

Boronia & The Basin COMMUNITY NEWS



Issue 298
Ap. 2021

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COVID WASN'T ALL BAD

The death of loved ones, job losses, lack of financial security and basic human needs such as food and shelter have challenged us all in ways we could never imagine.

As I sat on the couch checking my social media I was overwhelmed with incredible sadness as some acquaintances cried for help as they sat alone in their homes unable to connect in person with family and friends. My elderly mother was upset as she was unable to pop down to the shops for her social interaction with shopkeepers and the bus driver.

We are truly blessed to live in one of the most beautiful areas in the outer east of Melbourne where nature abounds and a strong sense of community prevails. The perception is that we are mostly middle class and wealthy in the east, this could not be further from the truth. Knox had the highest reporting of family violence incidents in the region prior to COVID, and I can't begin to fathom the fear of women (or men) living in lockdown with an abusive partner.

I would constantly ask myself am I doing enough to support my family and community through this crisis. Did you connect with isolated neighbours in your street, check on family and friends more often on the phone or social media?

Do you feel you were supported enough during the lockdown? Is there more we could do to empower ourselves or support others should lockdowns occur again.

The closure of our thriving Community House was challenging to say the least. We have always prided ourselves on offering a safe and inclusive space for residents to participate in adult education, community development programs and social groups. For many the House provided the only social interaction with other people on a regular basis.

So what were the positives? I believe it was a strong sense of community that supported the building of resilience and the health and well being of many our residents throughout the main lockdowns of 2020.

The commitment of organisations and our communities working together ensured that basic human needs were met by those most disadvantaged.

Another positive was the willingness of residents to learn digital literacy to connect to family and social groups online.

It was inspiring to see so many organisations and Knox Council rising to the challenge of supporting communities. Our fabulous emergency relief organisations Knox Infolink and Champion Community Hub ensured food hampers were distributed to those in need.

The pandemic has opened our eyes to what is truly important, not material possessions but the realization that our family, friends and community are crucial to our happiness and well being.

Heather McTaggart JP
Manager – The Basin Community House

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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.

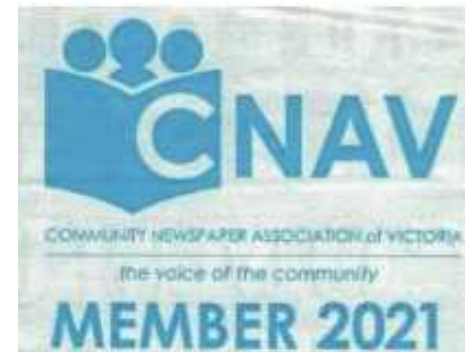
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Mimicry . . .

And this month I've been getting right into mimicry. There are so many aspects to birds which people I meet, some whom have no interest in birds whatsoever, find fascinating. Migration, plumage colour, song, ability to hunt in darkness, the list goes on. Many though, yours truly included, rank mimicry at the top of the list. Surprisingly to many new to the world of birds, a wide variety of Australian birds have mimicry in their repertoire, but the master of this is the Superb Lyrebird.

My fantastic neighbour Ingrid recently loaned me a book called 'The Bird Way' by Jennifer Ackerman, which gives amazing insights into all types of bird behaviour, including mimicry. In the book she describes how as celebrated as the Lyrebirds ability to mimic man made noises is, it is extremely rare (I have never experienced it myself).

If you have watched David Attenborough's documentary where a Lyrebird in Sherbrooke Forest mimics perfectly the camera shutter sound, you find it difficult to comprehend how it can do that. Logging



trucks labouring through the gears, car alarms, chainsaws (my good friend Jon Ferres can attest to that one, on the construction of the Thompson dam in the 70's) in fact many anecdotal stories abound as to this incredible behaviour.

The reason she points out for this is that as skilled a mimic as the Lyrebird is, it mainly learns that mimicry from it's parents. This can be proven by the fact that Lyrebirds, introduced to Tasmania in 1935, still mimic Pilotbirds and some other species which aren't even found in Tasmania.

Of course though, the main reason male Superb Lyrebirds have mastered the art of mimicry is to impress the lady Lyrebirds (bit of an ongoing theme that one). The male who can imitate the most number of birds is most likely to win the female over, so maybe taking on man made sounds as well helps to impress a female even more. Black Cockatoos, Eastern Whipbirds, Kookaburras, Pilotbirds, GangGangs are all species I commonly hear lyrebirds impersonating.

This next bit is going to be a bit hard for me. Take a deep breath..... try to soldier on..... Here we go.

Ummm, you know the umm, well you know, the bit about ah, phew, I'm starting to blush, you know the copulation bit, there, I just said it ok! Well yeah, that bit, when the male and female Lyrebird do that thing, to ensure the female stays put and the act takes even longer, male Lyrebirds mimic birds giving alarm calls, specific alarm calls which suggest a raptor (bird of prey) is in the vicinity, which makes her cower in fear and even more submissive. There that bits over and done with, nearly had to get someone else to write that for me. On to the next paragraph.

I would be surprised if any people reading this would not have a small bird called the Brown Thornbill visit their garden. These little birds travel mostly in small flocks through the understorey feeding on insects and have lots of different calls but are also good at mimicry. Now why would a little bird like this have the ability to copy other birds, you may ask. One of this birds sworn enemies is the Pied Currawong, a bird who voraciously feeds on eggs and nestlings.



So if a predator like a Pied Currawong is hanging around near a Thornbills nest, what better way to distract it than copy some alarm calls of say a Noisy Miner or NewHolland Honeyeater telling the neighbourhood that a Peregrine Falcon or similar is nearby. By taking the Currawongs mind off its task for even a few moments gives the Thornbill an opportunity to scamper away some distance from the nest and the old Currawong is left wondering where the nest is located, doh fooled again!

