



PRICE
GOLD COIN
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CHEWTON CHAT

Issue 288

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CHEWTON DOMAIN SOCIETY Inc
Reg # A0034364L
PO Box 85, Chewton. Victoria. 3451

www.chewton.net



Visiting Jirrahlinga...

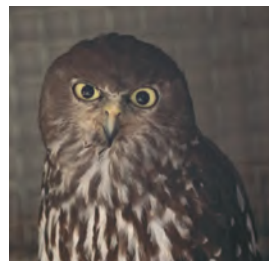
Dingo Conservation and Wildlife Education Centre



There have been a few articles in the media lately about the launch of Jirrahlinga, so we thought it was about time the *Chat* went and had a good look. So, on a warm sunny Saturday two of us turned into Eureka St, Chewton and followed it onto Dingo Park Road. After following the dusty gravel road for a while, we came upon a little oasis with green trees and big signs letting us know that we had reached our destination.

We met Tehree Gordon and her husband Hamish who together have revitalized the centre over the past few years. In 2005 they mortgaged their house to take over the property. They were extremely concerned at that time that the dingoes, of which there were nearly 500 (including puppies), were going to be destroyed. The property was in a concerning run-down condition after the death of previous owner Bruce Jacobs. Bruce was credited with building awareness of the plight of the vilified Australian native dog. Like Bruce, Tehree and Hamish were working to improve the reputation of the dingo and strongly believe that dingoes can be worked with and do not need to be destroyed, particularly by using inhumane methods.

One of the keepers, Marie, who has worked with Tehree for many decades, gave us a tour of the property. The chirpy and sometimes raucous sounds of parrots and the occasional group howl of the dingoes accompanied us as we walked around. In amongst large aviaries can be seen various parrots, corellas, kookaburras, cockatoos, lorikeets, honeyeaters, eagles, owls, egrets, a Brush Turkey, Magpie Goose, Tawny Frogmouth, Bush Stone Curlew and even a kite. An ornamental dam is the home of some black swans, various types of native ducks and a Cape Barron Goose. A group of emus are housed in a large run.



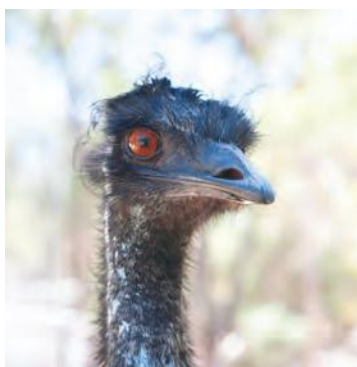
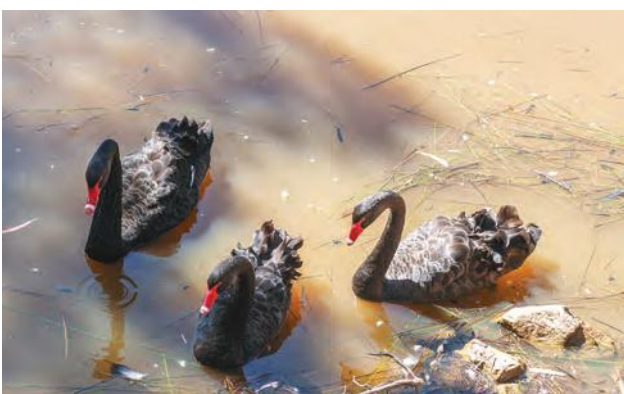
Visiting Jirrahlinga Dingo Conservation and Wildlife Education Centre

In amongst the aviaries and pens are pathways and several covered seating areas so people can stop and rest or just sit and enjoy the atmosphere. Bore water has been used to help create a green garden dotted with flowers, so the delightful smell of roses permeated the air. We bypassed the snakes which were being shown to an enthusiastic tour group at the time, but we saw some lace monitors, an eastern water dragon and some turtles. Other creatures to see included various types of wallabies and kangaroos, Rufous Bettong (rat kangaroo), flying foxes, wombats, possums, echidnas, and some koalas which I was able to pat. The Sugar Gliders were fast asleep and hiding in their little homes.

There are still 120 dingoes at the park. When Tehree and Hamish inherited a huge number of dingoes back in 2005 many were in poor condition. Only 3 had to be humanely euthanased, the rest were brought back to health and able to live out their lives. Their breeding is now strictly controlled. Interestingly, two of Bruce Jacob's original dingoes are still alive. They are a mating couple (dingoes mate for life) and are now 19 and 20 years old. Last year the keepers were amazed when this old couple surprised them all and produced a puppy.

In amongst all the animal enclosures and gardens, are other fun things to see including many large dinosaur sculptures which make the property seem somewhat reminiscent of Jurassic Park, albeit without the scary people-eating dinosaurs.

