

Boronia & The Basin COMMUNITY NEWS



Issue 294
Nov. 2020



Back to normal? Back to Covid Normal



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From the Editor...

Getting out from under...



Just one year ago, we could hardly have imagined the situation from which we are just emerging - but not completely. A few mild restrictions to reduce the risk while much of the rest of the world is being beaten down by massive casualties.

We are the "lucky country".

Our cover picture is from one of our Summer Series Concerts in the Park, growing in popularity amongst both performers and patrons. The beautiful Triangle park is a drawcard for the local community, especially on a sunny day, and the free Summer Series concerts are popular with both public and performers. It's a bonding experience, sitting out on the grass, maybe with kids, or neighbours. Then along came Covid (apology to Ray Stevens) and suddenly music in the park was off the menu. When the first panic over Covid came it seemed to many to be as overblown as the lyrics to Stevens' 1957 hit. When the first wave subsided it seemed the complacent doubters had got it right. Covid 19 was retreating:

Then came the next wave and the rules and regulations were piling up almost as quickly as the casualties. Suddenly we were faced with the kind of restrictions that would normally come from a criminal conviction. Just short of being incarcerated, we had extreme limits on what we could do (stay home) and the stats were piling up along with the penalties.

It wasn't quite fully bipartisan, but it was close. How much more admirable did our politicians become when not point scoring or opponent bashing. How inspiring to see them listening to the science instead of their political machines. If only it could last.

With luck and determination we may yet get the chance to gather in the park for a picnic with music - it won't be November and it probably won't be December, but let's all aim for a new year of hope to the sound of music.

I went by the park today and it was busy with families having a picnic, with parents sitting in the shade and watching their children, with a community coming together to relax together - socially distanced of course.

John Mortimore

Email:

contact@bbcn.org.au

Share your neighbourhood.

This is a community newspaper run by unpaid volunteers. If you would like to help in any way; writing, illustration, photography, advertising etc etc - please contact the editor or president. It can be fun!

We aim to provide the people of Boronia and The Basin with an effective medium of communication, information and expression and to promote community identity, cooperation and pride. Views and comments expressed in this paper are not necessarily those of any member of BBCN Association unless acknowledged as such. Products and services listed or advertised in the paper should not be considered as endorsements. While every effort is made to ensure accuracy of editorial content, BBCN takes no responsibility for errors.

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We welcome all contributions from our community but can not guarantee publication. Email is preferred but not essential. Articles or letters that have no contact details, are abusive in nature, or contain racial or other vilification will not be published. Insulting the editor is okay only if you do it intelligently and use facts.

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Willie Wagtail

(*Rhipidura leucophrys*)

I love Willie Wagtails, who doesn't love Willie Wagtails? I mean, get serious, what's not to love about them. You could show any person who lives in this country a photo of a Willie Wagtail and if it didn't elicit a smile I'd be very surprised.

Always on the move, seldom stopping for more than a moment, their comical activities I find hilarious, and if you go near a Wagtail's nest or get in his grille you'll soon get short shift with a scolding rendition of his 'rikka-tikka-tikka-tik' alarm call. If you've ever been on the receiving end you'll know what I mean, he gets the point across he's not happy with you very effectively. I've even seen them give Wedge-tailed Eagles a good dressing down, now there's a David versus Goliath battle if I've ever seen one.

Before I was married and settled down I worked on a cattle station in central Australia, near Coober Pedy. On arrival there I was amazed to find that Willie Wagtails were common, especially right near the station homestead, there seemed to be one or two always hanging around. Indeed they are found over the entire continent except for heavily forested areas.

To my surprise one day a Willie Wagtail appeared at the station who didn't have a tail, figure that out. The only explanation I could give would be an encounter with a predator, possibly a bird of prey. Not surprisingly I thought he looked very strange, but seemed to cope ok, not having a tail to wave around to disturb insects would have made life difficult though I would imagine.

These little birds are diurnal, meaning they are active during the day. Active during the day normally means you sleep at night. Not these little guys, they can often be heard calling at night. Some research into this abnormal behaviour has found that it is mostly males creating this din, the presumption being it is territorial behaviour, with some of it being an attempt to impress a lady Willie Wagtail, favourite pastime of males of all species on this planet.

This research also uncovered the fact that while Wagtails normally have only one partner, some extramarital affairs occur, always in a clandestine manner (by both sexes). I can just picture Mrs Willie Wagtail waiting back at the nest with a rolling pin behind her back, waiting for the offending male to get his lumps when he finally returns.

My birdwatching guru cousin Martin O'Brien and I can both attest to the nocturnal singing of the Willie Wagtail. Each year we both spend at least 2-3 weekends up at a place called Lurg, east of Benalla. We camp on the grounds of the old Lurg primary school, long ago closed down. It is very rare to spend a night there and not have it broken by the pesky Wagtail, he literally goes on all night. At first light I drag my sorry backside out of bed and it won't be long before my mate the Wagtail shows up, bright eyed and bushy tailed, like he just had the best most refreshing nights sleep in years. Through bleary eyes I look at him, a scowl on my face. 'When do you bloody well sleep?' I yell at him.

A couple of years ago I worked with a Canadian guy, Alec, good boilermaker, they're called ironworkers in Canada. He was a really nice guy, when he found out I liked birds he came up to me one day and said, in a thick Canadian accent, "Do you know those little Willie Wagtail birds? They're my favourite birds in the world". He went on to explain that he had been working on a job somewhere and one of these characters would show up every day, just to make the day a bit brighter. As he went back to what he was doing I heard him say to himself, "Oh yeah they're great little birds alright".