But many other birds also mimic, Silvereyes, Australian Magpies, some species of Bowerbirds and Common Starlings to name a few. Don't believe everything you hear in the Australian bush, you can sometimes get it wrong if you're going by call alone. And another interesting thing is that Sulphurcrested Cockatoos, who are extremely good at copying sounds they hear living in captivity, have never been recorded doing the same in the wild.

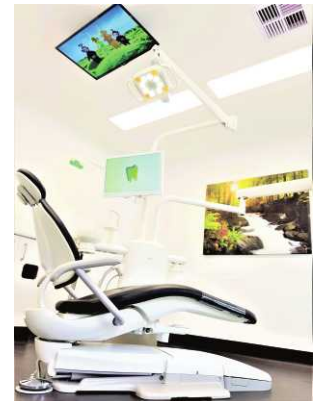
Our most recent field trip took us to the Western treatment plant near Werribee, and an epic day it was. Highlights were Purplecrowned Lorikeets, 3 Brolgas flying low overhead while we had our lunch, a Tiger snake swimming across one of the ponds and being surrounded by inquisitive Blackwinged Stilts, a Common Sandpiper (rare in Victoria) and 2 Australian Spotted Crakes. Great day had by all! You know the drill, email me if you want to come along next time.

Des Palmer arc_up_welding@live.com.au

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The clinic offers extended consulting hours (MonSat 7am9pm and Sun and Public Holidays 9am8pm by appointment) and our hospital provides roundtheclock care 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Our existing clients also enjoy a 24 hour service.

BBCN FAREWELLS VERONICA

Our BBCN Committee was saddened recently when we accepted Veronica Pearce's decision to step down.

Veronica joined us in 2008 and became Treasurer. She managed the finances and invoicing so capably and diligently, then also took on the role of Distribution Manager when Graham Billing retired many years ago. Veronica gladly took his place ... "until a replacement could be found". Graham had been doing this from the BBCN beginnings, so Veronica spent months checking extensively & bringing the distribution records up to date for easier management on the computer.

Having already been so diligent as our BBCN Treasurer for many years, the addition of managing the distribution team made Veronica a doubly valued committee member.

Veronica always discouraged her team of walkers from taking on too many rounds, as they would

be very hard to replace if they became ill or unable to continue but she did just that herself she took on so much. So when she stepped down recently we had many roles to fill Treasurer, Distribution Manager, walker and coffee/tea and biscuit keeper.

Thankfully we have a new Treasurer who has been well trained by Veronica, the biscuit/coffee/tea box will be taken up by one of us and we are hopeful that someone will step in to manage the distribution of our BBCN. Veronica has also offered her assistance to help a new Distribution Manager to settle in.

We thank her sincerely for her constant commitment to her many roles in the BBCN and for her vast knowledge of the system of running and organising our local paper.

We all wish Veronica well and know her family will enjoy having her back. She has been extremely appreciated as a committee member so will be greatly and sadly missed.

Knox-Sherbrooke Royal Children's Hospital Auxiliary ...

has after 44 years of service been forced to disband but through the auspices of the Ferntree Gully Friends of Red Cross, (Maxine Lane), Ferntree Gully Library Knitting Group, (Sally & Marion Hodgson) who are the distribution points - items are still flowing through to the following: Royal Children's Hospital Auxiliaries, Red Cross, Angliss Hospital, Yooralla, Kogo, and many other places. the following groups supplying items and wooden crafts are: Waterford Park Craft Group, Waterford Park Men's Shed, Ferntree Gully Library Knitting Group and some outside people. Our sincere thanks go to all those working so hard to assist the above groups.

Also is it possible to put in that the Ferntree Gully Friends of Red Cross are holding a stall On Saturday April 17th in the Ferntree Plaza at Upper Ferntree Gully starting at 9am and ending at 1.30pm

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Life Activities Club of Knox Feb 11 and March 11, Picnic in the Park

APRIL, and thankfully, we can go on and we will to ECHUCA, by bus. 5days / 4nights, 40 of us will board the bus for fun, adventure, painted silos, history, and cruising on the Mighty Murray River. "Emmy Lou", a genuine paddle steamer, and it's fascinating to observe the steam engine at work, all the bits and pieces moving as in the old days. Also, in the plan is to visit and learn about the irrigation and wartime history of the internment camps.

A winery visit too, let's not forget. We will arrive home, well fed, knowledgeable, with new friends and happy memories. Otherwise, activities continue. Social Games on the 1st. Friday every month in Vermont, Badminton in Mitcham, Cinema in Boronia. The Walkers will be out in the great outdoors. The Card players will be dealing inside.

"Men's Coffee and Chat", will meet in FTG. And we now have "Girl's Coffee and Chat", and this is held on the 1st Monday each month, at the Banksia Nursery.

NEXT, there is another bus trip being organised by Helen for the 8th. of April. A day trip to the Blackwood area. 2/3 beautiful gardens, i.e. Garden of St. Erth, Frogmore Gardens, and the Blackwood Ridge Nursery and café, always a cuppa handy.

See you soon. We would like to welcome you to any of our activities, and for more information, please ring Carol on 0419 870 639, for a copy of our newsletter.

Or contact us on www.life.org.au/knox

Another one bites the dust.

Danny Nolan

On the morning of Monday, the 8th February the building at 16 Floriston Road became the last single dwelling house to fall in the street. It was the end of an era.

Built sometime in the early to mid 1950s, it was a comfortable two bedroom weatherboard that was very much kept (from the outside anyway) in the period it was built. Lovely, manicured lawns with razor sharp edges up to the footpath a bed of flowers running parallel to the dual concrete driveway with the green grass centre. A magnolia sitting pride of place in the front yard behind the wooden fence. A green and cream awning hanging over the front window to protect from the Westerly facing frontage.

