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COMMUNITY NEWS



Centre Pages

Est. 1994

Delivering to Boronia, The Basin and surrounding areas

PUBLISHED ON THE FIRST NATIONS LAND OF THE WURUNDJERI PEOPLE

72 year old Prabodh from Boronia completes his second MCG to SCG walk, and has raised almost \$100,000 for the McGrath Foundation. See story on page 8.



David Stewart

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Free printed circulation to 13,000 households and businesses in Boronia and The Basin, also online and on Facebook.

Are local newspapers still relevant in these times of instant news?

While not concentrating on world news in general, local newspapers provide a vital source of information and news for people in their communities. They cover local events, incidents, and issues that are relevant to residents in the area, including government decisions, community events, crime, and local sports. Without local newspapers, many of these stories may go unreported or not receive the attention they deserve.

They also, more importantly in this day and age, play a crucial role in holding local authorities accountable. By reporting on government decisions, local newspapers can help to ensure that public officials are acting in the best interests of their constituents and are held accountable for their actions. Whether it be perceived corruption or an unpopular act regarding government lands such as parks and buildings or areas controlled by their authority like animal regulations and changes in garbage collection.

By extension, local newspapers provide a platform for community engagement and discussion. They often publish letters to the editor and opinion pieces from residents, providing a forum for people to express their views on issues affecting their communities.

Economically, local newspapers can help to promote the area's businesses and the economy. By featuring stories and advertisements about local businesses, they can help to drive business and support local entrepreneurs.

Overall, local newspapers play a vital role in informing and engaging communities, promoting accountability, and supporting the local economy. Without them, residents may miss out on important news and information that affects their daily lives, and more importantly, a sense of community.

Danny Nolan

insert brain here



Boronia & The Basin Community News

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We welcome all contributions from our community but can not guarantee publication. We reserve the right to edit material. 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. Submissions preferably should be 500 to 800 words. All photos should be submitted as separate jpg, png or pdf files.

This community newspaper is run totally by volunteers. 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. We welcome your response to published articles, and request that such responses be courteous and objective.

If you would like to help, please get in touch, we use many skills.

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Printing by Newsprinters, Wodonga

Page 3 Bird

Who am I?

Des Palmer

Come with me on an adventure. We will cross the vast Pacific Ocean, one of the last remaining frontiers on the planet. We will fight our way through storms and tempests, and struggle through the oppressive and humid equator, through the infamous 'doldrums,' hated by the sailors of old. We will reach our destination in less than four weeks, travelling from the Aleutian Islands near Alaska to the southern half of the Australian continent, a journey of almost 15,000km.



We number up to 35 million of us, and we breed from the Recherche Archipelago in WA, all along the southern coastline, through SA, Victoria, the Bass Strait islands and

Tasmania, and north to about Broughton Island in NSW. In any given year we number between 1.5 and 2 million on Phillip Island alone. We return to our home on the same day each year, September 24, and individuals return within 2-3 hours of arriving on the same day as the year previous.

We will arrive exhausted but happy, and will catch up with the same mate we paired with last year. We will then spend several days relaxing and doing a bit of housekeeping, cleaning out the same burrow we used last year before setting off to Antarctica, gorging on Krill around the pack ice for a fortnight before we return.

On our return a single egg is laid and we will take turns (about 12-14 days) incubating it while one of us sits patiently waiting for our mate to return on dark to feed us. Once the egg hatches, we will both go to sea each day and on our return will feed the hungry chick on the day's catch, regurgitated from our crop.

We are born to fly, one of the world's greatest travellers, no passports, no security checks, just total freedom. Some say we fly the distance of to the moon and back again in our lifetime, but we are also excellent swimmers too, diving to a depth of 50 metres in search of our prey - krill, small fish and squid, which we catch with the



aid of a small hook on the end of our beaks.

A single egg laid in our burrow will hatch in early January and after early March it will be twice the size of us, its parents; a big brown ball of fluff. At the end of March we will leave the chick in the burrow and begin our 15,000km journey back to the Aleutian islands. Over the next several weeks our chick will break down the oil rich food we have been feeding it and will develop feathers and transform into an adult just like us, before it too begins its first migration to join us, unassisted in any way, back to our home in the waters off the Aleutian Islands.

Who am I? I am the miracle of the Muttonbird or Short-tailed Shearwater.

APOLOGY TO THE STOLEN GENERATIONS - Tuesday 13 February 2024

This event marks the sixteenth anniversary of the motion of Apology to Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the House of Representatives chamber at Parliament House in Canberra, ACT, at 9:00am on 13 February 2008 by the former Prime Minister, the Hon. Kevin Rudd.

The Apology related to past laws, policies and practices that have impacted on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly members of the Stolen Generations.

The motion was supported by the Opposition and passed through both

houses of Parliament. Brendan Nelson AO (former federal Leader of the Opposition) gave a formal response. Members of the Stolen Generations were invited to hear the National Apology first-hand in the gallery of the chamber and thousands more filled the Great Hall of Parliament House and flowed out onto the lawns to watch on big screens.

The Apology was broadcast across Australia. For more information – see The Healing Foundation's Apology to the Stolen Generations fact sheet – visit healingfoundation.org.au and search "National Apology Fact Sheet."

What is Australia Day, and should we celebrate it?

The following information is from "twinkl" (school educational resource website - twinkl.com.au)

What is Australia Day?

It is described as a day to reflect on what it means to be Australian, to celebrate contemporary Australia, and to acknowledge Australian history. Australia Day is also used as an opportunity to crown the Australian of the Year. Australia Day 2024 will mark the 20th anniversary of the Australian of the Year awards. Each state nominates their own Australian of the Year across four different fields: Australian of the Year, Senior Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year, and Local Hero.

Why is Australia Day controversial?

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people see Australia Day as a day for sorrow and mourning, with some referring to it as Survival Day and viewing it as an inappropriate celebration of the invasion by British settlers. These people had been living on the continent we now know as Australia for more than 60,000 years, and at least 1600 generations had lived and died there. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people now take this opportunity to celebrate the survival of their people and culture.

In recent years, Australia Day has promoted a focus on reconciliation and recognition of the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to Australia. In a 2009 poll, 90% of those who responded thought that it was important to recognise Australia's indigenous people and

culture as part of the celebrations. This marks an important shift in the culture and mentality surrounding the event and will be a large part of the Australia Day 2024 celebrations.

When was Australia Day established?

26 January was first observed as a holiday in 1838, originally limited to the territory of New South Wales. However, representatives from Tasmania, Victoria, Queensland, Western Australia, South Australia and New Zealand joined NSW leaders in Sydney to celebrate the Centenary in 1888. It then became known as Anniversary Day or Foundation Day.

It wasn't until 1994 that 26 January became known officially as Australia Day.

(Editorial note: 26 January was proclaimed a Public Holiday in 1994)

HISTORY OF THE BASIN THEATRE

It was 1954 in The Basin that Edna and Fergus Chandler with some likeminded friends produced a play under the banner of The Basin Drama Group. The play was Quiet Weekend and it was held in The Basin Progress hall. It was such a success that they repeated it in the Boronia Progress Hall.

This led to the company producing three plays a year with rehearsals being held in the home of Edna and Fergus Chandler. After rehearsals the company would move to the Hall where they borrowed seats from the Salvation Army.

At the time the Salvation Army was a prison farm for young offenders, and thanks to the borrowing of the seats, the company had the young offenders as an audience for the final dress rehearsal in the Hall. As a captive audience, as one would suspect, they were a nightmare. No hesitation in calling out suggestions if they did not consider that the acting was up to their standard. But, if the young audience liked the show, the company knew they were on a winner.

In 1958 the groups formalised and with a constitution and management took the name The Basin Theatre Group by which it is still known today.

By 1966 the company outgrew the Chandler home, so on land donated by the Chandlers they built an A-frame building known as The Hut.

As the company got bigger and The Hut had outlived its main use, a new theatre was built. It was done with no financial help, other than the volunteers of the company giving their time and energy to constructing a modern theatre in The Basin behind Doongalla, the home of the Chandlers.

The initial construction of the new theatre was the stage, auditorium, small foyer and storage room. Over the years these facilities have been extended to include props/wardrobe, storage, rehearsal space and modernisation of the kitchen and foyer space.

Edna Chandler, "From its origin in 1954 the Group's character has been that of a private club, established for the enjoyment of its members. This family atmosphere has been indicative of the unity and dedication of theatre friends. Extraordinary devotion and unselfish service over a long period has been a feature of this fellowship. To this present day, members combine service with privilege and fun, and find pleasure in united efforts as an organisation."

The Basin Theatre Group produces four shows a year, plus taking one-act plays to various festivals around the state. TBTG also donates to various charities in the area. A great theatre in the bush of the Dandenongs.