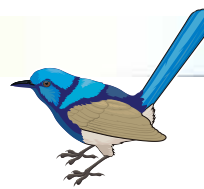
Kim Wormald's photo of this Willie Wagtail is titled 'Hitching a ride' and is a common sight in rural Australia, they can often be seen on the backs of sheep and cattle, and in this case is a chestnut horse. The animal whose back is used as a perch never seems to mind and it is

the perfect place to launch an attack on the insects stirred up by the grazing stock, an arrangement that suits both parties.

Willie Wagtails could be mistaken for the similar Satin or Restless Flycatcher, but they are normally found high up or in the canopy. At a pinch you could mistake Grey Fantail for a Willie, but they are mostly grey but can behave in a similar fashion, sallying after airborne insects. If you look at Kim's photo you will see a pair of white eyebrows and this increases in size depending on the emotion he is feeling. Check it out next time you're copping an earful from one of these little characters, it will be very prominent.

I find myself in a constant dilemma on the issues surrounding me / my family / mankind yudder yudder! If climate change is not on the top of that list you've been living in another cosmos, probably with most of the politicians in Canberra, who still somehow believe money and coal will fix everything. But you all know my feelings on that so I won't bang on any more.

Recently I have been trying to get my head around the Lake Knox issue, complex issue within itself, just fast forward to give our birdlife the best option please. The Blue-billed Duck, endangered in this state, probably needs all the help he can get, so without weighing in yet (by next month I feel I will have more information), I



Our Page 3 Bird



would encourage everyone reading this to do the same. The Knox environment society are backing the protest to the hilt, so I feel they would have a very credible point of view. To lose one more wetland does not seem a good option to me. Anyhow I will get back to you with my opinion next month, not that that means anything more than yours, but every contribution helps to determine the best outcome.

Des Palmer

Allan Small - Westfield Local Hero for 2020

Westfield have just announced that our much loved and respected Allan Small has been awarded the Westfield Local Hero for Knox in 2020. On their website this is what they say,

"We are thrilled to announce the Westfield Local Heroes for 2020. Our communities in Australia and New Zealand nominated and voted for those people who make a positive impact on their communities and environment.



These inspiring local leaders were nominated and voted for by the community and will now be awarded a \$10,000 grant for each of their affiliated organisations to help their important work to grow."

Allan has been and continues to be a local firefighter with the Basin CFA for over 50 years and he gives his wife much of the credit for his ability to serve in the community over the years in so many fields. It will be donated for training equipment, which is much needed considering the previous fires earlier this year and the upcoming fire danger period. In his early years he was also the Governor/Operations Manager of Pentridge Prison for around 10 years.

Allan was reluctant to be nominated but when he found out about the \$10,000 grant he was keen to be involved so he would be able to donate this money to the The Basin CFA, which is exactly what he will do. Well done to you, Allan Small, a special award for a special man in our local community.

Lynette Hayhurst



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I want to start by checking in and seeing how you're all doing. The last few months have placed enormous pressure on our community, our businesses and left no person unaffected. Please remember to look after yourselves and each other. Please if you need help, simply ask for it. If you need a list of contacts or otherwise, please contact my office.

During this pandemic the Victorian Government has to date invested an extra \$200 million in mental health supports to make sure people who need help, get it. We have also put extra support into the prevention of family violence, housing and homelessness to help people who need it.

We also recently announced a \$3 billion package for the Victorian Businesses which will provide cash grants, tax relief and cashflow support to businesses as we work together to drive coronavirus cases down and progress along our roadmap to COVID Normal. We also announced a \$100 million Sole Trader support fund to help some of the most affected sole traders. For more



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information you can go to www.business.vic.gov.au. Please, also remember to do what you can to help where you can to get behind local businesses. Whether it's today or as we move back into a COVID normal we need to back in local and get around them.

‘Getting On With it’ – Some Quick Project Updates: \$44,000 to deliver major upgrades to the Shree Swaminarayan Temple in Boronia to support our local Indian and proud multicultural community - Early works have begun on the North East Link which will close the missing link in our road network and get you to the city and across Melbourne sooner

New Colchester Reserve pavilion for the Eastern Raptors now delivered - Planning on the new Senior Building at St Bernadette's now in final stages. Construction set to start soon on the new state of the art 120 bed public aged care facility in Wantirna.

This edition's shout out is to the amazing carers out there in recognition of their work in helping kids who need it most. It was Foster Care week from the 13-19 of September and as someone who spent time in care, I know how fantastic these people are.

Don't forget, I'm here to help you and your family with state government matters. However, as my team and I are currently working from home, my office is closed to walk-ins. That said, you can call my office on 9738 0577 or email me at Jackson.Taylor@parliament.vic.gov.au and I'll get back to you. For anything further you can search 'Jackson Taylor MP' for more and to follow me on Facebook.

More Mental Health Support For Local Students

More Victorian secondary school students in our local area will soon have access to the school-based mental health support they need. A timeline for the 2021 roll-out for Victorian government secondary schools across the state has been released and includes extra support for local schools under the Mental Health Practitioners initiative.

In recognition of the increased mental health challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic, the roll-out has been brought forward to be completed by the end of 2021.

Under the initiative, schools in Outer Eastern Melbourne will benefit from access to additional mental health support for their students in 2021. This includes five schools in our local area – Bayswater Secondary College, Fairhills High School, Boronia K-12 College, Wantirna College and Heathmont College.

The \$51.2 million initiative, which began in July last year, provides funding to schools to recruit a mental health practitioner. It will see qualified mental health professionals in every government secondary school campus across the state, including psychologists, social



workers, occupational therapists and mental health nurses.

Mental health practitioners offer counselling and early intervention services, and coordinate support for students with complex needs, linking them with broader allied and community health services. All government secondary schools will receive between one and five days a week of support, depending on its size and requirements.

