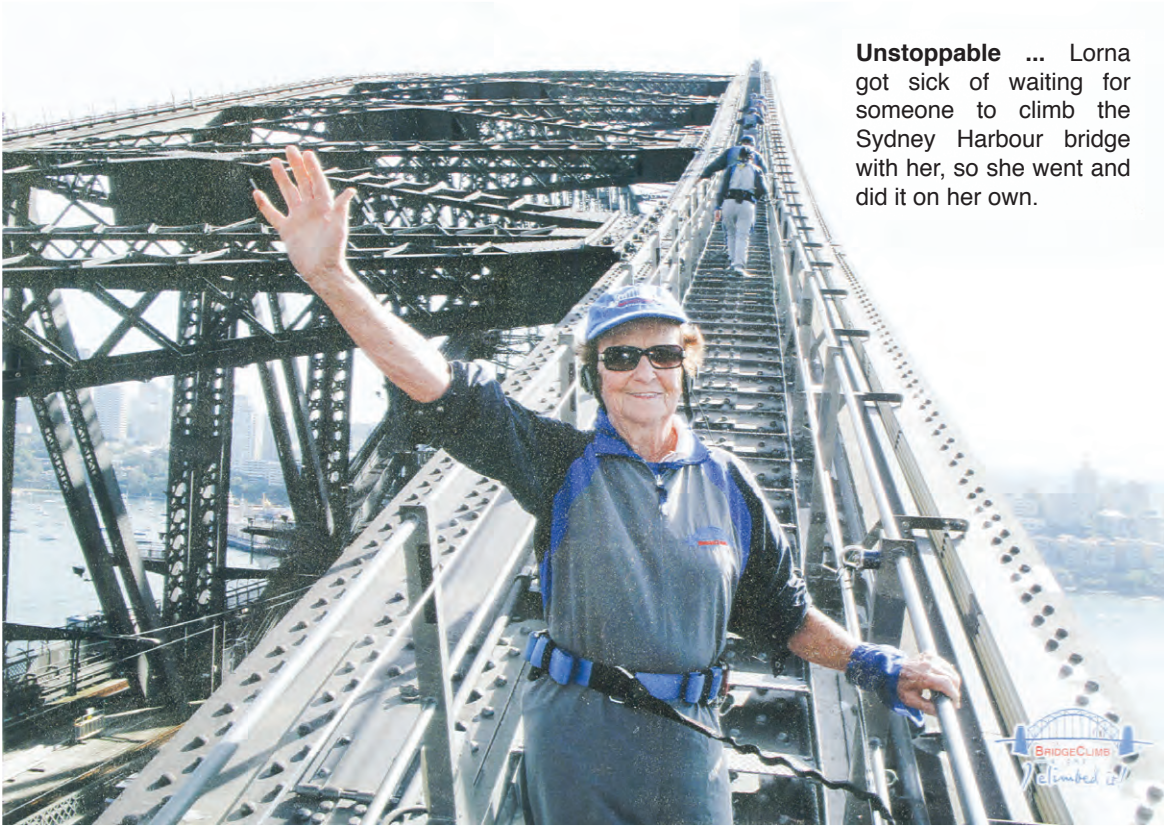
Your husband died suddenly just a few months after your youngest child Terry was born and overnight you became responsible for your family's livelihood - which happened to be a newspaper. What was that time like for you?

I had spent most of the year before

that in St Vincent's hospital in Melbourne because I was very ill when I was pregnant with my youngest, and I had to have a serious operation afterwards.

I had been home for a little while, but I hadn't even been down the street yet, because even though I had recovered, I

Unstoppable ... Lorna got sick of waiting for someone to climb the Sydney Harbour bridge with her, so she went and did it on her own.



A CUPPA WITH DOM



Keeping it in the family ... Lorna fought to keep the Leader going so that her children Tony, Bev and Terry could take over one day.

still wasn't back into normal life - then Brian died.

It was unbelievable.

The first few weeks I was just numb. I immediately had to start running a business I didn't really have the faintest idea about. We couldn't just stop publishing - even for a week - because Brian and I had taken out a loan to buy the business from his parents and we were in debt. The loan and the bills still had to be paid.

The staff didn't like it; they obviously thought I couldn't do it, and I didn't blame them.

The journalist left almost straight away so I was doing his job as well. The compositor left three months later because he didn't want to work for a woman, but I advertised in the Herald Sun and fortunately found people to replace them.

My parents were wonderful, and they took care of everything at home and organising the funeral while I kept the business going.