I remember a few years earlier as I passed the house on my daily walk, I would often see an elderly lady moving about the front yard, sometimes sweeping the path or doing some gardening and occasionally I would wave and she would acknowledge with a wave back and a soft: "morning".

The old lady hasn't been there for a while as the property was sold in early 2018 for 1.6 million dollars, due to its desirable location and plot size – just over 1200 M2. It was a rental for a while, you could tell, even though the property was kept neat the more proud homeowner touches just weren't there anymore. I wish I had have maybe taken the time to talk to the lady when I had the time, regretting now the chance to hear stories she probably had regarding the area and its changes. Then again, I could be wrong. She may have only been there a short time and I only noticed here due to my current need for more exercise. If anyone can tell her story, I would be glad to give it a read. (I have since found out she died in 2017 aged 97 and loved her



garden right up to her passing) But if she got the piece of that 1.6 Mil, great for her.

But now it is a vacant block with nothing but dirt, memories and a large excavator waiting to be taken away. Soon to be replaced with ten 2 storey townhouses with lovely views of the Coles/Kmart loading bay and car park.

Early images of the two streets Floriston and Turner roads immediately behind what is now Dorset Square

are rare. Pre 1970s photos before Kmart & Coles were built barely show either road. They are there running off Boronia road, mainly obscured by the angle or perspective but always on the edge of the shot, on the peripheral of any photo that was more interested in showing Boronia shops and of course the infamous railway crossing, fair enough too, back then they were just quiet residential streets.

Turner Road still exists but ends at the roundabout that enters the Dorset Square car park. No longer a street rather than a long driveway. It of course was swallowed by the development of the Mall and Kmart/Coles back in the 1970s as well as the Western side of Floriston Road.



This is not an essay on the horrible state of progress in our area, as 16 Floriston was one of the last houses built on

the road, my point, for this article, now I have eventually got around to it, is this. We are lucky that we can source information and old photos thanks to great resources in the area and people who love to share their knowledge and memories.

Institutions like the Library and the Knox Historical Society, but more importantly Facebook groups like Boronia "The good old days" A collection of 5000 plus members mainly locals sharing photos, newspaper clipping, ephemera and stories that keep history in the area alive, no matter how fast progress changes the landscape.



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**Alan Tudge,
local Federal MP**

The vaccine rollout has now commenced across Australia and Knox is playing an important part.

Biosafety (pictured) in Ferntree Gully are the lead consultants in decontaminating an old penicillin facility in the UK to enable it to become a massive global production, storage and distribution facility for the Pfizer vaccine.



Biosafety specialise in this kind of decontamination, and managing director Brett Cole is one of the only global experts in this field. Without him this job would not have been able to happen. It's always fantastic to see the number of innovative businesses that we have right here in Knox.

In Phase 1A of the rollout the Pfizer vaccine was given to quarantine, border and frontline workers and aged care and disability residents at aged care homes and public hospitals. Beginning in March in Phase 1B, the AstraZeneca vaccine will be available at many more locations including GP Clinics, respiratory clinics, vaccination clinics and pharmacies.

If you do have any questions about the vaccines, it's important that you seek reliable information.

www.health.gov.au/covid19vaccines has a number of resources that can help answer your questions.

It's taken 30 years, but the **Napoleon Rd duplication and Dorset Rd extension** are progressing! \$130 million of federal funding remains secured and \$10 million of this has been provided to the state government to finalise planning. Currently we are waiting for the state government to complete scoping activities including traffic modelling, options assessment and detailed project costings.

These are likely to be finished in September this year. We will then know exactly when the state government can start construction, but it will likely be in early 2022. I know it can be frustrating how long these projects take, but I am seeing some good progress. I will continue to keep you updated.

For more information on these and many other local projects, please visit www.alantudge.com.au

Knox Regional Netball Centre construction is set to start earlier than expected. The designs are now done, the tender process is underway and construction is due to begin in April this year! This was an election promise of mine and \$4m is now secured.



construction. Construction will include two new indoor courts, seating for 300 spectators, an extra 180 car

Knox Council and the state government have now also agreed to contribute with the Council managing the project's

parks and a general face lift for the complex. The centre hosts over 6,000 people every week and is a huge part of our community's life.

The Knox Relay for Life is back for 2021!

This is a sensational community event that helps raise much needed funds for the Cancer Council. Last year's relay was cancelled due to COVID, so we want to make this year's event twice as big! So please, register a team, bring your family and friends along and help support this important cause.



When: 13 March 2021, 12pm-10pm

Where: Knox Athletics Track, Bunjil Way, Knoxfield

All the detail of the event and how to register can be found here. Thanks in advance for your support of this great cause.

Happy year of the Ox to all those celebrating Lunar New Year, Chinese New Year and TET across Knox. We live in the greatest multicultural society in the world and these celebrations have become a part of the Australian culture and calendar.

The Ox is a symbol of strength, reliability and fairness. All qualities we can aspire to in our lives. I hope you have a healthy, happy and prosperous year and enjoy celebrating the new year with your family and friends.

Continued next page . . .

Alan TUDGE MP
Federal Member for Aston

f tudgeMP | alan.tudge.mp@aph.gov.au
9887 3890 | www.alantudge.com.au

Real Action For Knox

... from previous page

Community Theatre is back!



It's great to see Fab Nobs Theatre back doing what they do best.

Fab Nobs is a local theatre company located in Bayswater that produce great local theatre productions all year round. I was recently able to help secure a small federal grant to assist them with building their production sets which has been especially helpful now that they are able to perform again. They are currently busy preparing for their next big production BIG FISH, which starts on 20 March. They would love to see you



there!