After our tour we were invited into the Reiki room, which is where Tehree, a deeply spiritual woman, helps heal people and animals. We had a long chat with Tehree and learned a lot about the park and Tehree herself who is a fascinating person. She is very giving and lives with passion for the work she does. Tehree was announced as Senior Australian of the Year back in 2004 - which is only one of her many accolades. Tehree and Hamish together have provided foster care for more than 40 children and have been working with wildlife for many decades. Tehree is an inspiring and positive person with one of her mottos being, "It is not about what happens to you in life. It is how you deal with it." After surviving many hardships including a difficult childhood where she lived in sheds, caravans, tents and occasionally in a house, Tehree has great compassion and is a skilled reader of human nature. When people with disabilities come to the sanctuary they are given special help. The tour can be adjusted so that they don't feel left out. The staff go out of their way to make people feel included so they can go home happy. Tehree told us the story of a man who rang up one day and asked if he could just come and sit quietly in the sanctuary. He found solace there. Two weeks later he died of his illness.



Visiting Jirrahlinga Dingo Conservation and Wildlife Education Centre

Another exciting thing that the sanctuary offers is a very popular Junior Rangers Program. Children come for a whole day and learn about wildlife and what is involved in caring for animals. Tehree and Hamish are also wanting to reach out to the community and offer opportunities for respite groups and aged care organisations to connect with the sanctuary. They are also open to charities using the facility for fund raising opportunities. Another thing happening soon will be meditation and relaxation classes and events where people can enjoy being bathed by the amazing sound of crystal singing bowls. These events will be announced on Facebook soon. Glamping with native animals is yet another venture in the pipeline.

Expressed beautifully on their website is:

“Jirrahlinga is not just for distressed native animals. It is primarily about people. Particularly people who have a disability, a special need, the frail or the aged. What better therapy could there be than to come into a supportive environment to work quietly with animals or just visit and touch a koala or joey that do not place demands on a person’s physical or mental capabilities. This is the secret of Jirrahlinga: A place where dementia patients suddenly respond for the first time in months, where people with learning difficulties working on a regular basis find the confidence to talk animatedly about their animal charges, or where disadvantaged youth gain an opportunity to move on through life after discovering that the complexities of life can be managed by giving to creatures with more need than they have and which respond with their own form of gratitude. Our vision is simple, we strive to be a World Class Wildlife Sanctuary delivering high standards of care, compassion and ethics to all of our animals, as we work towards long-term sustainability of all wildlife and environment.”

To find out more about, or connect to, this local sanctuary check out...

www.jirrahlinga.com.au

or on Facebook it is *Jirrahlinga Dingo Conservation and Wildlife Education Centre* or phone 0493 387 144.

Jackie McMaster.



Photos by Julie Millowick, Janet Russell and John Ellis

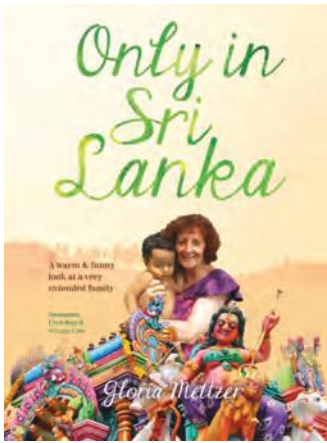


Apart from an array of wildlife and lovely people, Jirrahlinga boasts several quiet spots for contemplation and reflection...

...and it's well worth a visit!



The 'White' Nana



December 2022. Colombo airport. Departure. We draw up outside the departure section. Remove my inflated suitcase from the car, said case bulging with local artefacts, teas hand-picked in the Kandyan hills, gifts from the family - my deceased son's Sri Lankan family, and prop it on one of the trolleys lined up outside the entrance doors.

Only the traveller with a passport and a current ticket is permitted entry to the airport. My young Australian-Sri Lankan grandsons hover like flies around me, none of us wanting to utter that final goodbye. Raised in Sri Lanka they refer to me as *'their White nana'*.

White nana visits them every year. Covid interrupted this cycle. This my first legally permitted visit in three years. My beautiful Sinhalese daughter-in-law, my son's widow, brought them to Australia to visit me last year. As luck would have it, the week they arrived in Melbourne I caught Covid and had to hibernate.

My son chose well when he chose a Sri Lankan wife. She's a natural survivor. As she tells me *'mum, I survived the sudden death of my mother when I was 12. I survived the 30 years of civil war in my country. I survived the tsunami, if only just. I survived the tragic sudden death of my husband aged 44. I had Covid twice, plus a bout of cancer and chemo. And I survived the recent political turmoil in my country.'*

For a month I have been immersed in the glow of family, her family, of village life, the familiarity of quaint winding lanes, coconut trees bordering their land, the river on their doorstep where the boys swim and kayak. The same river that overflowed its banks during the tsunami, causing loss of life and vegetation. This is the tropics. Everything grows back with a vengeance, camouflaging trauma, homes swept away, neighbours caught in its force, floating out to sea.