Peter Kemp

COMMUNITY



In late November BBCN committee members along with other Community groups gathered at the Bendigo Bank in Bayswater to receive generous grants to help these volunteer organizations continue their great work. During the presentations, a representative from each recipient gave a short speech and the reason the grant was applied for. Without going into detail, I can only conclude it was money wisely and well spent. I can only applaud their work.

The Bendigo Bank, as well as all our generous sponsors, help to make this paper continue in its present healthy and growing state. This paper is run purely by volunteers and the sponsors have no input on content or editorial direction. Everyone does it for the good of the community.

It is right there in the name of the paper.

One of my favourite parts of the evening – a close second to driving home with a novelty large cheque, Happy Gilmour style in the back seat - was when a gentleman from one of the community groups, who also received a funding grant, thanked us for running an article for an event. He said he sent it to four different papers and we were the only ones that acknowledged him. I sincerely would be shocked if we didn't.



Miller's Homestead hosted the yearly Newspaper Christmas gathering many of the volunteers associated with the paper, who came together to celebrate as a sign of appreciation. It was announced that one of the projects the paper is excited about, The Young Writers Initiative, will continue not only to reward those

who contribute, but hopefully to create some enthusiasm and maybe recruit exciting young contributors to the paper in the future.

The beauty of writing about local people and events seems to me to be a bottomless bag of stories as the community keeps supplying material. The week before Christmas, the residents of the street where I walk my dog, took it upon themselves to have a neighbourhood carols singalong on one of the resident's front lawn, another example of community



participation. It drew a crowd of all ages with everyone walking away feeling good and with a candy cane.

I contribute my naff little stories on my historical adventures and day outings, but the paper's main focus is dedicated to giving the community a voice, and we are firm believers and advocates of helping in any way possible. Whether it's promoting mobile showers for the homeless or highlighting scams against the elderly, supporting Church groups and services and local events that everyone can benefit from. That is the BBCN's purpose and goal. If you are part of a local group or community service, please, let us know.

If you enjoy writing about local events or feel the need to share a personal story or interest. Send it in. We are always looking for new contributors. I've been doing it for over 15 years now and find it extremely rewarding and honestly believe the paper just keeps improving.

Danny Nolan

June Wilson and her Lilly Patches - Boronia Legend

June started working in Boronia in 1979 for Boronia Bargain Box Fabrics in Erica Avenue in front of the Free and Easy uniform factory, which has now been pulled down. She worked at Bargain Box Fabrics for 15 years and watched as the fashion industry declined, due to the free trade agreement. Imports were much cheaper, Australians bought them up instead of our Australian brands, and people stopped making their own clothes.

June became interested in patchwork in the 1990's. After her husband died in 1997, she thought she might go and work up north and travel around. While working in Lilydale, a friend talked her into starting her own business instead; so June moved to Boronia and Lilly Patches was born in 1999.



June says, "Patchwork does not feel like work, more an enjoyable passion. Most people involved in patchwork give back to their communities by giving quilts to the less



fortunate; particularly children or people in crisis. There is a group who get together at the shop, once a month, and between them, they make quilts which go to children."

The fabrics Lilly Patches supply are 100% cotton. June said, "It is quite an addictive hobby to be involved in because it's always evolving with so many beautiful fabrics at your disposal." Her favourite fabric at the moment is the glorious Sienna, which is designed by Max and Louise, two girls from Healesville.

While I was interviewing June, she likened Patchwork Groups to the Men's Shed for women; as everyone is welcome and each and every person develops great friendships and are no longer alone.

Here is a list of local quilt and craft shops if you would like to check them out:

- Lilly Patches - Boronia
- Waverley Patchworkers
- U3A Knox Patchwork Groups – Boronia
- Edge to Edge Quilting Service – Kilsyth
- Craftpaks Quilt Shop – Heathmont
- Cross Stick and More – Ferntree Gully
- Textile Offcuts – Lilydale

Contact Victorian Quilters' Guild to find a quilting group near you. If you are looking for a new hobby and interested in meeting like-minded people, this could be for you.

Debbie Ball



DRIVING FROM Boronia to The Basin in modern times takes about ten minutes. One hundred years ago it was a different story. To start with, not many people owned motor cars, and the district's roads were wild and woolly.

Some of the earliest hire car operations in the district were therefore for the benefit of people wishing to stay for the weekend at guest houses in the hills, and are a story in themselves. The first hire car service in Boronia was started in 1924 by Vere Page.



Vere Page far left (Boronia Football Club)

Vere Page hailed from the tiny gold-mining town of Gaffneys Creek, high on the Great Dividing Range near Woods Point. When Page arrived in Boronia in 1924, he saw that the area had potential. At that time, Boronia shopping centre consisted of exactly five shops. There was a telephone service, which only operated from 9 am

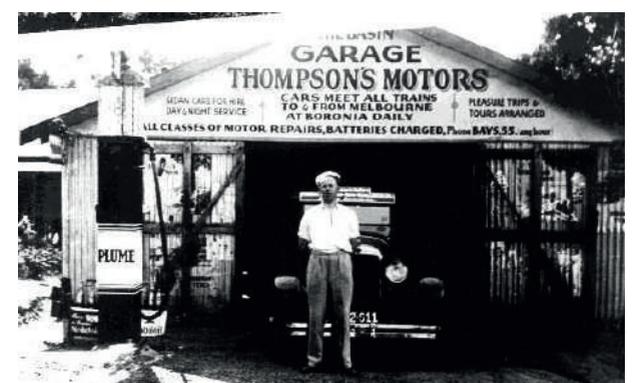
HIRING A CAR 100 YEARS AGO

to 6 pm, and reticulated power was only provided within a quarter mile (400m) radius of Boronia post office, then situated at the corner of Boronia and Turner Roads.

The cars Vere Page acquired to operate the hire car service would need regular servicing and secure housing, so Vere Page established a garage on Ringwood (Dorset) Road, which would survive for many years.

Unfortunately, Vere Page was also the first to discover a long-lasting local hazard. In November 1924, Page became the first casualty of the the notorious Boronia/Dorset Road rail crossing. After colliding with a train, Page escaped with a few scratches, but his car was a write-off. Vere Page was also one of the first on hand at the disastrous collision between a motor bus and a train on the crossing on Easter Monday, 1926, in which ten people were killed.

A second car hire service was started in 1928 at The Basin by Alf Thompson, who lived in the area for many years. Thompson established a garage in



Forest Road west of the shopping centre, though there were few shops at The Basin at this time.

Both car hire services survived until World War II, when petrol rationing restricted the use of private motor cars. But in the post-war period, cars became more plentiful, and after fuel rationing ended in 1950, increasing numbers drove their own cars for a day or a weekend in the hills. Vere Page could focus on his real estate business. Both garages survived until the 1980s, although Thompson's garage was rebuilt in the 1950s.

Hire cars in the hills today are generally restricted to weddings and other special events. But they follow a long tradition, started one hundred years ago by Vere Page and Alf Thompson.

Ray Peace, Knox Historical Society

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A Seventy Year Celebration *Danny Nolan talks with Nelly Klep*

At the age of 13, Cornelis "Kees" Klep, with his parents and seven other siblings immigrated from Holland to Australia arriving in December 1953.

A new life beckoned after the turmoil of post-war



Europe. Originally billeted at the Commonwealth Immigration Centre in Bonegilla just outside of Wodonga, the new arrivals were relocated to what was then the outer suburbs of Melbourne, at the Holmesglen Migrant Hostel (now Chadstone).

After five years Kees, his mum, dad and now 8 siblings (one more arriving by a more natural means, and beating the rest of the family as she became the first naturalised Australian) moved out to their first home in East Burwood.



Kees secured an apprenticeship and went on to become a carpenter and it was whilst working his trade he met his future wife, Nelly. Romance blossomed after her sister did some serious matchmaking when Kees was employed to work at the family home.

Nellie's family, like the Kleps, were migrants who arrived in Australia not long after Kees, in 1954.

They married in 1966 and moved out to Boronia where Kees had begun building the family home in which they still live today. Nelly recalls that in the early days, it was like living in a campsite. As the building of the house continued, so did their family, having three children to fill the home. Kees took his trade to a new level and studied to become a school teacher, specifically, a woodwork teacher. Moving from worksites to the school room would be a hard task for some, but Kees was used to dealing with youngsters, having had and continued to have a long (over 60 years) association with the Scouts, culminating in an Order of Australia award for Youth Services in 2021. Nelly, is also a



committed volunteer and has been with this paper for over 20 years.