Find out more at www.fabnobstheatre.com.au

It's great to see sport back this summer; it is such a vital part of our community. **Knox Boronia Churches Cricket Club** is one of the many sports clubs that I recently helped secure federal funding for. They have used their funding to purchase a bowling machine and new kitchen equipment.

Good Luck for the season everyone! I hope to be down soon to catch all the action. Sometimes, just a small amount of money can make a big difference. Please contact my office if your local school, club or community group is not on my database, so we can keep you informed of upcoming funding opportunities.

Alan Tudge

VALE JAMIN SWANEVELD Artist extraordinaire

Popular local identity Jamin Swaneveld was tragically killed when he was involved in an accident on his beloved motorcycle near Emerald on March 6th. He was only 45 years old. A devoted husband and father he is survived by his wife Marcie and his two children Willow and Banjo.

Jamin was a creative giant in the area. A talented artist who drew and sculpted, this combined with his builder's background created amazing fantasy and whimsical pieces. I first met Jamin when I first moved into the area nearly two decades ago. He had just opened up a space next to a Nursery called WillowWoods in Belgrave to showcase his art. It was a magical place. I would pop in and just chat about anything, he had that charismatic personality and being a natural storyteller, he could hold an audience for ages.

Sadly, WillowWoods didn't pan out as planned and Jamin took a leap into the great unknown and decided to start up his own tattoo parlour Last Frontier in Upwey. During COVID, unable to work from the shop, he decided to move the business to his home in Cockatoo where he rebuilt the shop's fantasy interior in a separate studio.

The world has lost a wonderfully creative talent and a true gentleman, a man whose passing has affected many in the community as they realise how much a change he made in their lives and I cannot begin to understand the loss his family is suffering. But if you reap what you sow in this life Jamin is currently walking through a field of gold. RIP great man.

Danny Nolan

William Matthews

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DAYS FOR GIRLS - BREAKING THE STIGMA

This incredible organisation exists to reach out to some of the poorest communities on earth. Shame and stigma about female menstruation goes hand in hand with widespread marginalisation, disadvantage and poverty. The 'Days for Girls' organisation skilfully and bravely



tackle the problem by creating high quality, discreet, reusable sanitary products that will help girls

respond to their menstruation with dignity and self care whilst seeking to educate and advance the cause of girls in their communities and the world.

Many cultures marginalise girls and women as 'unclean' during their menstrual cycle and this means that girls can quickly become disadvantaged in education, employment and society at large, with no access to sanitary products.

Days for Girls International is providing answers.



Starting in the U.S. by Celeste Mergens who saw the need and reached out to her church, interest and volunteers quickly grew into an international organisation spreading around the world including Australia.

'Days for Girls Australia' originally started with 2 teams in

2012, and has quickly grown to 160 teams or 'chapters' spread across the country. Right here on our doorstep, the Ferntree Gully chapter for Days for Girls Australia, coordinated by the lovely Susan Shaw, runs it's

program out of the large back room of the 'Here & There Makers' store in Boronia.

Susan runs a volunteer roster and oversees the construction and distribution of the kits. Using only quality materials to produce highly effective, reusable items that are planetfriendly, these amazing sanitary kits have been dispensed around the world, revising their design regularly to provide the most effective and userfriendly product possible. More recently, the Australian chapters have been concentrating their efforts in the Asia Pacific region where they try and partner with local organisations or enterprises to better reach their target demographic.

Along with the kits, educational programs are offered through Days for Girls International in local languages. Allied workers educate and teach body knowledge and selfcare through pictorial demonstrations, including how to use and clean your products. Days for Girls Int'l seek permission from village leaders and try and partner with not forprofit organisations on the ground.

This partnering with local support workers and elders is vital because in most areas around the world, permission and access need to be granted for foreign aid and programs to be welcomed and successful. Local contacts and partnerships help with the distribution and effectiveness of this life affirming scheme.

Supporting Enterprises

Days for Girls International, often partner with local workers and groups who will teach women to sew and produce their own sanitary products. This can provide vital ongoing skills and a sense of purpose to vulnerable women whilst providing their community with much needed menstrual dignity and breaking the stigma and taboo of this subject. Part of Days for Girls Ferntree Gully, is to help supply and support these enterprises as well as sending ready to use kits to

wherever they are needed most.

Volunteers

This terrific program is made up of hard working volunteers from our local community who give of their time and energy to skilfully sew and complete thousands of kits a year. PreCovid, this workshop produced 3000 kits per year with around 80 regular volunteers a month and many more offering casual help. Ages have ranged from 12-90+! This team has the honour of holding a "Gold Standard" in sewing which is checked regularly by their parent company.

Covid has stifled production and numbers but it has not stifled the enthusiasm for what they do. Committed women still meet each week within restrictions and have continued to be a hub of support, conversation, laughter and purpose.

More than just sewing

This lifegiving idea not only changes lives overseas, but here, on our doorstep too, it brings people together with a common goal, often alleviating isolation, loneliness and boredom within our own community. A supportive team environment in a brightly lit work room with colourful accents of fabric, soft furnishings and chatter, welcomes one and all to be part of something big and important. I would say that this 'offshoot' of an already good idea, is a silver lining and a valuable contribution to our local community in so many positive ways, giving a sense of belonging and wellbeing.

Support

No notforprofit organisation can exist without generous support along the way. A special mention to the Rotary Club of Boronia for their recent purchase of new irons and for the continued financial aid given by the 'Here & There Makers' store who let this organisation use the large back room rent free and cover overheads so that it's vital work can continue to support some of the most vulnerable of our planet's population – girls.

Community Involvement

Want to help? Here's a few ideas: Donate money (tax deductible), donate fabric –new Quilter's Cotton at least 52 inch lengths only (no small pieces please) or donate your time. Days for Girls FTG is always looking for helpers. Please contact Susan Shaw on email ferntreegully@daysforgirls.org for more details.