The boys and I had fun together. As their father's mother I have long had a special place in their hearts. I was their grandmother. No one else shared this title. Every night they fought over which one would have their turn to sleep with nana, as is their common custom. Some nights I begged off, pleading for a restful night minus legs or arms entwining with mine.

Each day whilst their mother worked in her hotel business we would take a tuk tuk down town to buy gelatos or go for a swim or I'd take them for a chicken burger, a change from their usual curry and rice staple meals. Often they plied me with questions: tell us about our father. *'What was papa like as a boy? What mischief did he do? Was he naughty? Did he like school?'* They were barely out of kindergarten when they lost him, yet their memories of him warm me.

My son died suddenly, inexplicably, in Colombo six years ago. His wife and I attended the court to hear the judge give a report of the inquest into his death. All they could tell us was *'the cause of death was inconclusive.'* Nothing more. We don't really need more I suppose as nothing will bring him back. He has however left us a beautiful legacy – three vibrant, cheeky, intelligent, beautiful sons.

One afternoon the 12 year old snuggled up to me on the couch. *'Nana, do you want to hear my life plan?'* I laughed. *'Yes dear, tell me your life plan.'* *'Well nana, I've got five more years of school and then I'm coming to Australia to study. I'll live with you and become a lawyer. But before I do that I'll go to the gym and get really fit. And that's my life plan.'* I didn't tell him how life doesn't always go to plan. His father's life is proof of that.

My departure day loomed and we each of us tried to hold on tight to the warmth of our brief time together.

The actual day of departure arrived. A heavy heart greeted the day. My youngest grandson, recently turned 11, told me *'nana, I am so, so sad. Can't you stay one more day. Or two days. Or a week?'* I reminded him why I had to leave. *'Australia is my home, my family, my partner, my friends.'* *'We will come and visit you next year nana,'* he assured me.

The moment arrived. Departure time at the airport. I hugged their mother, then each child in turn. Tears and hugs and more tears. As I turned and walked towards the airport door, sobs haunted me. I heard one of them wail – *'I lost papa. And now I've lost nana.'* His White nana.

Gloria Meltzer.

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It happens oh so quickly...

The Vic Emergency App beeped. Barfold again I thought... but no! Corner of Llewellyn Road in Golden Point it said... and when you live at 17 Llewellyn Road that's only 170 metres from our front gate!

No visible smoke from the house, so down the drive to the front gate for a closer squiz. Nope, nuthin'. But then the sirens started in the distance and very quickly got closer. Firetruck after firetruck came across the ford and turned north into Llewellyn Road; Elphinstone, Harcourt, Chewton, another Elpho one, Castlemaine and more. Some smaller CFA units, Parks Victoria utes and even two police vehicles.

All going up the drive next door! To a property about 200 metres away, just over the hill! Smoke was difficult to discern over the hill and through the trees - but the evidence was there! And then the helicopters arrived - a smaller one circling was quickly joined by a larger one with a refill tube hanging beneath it.

With helicopters circling just above tree height, and one dumping water, our local fireguard WhatsApp began to fire up too!

- "I see there's a fire logged at Llewellyn Road and fire trucks arriving. Any info anyone?"
- "I'm in Ballarat at the moment. Please keep us informed."
- "The helicopter is circling around ****'s place..."
- "Fire truck heading up ***'s drive, 2nd heli now here, this one with water onboard."
- "The smoke seems to be easing."
- "Water bomber just dropped more water."
- "Under control on the Vic Emer App."
- "Good luck everyone. On the coast right now. Keep us updated."
- "Yeah it's all out now. Nobody's hurt or anything."

A WhatsApp for What's Up - worth its weight in gold!

Thanks to all the volunteer fire fighters who did such a great job retrieving a potentially dangerous situation so promptly.

It was dangerous for the Golden Point community and the stack of people who are at the Res on days like this!

And thanks to the volunteers who co-ordinate our local Golden Point Fireguard group, who keep the map and phone contacts up to date, and who maintain such an important WhatsApp.



...and a well-organized Community Fireguard Group can spring into action quickly too!

PLUMBING & GAS FITTING: Please contact us for all your requirements

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- Supply and installation of
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- **GAS HEATING:** Space Heaters, Ducted Systems, Hydronic & Gas Log Fires
- **WOOD HEATING:** Freestanding & Inbuilt
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...and didn't the social media light up afterwards!

When this fire story was posted on Facebook it attracted 4,122 views overnight - and several pertinent comments...

"Thanks for the photos. CFA member here. I didn't attend, but apparently the aerial assets were invaluable here, because of the rough terrain. Also noteworthy, the Chewton CFA crew for driving their tanker in very difficult terrain. Otherwise it would have been a much more dangerous fire."