In December 2023 to mark 70 years of the Klep family arriving in Australia, Kees reunited with his

8 brothers and sisters just up the road in Sassafras to celebrate. An amazing feat and fortunate enough for a group of siblings to come together after such an amazing journey.



BEN'S PLACE



Ben's Place hosted a heart-warming Christmas party that brought smiles to families facing challenges during the holiday season. President Liz Bullen and her team of volunteers transformed The Basin Seniors Hall to become an enchanting wonderland that made a beautiful backdrop for photos. Jolly old Santa himself made a special appearance, delighting all the children with gifts and lolly bags.

Everyone enjoyed the delicious food, with popcorn, slushies, and fairy floss making the party even more special. Our talented face painters were kept busy all afternoon creating gorgeous designs for each of the children.

At Ben's Place we believe in community and kindness and this Christmas party was our way of creating a magical space for families in need. We wanted everyone to come together, share in the joy of the season, and make beautiful memories. We are so very appreciative to all the volunteers who helped make this a special day.

Thank you also to Knox City Council for helping fund our party through the minor grants program and to The Basin Community House for their generosity and support to use the Seniors Hall. We are thankful to now have access to the Seniors Hall every day for our free community pantry.

Ben's Place is open for fresh fruit, vegetables, bread, treats and pantry staples at:

The Seniors Hall, 366 Forest Rd, The Basin
Monday and Tuesdays 11am-12noon
Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday 12-1pm

Email group.cskyr@gmail.com

The Internet
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 7am to 9pm Every Day **24 hours with entry code**

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Boronia Retiree's Second Solo Walk from MCG to SCG to support the McGrath Foundation

Dr Prabodh Malhotra, 72 took on the challenge of walking for the second time from the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) to Sydney Cricket Ground (SCG) to raise awareness and funds for the McGrath Foundation (MF).

The walk started on Sunday 29 October 2023 at 7:00 AM near Dennis Lillee Statue, outside the MCG, with a flagging off ceremony. Despite coolish and drizzly weather conditions on a Sunday morning, around 40-50 well-wishers (including John from BBCN), friends and family members as well as McGrath Breast Care Nurses came together from across Victoria to wish Prabodh well for a safe walk.



The live music was later joined by a dholi (Indian drummer) and many men and women began to dance to the Indian beats. While I was exhausted after such a long walk, I also summoned the left-over energy and briefly joined the dance. Shekhar and Andrew held the banner and led the procession. What an electrifying atmosphere it was! We were received by the Test Cricket legend Glenn McGrath.

Friday 5 January was the Jane McGrath Day. We were fortunate to be among the 204 people who walked onto the SCG before the start of the game.



The number 204 signifies the 204 Breast Care nurses that the MF currently has. Their aim is to have 250 Breast Care nurses by the end of this year so that no one across the country goes without the care they need and deserve. MF has so far helped around 130,000 patients and families with breast cancer.

Jane McGrath High Tea was attended by a large number of dignitaries including the Hon. Anthony Albanese Prime Minister, the Hon. Peter Dutton Leader of the Opposition, several ministers, TV personalities, Olympic champions, Women Cricketers, Sports athletes, supporters and well-wishers of MF. But it was Jen, 37, a breast cancer survivor who won the hearts of everybody when she bravely shared the details of her story. Her story from being super fit to be diagnosed a breast cancer patient within a few months. And how McGrath Breast Care Nurses were able to help her through her ordeal. Jen's speech brought tears to every eye in the audience.

In their opening remarks on the opening day, both Tracy Bevan and Glenn McGrath acknowledged the contribution of our marathon walk from MCG to SCG in terms of raising awareness across the rural area in the two states and raising funds. At the time of writing, the tally of funds raised was \$94,871 against our target of \$100,000. It would be great if you could please go to the link below or scan the QR Code and make a generous donation. All donations over \$5 are tax deductible.

fundraise.mcgrathfoundation.com.au/fundraisers/prabodhmalhotra/walk-from-mcg-to-scg



After walking more than 1,300 kilometres through over 40 central Victorian and central New South Wales towns over 67 days, we arrived at the SCG on the Opening Day of the Pink Test. A

team of volunteers acted as Support Crew and drove the van that was my home for ten weeks. My son Shekhar joined me at Wagga Wagga and drove for the next five weeks all the way to Sydney. It wasn't smooth sailing though. We faced many challenges during the walk including snakes, toe-blisters, loss of toenails, hot to extremely hot weather, and breakdown of the van. Our determination and the will to succeed kept us going day after day until we reached our final destination.

We walked to the Entertainment Quarter on Tuesday 2 January and completed the walk. On Wednesday 3 January 2024, we gathered outside the Allianz Stadium where we were received by Tracy Bevan Director and Ambassador MF, Holly Masters CEO MF and a number of McGrath Breast Care Nurses. Amid the photo shooting and live music, we formally walked alongside The Big Three Trekkers from Newcastle and the Pink Sari Women's Group from Sydney to the SCG.

Term 1 Classes - Now Open

Outlook and Email. \$50

Fridays 12:00pm to 2:30pm
9 February - 22 March

Digital Essentials L2 - \$50

Wednesdays 12:00pm - 2:30pm
7 February - 27 March

Digital Essential L1 \$50

Fridays 9:30am - 12:00pm
9 February - 22 March

Word and Excel - \$50

Wednesdays 9:30am - 12:00pm
7 February - 27 March

Introduction to Photography - \$50

Mondays 12:00pm - 2:30pm
5 February - 25 March

Tech Support Drop In - Free

Mondays 9:30am - 11:00am
5th February - 25 March

Yoga - Tuesday \$96

Tuesdays 7:30pm - 9:00pm
6 February - 26 March

Craft \$2 per class

Friday 12:00pm - 2:30pm
2 February and 8 March

Fun and Friendly Cooking \$100

Thursdays 10:30am - 12:30pm
8 February - 28 March

Exercise Right for Active Aging \$80

Thursday 10:00am to 10:45am
8 February - 28 March

Colour and Chat - \$40

Mondays 12:45pm - 2:45pm
5 February - 25 March

Conversation and Friendship Group

Fridays 10:00am - 12:00pm
2 February and 1 March
Gold coin Donation

Yoga - Friday \$84

Fridays 9:30am - 11:00am
9 February - 22 March

Patchwork and Sewing \$40

7:30pm - 9:30pm
15 February and 21 March

Beginners Art - Drawing & Acrylic \$130

Tuesdays 9:30am - 11:00am
6 February - 26 March

Craft and Chat \$20

12:00pm - 2:30pm
8 February, 22 February, 14 March and 28 March.

Tai Chi \$117

Wed Morning 9:30am - 11:00am
31 January - 27 March

Charity Group \$2 per class

12:00pm - 2:30pm
16 February, 15th March

Card Making - \$30

Fridays 12:00pm - 2:30pm
9 February, 1 March and 22 March



The Basin
Community House



Scan here for
course information



To book or for any inquiries Call 9761 0209 or email info@tbch.org.au

CROYDON FILM SOCIETY

The Croydon Film Society has certainly been well received at its new home in the Boronia Cinemas. We can still take more members with only two of the four cinemas occupied. In 2024 the society is offering eighteen screenings throughout the year with films from the UK, Australia, USA, France, Korea and Bhutan.

As a member you will receive regular newsletters in the form of an E-News which will have a review of the upcoming films, and a full rundown of everything of importance to do with cinema in Melbourne and Victoria.

You will be able to discuss the film you have just seen with friends and new acquaintances in the foyer or join the group which habitually retires to a local café for coffee and further discussion.

Annual membership is only \$120 for the eighteen screenings or \$100 concession and a membership can be shared between two people with one attending each screening. This equates to \$6 or \$5.50 per screening.

The new season kicks off on Monday 12 February at the Boronia Cinemas in Dorset Rd. Screenings commence a 7.10 in Cinema 4 and 7.20 in Cinema 3 on alternate Mondays except school and public holidays. To join the Croydon Film Society contact membership@croydonfilms.org.au or ring 0490 663 159.

TOBY & the Magic Pencil Competition

It's been a full twelve months since the BBCN premiered Toby & The Magic Pencil. To celebrate the continuing saga we have two special prize packs to give away.

To be in the running for a chance to win one of these prizes, tell us in writing if and/or why you enjoy the serialized comic.

You can email us at contact@bbc.org.au or by more traditional means at PO Box 141 Boronia 3155.