This builds on the \$65.5 million investment in student health and wellbeing initiatives in schools, including the Victorian Anti-Bullying and Mental Health Initiative, the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support program, as well as increased investment in allied health and nursing services.

All Victorian government school students, whether they are learning remotely or attending school on-site, have been able to access mental health and wellbeing support during the pandemic.

Secondary school students can access counselling via a voice call or video conference through the Headspace counselling partnership or via their school-based mental health practitioner.

Minister for Education, James Merlino, said "So many of our young people are experiencing mental health challenges - this will make it easier for them to access the support they need at school. This is one of the biggest issues raised with me when I talk to students, parents and carers and schools."

Jackson Taylor, Member for Bayswater, added "It's been a tough year for our schools – certainly a year like no other. And I'm so pleased that we've been able to bring forward this very important program to ensure our kids get the support they need"



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Acorn re-Opens

Owner, Tony Eastwood, is very excited to be reopening The Acorn Bar and Restaurant's doors after being closed for eight long months during this unprecedented pandemic that we have all been living through, especially as on the 16th November, 2020 it is his 4th anniversary of being the owner of this fantastic venue. Tony with Lisa Clark, the new venue manager, and their team which includes their builder Richie who has worked tirelessly since March, have been working hard behind the scenes to fully renovate this much loved local venue. All their hard work and inspiration is paying off as a brand new and exciting venue emerges with a completely new theme that they are sure you will all love.

Tony and Lisa and the staff, cannot wait till to reveal all the hard work to you all on Wednesday 18th November 2020. They are also excited to be opening a brand new beer garden at the rear of the venue, with many local craft beers available for you to sample alongside their brand new menu for the spring/summer period. Their back deck will not be initially opening due to some final and exciting changes that are currently still under way.

They will be open 4pm till 10.30pm Wednesday to Sunday nights and opening for lunch on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 12pm.

For further information on how to make a booking please go to their Facebook page and click on *Book Now* or alternatively search for The Acorn Bar and Restaurant on Opentable, www.opentable.com.au, call 9762 8667 or email Lisa at lisa@theacorn.com.au Please also note that they are currently adhering to all government mandated guidelines so at this point in time bookings are essential and walk ins, unfortunately, may not be able to be accommodated. Lisa, Tony and the team can't wait to see your lovely faces again very soon.

THE ACORN
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Spoonville...

Walking past Boronia K-12 College these days is a solemn affair. With the gates all locked, the playgrounds still and so little presence of any school kids left that even the crows have moved on as there is not a trace of litter in the bins or on the ground. Even the bald spots of dirt next to the parking spaces where children are dropped off have grass growing back. So, it was a pleasant surprise when Spoonville popped up one day outside the fence near the drop off zone in Rangeview road in early September and has since been gradually growing in population.



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Uncle Bill Gault

It's 6.20am on Anzac day, 2020, my wife and I have just come in from our front gate as the dawn service is an at home affair this year due to the Covid 19. We stood there with all our neighbours, Adrienne thinking of her father Bill Mahony who fought in Darwin and in my mind I thought of the three men whom what war means to me. My Great Uncle David, who was such an inspiration and mentor for me, who fought in the Middle East and New Guinea. My English Grandfather, William 'Peddler' Palmer, gassed on the battlefields of France in the first world war who survived the war but died prematurely aged 56 many years before I was born. And another Great Uncle, Uncle Bill Gault, who died in such terrible circumstances 20 years before I was born.

To me it seems odd to be writing about a man who I never met. His own son Howard Gault, who goes by the nickname Blue, who was born in 1939, does not remember his father. The tragedy of war, of men lost and of men who returned but were never the same, affects so many people. My memory of Uncle Bill focus' on a single photo, an amazing photo of a young man in uniform with his arms around his sisters, Dolly (my Grandmother), Daphne (Uncle Dave's wife), Florence and Pearl. It is the sort of photo that you could show a thousand different people and each one would smile and say "what a charming photo of a handsome young man with his beautiful sisters".

William John Gault was born on the third of October, 1909. He was born in Richmond and remained a keen follower of the Tigers throughout his life, his letters from New Guinea always asking news about their progress. His occupation was listed as concreter, hard physical labour would not have been new to him. He enlisted into the army on June 4th 1940, joining the 2/22nd Battalion, which became known as 'Lark Force'. On March 12th, 1941, he boarded the Katoomba bound for the defence of New Guinea. On 3rd May he with many of his mates disembarked at Rabaul, New Guinea.

The defence of New Guinea against the Imperial Japanese army was the last line of defence before the impending invasion of Australia. The bloody war of the Pacific was at last heading south, with Australia the main objective. With the bombing of American Navy ships at Pearl Harbour by the Japanese Air Force in 1941, Hitler found an unlikely ally in the Japanese forces. But this critical error drew the Americans into the war, which was the only thing which saved our country from falling.

The Australian troops at Rabaul were very undermanned with not enough weaponry to repel the might of the Japanese army once they landed in New Guinea. Against overwhelming odds, the order of every man for himself was given. Many men retreated into the jungle, some were able to escape, enduring hardships beyond comprehension to us living in such luxury. Uncle Bill escaped into the jungle but was eventually caught by the Japanese,

becoming an official prisoner of war.

The Montevideo Maru was a Japanese ship built in 1926, running between Japan and South America before the war broke out in 1939. It was then converted into a troop ship taking Japanese troops to the Pacific theatre of war. On June 22nd 1942 it left Rabaul with 1054 Australian prisoners of war, bound for the then Japanese held Chinese island of Hainan. Among those on board were three notable Australians. Harold Page, brother of Australian National Party Prime Minister Earl Page, Reverend Syd Beasley, uncle of former ALP leader Kim Beasley and Tom Vernon Garrett, grandfather of Midnight Oil lead singer and former ALP environment minister, Peter Garrett. But more importantly for me was private William Gault.