I thought I was drowning, but giving up and walking away wasn't an option.

I had several offers to sell the business, but none of them would have gotten me out of debt. If I'd had an offer that would have covered my debts I probably would have taken it, but I'm glad I didn't because the paper was Brian's life and his family's life and I wanted to try and keep it in the family.

I look back and I honestly don't know how I did it. People have asked me where I got the courage and I say it wasn't courage, it was sheer desperation. I had five kids - I did it because I had no other option.

“I sat on the steps of the Telegraph Hotel across the road and watched it burn, and it was heartbreaking.”

I think a big part of how I kept the business going was thanks to the business people of Numurkah. They were absolutely wonderful.

Two late businessmen, Col McPherson and George Paterson, told me if I had a space Tuesday morning that I couldn't fill, they'd take an ad. You have no idea how good the people of Numurkah were to me.

There was also a printer in Shepparton, Bill Biggs, who I had never heard of before, who rang the *Leader* when he heard Brian had died, and offered help. He and his partner Kel McDonald were absolutely wonderful to me.

I could ask them anything about machinery and they would give me honest opinions, and they did quite a few printing jobs we were having trouble with.

The kindness of individual people was marvellous, and I wouldn't have survived without it.

George and Dorothy Thorp, a couple that Brian and I were friendly with, helped me so much as well. After about three weeks George would come and pick Terry up on Monday morning and bring him back Friday night. They had five kids of their own but they took another baby - can you imagine?

As a mother, it broke my heart, because I had always been home with my kids, they were my life and Terry was just a baby, but it was one of the biggest things anyone could have done for me, and it allowed me to keep the business going.

You can't repay that.

Brain died on June 14, then my father died on July 11, and my mother died that December.

In a way, I think having to keep the paper afloat was a blessing in disguise, because I had to keep going; I couldn't just give into the grief.

Somewhere along the line you became confident at it and started to enjoy it didn't you?

I did; after a while I loved it. When we were kids you were expected to be seen and not heard, and only speak when spoken to, so putting myself forward and speaking up and standing up for myself the way you need to

as a newspaper editor was hard, but I learned to do it.

Before I was thrust into it, I never would have imagined that I could have done it, but I gradually gained the confidence I needed, and I really enjoyed it.

It's a great job because you get to know nearly everyone in town and you get to meet all the important people who came to town and you are an important part of the town's life.

I didn't ever want to retire, but I didn't want to be a parent that held on too long. I had kept the paper going, in part, because I felt like it belonged

burn, and it was heartbreaking.

It was a Tuesday night and the paper was coming out the next day, and with the help of *The Shepp News* we had the fire on our front page the next morning, because it was a major news story - it was the biggest fire in Numurkah's history at that point.

Once again, the Numurkah community gave us so much support, and that's what kept us going.

I was still sitting on the steps of the Telegraph Hotel when George Cattermole from Morrison and Teare solicitors next door came and told me they had three offices in the building for us to use. We started work in there the next day.

We actually ruined their carpet because we were constantly tramping through the ash next door seeing if there was anything we could use, and then back into their office. They had to put down tiles.

We got new printing equipment and set it up in a show pavilion and kept going. We never missed a single edition, but it was hard on all of us for quite a while.

When you finally did retire, you didn't stay still for long did you?

No, I couldn't just sit around, I needed to do something useful, so I joined the Court Network, which is an organisation which provides trained volunteers to support people in court proceedings - it could be the accused, the accuser, the victim, witnesses, or any of their families.

I thought it seemed like something worthwhile I could do, so I applied and was asked to attend an orientation and went down to Melbourne for it.

Out of 300 people, they only chose 30 and I'm sure they only chose me because I was the only one there from the country.

I only told my family about it after I was chosen - I wasn't going to tell them if I didn't make it. We had three months of intensive training and we had to fill in a form saying which court we wanted to work at and I chose the Supreme Court because I wanted to be in there with the big time crims.

I was shocked when I was allocated to the Family Court because that was the very one I didn't want. I was told we were placed where they thought we were most suited, and after a few weeks I wouldn't have changed it because I think that's where we were needed most. Nobody wins in the

family court - it's just heartbreak and raw emotion in every case and people really need support. I did that one day a week for eight years and I'm proud of that work, because I think it's important and I know I helped people.

You were inducted into the Victorian Honour Roll of Women last year in the trailblazer category. Do you feel like that's an accurate description of you?

Yes, I do now. I didn't think about it at the time because I was just doing what I had to do, but there really weren't women in the media, especially in high positions, and it's important for us to have that representation and that freedom to be there.