"Thank you so much for all those fire fighters who attended. Whilst in Castlemaine, friends messaged me saying you ok? Fire at your house. I thought what the hell are they talking about. When I got onto the emergency app, it showed where the fire was. It showed fire at Golden Point Road and the corner of Llewellyn Road, showing the fire was on my property. OMG. I am in town, so a quick turn around and straight home. Helicopters, fire trucks and other trucks everywhere. The fire was on the opposite side of the road from us, then of course you think of your neighbours as the fire was behind their property. The residents of the top end of Golden Point Road, would like to thank all the fire fighters as it could have been one big disaster with the wind blowing. The disappointing thing was all the idiot people up at the res standing on the road, watching whilst fire trucks were trying to back into the res to get water - and they wouldn't move themselves or the cars, whilst the fire fighters were trying to set up for access

to the water. Then onlookers made it even harder. It was a nightmare at the res, if the fire had got away or was heading towards the res, it would have a horrible ending as people just didn't get it, to get in your car and leave."

"People should have been instructed to leave via Harmony Way. This is a major problem that needs to be addressed.....trucks not being able to refill and those people should have left safely if and before it got out of control!"

"It is a serious concern as it's one way in or out..."

"CFA were under pressure to put fire out. They shouldn't have to chase up people as they had a more pressing situation to deal with, they may have thought that people would not have not been thinking of how dangerous it was and they were being so disrespectful to the CFA, by not moving out the way."

"Yes people should have left but didn't straight away. After some time some people left whilst heaps stayed and watched the helicopters. It was hard as it was so chaotic up there for that many people to listen, and with other spectators arriving it was an absolute nightmare."

"I was ready to turn on all my bush fire sprinklers. Gee they dealt with it very swiftly. Thanks to all involved."

"Thanks for all of your concern and support, everyone. We're just glad we managed to get things under control," from Chewton Fire Brigade.

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Chewton CFA Update

January saw around half-a-dozen callouts give our newer members a chance to pitch in on the fireground. Our new driver Jessie also had a couple of chances to get behind the wheel.

The biggest callout we attended was a grass fire in Barfold on 26 January. We pitched in alongside 26 other tankers (and a couple of helicopters!) after a burn-off went wrong. Crews were blacking out on steep and somewhat rocky terrain and we helped to ferry water and do some blacking out for the afternoon. Our slip-on returned to the scene the next day to assist with more blacking out. Thanks to everyone who turned up to help out on both days!

Fire Danger Period restrictions

This is a good reminder to everyone that we are now in the fire danger period and a good demonstration of why burning off is not permitted during this time. Barfold wasn't the first burn-off gone wrong we've been called to, and even if things don't get that out of control, anyone burning off during the Fire Danger Period should expect a visit from their local brigade!

At this stage it is anticipated that the Fire Danger Period will last until May 2023. For full information about restrictions during this period, visit www.cfa.vic.gov.au and search for "Can I or can't I?" There's a great list on that page for both the Fire Danger Period and Total Fire Ban days (*Note that the Fire Danger Period isn't the same as a Total Fire Ban. On Total Fire Ban days, more severe restrictions apply.*)

How we can help you get prepared and stay safe

With only one tanker in our brigade, in the event of a fire emergency in Chewton it is very likely our tanker will be attending a fire outside of Chewton and unable to come to you. That is why it is important to know what you can do for yourself to stay safe during fire season.

We have scheduled a fire safety planning workshop at our brigade, at 1 Mount Street, Chewton, on Saturday 4 Feb from 1- 4pm. This session is specifically for people who have already attended one of our Fire Safety Essentials sessions, and who want more help putting strategies into action. At this workshop fire safety officers from our CFA district will run through the process of planning for fire emergencies in detail.

If you are planning on attending, please text Rob Reid-Smith on 0490 348 763 with a text that starts "Fire safety planning workshop". If you haven't attended a Fire Safety Essentials session before, stay tuned to the *Chewton Chat* and our social media for details of new sessions as they come up.

We are also available to help you prepare for the fire season with our Property Advice Visit Service (PAVS). We can come to your home for a chat about what you can do to prepare your property and develop your own fire plan. We will leave you with a written list of actions you can take to make your place safer. To discuss making an appointment for a visit, please send a text starting with "PAVS" to Rob Reid-Smith on 0490 348 763.

Get in touch

To find out more about what we're up to, or to get in touch with us with any questions about fire restrictions, burning off, fire safety or emergencies, you can visit our Facebook or Instagram and leave a message.

Just search for "Chewton Fire Brigade".

Stay safe, everyone!

Adam Ford.

Photo credits: Jessie Boylan, Bec Howell and James Godwin



Blue-green algae alert at the Res...

What started as a Facebook post and a report to Parks Victoria became a check to see if the dreaded blue-green algae had taken up residence in Expedition Pass Reservoir.

Parks Victoria took the responsible approach, sending samples for scientific lab testing and putting warning signs at the Res itself.

“WARNING

Suspected Blue-Green Algae

Contact with affected water may cause harm to humans and animals.