Analy Alfonso

HERE AND THERE MAKERS - Local Business in the spotlight

This Ecofriendly, Zero Waste, Reuse and Refill business model is making it easier for locals to switch to less consumption, more earthresponsible living. As you enter this delightful store you get a sense of the care and love that has gone into it's foundation.



Michelle Gates, the store manager, founder and an entrepreneur – is passionate about “seeing people make sustainable changes in their lives”. She enjoys researching new products and the fun and loving community of staff and volunteers that have gathered in this

warm and welcoming space to make a difference to our planet.

The Here & There Makers emerged from Michelle's lounge room in 2013 where a group of women were creating personal hygiene kits for charity (see more below) and after using a number of local public buildings as it grew, they finally moved to its current location on the corner of Erica Ave and Boronia Road, entering their 4th year in Boronia and blossoming into a hub of good ideas, promoting responsible consumption.

The name “Here & There Makers” is derived from the many locations this shop sources it's products. From Belgrave to Bangladesh, N.S.W to Bangkok – Michelle Gates and her team work hard at finding or making ethically and ecologically sound products that offer quality and care for our planet, insisting on items that come with

'end of life' solutions for their disposal. Don't mistake this shop for a 'craft shop'. If products don't meet the strict criteria above, they don't make the cut.



Ethically sourced and labour intensive products can cost more than mass produced equivalents but every effort has been made to keep prices as accessible as possible. The shelves and tables are filled with products for nearly every daily need spanning cosmetics, hygiene, laundry and baby needs, plus a wonderful array of giftware and so much more.

The store itself helps to fund a charity project called “Days for Girls” which is a notforprofit organisation advancing menstrual equity and the health and dignity for girls around the world. (more on this project to come in the next issue) www.daysforgirls.org for more information.

A group of skilled and enthusiastic volunteers are busily sewing in a large brightly lit back room making many of the handmade products on sale as well as up to 3000 kits supporting 'Days for Girls' important work among some of the world's poorest communities.

The COVID Pivot

How did a store like this survive 2 major Victorian shut downs? They adapted. They turned to Click & Collect ordering on their website, and of course they were in perfect position to make face masks! Producing up to 500 masks a week at the height of lockdown, this little shop could not keep up with demand. Their quick



thinking and the nimble fingers of their dedicated volunteers kept them afloat.

The resilience of so many small businesses under such tough economic conditions is a testament to the courage and passion of the Aussie spirit.

Recycling Hub

Don't think that this business is all 'sell' – they are also a hub for recycling to help us all reduce landfill. Come in and check out what you can get recycled that our home recycling bins won't accept. Some of these include writing pens/textas, dental hygiene products and some specific coffee pods.

Committed to reducing plastic and waste, you can refill purchases again and again by returning your jars and bottles or bringing your own. Fill up on the array of earthfriendly products to suit every household.

How can you help?

Come in and browse and buy. Join the movement of sustainable living that reduces the mindless plastic consumption we have been lured into.

Donate – good condition towels, woollen blankets and secondhand flannel sheets

Volunteer <https://hereandtheremakers.com/> has a volunteer application form

Future Initiatives

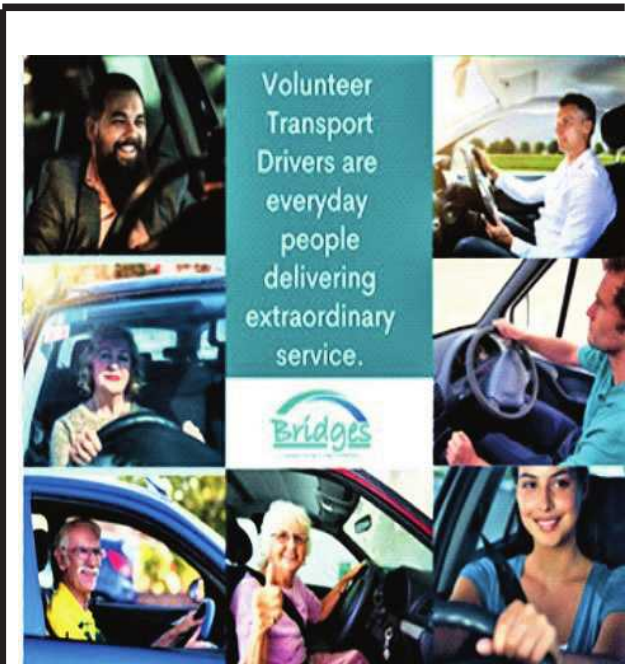
A return of workshops are hoped for in the near future as some stability returns to restriction guidelines. Topics such as 'green cleaning', personal care and project specific sewing classes will be on the menu soon.



Michelle dreams of seeing the business expand it's recycling capacity and perhaps include fresh food and produce to it's shelves.

Support local business and the planet by checking this very special store out soon.

Analy Alfonso



Volunteer Drivers make a difference

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Email lynm@bridgescc.com.au

or ring 9763 9700 to join today!

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



Knox Rotary Club

As a response to unmet needs for professional counselling in our community, the Rotary Club of Knox has launched

Simple Steps Solutions Inc.

This program will enable individuals who are presently financially disadvantaged and who may be experiencing issues such as stress, anxiety or relationship problems to access the services of fully qualified counsellors at no cost to themselves.

SSSI has partnered with headspaceKnox to run a Pilot Program.

The role of the headspaceKnox is to

- identify a client who meets the criteria
- help the client select the most appropriate counsellor from a list of participating counsellors, supplied by SSSI
- make a referral. The client would then negotiate appointment times with the relevant counsellor.

The account is then sent by the counsellor to SSSI for payment.

SSSI will keep only basic data; for example, age range, gender of clients to help with forward planning. At no stage will SSSI be told the name of the client or other personal information.