The USS Sturgeon was a US Navy submarine, posted at Fremantle, Western Australia. Its orders were to patrol the oceans to the north of Australia and to sink any enemy ships it encountered, and on the night of 30th June it by chance sighted an enemy ship off the Phillipines coast near the island of Luzon. It was unescorted by destroyers and against protocol was not marked as carrying prisoners of war. The Sturgeon followed it for four hours but was unable to gain any ground on the speeding ship travelling at full throttle, 17 knots per hour. The skipper of the Sturgeon decided to pursue it with an idea that the ship would possibly slow down at midnight, believing any following submarines would have been given the slip. His premonition gained credence when on the stroke of midnight, the Montevideo Maru, feeling safe, throttled back to 11 Knots.

Lieutenant Commander Wright, the captain of the USS Sturgeon, recorded in his journal how easy the sinking of the Montevideo Maru was. It managed to pass the ship soon after midnight then positioned itself broadside of the vessel. At 2.29am on July 1st it fired the first of four torpedoes into the hull of the ship, not knowing it was sending 1054 POW's on board to a watery grave. His journal notes the time between the first torpedo striking and the time before the ship disappeared out of sight on its journey to the ocean floor as 11 minutes.

Back in Australia, family members were officially informed on April 28th 1942 that Uncle Bill was a Prisoner of war. On October 13th, 1945 they were told he was on board the stricken vessel the 'Montevideo Maru', presumed dead. They must have been 3 long years for my family, not knowing anything about Uncle Bill, just empty feelings of despair, clinging to hope. Even after the war finished, for what must have seemed an eternity, information was sketchy.

In 2005, my second cousin,

Howard Gault received a letter from an old man named Syd Illes who lived in the Western district of Victoria. In shaky handwriting but with diction crystal clear, he told Howard he was probably the last man of his battalion to see his father alive when in the jungle of New Guinea two groups decided to split up and go in different directions. Syd's group went one way and he remembered looking across at the other group: his mate Bill Gault was in that group.

Of the 1054 prisoners on board the 'Montevideo Maru' there were no survivors. It is Australia's greatest maritime disaster, and more Australians lost their lives that night than in the Vietnam war. Of the 68 Japanese crew, 17 survived. Contrary to the belief that all prisoners were locked in the hold below the ships deck and had no chance, a 2003 interview with a Japanese survivor tells a different story. In October 2003, Yoshiaki Yamaji gave the following account;

"There were more POW's in the water than crew members. The POW's were holding pieces of wood and using bigger pieces as rafts. They were in groups of 20 to 30 people probably 100 people in all. They were singing songs. I was particularly impressed when they started singing 'Auld Lang Syne', as a tribute to their dead mates. Watching that, I learnt Australians have big hearts".

It was determined that the Japanese vessel which rescued the crew would not have wasted their time looking for any surviving POWs in the water, particularly with the knowledge that an enemy submarine was in the area. The men left drifting on the ocean had no chance of survival.

Howard 'Blue' Gault is 81 now. He lives at Dromana and besides a few skin cancer problems being kept in check by his doctor, he's as fit as a fiddle. He can't wait for the Covid 19 restrictions to be lifted so he can get in his boat and go fishing again off Safety Beach. They have to get lifted soon, the Whiting and Calamari are starting to come on the bite.



KNOX
your city

Knox Community Forum

Have your say about the future of Knox!

Over recent months we have been working with the community to develop a Community Vision and Goals to inform future planning for Knox. Now we'd like your help to take the next step.

We're holding an online community forum to discuss the part Council will play to help achieve our vision. This is your opportunity to help Council consider a vision and goals, and determine the best response.

Date: Tuesday 1 December 2020

Time: 11.00am to 1.00pm

Where: via Zoom (link will be sent 24 hours prior to event)

Register your interest to participate at knox.vic.gov.au/communityplan or call 9298 8000 by 5pm, Monday 16 November 2020.



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Meal Vouchers for the Unemployed

The Rotary Club of Boronia has come up with a great idea to help those in their community who have lost their jobs because of the pandemic.

The Rotary Club usually meets on Tuesday nights for dinner at a local club which had to close as part of the lockdown, so they now meet weekly via Zoom. The members decided to donate the money they would otherwise be paying for a meal to help feed those who have lost their income. With the help of Knox Infolink, a not-for-profit organisation in Boronia run by volunteers, the Rotary Club has turned the funds raised by its members into Dinner Vouchers for those in need.

Infolink distributes the vouchers to selected recipients. The Rotary Club has arranged for two local restaurants to supply meals, which may be ordered by phone for pick up. The restaurants are then reimbursed by Infolink for the cost of the meals they have supplied each month. Vouchers come in two denominations of \$30 and \$50, depending on the size of the household. The vouchers



Rotary Club of Boronia

cannot be redeemed for cash or alcohol at the restaurants.

This project not only provides food for the unemployed, but also assists the participating restaurants to continue to operate in these difficult times for the hospitality industry, as they both employ local people of the Boronia community.

For the past six years the Rotary Club has run a successful Anzac commemoration service for local Primary & Secondary schools, supported by annual grants from The Rotary Foundation. This year the Anzac event was cancelled due to the lockdown so the Club, with support of their District, redirected the allocated funds to the Dinner Vouchers project. To date, the funds raised by Rotary club members together with this grant from The Rotary Foundation have enabled the Club and Infolink to produce vouchers to the value of \$5000.

The project will continue until the end of 2020.



Photo by Jay L.