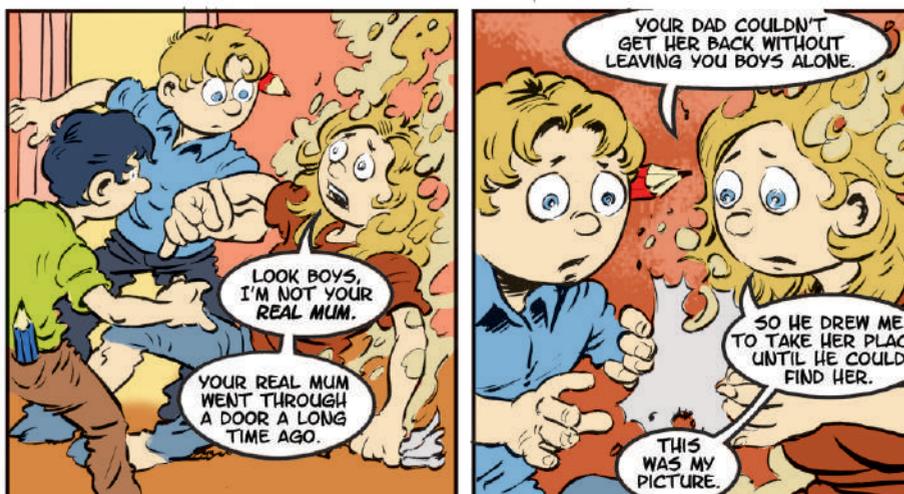
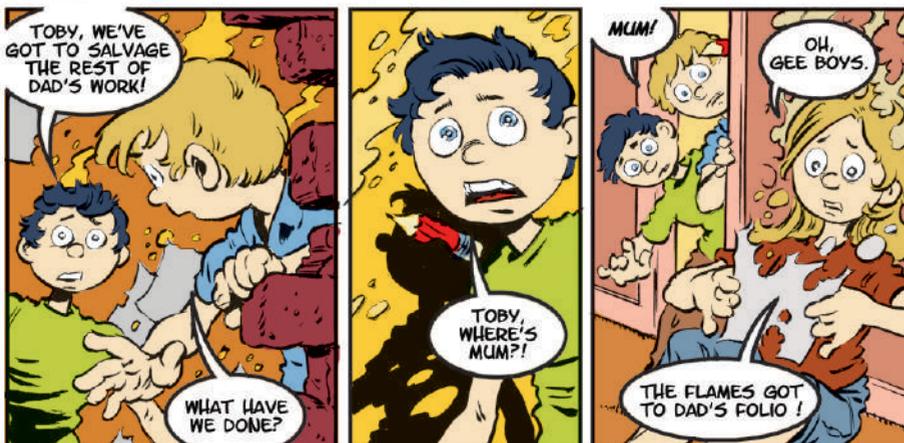
Up for grabs are comic packs, one for the under 13 and an Adult selection. Both prizes contain an issue of Toby #1. The junior pack will also include an issue of Toby #2 and a special comic from ComX, a new superhero called SYDRIS, drawn by over a dozen Aussie artists.

The adult pack contains over \$250 worth of new Australian comics from publishers such as Reverie, Dark OZ, ComX, and Shidot. Some of these publications are signed by the creators and are collector's items.



The fact that the BBCN has two regular featured cartoons is of great pride, especially since most of the National and State papers have abandoned them for more advertising space. So please, if you want a chance at scoring these great prizes let us know. We'd love to hear from you.

TOBY and the MAGIC PENCIL The Dragon's fire is devastating



TOBY AND THE MAGIC PENCIL CREATED BY GARY DELLAR. ART BY BEN SULLIVAN. LETTERS BY DARREN CLOSE

TO BE CONTINUED...

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KIDS
ZONE

Starting Prep – How you can help?

Starting school can be daunting for a child, particularly if they don't have any brothers or sisters already there. You can help them to ease into school life by making sure they are as prepared as possible, giving them confidence that they will cope with the days ahead. The more they know about the journey ahead the happier they will be to start it.

Here are a few things you can do to help them through and continue to support them for the rest of the year.

In the weeks before school starts

- Ask your child what they think about starting school.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about going to school.
- Encourage your child to do things on their own. This could be dressing, going to the toilet, washing their hands, unwrapping their food and opening and closing their drink bottle and lunchbox.
- Show your child where the school is and talk about how you will get there.
- Arrange play times with other families whose children will be going to the same school. It helps if your child knows another child at their school at the start of prep.
- Practise the things your child will need to do to

get ready for school (e.g. putting things in their bag, remembering to take a hat)

- Confirm your before or after school care arrangements and explain these to your child.

- Be positive about starting school and enjoy your child's excitement.

The first day of school

- Make sure your child knows who will take them to school and pick them up on the first day.
- Help your child to organise their clothes, hat, shoes and socks the night before.
- Help your child to pack their school bag with a snack, drink, lunch and a hat.
- Place a spare pair of underpants and a change of clothes in a plastic bag. Let your child know these clothes are in their bag in case of any accidents at school.
- Put sunscreen on your child in the morning if it's needed.



- Show your child where you will meet them at the end of the school day.
- At the end of the day talk to your child about what happened at school.

The first year of school

- Find out about what your child is learning at school. By doing this, you can support your child's learning and find out how your child is adjusting to school.
- If your child is having difficulty at school, talk to their teacher. Your child can also say what they think might help them.
- Keep talking to your child about school. Ask them about their new experiences, what they like and what they find hard.
- If your child goes to care before or after school, find a way of sharing your child's school progress with the staff.
- Share feedback about your child's experience of starting school with the school and early childhood service.
- Organise time for your child and their new friends to play together outside of school.

Starting school | vic.gov.au
(www.vic.gov.au)

Joy Shelley

2023/24 BBCN Young Writers Initiative

The BBCN Young Writers Initiative (YWI) has been a success with over 100 entries submitted in the last five months of 2023. Two awards were issued in each month from August to December, providing our local young writers with kudos for their contributions in the form of a handy \$50 voucher for their preferred store. Examples of the submissions have been shared in the printed paper and online, as well as on the BBCN facebook page, where your feedback is

always welcomed:
<https://www.facebook.com/BoroniaTheBasinNews>

We are very pleased to announce that Bendigo Bank have generously agreed to provide funding for the YWI to continue in 2024 through their Youth Foundation Grant Program. This enables BBCN to continue the YWI through 2024. We will accept submissions from March to December and provide awards for two submissions each month as well as the annual school awards.

The young writers have been very excited to receive their awards and mostly desire to invest their prize money in their ongoing education. In the March issue we will announce the overall winner for 2023 (\$200 for the chosen writer and \$400 for the school they represent).

BBCN are very pleased to encourage our young people to contribute their ideas to our community and to publish their creative articles. We acknowledge the support the schools and parents have provided to their students to share their work through this initiative. We look forward to more entries in 2024, please submit through our YWI webpage: www.bbcn.org.au/Young-writers/



YWI November awards presentation to Panna Chaiya & Jorja Jiggins with The Basin teacher Amy Hillier and BBCN's Arthur Shelley



Award presentation to Hannah Knowles for her December YWI Award.

KIDS
ZONE



Recent studies suggest that 65 per cent of children entering primary school today will have jobs that do not yet exist. Many of these will be in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects. Sadly, girls are under-represented in these subjects with only 30% of women having careers in these fields. It is important that girls are encouraged to study these subjects so that they can be part of the solutions needed for our rapidly evolving world.

How can we best encourage girls to study science? We need to debunk the myth that science is boring and celebrate the fantastic things that scientists have achieved and are continuing to achieve.

There are so many different scientific fields that have had significant contributions by women. These amazing women should be the role models that our kids (both girls and boys) look to for inspiration. Some great examples of how women in science have changed the world include:

Marie Curie's work in Physics and Chemistry - discovered x rays which saved thousands of soldiers' lives in World War I and are still being used today. Her work on radium led to the development of cancer treatment. Marie Curie, her daughter and granddaughter have won 4 Nobel prizes between them.

In 1953 Rosalind Franklin, a chemist, made the crucial discovery that led to the understanding of the structure of our DNA. This has enabled scientists to work out how DNA makes us who we are. Dorothy Hodgkin, another chemist, made discoveries of the structures of Penicillin and Insulin, which has enabled us to make them synthetically.

Celia Payne, an astronomer, made the discovery

Encouraging Girls in Science

February 11 is International Day of Women and Girls in Science.



in 1925 that the sun was made of different chemicals, hydrogen and helium, rather than being the same as the earth. Her work on the nature of variable stars was

foundational to modern astrophysics. The NASA, Apollo 11 moonwalk in 1969 may never have happened without the calculations of mathematician, Katherine Johnson and software engineers, Margaret Hamilton and Frances Northcote.

Women's and girls' voices and expertise in science, technology and innovation are vital to bring new perspectives for emerging problems. We urgently need to close the gender gap in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields and actively promote gender equality in science, technology and innovation careers.