This program is being funded by grants from the Rotary Club of Knox, Rotary District Grants and Knox City Council. However, SSSI has registered as a Charity and will need to seek and encourage further donations if it is to continue.

Further information can be obtained by contacting enquiries@simplesteps.com.au.



**BOOKS FOR KIDS CAMPAIGN
SPONSORS 25 VICTORIAN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

With the commencement of Term 1, 2021, Books in Homes Australia is excited to embark on a special project in partnership with Rotary District 9810 and supported by Ansvr Insurance that will see around 4,000 new and highquality books distributed to some 1,830 children in 25 primary schools in Eastern Melbourne and the Yarra Valley.

Books in Homes Australia is a charitable foundation that provides booksofchoice to children living in remote, disadvantaged and low socioeconomic circumstances, ensuring crucial early literacy engagement and the development of reading skills needed for lifelong achievement. To date, Books in Homes has distributed over 2.7 million new books to children through schools and communities around Australia.

Basic education and literacy are focus areas for Rotary International. Partnering with Books in Homes to encourage the development of reading and to give primary school children living in their local area their own books to keep was a fantastic project that drew the full support of Rotarians. The geographical area covered by Rotary District 9810 includes from Sandringham to Templestowe and up to Upper Yarra and Healesville. The 40 Rotary clubs in this district raised an incredible \$35,000 in the District Governor's Family Project – Books for Kids Campaign, which aimed to identify and fund local primary schools that would benefit from being on the Books in Homes Program. Each child will get to choose two new and quality books during Term 1, 2021. In addition, each participating school will receive a Preview Pack of 48 books to integrate into the school library for all current and future students to access.

The 25 schools supported by this project includes three in the City of Knox: Bayswater Primary School, Boronia K12 College and Boronia West Primary School.

Thank you, Rotary District 9810, Ansvr Insurance and Campaign Coordinator Shia Smart, along with husband Duncan and son Flynn, for your outstanding contribution to the Victorian community by helping to create a better reading future for primary school students.

**ANZAC DAY SERVICE, TIM NEVILLE ARBORETUM
Wed 21 April at 11.30 am**

Each year since the centenary of ANZAC Day in 2015 the Rotary Club of Boronia has conducted an annual ANZAC Day commemoration for local primary schools.

The 2021 event will again be held at the Tim Neville Arboretum, with the ceremony commencing at 11:30am on Wednesday, 21st April.

The Guest Speaker will be local returned serviceman, Billy Schroeder, who is Senior Vice President of the Boronia RSL Subbranch. Music will again be provided by the St Joseph's College Stage Band and the St Joseph's Primary School Choir will provide choral support.

Local primary schools have been invited to participate. Any other interested persons are welcome to attend.

The commemoration service has been registered as a COVIDSafe Event.



Distribution

Our thanks and best wishes to Robyn Crook, who is currently unwell. We wish her well for a speedy recovery. These walking rounds are available, if you can assist or would like more information, contact@bbcن.و.ا

Permanent Walking rounds currently available are 60 papers in The Basin area; Boronia Mall: Approx. 125 papers; Boronia Albert Avenue area: 125 papers.

A Temporary round currently available is (1 year min), Dixon Court area 118 papers.

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Business Interruption Insurance and Covid-19

As if they didn't have enough to worry about, many business owners have had their business interruption insurance claims rejected or have been told by their brokers and insurers that their policies do not cover pandemic related losses, when in fact many policies should.

Many businesses hold or have held these policies, which typically included coverage for loss of revenue or profits as a result of outbreaks of disease, or orders by authorities that have restricted access to their business premises, such as occurred during 2020.

Businesses owners have tried to claim on these policies on the basis that this cover extended to loss of revenue or profits suffered as a result of COVID-19. However, a number of these business interruption policies state that they exclude insurance coverage where the disease in question was defined as a "quarantinable disease" under the Quarantine Act 1908 (Cth). The issue is that this piece of legislation was repealed some years ago and was replaced by the Biosecurity Act 2015 (Cth), meaning the Quarantine Act 1908 no longer applies. This then leads to the issue of whether the clauses in question actually do operate to

exclude insurance coverage. Many insurers and brokers have advised

businesses that they cannot claim on their business interruption insurance due to these exclusion clauses.

In a judgment delivered in November 2020 by the Court of Appeal in New South Wales, the court found that COVID-19 is not a disease declared to be a "quarantinable disease" under the Quarantine Act 1908, and therefore it follows that certain exclusion clauses, which insurance companies relied on to deny coverage to businesses, are ineffective.

In an effort to stave off a massive amount of claims, the Insurance Council of Australia ('ICA') is now trying to challenge the NSW Court of Appeal decision on the Quarantine Act ruling. If an appeal is actually granted, a final outcome on that could take months or longer and even then it is not guaranteed that insurers will start paying out claims (if the industry loses that appeal).

The fact that the 1908 Quarantine act exclusion has (at this stage) been disallowed, still does not necessarily provide a clear trigger for a claim, it just (subject to the

appeal) may remove an exclusion, however other conditions required for a payout may not still be met.

For example, most business interruption policies are not aimed at compensating the client for losses sustained due to states of emergency being imposed.

The ICA has stated that further test cases are in the pipeline, and will look at these other contractual areas that the industry believes could preclude it from paying out pandemic claims.

Notwithstanding the above, if you own or operate a business which may have experienced a loss of revenue or profits due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, and believe that you may have held business interruption insurance cover during that time, it is still critical that you obtain independent legal advice. Depending on the terms of your policy and any possible exclusions you may still be entitled to the benefit of your insurance cover and simply not be aware of your entitlements.

As always I'm happy to assist with this or any other matter. (This is not legal advice).