William Matthews Funerals

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Great Moments in Cinema History

Danny Nolan

Of all the things that have been shut down during this pandemic, I think the one I miss the most is going to the local cinema to see a movie. Netflix and the other thousand streaming services are handy and serve a purpose but sitting in a comfy seat, eyes fixed on a massive screen and surround sound so that your only focus is on what's in front of you. No other distractions, no phones, no interruptions or talking. (that is if the other patrons are functioning humans) It's no secret that all the blockbuster films have been delayed and there has even been talk of the death of cinema, which I highly doubt. If it survived TV, video and YouTube, a pandemic caused closure for six months isn't going to even bruise it. I look forward to cinemas opening again. It figures that one of my favourite places in Boronia is the Metro Cinema. We are lucky in Boronia to have our own picture theatre and did you know that it has been operating off and on in the same location for nearly 80 years?

So, if I couldn't go there, I decided to delve into the fascinating history of our local picture show joint.

It all started with The Electra Theatre which was built on the site sometime in the late 1930s, it was a fibro and brick building constructed on land owned by Charles Spalding who had recently built the Loyalty theatre in Ferntree Gully next to his Bakery. I can't confirm if this is intentional as he is not listed as the owner or operator in any early documents. The theatre stood out on the main drag that was Dorset road in a prime position opposite the railway station.

In the area, the same time as the Electra originally operated were the *Glen Theatre* in *Sassafras*, the *Upwey Theatre*, *Belgrave's Cameo Cinemas* and the aforementioned *Loyalty Theatre* in Ferntree Gully. Going to the flicks was popular in this part of town. Did you know that in January 1952 Olinda had its own Film Festival that attracted 600 people?

Trying to pinpoint when the cinema first operated is a bit tricky. According to the *Cinema and Theatre Historical Society of Australia* (CATHS), the Electra theatre was opened on 14th October 1939, then contradicts itself by saying it operated from 1943. Whether the 1939 date was the commencement of construction as the Architect and Builder are listed with dates 1939+40 respectively, isn't made clear. While the *Cinema and Audience Research Project* (CAARP) lists its first opening as 1st January 1946. In his history of the **Boronia Church of Christ** David S Allen wrote: "At the Board meeting in mid-August, Mr Graham reported the arrangements being made for a combined Churches Thanksgiving Service in the Electra Picture Theatre, Boronia, on "V. P. (Victory in the Pacific) Day." World War Two was over!" - VP day being held on the 15 August 1945.

LATE ADDITION: this of course was all shot down when

a poster for a November 1942 Austerity Meeting was found after I wrote this. Refer picture.

The theatre was definitely up and running post-war as there are many adverts in the local newspaper the *Mountain District Free Press* also many stories of events held there, one notable one being the June 1952 public meetings over the outrage following the railway crossing accident where 9 people died earlier that month, demanding action on installing warning lights. Something that after nearly four years of to-and-froing between the council and the Victorian Railways over responsibility saw the installation of warning lights within months. The Electra being an auditorium was also the venue for plays and concerts as well as film.

Ken Barret, who grew up locally during the 1950-60s and now lives in Kilsyth recalls some of the physical and technological changes the theatre went through: "The original entrance had double doors with a large foyer. There were display boards which featured coming attractions advertised on them, there was also a ticket box. The theatre was open on Saturday mornings so you could book your seats for the evenings showing. Whenever there was a Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis movie on Saturday night the place was booked out. The Saturday matinee was always full of kids. Mum would give me one shilling each week 9 pence to get in and 3 pence for an icy pole. We got a newsreel a cartoon a trailer and a main feature. Great memories"

"The Farmers (owner-operators during the 1960s) introduced cinemascope movies when they managed the theatre"

"I can remember when they had an entrance down the sideway. When TV started the theatre closed for a period of time. The theatre opened up again and that when the entrance was up the side alley". What is now the Chandler Arcade.

With the success of the Boronia Mall when it opened three years earlier Village Cinemas demolished the Electra in 1976 and constructed a more modern brick building consisting of two cinemas. This operated as the Village Twin from 1979. It ran until 1989 when it closed, along with a similar sized Twin cinema in Knoxfield due to the major redevelopment at Knox Shopping Centre. It was then taken over by Century Cinemas and expanded into 4-screens in around 1990, then Village Cinemas took over again as the Knox cinemas were going through even larger expansions. It closed for a while in 2002 when the redevelopment was complete, it then re-opened in 2004 as the Regent Cinemas. This was short-lived as it was closed by Knox council in October the same year, for breaching safety regulations.

This was taken over almost immediately by current owner-operators the Schouten family in June 2005. Tom Schouten has theatre in his blood and has been associated with it since he was seven years old. He parents were also involved, working in some form or another either as an administrator or a musician in his hometown of Geelong.

Tom has long time links to Boronia, working as manager of the then Village Twin back in 1985, the same year he married his wife Cynthia, who also had a long working history in the cinema industry.

Tom, Cynthia and daughter Ellie are passionate about the property bringing back up to code when previous owners had neglected it. Immediately improving safety and comfort. This included new fire safety equipment, upgrades to exits and a new boiler for heating. Tom has also overseen the replacement of the old film projectors to digital projectors, new air-conditioning and cut the carbon footprint of the premises with the installation of solar panels on the roof. This last



action you may think is not so impressive, but have a look on Google maps of the Boronia shops: Dorset Square, Junction and Village and see how many other buildings are fitted with solar panels and you see how innovative the Schouten's have been. The family's dedication to the community has meant the ticket and candy bar prices are considerably cheaper in comparison to the large shopping centre multiplex, which always seems to be verging on the ridiculous when it comes to ticket pricing. These initiatives as well as free tea and coffee for Seniors as well as the best membership club anywhere. I know because I've been a member for the last five years.