STEM skills form the basis of the fastest-growing job categories. Recent studies are showing that shifts in the global job market will result in 58 million new jobs, particularly in data analysts and scientists; artificial intelligence and machine learning specialists; software and applications developers and analysts; and data visualisation specialists.

UNESCO passed a resolution in 2015 to build

and accelerate programs that address the gender imbalance in STEM and progress is being made. The Australian government is one of the contributing partners in this and has already committed millions of dollars to support school and workplace initiatives.

Although global funding will help, we are all part of the best way forward. A significant part of the solution is to start the awareness and excitement of sciences at home as well as school. Kids will benefit from knowing that science is fun. By stimulating kids to ask about science, parents will develop stronger relationships with them as they explore these possibilities together. Global issues such as climate change, renewable energy, artificial intelligence and medical development will need the next generation of scientists. A more balanced gender mix will accelerate what the world can become and how quickly we can achieve these improvements.

<https://unwomen.org.au/in-focus-international-day-of-women-and-girls-in-science/>

Joy Shelley



Healthy School Lunches

No more half-eaten lunches--this taco-inspired lunch is a healthy and portable meal your kid will love.

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup chopped lettuce
- 75g cooked lean ground beef
- 2 tablespoons shredded Cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons salsa
- 1/4 cup green grapes, sliced lengthwise
- 1/4 cup chopped honeydew melon
- 1/4 cup chopped kiwi
- 1/2 cup corn kernels or about 1/3 of a corn cob
- 6 tortilla chips
- 2 tablespoons guacamole



Directions

1. Layer lettuce, beef and cheese in a medium or large container. Top with salsa.
2. Combine grapes, melon and kiwi in a small bowl. Pack in a medium container.
3. Place corn in a small container.
4. Pack chips in a medium container. Nestle a small dip container of guacamole among the chips.

Taco Salad Bento Lunch for Kids
(eatingwell.com)



Reader's Letter – abridged (21 December 2023)

- this letter from a local lawyer is part of an ongoing issue referred to the Council, Local MPs and Police, and was accompanied by several photos.

Bus Stop at 5 -7 Chandler Road Boronia



I refer to the above matter and thank the Council for its reply to my previous correspondence on 4 May 2023 ...

Since my last communication regarding the bus stop located at 5-7 Chandler Road, several disturbing incidents at this location have escalated my concerns.

On 22 May 2023, I was accosted by two men who appeared to be intoxicated at the bus stop. One of them physically blocked my path while blowing cigarette smoke in my face, using perverse language and was holding what appeared and smelt to be a bottle of alcohol. The other man was sitting laughing. I immediately phoned the police.

Subsequent occurrences of anti-social behaviour, notably on 15 August and 7 September 2023, also necessitated police intervention.

Whilst there are numerous other times where there has been significant anti-social behaviour, to avoid overburdening the Victoria Police, I have only contacted them in the most extreme of circumstances.

The current design of the bus shelter does not adequately ensure public safety, and repeated inappropriate activities at this location raise serious legal and public safety concerns ...

The recurring issue of abandoned trolleys is also one that cannot be addressed solely with superficial suggestions. It is evident that more stringent accountability measures for businesses are necessary. I suggest the Council explore legal or regulatory approaches to compel these businesses to manage their trolleys effectively. This issue is not isolated to the bus stop and trolleys from Coles, Kmart and Woolworths are scattered throughout the streets of Boronia ...

... while I understand the procedures around reporting violent or inappropriate behaviour, the very fact that such a directive is required underscores the urgent need for preventative measures and decisive action.

I trust you will take these concerns seriously and act with the necessary urgency they demand. We will be monitoring the situation closely and I expect a response from your office on what measures will be put in place to address the above matters raised.

Yours faithfully

Family Lawyer (Vic)

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Cub Scouts

Boronia Bowls Club Mid-Season News 2023/24

We have reached the midway point for the bowls season with Xmas and New Year now upon us. At Boronia Bowls Club we currently have teams in the metro Saturday, Tuesday and Thursday pennant competitions.

The Saturday pennant sides have so far enjoyed some mixed results. The 1st side currently sits seventh on the ladder after starting the season with a couple of good wins. The team now needs to get some late season wins to move out of relegation so it can remain in second division. The Saturday 2nd side is enjoying a wonderful season, and currently sitting second on the ladder and looking forward to the finals. The Saturday 3rd side went into the mid season break with a win

which moved them to 5th on the ladder, just outside the final four, so with a few more wins they will also progress into the finals this season.

Our Tuesday pennant 1st team is comfortably on top of the ladder in Division 3, and is hoping to have a huge finals series and progress to Division 2. The Tuesday 2nd team is currently third on the ladder and positioned for a finals appearance as well. The Tuesday 3rd team is sitting on top of the ladder having only dropped one game so far for the season. Here's hoping they can continue their form into the finals.

Our Thursday pennant team are sitting nicely in third position on the ladder. The Thursday

pennant is a slightly different format with 7 players per side playing a variety of games each week in a quicker format. Good luck to all our teams for the second half of the season, we have high hopes of some more flags making their way to the club room walls around mid-March.

For anyone wanting to come down for a roll, Twilight Bowls is on every Friday night from 6pm all the way through daylight savings.

Scan the QR code to head to the club website, and please follow us on instagram @boronia_bowls_club



Twilight Bowls

Boronia Bowls Club - Marie St, Boronia

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Boronia Bowls Club

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TWILIGHT BOWLS IS BACK AGAIN FOR 2023/24

Bring the family and friends down to one of our Twilight Bowls sessions.

Held every Friday night from 6-9pm from 6th October 2023 to 5th April 2024.

All equipment and coaching supplied - full bar, sausage sizzle and dim sims available.

Just turn up or phone Patrick on 0459 999 261.

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 Glengollan Village Ferntree Gully

CLUB SUPPORTERS

Jackson Taylor MP Bayswater
 Mary Doyle Federal MP Aston
 Cr. Jude Dwight Chandler Ward

No fees for new bowlers for the first year - Call Wayne for Membership on 0430 451 250

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT (GBBC) 16-19 FEBRUARY

Spend time in your favorite places watching birds—then tell us about them, including your very own backyard!

In as little as 15 minutes notice the birds around you. Identify them, count them, and submit them to help scientists better

understand and protect birds around the world. If you already use eBird or Merlin, your submissions over the 4-days count towards GBBC.

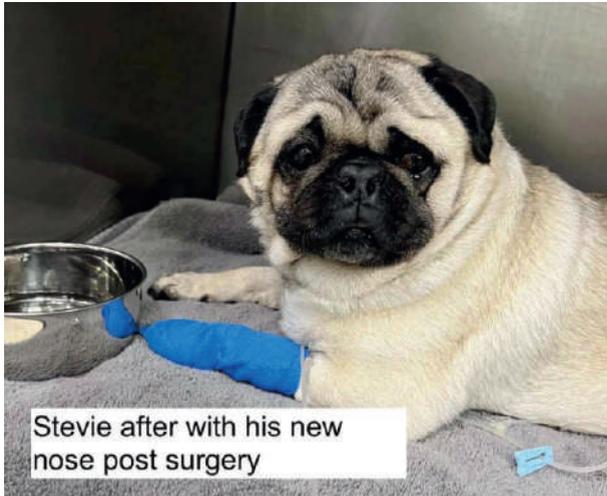
Connect to Birds, to nature, and with each other.

Birds are everywhere, all the time, doing fascinating things.

Join in, February 16–19, 2024, when the world comes together for the love of birds.

For information on how everyone can participate, visit www.birdcount.org

PETS PIECE - STEVIE



Stevie after with his new nose post surgery

heat and become quite warm. It is then important to visit the vet if you are concerned, as cooling will help prevent further cell destruction but does not resolve the inflammatory process that has already started in your pet and they may need further supportive care.

As vets, we can help with preventative measures for heat stress by advising owners when their pets are overweight. We also do preventative airway surgery in at-risk breeds from around 12-months of age (once they have finished their growing). This can be particularly important for our flat nose breeds that may snore, have exercise intolerance, noisy breathing etc. Prevention is better than trying to surgically correct these issues after, as they develop a lot of secondary changes in their airways which are irreversible - even with surgery.

Stevie is a 9-year old pug that had upper airway disease and was struggling to breathe. He was quite noisy when he would breathe and would put a lot of effort into his breathing. As a result, Stevie underwent major airway surgery where we were able to open up his nostrils, remove some of his soft palate at the back of his throat and his tonsils to allow him to breathe better. We can proudly say that this surgery was successful, and he now has a much better quality of life.