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A LETTER OF CONCERN FROM ONE OF OUR READERS

I am contacting you in the hope that you would consider posting a story about the problem that myself and I'm sure many other people in boronia are facing. With the high volume of housing development going on in boronia in particular, it has resulted in many houses being left vacant while the plans are going through council for building approval, a process which can take months (overdevelopment is another huge problem, and neighbors are lodging objections to plans due to high density multi story developments being proposed in areas primarily consisting of single story detached houses). So these houses sit vacant for months on end to be vandalised and squatters move in to cause havoc. In our street there is three such houses, one immediately next door, and my life has become a hell. There is drug activity, and multiple people using these buildings as doss houses. We want to leave this beautiful area as a result, however now my house price is compromised and it brings down the feel of the entire area. I have young children who I now cannot let play outside, my other immediate neighbours are an elderly couple in their eighties, and other neighbors in the street are disabled. We are all intimidated, and sick to death of it. I have had to call police multiple times. Feel free to contact me if you would be interested in this story. Kind regards.

Name supplied - to follow up this story, get in touch with us at contact@bbcn.org.au



Nick Wakeling, State MP

Recognising outstanding service

The past twelve months have been tough on all of us. None more so than the extraordinary staff at Knox Retirement Village and all aged care workers.

Throughout the pandemic, these workers have made enormous sacrifices to care for and protect our community's most at risk. We all owe these workers a debt of gratitude for their service.

It is for these reasons that I was particularly honoured to visit Knox Retirement Village and to recognise, on behalf of Knox Retirement Village and our entire community, the great efforts of these workers throughout the pandemic.

While the current state of our aged care sector is receiving much needed attention, it is important that we do not lose sight of the incredible care and dedication often in difficult circumstances of our aged care workers.

My heartfelt thanks go out to the staff at Knox Retirement Village and to all workers in the many retirement villages in our Knox community.



Our future leaders

A new school year brings new student leaders and it is always a great honour for students to be selected for these important roles and to represent your school. Recently I was honoured to have had the opportunity to visit local schools including Wantirna Primary School and Ferntree Gully North Primary School to recognise their 2021 school leaders.

It is a particular honour this year to recognise students who, after the challenges faced by students last year and the rocky start to this year, have shown great leadership and support to their peers.

I congratulate those who have been chosen to lead their school in various capacities throughout 2021 and



I wish all students a great year ahead in 2021. I look forward to seeing many of our 2021 students leaders go on to achieve great things in the future.

Uturn sign for Thomas Street and Burwood Highway intersection

It gives me great pleasure to announce that a 'UTurn Must Give Way' sign will be installed at the intersection of Thomas Street and the Burwood Highway in Ferntree Gully.

Recently I was contacted by a Knox resident concerned about the Uturn at this intersection and this resident advised me that a 'UTurn Must Give Way' sign is needed to improve safety.

After contacting the relevant authorities on behalf of the community, the decision was made to install the sign.

This result is a great example of democracy in action, and I encourage all Knox residents to reach out to me at nick.wakeling@parliament.vic.gov.au should they have any ideas for improving our great Knox community.

'Lemonaid' fundraising for Wildlife Victoria

The resourcefulness and dedication of many of our younger Knox residents never ceases to amaze me.

Recently, while out and about in Wantirna, I came across Grade 5 student Reuben who runs a lemonade stand under the banner of 'lemonaid bros'.

In the past, lemonaid bros have helped raise funds in the wake of the devastating 2019/20 bushfire season and I was pleased to see that their recent efforts have included raising funds for Wildlife Victoria.

On behalf of our Knox community I would like to show my appreciation to Reuben and lemonaid bros for their efforts and I encourage all to stop by their stand and show our community's support!

A Happy Chinese New Year to all Knox residents



Recently I was kindly invited by the Knox Chinese Elderly Citizens Club to celebrate the Lunar New Year.

Not only was it fantastic to mark this auspicious day with the Knox Chinese Elderly Citizens Club, but it was also fantastic to be able to convey the enormous goodwill and appreciation that we all have for our Knox Chinese community.



I again thank the Knox Chinese Elderly Citizens Club for their invitation and wish all Knox residents a Happy Chinese New Year.

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AN ONGOING PRODUCTION

Live Theatre as an artform can be both refined and raw, momentary and everlasting. It brings to light the intricate layers of the fabric of our society.

Knox City Council has been proud to support The Basin Theatre Group through its Community Development Fund. With a near \$10,000 grant in recent years towards new, energy efficient lighting TBTG can now enjoy savings upwards of 2,000 per season and, naturally, this means carbon savings too.



An additional \$10,000 CDF towards the group's **Road to Recovery** project postCovid aided the fantastic, long-awaited launch of James Nicolas' historical account, 'The Basin Theatre: an ongoing production'. And what a privilege to share in the celebrations! The delightful family atmosphere indicative, as James writes, of "extraordinary devotion and unselfish service over a long, formative period". The deep joy of loyal friends finally coming together, to share food and stories once again.

I do hope James does not mind me sharing the words he added to my signed copy: "This group is a wonderful example of female leadership for 40 years... in an earlier time!" Given eight of Knox's current nine Councillors are women, the leadership of Edna Chandler offers great cause for reflection, "there is no room for the ungenerous heart, the critical mischievous tongue, and that with enthusiasm brought true engagement".

This book is an important pause in the history of this

Cr. Jude Dwight and the legendary, beautiful Betty Davis!



theatre... to reflect, celebrate, learn, grow and preserve. So while we wait in anticipation for the next show, do pop into Rainy Day Books for your copy and enjoy the ongoing production, a true gem of The Basin.

On behalf of Knox City Council,
 Congratulations Basin Theatre Group, well done.

Cr. Jude Dwight



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Jackson Taylor, local MP, monthly report

We are now well and truly in to 2021 and what a big year it has been already. I wanted to jump straight in and talk about something really important, mental health. Mental health impacts all of us. If it's not our own direct experience, it's people we know – people we love. And when someone we love is in pain, we suffer with them.