I talked to Tom recently regarding the lockdown and he said it was a shame that they wouldn't be able to celebrate their 15th year with the community but it is what it is. Public safety is paramount and if the State government cancelled the football in Victoria it must be serious. Due to the speed and unpredictable nature of the pandemic and the lockdown that ensured when the cinema was forced to close, the business put out a social media call for anyone who wanted ice-cream's since they would not keep over the duration of the closure. They were gone in hours. When the lockdown continued other stock that would run out of its use by dates such as lollies and chips were donated to Police stations in the area. When the lockdown ended and limited numbers were introduced, the family took the hard decision to wait. This proved to be the right decision as to the limited seating due to social distancing only last twelve days before compulsory closedown was reintroduced. Tom is optimistic that things will return to normal and with it some long-delayed blockbuster films.

I share Tom's outlook and when things do return to normal, or what will be considered normal, I look forward to sitting down with a Choc Top in one of the four Metro's theatres because I'm going to be spending my money locally, just to help everyone get back on track.

As an endpiece I cannot recommend the Metro Cinema membership club highly enough. For value for money it is unbeatable. \$20 a year for \$8 adult entry (that's TWO adults) for every session as well as two free passes. If you love going to the flicks as much as I do, it pays for itself in a couple of months and nothing can beat \$4 choc tops.



Electra theatre prior to demolition 1970s



Village Twin 1981

Knox SOW NEWS



Mystery Letters

Have you been doing your 1 to 2 hours of exercise, walking the streets within the 5km Lockdown Limit? Have you seen the letters engraved into the footpath or kerb? What do they mean? Who put them there?

Most are in the concrete but the best ones are in St. Laurent Rise, Knoxfield. They are beautifully cast into the kerb bricks. It is obvious that these refer to the Water, Gas, Telephone and Electricity services under the ground. But what do some of the other letters mean? Have you seen B, F, H, M, S or V? What letters have you got in your street?

Knox Street Orienteering Walks are suspended at the moment but we hope to start again later in the year. We usually meet twice a month and spend one hour finding answers to 20 different clues that are shown on a Map Sheet – not just these mystery letters. It is good fun. While we wait for the Pandemic Rules to be relaxed many

walkers have been “letting their fingers do the walking” with Virtual Orienteering. It uses Google Maps Street View to search for the clues. Map Sheets and instructions are on our webpage. www.knoxow.org.au

Many local Primary Schools have added our Virtual Orienteering to their student ‘at home’ activities.

For more information contact the Walk Organiser, David, on 0419 337 311 or david@knoxow.org.au.

Naturopathic Case Study

Macular Degeneration

M. 72-year-old, has been diagnosed with macular degeneration. Although there is no cure, there are treatment options that can slow down its progression, depending on the stage and type.

The macula is at the centre of the retina at the back of the eye and is responsible for the detailed central vision and most colour vision. It is about the breadth of a size 12 font letter “o”.

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With 16 veterinarians on staff, we are one of the largest companion pet only veterinary hospitals in Melbourne. This has allowed us to offer a very broad range of services and expertise uncommon in other veterinary clinics.

We continue to work at providing the broadest range of options possible for our clients. Our philosophy is firmly rooted in the principle of providing as many options for a clients as possible but understanding that the “right” option in any situation is not always the most advanced option.

The clinic offers extended consulting hours (Mon-Sat 7am-9pm and Sun and Public Holidays 9am-8pm by appointment) and our hospital provides round-the-clock care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our existing clients also enjoy a 24 hour service.



The Melbourne Walk to D’feet MND is on Sunday, 17 November 2020 at 10am. As in previous years, the Melbourne Walk will be held at the iconic Princes Park in Carlton. The Walk is an easy 3.5km flat walk around Princes Park, wheelchair and pram friendly. Disabled parking is available for people with MND

Bring your family, friends and dogs along for a fabulous day out to support people with MND. There will be coffee, BBQ, face painting, balloons, real dinosaurs, raffles, merchandise for sale and heaps more!

Nutrients:

- Lutein and zeaxanthin: they are helping with the retention of visual sensitivity and acuity. They are carotenoids found in eggs, kale spinach, turnips greens, broccoli, Brussel sprouts and oranges. They help by increasing the density of the macular pigment, which absorbs harmful blue light and reduces photo oxidative damage.
- Bilberry and grape seed: they are rich sources of flavonoids which help the microcirculation. They reduce the permeability and strengthen the capillary walls.
- Vit. C, vit. E, selenium and beta-carotene: Important antioxidant defence for preserving the clarity of the lens.
- Zinc: High levels of zinc are found in the macula. It enables vitamin A to create a pigment called melanin which protects the eye.
- Omega-3: It’s an essential building block for light receptors that are required for eyesight.

Diet and lifestyle:

- To limit intake of saturate fats
 - To eat oily fish three times a week
 - To increase the intake of dark leafy vegetables daily
 - To choose low glycaemic index carbohydrates.
 - To wear adequate eye protection for outdoor activities
 - To exercise regularly
- The goal is to slow down the progression of the condition. *Christine Gozlan*, Naturopath at Essential Health Foods - 246 Dorset Road, Boronia. Tel: 9762 6093

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(Photo's are of 2019 schools events)

This year has been a school year like no other. It has seen a number of my favourite school events cancelled but thankfully, some still able to proceed.

Many schools at the start of the year had to cancel their tours of Parliament House where I would have normally

A school year like no other. - 2020 - Nick Wakeling MP

taken the students on a personal tour.

In July, local schools would have participated in National School Tree Day where for the past 12 years I have visited schools and donated native shrubs for students to plant and cultivate within their own school gardens.

The Primary School Captains Luncheon, a favourite of mine also had to be cancelled. The School Captains Luncheon would have seen grade six school student leaders from around Knox come together in my office for lunch and to celebrate the achievements of their final school year.