If, by doing what I did, I helped pave the way for other women then I'm proud of that.

You're a bit of an adventurer aren't you?

Yes, I like to do things that might seem a bit out there. For a long time I really wanted to climb the Sydney Harbour Bridge and I got sick of waiting for someone who wanted to do it with me, so in the end I went and did it on my own and it was wonderful.

I went hang gliding in Bali as well and they dumped me in the water!

I don't like to sit still, I'm used to being busy and I like to be doing things and trying new things.

One way you kept busy post-retirement was through community volunteering - a lot of which has been with older people - why is that an area that appeals to you?

I was carer for my parents when they were older, and I had older neighbours either side of me for years that I cared for as well. I just find it really rewarding.

It's older people that need the help. I volunteered at the old Baala House, and later Karinya and the Lodge, and more recently with palliative care as well.

In the aged care facilities they're very well looked after, but some of them don't have many visitors, so I would provide company and conversation and I really enjoyed that.

I also volunteered for Vinnies for a long time, working with people who came in for assistance, and that was very rewarding as well.

I've given it all up now, except for the inter-church council.



Lorna Morris OAM ... Lorna is proud the she was able to blaze a trail for women in the media, even if it was out of sheer desperation.

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ENGAGEMENTS

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Ashley and Theresa
(Waaia) together with
Doug and Heather
(Doncaster) are
delighted to announce
the engagement of
**KATHRYN AND
ALEX**

We wish you a
lifetime of happiness.

BIRTHS

WILLIAMS
(Walpole) —

Andy and Zena are
excited to announce
the arrival on April
10th of
LEXI ALICE
(6 lb. 2 oz.)

IN MEMORIAM

HOLMES —

Douglas Edward.
1928 - 17.5.2019

We remember you
for yur love and
kindness.
So many fond
memories of you.
Your loving family
Glenice, Lesley,
Graeme, Stephen,
Neill, Craig and all
their families.

DEATHS

MELVILLE —

Alan.
20.1.1947-10.5.2020

Passed away at home
in Bulla, Victoria.
A courageous man
right throughout life,
loved his family and
friends, loved by his
family and friends.
We were mates for 67
years, will be sadly
missed.
Our condolences
to Marian, Scott,
Rachael and their
families.
RIP Malley
Jan and David Cook
(Cookie).

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Across NCN Campuses
Casual

**Community
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- Community Projects**
Numurkah Campus
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**Chronic Disease
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0.3 EFT – Part Time Permanent

**Primary Health
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0.4 EFT – Part Time Permanent

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Receptionist**
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NumurkahLEADER Sport



Not just yet ... Local football clubs are waiting for advice from AFL Vic before they get back to training.

Sport’s back ... for some

LOCAL sporting clubs are celebrating an opportunity to get back onto their sporting arenas after Victorian Premier Dan Andrews announced an easing of lockdown restrictions on Monday morning.

Andrews announced the state would take the first steps to come out of its stage three COVID-19 lockdown from today.

A range of outdoor sports and activities will now be permitted, including golf, fishing and training in groups of no more than 10.

It’s understood that golfers will be permitted to play in groups of four, provided strict distancing and hygiene protocols are followed.

While it is now permissible to gather in groups of up to 10 people, Numurkah football coach Jye Warren said they would not be starting training until they had some clear direction from the Murray league, or AFL GM.

“While the Premier came out and said the AFL could go back to training, he didn’t really say that country leagues are allowed to,” Warren said.

“It seems that you are allowed to kick the footy in groups of no more than 10, but you are not allowed to have any contact, so you can’t tackle or anything like that.

“AFL Goulburn Murray has said that they will be discussing this over the next couple of weeks, to put some things in place.

“We are sort of in limbo, and I think a lot of clubs are going to be a bit wary and nervous, just in case we don’t get the green light and can’t actually train together.

“When we heard the restrictions had been eased, we got excited, and were going to organise meetings with our leadership group, but now we are a bit worried in case AFL Victoria says no. We don’t want to risk it and be the ones to get done for something we thought was okay.

“Until we get 100% guarantee that we can go ahead and train in 10s, then that’s when we will start,” Warren concluded.

Nathalia FNC president Dean Limbrick held a similar view.

“We will wait until AFL Vic releases its guidelines,” Limbrick said.

“Some of the guys have been training on their own, but some of them have also said they wouldn’t

train until they knew the season would go ahead. I can’t see that happening unless they release the crowd restrictions.

“I think there would be lots to negotiate before that happens,” he said.