For your safety, we recommend:

- No swimming
- No drinking water
- No water sports
- No dogs in water”

But as often happens at the Res, some people know best. Or think they do! As the days of waiting for the testing were heading towards a week, someone removed the signs - illegally of course.

People arriving at the Res then had no signage to make them aware of the possible problem - and based their decision-making at the Res on incomplete information!

As it turned out, the testing proved negative - no doubt a huge relief for those that had swum there and those who had let their children swim there.


Note 1: *If blue-green algae multiply to high numbers, toxins may be produced causing health problems for people, domestic animals and stock that come into contact with the algae.*

Contact with the algae by recreational users can be harmful. There have been reports of skin and eye irritations, nausea, vomiting, muscle weakness or cramps by some people who have swum through algal scum or swallowed it.

<https://www.csiro.au/en/research/natural-environment/ecosystems/blue-green-algae/what-are-blue-green-algae>

Note 2: *Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) is currently warning people to avoid direct contact with water at Tullaroop Reservoir and Hepburns Lagoon after high levels of the bacteria were detected.*





ASX: KZR

Kalamazoo Resources Limited is a gold exploration company with a primary focus on identifying commercially viable gold deposits within the central Victorian Goldfields consisting of three key projects.

- 1. Castlemaine Gold Project is located ~120km NW of Melbourne.**
Granted licences (EL6679, EL6752 and EL7112) which lie East and South of the Castlemaine township, covering most of the historic Castlemaine Goldfield.
- 2. South Muckleford Gold Project is located ~150km NW of Melbourne.**
Granted licences (EL6959 and EL7021). This project is located only 10km from the Castlemaine Gold Project.
- 3. Myrtle Gold Project is located ~135km NW of Melbourne.**
Granted licence (EL7323) located just 30km south of the Fosterville Gold Mine.

Kalamazoo is planning to conduct low-impact gold exploration activities within these project areas.

To discuss any of our projects or if you require any further information, please visit <https://kzr.com.au/castlemaine-gold/> or Luke Mortimer on 03 9988 7796 or luke.mortimer@kzr.com.au.

An enigmatic love letter



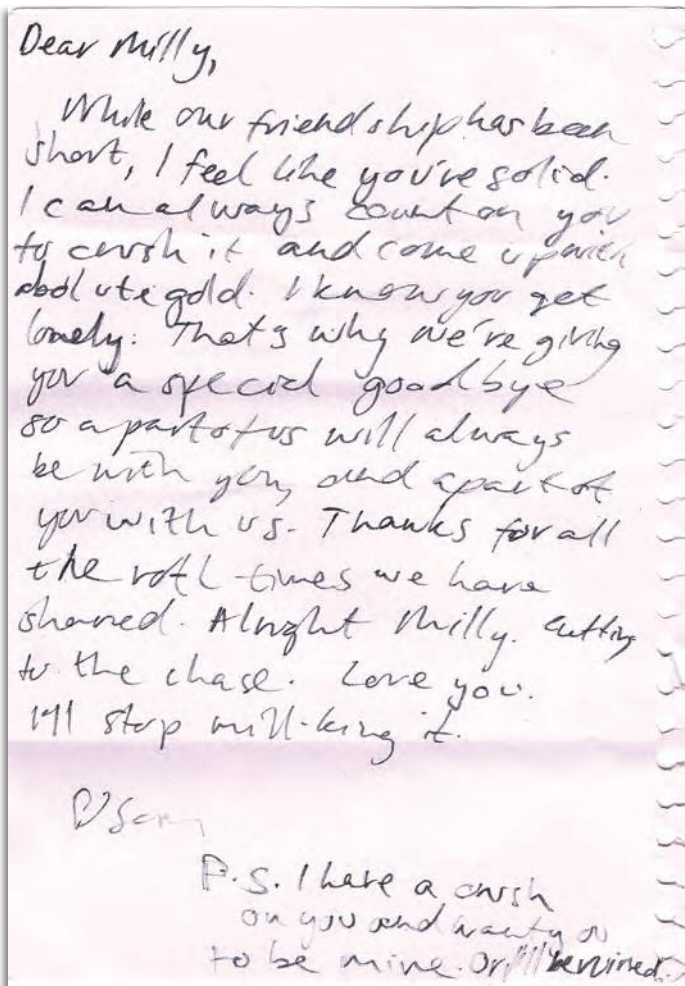
The imposing abutment of the old Garfield Water Wheel stands tall in the bush just north of Chewton (up North Street would you believe?). New signage is there as we profiled in the January Chewton Chat, and new interest has followed.

A letter was discovered at the Wheel – unstamped but the envelope was addressed to The Mill! It turned out to be a love letter that began “Dear Garfield Water Wheel”... and “things are not

always what they seem – we need to look closer to see and I know that you know too.” And “Thankyou for sharing your geometric imagination.”