Fortunately, the Premiers Reading Challenge which is enjoyed by many students was able to proceed. This is a

great initiative that assists students improve their reading skills and given the tough year, it has given many students a great deal of comfort during home schooling. Many students have done exceptionally well reading countless numbers of books this year. Each school was invited to recognise a student with my offering of a certificate and a book voucher in recognition of their fantastic reading efforts and for taking part in the Premiers Reading Challenge.

I am pleased that I am still able to proceed with presenting this year's Ferntree Gully Endeavour Awards. Although school graduation will look very different this year, I am delighted that I can still recognise students chosen by their schools to have shown great endeavour through-out their entire school years, not just during their graduating year. The Endeavour Award is for students who have strived to do their best in all aspects of their school lives and will have been helpful towards other students, staff and have been a great representative of their school.

As we head towards the end of an unprecedented school year, I would like to wish all grade six students the very best for their remaining weeks of their school year and wish them well in their future schooling.

Walking the News...



Distribution report

November Issue

Thank You

Our grateful thanks to Ross Ellard and Steve Masters, who have resigned from their rounds. We are grateful for your help for many years and wish you both well. We welcome & thank Rod Felton & John McMillan for taking on a walking round.

We hope all our walkers and drivers are keeping well. We hope to resume normal printing as soon as possible.

Knox Council Community Development Grant

The "Boronia and The Basin Community News" has recently received a grant from Knox City Council, under the "Community Development Fund". This grant will assist us in expanding our online presence so that we reach more of our community with both General Interest and Public Interest journalism. Our submission was entitled "Engage, Enlighten, Encourage, Expand".

Knox has a population of some 154,000 people.

Please let me know if your circumstances have changed or if you intend to take a break as soon as lockdown has ended.

Permanent Walking rounds currently available are:

The following rounds are available, if you can assist with these deliveries, please contact me, details below.

The Basin:

The Basin Shops: 95 Papers

Currently we distribute over 12,000 hard copies of our paper each month. Our objective now is to engage with a far larger audience through an increasing online presence. We have already started this process through our bbc.org.au website and our Facebook page.

Every month we have great information to share, which provides a source of enrichment to our community. This grant will enable us to become increasingly effective in engaging with people, in enlightening them with news and useful information, in encouraging them both as individuals as community.

John Pernu

Doongalla Rd, Simpsons Rd, Milleara Rd & part Sheffield Rd (inc) Salvation Army Farm: 60 papers

Temporary / Casual walkers or drivers:

For further information on the above rounds, or if you can assist with any deliveries on a casual or temporary basis, we would love to hear from you. There are always people away on holidays or temporary sick, so if you have any time to assist just once a month, please phone Veronica on 0403 522 308. Please note these are voluntary positions.



Alan TUDGE MP

Federal Member for Aston

[f tudgeMP](https://www.facebook.com/tudgeMP) [✉ alan.tudge.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:alan.tudge.mp@aph.gov.au)

[☎ 9887 3890](tel:98873890) [🌐 www.alantudge.com.au](http://www.alantudge.com.au)



Real Action For Knox



Dorset and Ringwood Golf Victory for the Community-Courses Saved



An online headline ‘Maroondah City Council has Scrapped Plan to Cut Up Ringwood and Dorset Golf Clubs.’ There had been an overwhelming response against this proposal.

Local players at both courses were shocked, disappointed and some were angry at the idea of one or both courses being cut up by the council.

The Maroondah Golf Strategic Review Stage One was commissioned by Maroondah City Council and one of the most highly controversial proposals was that one or both golf courses be reduced to 12 holes to enable the space provided to be used for other community purposes to be determined by council.

Residents adjoining the golf course at Dorset, members of Dorset Golf club and non-members have all been stunned by this proposal and the feedback shows the passion and commitment community members have for these highly successful and much loved golf courses.

Feedback was sought by council and only recently has the decision been made to cancel the proposal to cut back these golf courses

It is this specific recommendation that is the focus of my article since I personally was involved with others to seek out local community input from the surrounding homes affected and local golf players. Along with two others,

Robby Schuurman and Barry Hammond, walked around the adjoining homes with a petition asking support to stop the proposal.


We surveyed 207 residents with 90% of those we spoke to signing that they did not want the golf course cut up to 12 holes. At the same time we had two petitions of local Dorset Golf Members and non-members. Of the Dorset Golf members surveyed there were 340 signatures and all surveyed except one couple did not support the proposed changes and they represented 25% of members and if given more time I am sure would have been most if not all players. The next survey of non-members who play golf at Dorset resulted in 95% rejecting the proposals to cut up the course. A clear pattern emerged that all those users affected by the council proposals did NOT want the cut up of Dorset to proceed.

Also, it was my pleasure to work with Paul McDonald, the local Maroondah City Council member most directly affected by these proposals. He was generous with his time and support of our efforts to seek community input by those directly affected. Paul personally delivered leaflets, encouraging people to have their say by putting in submissions. Paul made them aware in his leaflets of the issues and encouraged locals to give feedback, he told me they responded overwhelming to his suggestions to

have their voice heard on these issues.

The Maroondah City Council themselves received an overwhelming response against the changes in all the other feedback they received. They had 1,125 submissions and on their website at ‘Your Say’ over 4,100 community members gave their feedback with many submissions sent directly to council including the ones we submitted. Council acknowledged that, ‘most of the proposed elements were NOT supported.’ Specifically, changes to accommodate other sports were NOT supported because of the impact on the golf courses.’

It was a privilege to work with my team and watch the galvanizing of so many in the community to prevent the Maroondah City Council cutting up these courses. Both courses are wonderful places for all ages to come play golf and enjoy the beautiful course and the great friendships that these venues have provided for so many decades. Well done, and a great victory to all who have worked so hard to have their voices heard.