Numurkah Golf and Bowls Club president Beverley Hutchins said she had no doubt at all that club members would be out in force over the coming weeks.

“Members have been missing their golf and bowls terribly, and I’m sure they will all be very eager to get back out on the course again, as soon as possible,” Mrs Hutchins said.

“Although we had some measures in place for getting back to our sport, the board met yesterday morning to further discuss the transition.

“It will be just social play for a week or so, as we work towards getting the clubhouse and course back in order and put some things into place, but the board will meet again to discuss perhaps getting some competition golf up and running after that.”

Numurkah Fishing Club secretary Gavin Parkinson welcomed the chance to get out fishing again.

“Our members, as individuals, will be very excited as the prospect of spending time on the water again, with many of them really missing their fishing, but from a club point of view, there’s many challenges ahead.

“Our regular meetings and pre-planned club events have obviously not been happening at all for the last couple of months, and with technology being limited for many of our members, keeping up with one another from a club perspective has been virtually non-existent, and of course we’ve not been able to run our normal fundraising activities either, so this is affecting the club financially, too.

“At this point the club has not discussed our options in terms of group events or competitions involving less than 10 members, but I’m sure it will be discussed in the near future, and various options worked through.

“Events such as fishing individually, or with a mate, with phone-in catch registration for club competitions, for example, are the types of things we will need to discuss moving forward.”

LOCAL SPORTING LEGENDS

Cool-headed Bev still shooting

ANY international rifle-shooting competitor who thought they could get one over on Australian officials at the 2000 Sydney Olympics hadn't reckoned on coming up against Bev Braybon.

"I think some of them thought that, because we hadn't hosted an Olympics for a long time, we wouldn't know what we were doing. They pretty quickly learned that wasn't the case, and we actually gained a reputation for being the hardest there was with the regulations," Bev said.

Although Bev had only been a licensed International Shooting Sport Federation official for five years when she officiated at the biggest event in the world, she had been shooting, and holding voluntary positions at a club and state level, for over a quarter of a century.

Bev, who became the first life member of the Numurkah Small Bore Rifle Club in 2014, started shooting for sport in 1973.

"We moved to Numurkah in 1972, and went to the rifle club a few times to watch my brother-in-law shoot. At the Christmas shoot they kidded us into having a go," she said.

In those days, shooting was done on an outside range over distances from 300 yards to 1000 yards with a large 'full bore' rifle.

Bev took to it like a duck to water, winning the club's C grade championship in 1973, and B grade championship in 1974 - the first of seven times she would win it between then and 2012.

Numurkah was one of the first clubs in Victoria to allow women to be members, and Bev, Yvonne Fowles and Gladys Beverley were the first women to join, after all trying it out at the 1972 Christmas shoot.

"Because there were so few women, we didn't have a separate women's competition and we all just shot together in the club, or inter-club, com-

petition."

Having quickly established herself as a competitor, Bev became part of the six member Numurkah team competing in the Crawford Shield competition against teams from Shepparton and Kyabram - clubs that didn't have any female members.

"In those early days, they would be shocked, and not necessarily pleased, to see women on the team, and they would assume that you'd be no good at shooting because you were a woman.

"That never made any sense to me because shooting is all about accuracy; it's not about strength, it's about skill, and there's no reason gender would have any bearing on your skill. When people thought I'd be no good at it because I was a woman, I always just thought I'd show them they were wrong."

When Bev wasn't showing other teams how wrong they were, she was shooting in the club competition every Thursday night.

"We didn't train or practise any other time, we lived in town so it wasn't like you were on a farm where you could shoot, and you couldn't go to the shooting range on your own," she said.

"So you really just trained as you shot at the weekly club meeting, and you were competing at the same time, because every time you shot it counted towards your points for the club championship."

Not having the time or opportunity to practise didn't faze Bev, who was already busy enough.

"I liked that it was just on a Thursday night, and some weekends, because that was something you could cope with when you had a full-time job and a family.

"I'd done athletics as a kid, and played netball and hockey when I was younger, and I'd always



The family that shoots together ... Bev, Lindsay and Glenn Braybon walked away from the 2002 World Masters Games in Melbourne with six medals between them – three of which were gleaming gold.

liked sport, but I was busy by then, so shooting was perfect because there wasn't a huge time commitment."

Bev did put in more time than just what it took to fire her shots however, being elected club scorer shortly after joining the club - an activity that, for her, was not dissimilar to shooting.

"That was actually my favourite part of being part of the club," she said.