Dr Gianne Ficatas - veterinarian

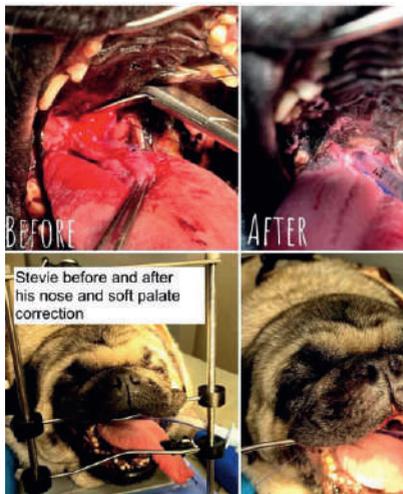
We all love spending the long, sunny days of summer outdoors with our pets but in Summer, the hot weather can certainly pose a risk for your pets.

As a vet clinic, we see some cases of heat stress in animals that come in struggling to breathe, in particular our flat nosed breeds (known as brachycephalic) which include pugs and bulldogs.

Symptoms of overheating include excessive panting or difficulty breathing, drooling, weakness or collapse. Symptoms can progress quickly into seizures, bloody diarrhoea or vomiting. Multiple body systems are involved in heat stroke and can include kidney, liver, gastrointestinal tract and more.

We characterise heat stress generally when the body temperature exceeds 41 degrees but it is certainly important to be aware of the warning signs before it gets to this point.

Risk factors for animals include obesity, upper airway abnormalities, lack of fitness, high humidity levels and confinement with poor ventilation.



At home, if you recognise these signs, you can start actively cooling your pet with a cold water hose down or fan/air conditioning. Avoid wet towels as they can trap the

BORONIA LOCAL BETHANY GOES TO SAUDI ARABIA



19 year old Bethany Moore from Boronia flew to Saudi Arabia in January to represent Australia at the Asian Dodgeball Championships in Riyadh.



Over the past 4 years Bethany has enjoyed playing competition Dodgeball on Monday nights along with her brother and other young adults.

As well as completing school in 2023, Bethany has enjoyed her job at Woolworths Boronia.

It's very encouraging and exciting to see our local talent represent Australia around the world.

John and Martina Moore

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Delivers for Boronia & The Basin

Jackson Taylor MP

Member for Bayswater

📍 Suite 2, Mountain High Centre, 7-13 High Street, Bayswater Vic 3153
 📞 9738 0577 📧 Jackson Taylor MP 📧 jackson.taylor@parliament.vic.gov.au

Welcome to 2024 and I hope you all had a wonderful, relaxing summer holiday break as we look forward to another massive year in our local community! Of course, a big shout out to those that worked through the Christmas and new year period.

And in particular, a big thank you to all our front-line workers who work day in and day out to keep us all safe. I hope you get a well-deserved break in 2024!

Metro Tunnel – Nearing Completion

It's the biggest shake-up to our city's public transport network in a generation – it's the Metro Tunnel, and it's nearing completion and on track for opening in 2025, a year ahead of schedule. 9km of twin tunnels under the CBD will soon unclog the City Loop, meaning more trains, more often, with test-trains completing journeys and – yes – even signs going up for the stations! How good is that?

This – alongside the Suburban Rail Loop, level crossing removals (like at Bedford Road, Ringwood), the North East Link and so much more – are a handful of ways the State Government is helping you get home safer and sooner.

Knox Regional Netball Centre

In massive news for local sports fans – the brand new, state-of-the-art Knox Regional Netball Facility, in Ferntree Gully, is officially open! I was stoked to join our local Federal Member of Parliament, Mary Doyle MP, Knox Mayor, Knox Councillors, and local netballers to declare this

ripper facility open (pictured).

The State Government delivered \$5 million to help see this project get done – and this new facility is a fantastic example of all three levels of Government partnering to deliver a project that is already making a lot of netballers very happy. Two new indoor courts. Nearly 200 new car parks. Refurbished existing courts. New amenities and so much more to boast about – it's all happening!

Cracking On With Backing In Education Locally

I'm happy to let you know that as we head into 2024 – we're not slowing down supporting our littlest locals.

And since my last piece in the BBCN, I'm stoked that we've now appointed an architect for the new build at Bayswater South Primary School (delivering on a promise I made at the election!), construction on the new permanent shade structure at Fairhills Primary is well underway, the slab is down for the new kinder on Iris Avenue, Boronia (part funded by the State Government) AND Goodstart Early Learning (Albert Avenue, Boronia), has received an over \$8,700 as a part of the State Government's Building Blocks grants.

When you deliver over \$80m in local school funding, there's always so much happening, I just can't fit it all in here! So stay tuned for even more updates on these projects and many more.

In Other News

- Knox Library well on track for completion early this year
- Works underway on the street-scape renewal on Erica Avenue, Boronia
- Funding delivered to Knox SES Unit for new road-safety equipment
- Made it easier to build a granny-flat
- \$100,000 delivered to Knox Infolink to support their work

Local Shout Out

Alongside my shout out at the start of this article, I thought it'd be remiss if I didn't give a very special shout-out to members of the Knox SES Unit, who've been deployed up in Queensland over Christmas to help with the floods and storm damage. They were away from their families and friends – but they got the job done. Well done, legends!

AFFECTION and LOVE

Flown a long way, we landed on the island.
 Little kids walked anxiously ahead.
 Holding gifts and bags of sweets.
 Entered the Ancestry home in a big garden.
 Little Angel and his brother ran towards them.
 Their soft hands make garlands around their necks.
 Grandparents hugged the kids and kissed them soft.
 Tear drops rolled down the cheeks and wetted their clothes.
 Sleeping green grass woke up and watched.
 Shiny dewdrops hid among the leaves.
 Butterflies flew around the flowers.
 Joyful laugh echoed in the Home.
 Happiness and peace glittered on faces and eyes.
 Worries and pains ran away for miles.
 Grandparents gave joyous smiles.
 They danced round and round taking their hands.
 Fresh winds blow giving their blessings.
 Grandma and grandpa you live long!
 Your affection and love the greatest gift for us.

Dayangani Silva



TEACHING CANTONESE TO MY KIDS

Growing up in Hong Kong speaking Cantonese, it has only hit me recently what a specific unique language it is. I've lived in Melbourne for 14 years and have been speaking English predominantly. Now, with two young boys (aged 3 years and 6 months), I have come to realise that I would love them to be able to speak Cantonese, not only to communicate with their grandparents, but also as that is our roots and identity.

This is more challenging than I thought, and the main reason is because English has become more natural and easier for me to use. My husband Victor and I have communicated in English since the day we met. Therefore, in our home, English is naturally the language we use. This is also sensible

as we are in an English-speaking country!

I am trying my best to incorporate Cantonese into our daily lives, from simple daily interactions, such as saying 'jo sun' (good morning), 'ho ng ho sik?' (is it yummy) to reading Cantonese books especially with my 3-year-old son. It is easier said than done, as I am the only person who is teaching Cantonese in the household, and I always forget to speak in Cantonese, as the default has always been English. My parents and family live overseas, so we have minimal support in that regard.

With an early childhood qualification myself, I am aware that children learn languages the best at a very young age, when new connections in their

brain are still forming. They learn best through meaningful daily interactions. Sometimes my parent would jokingly say, 'Take the kids and have them live with us in Hong Kong for a few months, I can guarantee you that they will speak Cantonese like a native in no time!' I would laugh along and thought to myself, 'Not a bad idea!' In the meantime, I will keep trying as I know a few Australian-born Chinese regretted not learning how to speak their mother-tongue. I also know some who are extremely grateful that their parents insisted on them learning their mother-tongue, and now they are proud that they know their home language.

Jacqui Leung

KNOX ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY (KES) NURSERY OPENS FOR THE YEAR ON 1 FEBRUARY

The Nursery may have been officially closed during January, but the gates are open as the normal background activities continue.

In line with the objectives of the KES all our plants are indigenous and locally sourced (under permit from DELWP) to maintain the biodiversity of the Knox area. Local native plants adapt well in local gardens, plus they attract pollinators of all species of insects and birds.

With the recent rain we have had the plants have continued to grow and are ready to plant out. While autumn is usually a better time to plant, the soil is still damp after the heavy recent rain. Planting should be easy now and with the usual

care for any upcoming hot, dry times to come, the new plants should do well in any garden.

There are many good choices of plants that flower at this time of year and attract the pollinators to your garden. Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa*) is one that is at its best in summer. This is a tall shrub that attracts all sorts of insects to its honey-rich white flowers. Small birds also like Bursaria which provides protection from predators with its spiny branches.

Prickly Currant Bush (*Coprosma quadrifida*) is another great shrub with edible red berries in



summer. Birds will eat the berries and humans can enjoy them too. Native grasses flower in late spring and summer and will attract butterflies, beetles and bees.