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Elizabeth Scott

The First Woman Hanged in a Victorian Gaol

The following poems were composed from an historical skeleton with fictionalized flesh added. Italics indicate direct quotes from research.

Victoria, Australia, 1863.

Some said. Elizabeth Scott
deserved what she got
for a shooting plan
to murder her man.
This meant
whether guilty or not
of this murderous plot
her tragic goodbye
was from gallows on high
Youthful and loose
was the story they told
while her husband was sick
and rich and old.
Cross and Gedge
were named in the crime
both of them hanged
both in their prime.
Gossip was rife,
re this troublesome wife,
and her hanging applauded.
but! was truth accorded?
The following pages, delve back in the ages.
Here is some
of Elizabeth's tale
the first female hanged in
a Victorian gaol.

Confronting Their Orders, 11th November, 1863

Elizabeth Scott
hooded white for the hangman
at Melbourne Gaol.
Ellen Fennessy veiled white for her Christ
at Good Shepherd Convent
both events firsts for the Colony.
Black clothed the drop
white the ascension
each event contributing,
Ellen's life for her church
Elizabeth's editorial for a preaching press.

December 18th, 1853

My mother traded me this day...

the rite she'd planned with Robert Scott,
bearded, broad bellied
and with a shuffling gait,
took place at Goomalibee, Benalla.
Dressed in bridal lace
my virginity was sold

for gold
but the gold my Mother bought was 'fools'
and the only gold I ever saw was in a glass
turning man's hearts black.

The Honeymoon

I'd not yet reached my fourteenth year
when my name changed from Tuckett to Scott.
He, twenty years my senior, was
chronic alcoholic, reputedly wealthy,
and regularly sought by Mansfield Police
for transgressions of the law.
I vowed to keep my footsteps free.
At his tearing entry
there was no pretense of love
but pleasure with no need to pay.
While he violated me
I fled to the innocence of childhood
the green fields of Twickenham
laughter and school.

My Marriage...

Was nothing but drudging for Mr Scott
in his *Mansfield district 'grog shanty'*
beside the Devil's River.
A baby every second year
five in all - but only two survived.
Victoria's sun didn't shine on me that decade.
Although I walked with dirt
I never let it stain my feet.
Outside the Inn
God's Church
of mountains, trees and river
surrounded me.

The Crime

Saturday 11th April, 1863

My ache for love engulfed me
visible to those who cared
and David Gedge,
who worked with horses, cared
and felt not only love for me
but saw a deeper freedom need,
and Julian Cross the shanty cook
agreed.
My husband died while in a drunken stupor
the victim of a shooting
ill conceived to look like suicide
that didn't stand investigation.
Silently I shared the guilt
because I knew I was the reason.

Legal Representation For Elizabeth Scott

George Stephen Milner, barrister
was briefed to defend Elizabeth.
A member of an Anglo-Australian legal family
his incompetence was masked by pedigree.
Milner, like Beechworth miners sought gold,

But he chose to dig in political dirt
and wouldn't have risked offending
the Puritan attitude of the day.
Authority would not condone
an unruly colony.

Records show Stephen Milner
made no attempt to save his client.
Long before the noose tightened
the hangman's trapdoor dropped.

The Trial - 23rd October, 1863

Beechworth County Court

One day was sufficient.
In evidence David Gedge said,
'Julian Cross killed Scott'.
Cross replied, 'Gedge made me',
then added, 'She gave me brandy,
and said yes.'
Elizabeth Scott was never questioned.
With no written evidence presented
and the corpse spared an autopsy,
there was no justice on the scale
that weighed the fate of Elizabeth that day.
Her barrister's previous failures were confirmed.
Twelve male jurors,
well able to ponder their own fate
if wilful wives weren't warned
from similar murderous acts,
took but thirty minutes
to declare the trio guilty.
Sir William Stawell,
the hanging judge,
didn't allow compassion
to flaw his reputation.

Reflecting - Melbourne Central Gaol,

10th November, 1863

This time tomorrow I'll be gone
I do not fear my death
because I'm safe with God.
The world has dealt with me unjustly,
my silence vexes my accusers
but their judgement passes me
like eagles plunging after prey.
I was of sand
but ten harsh years
have turned me into rock
There are regrets that I will leave
little John, and baby Thomas.
I ask you Lord
to keep my boys in safety
and not allow my cross
to splinter them.

The Hanging

11th November, 1863

On the pole above the gaol

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the black flag spoke the deaths
of three, for one
and journalists penned the story.
*Execution of Cross, Gedge,
and the woman Scott.*
With the drawing of the bolt,
pinioned, neck-roped, hooded,
and exhorted to repentance by the clergy,
*three miserable creatures were dangling helpless,
and let us hope insensibly,
from the black beam above.*
The righteous colony avenged.
Demonstrating to the rising generation
punishment for acts of *sinful desire.*
Julian Cross had trembled

David Gedge had wept,
and Elizabeth Scott, composed had asked,
'David will you not clear me?'
Reportage ; The Herald, 12th November, 1863
The Inquest, Melbourne Central Gaol, 11th November, 1863
*The bodies remained suspended for an hour.
Taken down by the hangman
they were arranged on trestles under the drop.
The white caps were removed
the ropes then coiled
to serve as pillows for the dead
the coroner viewed the bodies.
Scott, a rather nice looking woman
was fearfully altered.
Face of purple hue*

*and swollen head
nearly severed from her body,
she still grasped the white handkerchief in her fingers.*
*The youth Gedge,
livid over the lower portion of his face,
but the forehead,
which by way is of a rather intellectual form,
was perfectly white.*
*The change in Crosses' features
not so distinguishable
his being mulatto.*
Buried in Melbourne Cemetery
all they had to take
in cold dead hands,
was their truth.
Pauline Brown

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