Recently, the final report of the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System was handed down and sets the path for the complete transformation of our system from the ground up.

The report told us what we admitted back in 2018 when we committed to this Royal Commission that the current system is broken, and it is failing Victorians.

We must do more. So much more.

Out of it were over 60 recommendations and we will implement every recommendation. Every single one. Because it's the right thing to do. It won't be easy, but we will get on with this critical work. Because lives are counting on it. I look forward to bringing you updates on it over the coming weeks, months and years. To read the final report go here – rcvmhs.vic.gov.au

2021 also brings my 3rd year in proudly representing you in State Parliament. Over the last two years, I'm proud to say we've gotten on with delivering nearly \$300 million in local projects and creating local jobs. And, importantly, I've heard from thousands of you on your doorsteps, the phone, at the shops and via my office about what matters to you and helping you with queries – because as your MP, I don't take that responsibility lightly.

Excitingly, I'm also keen to report back on what last year's State Budget handed down in November is delivering for locals:

Free kinder for families in 2021 saving around \$2,000 per child

Nearly \$30 million to upgrade local schools including \$4.33 million for a major upgrade to Boronia West Primary and \$8.07 million to modernise and upgrade Fairhills High

Delivering a major upgrade to the intersection at Alchester Village to improve safety and access for locals

Delivering around \$2.5 million to revitalise Boronia's CBD and bring it back to life

A oneoff \$250 payment towards the energy bill of around 950,000 households – to check your eligibility visit compare.energy.vic.gov.au

\$5.3 billion for over 12,000 new social and affordable homes, creating tens of thousands of jobs

A Jobs Plan with a plan to create 400,000 new jobs, with half by 2022

This was the biggest jobs creating budget in Victoria's history and will help get us back on our feet and I'm stoked at the record investment coming into our part of the world in the outer east – you deserve nothing less.

On top of the budget, here's a few other things you may have missed

Nearly \$600,000 to support our multicultural communities with an upgrade at the Chinese Association of Victoria to expand their community facility and The Basin Temple to allow them to provide more meals for those who need a hand

\$12,000 in local grants to back in Boronia Cricket, The Basin Cricket Club and Eastwood Bowls Club

- Held a clean up Australia Day Event with 1st The Basin Scout Group and other locals recently



1st The Basin Scout Group

Work underway at Boronia K12 on their outdoor sensory space

COMMUNITY SPIRIT BRINGS BLIND CREEK TO LIFE

A section of a creek in Melbourne's outer east, hidden away for more than half a century, has sprung back to life and created a new public space for people to relax and unwind amongst nature. Thanks to Melbourne Water's "Reimagining Your Creek" program, a 650 metre section of Blind Creek at Boronia between Scoresby Road and Manuka Drive has been restored from an underground pipe into a more natural waterway. Works began in October 2019 to create this fantastic natural space, incorporating a contemporary urban design, for the local community to explore and enjoy.

The \$2.7 million project was delivered in a partnership

between Melbourne Water, South East Water, Knox City Council, and the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. Residents and community groups were instrumental in the project to revive and revitalise the creek. The project aligns with the State Government's Integrated Water Management Program by providing the community with water, protection from floods, improved interaction with healthy waterways and benefits from cooler, greener cities and healthier environments.



TAKING ACTION ON SINGLE USE PLASTICS

The State Government will ban specific singleuse plastics – like straws, cutlery, plates and polystyrene containers – across Victoria to reduce the significant amount of plastic waste going to landfill each year.

Minister for Environment Lily D'Ambrosio announced a phase out and ban of specific singleuse plastics by 2023, which will include singleuse plastic straws, cutlery, plates, drink stirrers, polystyrene food and drink containers, and plastic cotton bud sticks.

In many cases, these singleuse plastics can be substituted with readily available, costeffective alternatives.

The phase out and ban will not impact on medical or scientific equipment, emergency services or other activities that require these types of plastics for health and safety reasons. The government will work with the aged care and disability sectors to ensure appropriate exemptions for people who require straws or other single use plastics.

The ban will apply to all cafes, restaurants and organisations in Victoria by 2023. The Government will lead by example by phasing out certain singleuse plastic items from government departments and agencies by February 2022.

That's all for now, until next time – stay well.

You can call my office on 9738 0577, email me at Jackson.Taylor@parliament.vic.gov.au or pop in to the office at Mountain High Centre, Bayswater. And for any further you can search 'Jackson Taylor MP' for more and to follow me on Facebook.

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Gifts of love from U3A Knox



U3A Knox is back in strength. Members of the quilting group have been working hard through 2020 and were delighted to be able to hand over twenty-four quilts to the Marion Drummond Child and Adolescent Units at the Austin Hospital. These are psychiatric units where individual families are treated together. These quilts will go toward brightening the units and making them more homely. The clients are welcome to take them home if they so desire.

Members of U3A Knox have contributed generously and have been supported by Lilly Patches Quilt shop in Boronia. Their efforts are much appreciated. As there is an ongoing need the group hope they will be able to put together another collection for the hospital in the near future.

Even though U3A Knox had to close in 2020 due to COVID 19 restrictions, some courses started up again online using Zoom giving members a welcome social outlet. Now they have reopened with over 1160 members and more than 150 courses. All tutors are volunteers and once you join most courses are free. Occasionally a small charge is required to cover materials or tutor's expenses. Some of their new courses include Australian History, Creative Writing and an Online Learning Group that explore courses available through the Eastern Regional Library.



To find out how to join U3A Knox and what courses are available visit www.u3aknox.org.au.

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What 2020 has taught us is that during unprecedented times it's important to be somewhere you feel safe, protected, cared for and most importantly somewhere you don't feel alone.



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