So come into our nursery and see what we have available. The KES Nursery is located near the Ferntree Gully Library on Burwood Highway, and is open from 1 February on

Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, a great place to find local native plants for your garden.

Anne Morton

Farewells, Family, Farms & Firearms

My Mum passed away in the midwinter of 2023, she was 94 and she slipped away in her sleep. One couldn't ask for more. She left as she lived. Loved and adored by her children. We as a family made a joint decision to scatter her ashes in the Murrindindi river in the little town of the same name where she grew up.

The date chosen was Mum & Dad's wedding anniversary which fell in November.

My younger brother Joe's ashes were also being distributed with Mum's. He had passed seven years earlier and lived in a cupboard at my other brother's house, coming out only to watch the three Richmond premierships with him. He was Mum's baby so it was fitting for him to join in the celebrations.

It certainly didn't turn out like one of those solemn majestic farewells from a movie-type moment.

When my elder sister and brother scattered Mum's and Joe's ashes into the river, instead of flying away on the gentle breeze, the ashes came out in fast runs and plopped downward into the water, a light cloud of ashes drifting onto the rest of us. Since they weren't dressed or willing to go further into the river but stay close to the sandy edge, the ashes sank straight to the bottom of the river. The grey of the ash clearly visible on the muddy bed

close to the bank. There was talk of getting a stick and stirring it up a bit, but somehow resting in the river seemed peaceful. Anyway, the river was going to work its magic soon enough and everything would eventually flow down the waterway.

I feel an affinity to my family's maternal side. We always seemed to be visiting each other, whereas on Dad's side, there was little to no contact which suited him fine. I think he liked Mum's side of the family more.

Many of Mum's siblings and their families remained in the district and still have farms or manage properties to this day. When it was made common knowledge that we were to be in the area it suddenly became an impromptu family reunion, which we were fine with. We were all happy to catch up and talk about all things family.

It's funny hearing my country cousins talking about the farms they manage and how they refer to the "Gentlemen" farmers as the Rich Townies or Toffs as if it was half a century ago. Inevitably stories came around to our Pop (Mum's dad) which led to the usual chain of stories that always eventuate when we get together. It started when someone recalled how Pop found a flintlock revolver once while droving, and how he also had a large-bore elephant gun, that as legend has it, a skinny local used to trick cocky visitors into firing. He would shoot the rifle with apparent ease, then load it and hand it to the visitor. He would then watch as they found themselves lying on the

ground with the gun pointing up in the air nursing a sore backside and a wounded pride as the unexpected recoil threw them backward. According to my cousin, both guns were still around, though he wasn't sure which cousin had them.

When asked how many guns he owned personally, he said eighteen.

He said it made him sound like the hillbilly of Murrindindi. He also noted half of them are inaccessible at the moment because his son locked the keys in the gun safe. And until a cheap way of recovering them was found, it was going to be an expensive call to the locksmith.

It must also be made clear, that being a farm owner, firearms have a necessary role. Putting down animals quickly and humanely when there is no other choice and culling feral animals. This leads to appreciation and collecting as a hobby, even investment. But that's enough about guns.

Other talk led to the usual woes of those who live on the land. Cattle prices were great last year, whilst this year they were dragging on the ground. The main thing I took away from my country cousins besides all the great historical stories of the family - which almost falls in the passing down from generation to generation category - was how good-natured and positive they always seemed year after year, something mum never lost in all the years she lived in the big smoke.

Danny Nolan



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Balmoral
OVER 55 LIFESTYLE VILLAGE



A message from the Mayor Cr Jude Dwight

Welcome to what is already shaping up to be a big 2024!

It's a real privilege to provide this message as your new Mayor. I am constantly mindful of the huge responsibility as a resident myself, and ratepayer, mum, small business owner, volunteer and member of the Knox community. I recognise that being Mayor of the City is an act of service, and one I undertake to the best of my abilities as custodian of our land and Council assets for the benefit of all.

Outer East Foodshare

One of the big issues currently gaining nationwide attention is the surge in need for food and other emergency relief. Sadly, Knox was identified by Foodbank Victoria as one of only two 'red zones' experiencing the biggest food shortages in their eastern catchment – an area stretching for more than 500 kilometres from Hawthorn to Mallacoota.

Council has responded by establishing Food Relief Taskforce and warehouse facility for a new food relief distribution centre in Wantirna. Outer East Foodshare will use the building to store and distribute food to 35 local services in Knox who support residents in need.

7NEWS recently came out to see volunteers in action and I had the privilege to be able to help

highlight their incredible efforts. This is part of Council's ongoing work with food relief agencies in the outer eastern suburbs to overcome challenges in providing services for our most vulnerable at this time.

If you live in Knox and are in need of food and other emergency relief, visit knox.vic.gov.au/relief-providers

Knox Sport and Leisure Awards

Celebrating volunteers and grassroots sport here in Knox has for a long time been a commitment of Council. Nominations are now open for the annual Knox Sport and Leisure Awards in the categories of Club of the Year; Best Club Initiated Program; Club Person of the Year (Adult and Junior); Women in Sport Leadership, and; Years of Service.

Nominations close midday on 4 March and winners will be announced on 19 June.

Find out more at knox.vic.gov.au/sportawards

Have Your Say

As we commence the new year I want to reiterate how much we value hearing from our community. This year Council will be seeking your feedback on our new Council Plan – a Plan undertaken in consultation with our community every four years – a new strategy for our waste and resource management, how we manage our open spaces and more. To stay up to date and provide feedback in your language, please visit knox.vic.gov.au/HaveYourSay

Knox Fest

Last but not least, one of the biggest events on our calendar is just around the corner with the return of Knox Fest on Saturday 2 March from 10am–10pm at Wally Tew Reserve, Ferntree Gully.

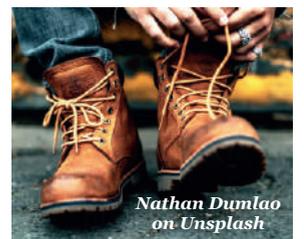
Highlights include two stages of music and performances, rides and inflatables, makers markets, a foodie hub, roller skating rink, vintage car show, free kids' workshops, activities and face-painting, roving performers, night-time projection art and a fireworks finale.

Find out more knox.vic.gov.au/knoxfest

WALKING THE NEWS

We welcome Bill, Donna, Julie and Leigh to our Voluntary Walker Team.

We're looking for two more Walkers to join.



*Nathan Dumlao
on Unsplash*

The vacant rounds are Academy Drive area (85 papers), and Bayview Cres/Mercia Av area (52 papers, and hilly), both in The Basin.

If you can help us with this once monthly commitment, please get in touch. If ever you are unavailable, we cover your round.

contact@bbcn.org.au

CommUNITY Day

A challenge with many of the options for a national celebration is that they do not represent all the communities across Australia. It would be great if we could genuinely celebrate being "One and Free" together, as collaborating citizens of this special place on Earth.

The real question is how do we emphasise the UNITY element into our CommUNITY - at all levels. How could this enable us to collectively celebrate and leverage our diversity of cultures, experiences and perspectives, such that WE can forge a common sense of SELF and agree what it means to be Australian?

Just over 25 Million of us choose to live in this special place in the world and most of us feel a sense of connection and identity with our shared "place," either as our birthplace or adopted home. No doubt diversity brings great advantages to our community, AND so does UNITY. Our differences of culture and perspectives bring creativity and mutual learning. When we accept and respect each others perspectives, we open our minds to greater possibilities for all. Fighting about differences weakens us all and destroys important elements of community, including trust, relationships, respect and collaboration to create mutual social value.

Exploring the possibilities in how others do things differently opens minds, stimulates learning and strengthens relationships.

Together we are much stronger!

When we find how to constructively explore more options around what we do, and why, we collectively generate the best possible life experiences for all our community members, and more sustainable community outcomes.

I propose the concept of a fully inclusive UNITY Day - where people open their trust, minds and hearts to possibilities suggested by others.

What could that look like?

In the spirit of CommUNITY, let's discuss this together ...

What do you think it could be?

UNITY Day would provide the opportunity to share and celebrate the collective us. Local commUNITY events and national events running in parallel, synergising each other.

It can be a day focused on how we benefit from each other through facilitating conversations (and actions) that highlight the social benefits created when we invest in each other. A day when we contribute insights on how to help us all - as a

group, rather than advocating for a predetermined position aimed at maximising what one personally receives.

UNITY Day, will proactively put U and UNITY back into our CommUNITY.

Arthur Shelley



The World Day of Prayer 2024

The theme is: the Olive Tree

'I beg you ... bear with one another in love'

**St Paul's Anglican Church Boronia,
273 Dorset Road.**

Friday 1 March @ 1030

The global Christian Church is calling our sisters and brothers, in every part of the world, to unite in prayer with us for and just a peaceful solution that would bring an end to human suffering.