And the envelope also included “Dear Milly, While our friendship has been short, I feel like you’re solid. I can always count on you to crush it and come up with absolute gold. I know you get lonely. That’s why we’re giving you a special goodbye so part of us will always be with you and part of you with us...”

And “P.S. I have a crush on you and wanting you to be mine. Or I’ll be ruined.”




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Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) awarded for service to the environment and the community

When local volunteer Christine Brooke and her husband John moved to Faraday ten years ago, Christine already had a strong interest in working for the environment and the community.

Before long she had become involved with local groups Sutton Grange Landcare and the Faraday Community Association. Her roles in Loddon Shire as a councillor and mayor along with her time on the board and community group of the North Central Catchment Management Authority gave her an overview of how the community and the government agencies can work together successfully. She has been involved at national, state and local levels of Landcare.

This led to her being elected to the Committee of Management of the local landscape restoration organisation and Landcare Network, Connecting Country, working across the Mount Alexander region. And this is where all her skills of governance and accountability, her knowledge of natural resource management along with her understanding of how communities can work together are all used so effectively.

As Christine explained to the *Chat*, “Our communities are vibrant places to live, because of the tremendous amount of time and effort given by volunteers to make them so, from the environment, the arts, sport organisations and all the work of parents within our education systems. I believe we can all play a part to keep them that way.”



Please support and encourage our very valued volunteers!
Where would our community be without them?

The Chewton Pool needs more volunteers

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chewtonpoolsecretary@gmail.com



Interaction / feedback?

We would love to hear from you!

These are interesting concepts but we rarely get spontaneous interactions or feedback directly.

Do let us know of anything that strikes you after reading the *Chat*. Or if there is something of community interest the Chat should know about. We have many great contributors – and at times we all feel as though we are working in a vacuum.

Drop into the church on a Thursday afternoon (2 til 5), email us at chewtonchateditor@gmail.com or simply drop a note into the often lonely (and friendless) little green and silver letterbox sitting on the fence outside the Primitive Methodist Church.

For all your concreting needs contact

Gavin Jury
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or

Mark Donnellan 54724825
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The *Chat* makes connections

The *Chewton Chat* gets around, stimulates connections and promotes linkages! And gets caught up in co-incidences!

Each month a package of Chats is delivered to local residential care units and sometimes the Chat receives messages in reply. A recent message suggested a personally addressed Chat need only have a name on the heading, rather than a wasteful envelope. A great idea but the writer went on further to explain how, when the Chat was read, it was then delivered each month to a former Chewton resident in the same unit.

At the time this message got to the Chat two co-incidences occurred simultaneously. Firstly, a former workmate of the ex-Chewton resident contacted the Chat in an attempt to contact his former boss - "The best boss I ever worked for"! Secondly, Max Lesser was researching Thompsons Foundry and their construction of locomotives (a long, long story for another Chat!) and he pulled out a 2014 photo of a foundry re-enactment he'd taken for the Castlemaine Mail. That photo of the crowd around the locomotive in that photo included the instantly recognizable former Chewton resident!



The result of these co-incidences? We were able to pass on a copy of the photograph as well as that request from the former workmate. Contact has apparently been made – and two more former workmates are now involved too.

Sometimes things just fall into place around you... and give you great satisfaction. And a warm feeling!

A town in transition?

A change of ownership of the Red Hill Hotel has seen it close until some time in February. *“The pub is under new management and is currently closed until early 2023 as the new owners get everything ready for a rebirth. Live music will still be happening, and we're excited to work with a fantastic local chef who'll be running their own show from the kitchen. All will be revealed in good time, so keep an eye out on our socials or website for updates. Hang tight and hope to see you soon x”* is the message on The Red Hill Facebook page. Another chapter in the long life of the 1854 pub is about to unfold.

And the late long-lamented shop? No word at this stage about the Chewton General Store that was. It's been empty since the end of May 2021. With all those new car parks out the front at least the pool and the park can profit from them.

But it's not all gloom and doom! We have an upgrade of Chewton's historic school that is scheduled to be unveiled shortly, a community-run pool that continues to kick goals, a service station that stepped up to the plate when the shop's doors shut, Grist Bakery in Wesley Hill that attracts a growing Chewton clientele and now helps distribute the *Chewton Chat*, Cuppa Chewton where the locals gather for a caffeine fix in all sorts of weather, the Chewton CFA, Chewton Film Society, Phoenix Chewton CWA, Post Office Hill Action Group (POHAG), Chewton Senior Citizens, Golden Point Landcare, St. John's Anglican Church, Golden Hope Foundation, Chewton Playgroup, Chewton community barbecuers and, of course, there's Castlemaine Goldfields F.C. based at the Chewton Soldiers' Memorial Park.