"Scoring was a challenge because it was about accuracy as well - you had to go through the paper targets and judge where the shots hit and record the scores from there, and someone would go through and check them. I enjoyed seeing how on the mark I was."

Bev also held the role of club vice-captain from 1974 to 1982, and helped organise the club's postal shoots, prize meetings and pennant teams.

"I enjoyed being part of the club and helping it run."

It wasn't just the Numurkah club that Bev helped run, also doing stints as secretary, treasurer and outdoor convener with Target Rifle Victoria.

Bev also competed as part of the Victorian ladies' team in Melbourne in 1975, and Sydney in 1976.

The Numurkah club had been pretty much running its own race when the opportunity came up to attend a session with a representative of Target Rifle Australia, the national federation for small bore rifle shooting.

"We thought it was about time we learned the official Australian rules, especially on scoring, because we had just been doing it our own way. We found out that we had been doing it right, there were just a few finer points that we didn't know."

"The presenter told us that if you can get qualified to be an official, you could get a position at the 2000 Olympic Games in Sydney. Some of us thought that sounded pretty good, so we did the courses that would qualify us."

Now equipped with the special technical knowledge required to officiate at a national and international level, Bev was selected as an equipment control official for the Sydney Olympics.

"Equipment control is a real business in shooting. You wear a special jacket that has to pass a stiffness test because it can't be too stiff or too tight otherwise that gives you an advantage," she said.

"Some of the overseas shooters thought they'd be able to get away with things, but they soon learned that wasn't the case."

"We caught a few people out for that and made them go and change."

The 2000 Olympics and Paralympics may have been the biggest stage Bev officiated on, but it was no means the only one.

She has also helped keep shooters honest at nearly every Oceania Shooting Championships

since 1997, every World Cup held in Sydney since 2009, the 2005 Melbourne Commonwealth Games and the Commonwealth Shooting Federation Championships in 2006.

Within a decade of the Sydney Olympics, Bev got a chance to become a gold medallist on the same range where she had proved such a hard task-master - winning the 70 years plus category for 50 metre prone sport rifle, and 50 metre plus free rifle, at the World Masters Games in Sydney in 2009.

It was the second time Bev had claimed that achievement, having also taken out gold in both events in the 60 years plus category in the World Masters Games in Melbourne in 2002.

That event was a real family affair, with Bev's sons Lindsay and Glenn, who had started joined their parents at the Numurkah club as soon as they reached the eligibility age, also winning medals.

"I suppose there was a fair bit of shooting talk around the dinner table at times," Bev reflects.

Far from having qualms about her children taking part in a sport involving guns, Bev was pleased to have them there.

"Some people are scared of rifles, but it's only a bit of machinery, and if you follow the rules it's one of the safest sports there is."

"It was something we all enjoyed and were able to do as a family and fit in around the other things we had to do."

"It was good fun and there were opportunities to take part on a lot of levels if you wanted to."

"I got to take part in the Olympics, and I've been to New Zealand as an official, which are things I never would have thought I'd do."

Bev said one of the most essential qualities for a shooter is the ability to remain calm under pressure.

"You have to be cool headed," she said.

Bev's supreme cool-headedness led her to winning the Numurkah club's Fritz Smidt Self Handicap Trophy outright an incredible 11 times since it was created, and she has also drawn for it twice - most recently in 2013, drawing with her son Lindsay.

At 83, Bev is the second oldest member of the Numurkah Small Bore Rifle Club, and she is still shooting regularly.

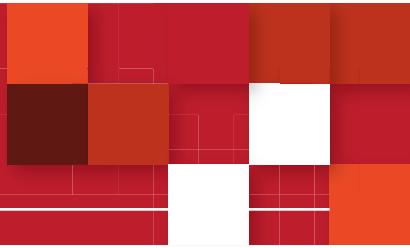
"When I started they only had the facilities to shoot prone, where you are lying down, but now they have air rifle and bench-rest bays - where you're seated with the rifle resting on a bench in front of you - as well."

"I shoot bench-rest now. I don't shoot as well as I used to, because I can't hold the rifle as steady as I used to, but I still enjoy it."

"I still go every Thursday that I can, and shoot and have supper and make a night of it. I've always enjoyed being part of the club."

Trailblazer ... When Bev joined Numurkah Small Bore Rifle Club in 1973 it was one of the first clubs in the state to allow women members.





Cool headed Bev still shooting



ANY international rifle-shooting competitor who thought they could get one over on Australian officials at the 2000 Sydney Olympics hadn't reckoned on coming up against Bev Braybon... *Story page 15*

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