"The World Day of Prayer" is an international ecumenical Christian laywoman's initiative. It is run under the motto "Informed Prayer and Prayerful Action," and is celebrated annually in over 170 countries on the first Friday in March.

www.worlddayofprayeraustralia.org

A Strummer's Story by Rob Fairbairn A BOY IN THE BUSH, Part 2, Goin' Up The Country

Tonight's special guest on "Looking Back on Your Career" is local musician, songwriter and former primary school teacher Rob Fairbairn. Let's begin with 1972, your first year of teaching. What are your recollections?

1972 had its challenges, that's for sure. I was made headmaster of a one teacher school in Hallston, South Gippsland. Looking back, it was hard work but at the same time I learned a lot and had some very interesting experiences. I could use a few song titles to help crystalize my memories of that year: "Changes" by David Bowie, "Alone Again, Naturally" by Gilbert O'Sullivan, "Are You Ready For The Country?" by Neil Young, "Country Road" by James Taylor.

It's interesting that you use song titles to express yourself, obviously music played a big part in your life, even then.

Absolutely, first I was a fan, buying records and going to concerts and what not. Then, when I was given my first guitar, I also became a practitioner, so to speak. And that guitar was my constant companion, I took it everywhere. I also had a reel-to-reel tape recorder that my parents had given me as a combined Christmas/birthday present. I taped my favourite albums, and they all came with me too.

So, let me paint the picture. Here's young Rob, how old were you when you started teaching?

I turned 21 in the March.

Here's young Rob, 20 years old, at his first school with his guitar, a tape recorder and a box of tapes in tow. Where did you live?

I boarded with Mrs Pearce, not far from the school.

How was that?

Look, it was fine, I was well looked after as far as meals and accommodation and everything but it wasn't home. There was the generation gap, of course. She was born and raised in the country, I was a city boy, we didn't have a lot in common really. So I would work late, I found excuses to go into town and most weekends I would go home. I pretty much kept to myself.

And you had your music, right?

Well, that was the thing. I was too self-conscious to play my guitar or listen to music in her house. My bedroom was right off the lounge room and she'd be in there watching telly and I didn't want to disturb her.

So what did you do?

I took my guitar and tape recorder to school and when the kids had gone home and I'd completed my next day's preparation and finished the cleaning or balanced the books I'd strum away and listen to some music. I clearly remember the acoustics of that old school room, it had a high ceiling so there was nice, natural reverb. And with the afternoon sun streaming in; birds singing outside, it was magic.

So, you were teacher, janitor, bookkeeper...

And counsellor and first aid officer.

How many students did you have?

24, from Prep to Grade Six

So, you're teacher, janitor, bookkeeper, counsellor and first aid officer in a one room school with 24 students. Were you good at your job?

I'd be first to admit I was hopeless, despite three years of training. I did my best but it was a huge

mistake sending me there in the first place. In the first month my leg got stuck in a septic tank, I fell asleep while reading a story and whacked a kid and was threatened with violence by his dad. I should have started my career in a bigger school. I would have been much better off, socially and professionally.



Were you lonely?

To a degree. For the first month I felt like a fish out of water. But then Mrs Pearce was gone.

She died?

No, she took off with her sister to travel around the country. She loved gardening and had always wanted to see the wildflowers in the West. So off she went.

Leaving you alone.

Not entirely, her son and daughter in law, Albert and Dot, lived a few hundred yards up the road. Dot would make my lunches and I'd have dinner with the family and I also had showers at their place because with Mrs Pearce away there was no hot water in the farm house. As well as being used for cooking her old kitchen woodstove heated the water and there was no one there to keep it going during the day.

Not ideal.

No, but I have enduring memories of crisp, misty mornings and bright moonlit nights as I walked between the farmhouse and Albert and Dot's. I'm reminded of a Rolling Stones song off the Sticky Fingers album, "Moonlight Mile."

Thank you. To be continued.....



At Knox & District Over50s we are a very friendly and sociable group who normally meet on the 4th

Tuesday of each month from January to November.

Our next meeting will be our Annual General Meeting which will be held at 10.30 am on Tuesday 27 February, at Club Kilsyth, 1-15 Canterbury Road, Bayswater North, followed by lunch in the bistro for those who wish to stay on.

We provide guest speakers, day and overnight trips, visits to Boronia Cinema, coffee mornings, regular lunches at different locations around Knox and morning melodies. If you are looking to enhance your social life, come along and join us.

At our November meeting we were entertained by the "Pleasant Pluckers," a very talented group of



people who between them played all manner of "plucked" string instruments. They even invited some of our group to join in with various small percussion instruments. Brilliant!



During December, our Christmas Luncheon was held at the Churchill-Waverley Golf & Bowls Club. It was a wonderful day for all concerned, with music, dancing and plenty of raffles. And,

of course, Santa and Mrs Claus came along with their very special elf and presented a small gift to each and every attendee.

2023 year was a great year for all at Knox & District Over50s and there is so much more to come in 2024.

We have a monthly newsletter (Knox Natters Matter) which will keep you up to date with the many fun social activities available.

If you are interested in joining our group, please contact Jill (9801 4363) for further information.

We look forward to hearing from you or, more importantly, seeing you in the near future.

**The Basin
Music Festival
15-17 March
tbfm.org.au**

Boronia View Club

will be meeting on Friday 16 February at 11.30am at Eastwood Golf Club, Liverpool Rd., Kilsyth with a 2 course lunch costing \$27. This will be followed by an afternoon of "mayhem and madness" as it will be the first meeting back for the new year. There will be a raffle, book stall and trading table with all monies raised going to The Smith Family Learning for Life program. The club is looking for new members, so ladies of all ages and backgrounds come along and you will be warmly welcomed. There is opportunity within the club for outings, film and coffee mornings etc.

Enquiries to judith on 9764 8602.

Regards, Christine Ingram

Publicity Officer



Something Special. This year being a Leap Year, at least 3 of our members will enjoy a real birthday on their real date. Now, let's see how we can get to know you, we miss you and I think you will like us.

PICNIC IN THE PARK and we meet in the Tim Neville Arboretum from 5pm. It's a byo get together, so bring food, drinks and a chair and we will be undercover at the Rotunda at the Francis Street end. Plenty of parking too. I'm aware that February 1st is short notice but if you miss this one, we'll be picnicking in the park again on Thursday 7 March.

If you feel like having a chat "feminine style," you'll be very welcome on the first Tuesday every month at Bronto's Café in Boronia. Call Irene on 0416211530, she needs to book.

Of course, for a "masculine chat" the second Tuesday is Men only, call Lothar on 0438013158.

But wait! There are more activities for you to



The Panda Rounds Round Dance Club in Boronia

had its Christmas Dance in the Boronia Progress Hall on Friday 15 December. Most dancers arrived early to decorate the hall. Red was the colour of the night. The dancing started at about 6.45pm but was stopped suddenly when "Ho Ho Ho" and a ringing bell was heard in the entrance hall. To everyone's surprise Santa had arrived! Panda dancer, Max Lennox, was dressed in the full costume and out came the phone cameras! He went over to meet Mr & Mrs Panda on the stage and was later seen dancing with the dance teacher, Alison.

Over 30 dancers celebrated the final dance of the year. Many had only begun Round Dancing since the Introduction session in February. Round Dancing is cued social ballroom dancing and is the easiest way to learn to dance. This was obvious as many of the 'beginners' were already dancing to the higher level cues. Panda Rounds recommences in January and another Introduction session, supported by the Knox Council's 'Over 55s Zest4Life,' is planned soon after.

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enjoy. We also have Cards, 500, Canasta and Bolivia. Walking Groups of various K's, Social board games, Lunch and Evening dining, Social Outings, like on 3 March a Pentridge Prison Tour. Then there are Garden Outings where we visit very interesting gardens. This month, 14 February, will go to Schwerkolt Cottage in Mitcham. Car-pooling is available, you can ring Helen on 97291151. As well as day outings, there are extended outings, such as 15 March travelling to Murray Bridge SA and surrounds by bus, riverboat and train for 8 days.

On 2 March we're having a Leap Year Party and Trivia Afternoon, all for \$25 per person for lunch, (bring your own drinks and glass please). A fun way to meet and we'll start at 12 noon. Please ring Judy on 0466 234 777 to book and for more information.

Last paragraph! You're welcome to join us at the Quarterly Meeting on Monday 26 February at 2pm, afternoon tea will be served. See you at the Wattle Hall, Underwood Road, Ferntree Gully. Plenty of seats and parking too.

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