And while neighbouring towns like Harcourt and Newstead are benefitting from wonderful refurbishments of their former railway stations and associated buildings, we in Chewton can quietly make our own pilgrimages to a site that was once Chewton Railway Station (and the Chewton Railway Precinct)... and imagine.

But Chewton boasts a restored and refurbished Town Hall, Post Office property and Ellery Park (apart from the bit along the highway that council owns – check the pink surveyor's flags) – owned by the Chewton community and managed by an elected Chewton Domain Society (CDS) committee. Apart from leasing the Post Office to a licensed P.O. manager, the CDS hires the town hall to many organizations, hosts and provides access to a collection of local historic material, publishes the monthly *Chewton Chat*, manages www.chewton.net and www.monstermeeting.net and the Chewton.net Facebook page, and has been supporting the annual Monster Meeting anniversary celebrations since 2003.



The only thing that's constant is change...



...and even more change!



One small block, so many changes!

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Studio Visits with Jackie and Julie Leonie Van Eyk

Our Chewton creative for this month is Leonie Van Eyk, a filmmaker, photographer, puppeteer and stage/project manager. Leonie first discovered the Castlemaine area about 12 years ago, when she was brought up from Melbourne to perform as the puppeteer inside the giant man-eating plant Audrey in Castlemaine Theatre Company's fabulous production of *The Little Shop of Horrors*. Leonie realised that she really liked the people she was meeting in Castlemaine so decided to settle in the district, connect to the creative community and raise her daughter.

Leonie chose a cute cottage in Chewton for her home and has since created a great insulated and soundproof



Leonie with her light installation at Castlemaine Art Museum

performed a solo puppetry show in Perth called *Castaway*. She also performed in Avenue Q which is like an R-rated Muppet Show.



Leonie's 'Anthony'

studio with walls made from hempcrete. This studio is where Leonie houses her equipment, edits her films and works with digital media.

Leonie studied Media Production at University in the 1990s and more recently upgraded her skills in digital media at Bendigo TAFE. Leonie has also studied puppetry and worked with Snuff Puppets, Polyglot Theatre, and

Recently Leonie has been working as a filmmaker and photographer, working for artists, musicians and community organisations. Some of the films she has made include "The Gung Hoe Growers" which is about a group of people who are using unused land to grow vegetables in a sustainable way. "Under a Tin Roof" is a film about the Thompson Foundry Band. Leonie also made a great short film about Castlemaine's "Billy Cart Challenge". She has been on the Board of Directors of The Castlemaine Documentary Film Festival and she has been employed by Mount Alexander Shire Council to produce photographic documentation of festivals within the shire.



Leonie's 'Charred'

I will help you find the words...

Tamsin Whaley
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Another important aspect of Leonie's skills is her work as an arts facilitator. She has worked with disability arts access programs in Melbourne and regional communities and last year was commissioned by Castlemaine Arts Museum to work with young people with the aim to get youth to connect to the gallery. They made their own films. One of the films included local youth riding their BMX bikes through the gallery and performing tricks. It seemed like a daring thing to do in a space which is usually quiet



Leonie's 'Black cat'



Jackie McMaster with photos by Julie Millowick

but it all went well.

Leonie says that moving to Chewton has been really good for her and she loves working with other artists.

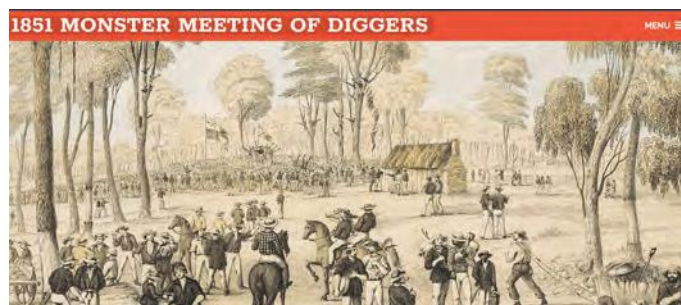
If you would like to see more of Leonie's work or contact Leonie check out www.leonievaneyk.com email leola73@gmail.com or phone 0425 767 964

Chewton Domain Society

The CDS Management Committee has had a well-earned break in January and the next meeting will be on February 20th. That quiet time hasn't stopped bookings being made for the Chewton Town Hall with local community groups getting their meeting schedules organised for the year.



Work is continuing on the Chewton.net and the monstermeeting.net websites as there's always new information or updates needing to be made.



Membership of the CDS is always an important part of our management and was in the very capable hands of Edna Preece for many years until her retirement. When Glen Harrison offered to help, the register then moved onto a digital method and became a great record of how we were tracking. After his ten years of support we now have another committee member who has offered to help with this time-consuming role. Further details will be in the next *Chewton Chat* but in the meantime, memberships can be applied for or renewed by making the \$10 fee at the Bendigo Bank either direct deposit or bank transfer: Bendigo Bank, BSB: 633-000, A/c number: 106516479. chewtondssecretary@gmail.com

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In September, 1852, nearly 12 months after the field had been proclaimed, the Government despatched Mr Miller, an Inspector of Schools to Forest Creek, with a view to establishing a National School there. He was present at a meeting held in Dr Green's tent at Chewton on the 21st, when the following were elected the local School Board, Dr Green, Jones and Buncer, Messrs C. Smedley, B. Ross, W. Coombes and M. Thornhill. After discussing the matter the meeting decided, in view of the migratory habits of the diggers, to use large tents as schoolhouses, so that they could be easily moved from one place to another in the event of the population shifting to new rushes. The conditions attaching to the establishment of a school, as explained by Mr Miller, were that the Government would pay two-thirds of the cost and the residents one-third. On February 1st, 1853, a second meeting was held at the residence of Mr Ross, with Mr Smedley in the chair. Mr Kane, one of the Inspectors, had arrived from Melbourne, and had brought with him two teachers and their wives, also tents for schools and teachers' residences. One of the school

tents covered a space of 30ft by 14ft, and was estimated to hold 100 children, and on each tent was marked in large letters "National School." Mr Kane stated that books would be supplied by the Department to the teachers at fixed rates, and would be sold to the children at the same rates; the school hours would be from 9 a.m. to 12, and from 2 to 5, and adults could have one hour's tuition every night. The fees being—under 8 years 1/ per week, under 12 years 1/6 per week, over 12 years 2/ per week, adults, 6d per day; all fees to be paid in advance. The head teacher's salary was £350, and he had to collect the fees and send a return to Melbourne, and if the total collected was less than his salary the Board of Education would make up the balance. The meeting agreed to erect one of the tents at Fryer's Creek, and the other at Forest Creek on an eminence on the east side of Adelaide Flat. Mr Leste was selected as the head teacher at Forest Creek, and on the opening day in February, 1853, there were 27 pupils present, and the number increased to 50 in a fortnight. This was the first public school opened in this district.



Chewton
Primary School 1054



Education in this area has a great history! and a visit to the school in the last few days of the holidays reveals (below) a school about to enter a whole new phase - the eagerly awaited upgrade is about to be revealed!

WATCH THIS SPACE!



*****Watch out for Chewton School on Instagram and on Facebook**

Phoenix Chewton Country Women's Association

Back to School

Getting the family organised for going back to school can sometimes seem overwhelming. Shoes, uniforms, books, after school care, and just generally getting back into the routine takes a lot of organisation and effort. I was a single working mum for many years and remember the juggling and worry of trying to have everyone's needs met without too much drama, it was somewhat exhausting!

Just a few things I've learnt along the way;

- You can't please everyone all the time, and compromise is a valuable lesson for kids.
- Organisation is your friend (even if it doesn't come naturally, it's worth it).
- Even though it requires patience, and you could do it quicker, each family member should have a job in the household.
- Follow your gut and stick to your guns. I don't know how many times I was told everyone's parents were letting their kids stay up late, go to unsupervised parties, etc. The list was endless.
- Make time to talk, listen and relax with each other around the table for dinner or even a games night. It's important.
- Breakfast is important.
- Make meal times easy, not a battleground by sharing plates. Great for picky eaters who can choose what they want to eat and the variety can be endless. Mexican inspired, salads and bread, beans and potatoes, chicken and fried rice, make your own pizza or whatever is in the fridge and pantry. Try and get the kids involved in the preparation. Leftovers can go into lunch boxes.

These are all pretty simple ideas, but they are ones that do make a difference. Importantly, be kind to yourself and try to factor in whatever time you can just for you. Sometimes it can seem an endless grind but it is amazing how fast these years go by.

Oh, and don't forget laughter and fun are free!

New members are always welcome. The Phoenix Chewton CWA meet most Tuesdays at Chewton Town Hall.

Madeleine Randall.



Chat donations...

Supporting your local paper... many readers are now donating once a year by depositing directly into the account at the Bendigo Bank using these details...

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Account name Chewton Domain Society

This can be done by dropping into any Bendigo Bank with those details and the donation, or it can be done on-line with a money transfer using those details. **Pay for all 12 editions in one transaction!**

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Aged care services in Mount Alexander Shire?

Mount Alexander Shire Council is asking community members for input on aged care services ahead of Federal Government changes in the sector. The changes being implemented by the Federal Government come into effect from 1 July 2024, and will impact services delivered by Council that:

- Support healthy ageing
- Help people remain at home
- Encourage safety, mobility, living well, and staying connected and independent within the community.

Council currently delivers aged care services such as personal care, home care, shopping, delivered meals, respite care, social support programs and more.

The upcoming changes will mean that from 1 July 2024, eligible residents will have the opportunity to choose from a range of aged care providers to deliver on their service needs - for example, a resident may choose to have meals delivered by one provider and personal care provided by another.

For Council to remain a provider of some or all community-based aged care services, it will need to compete for available funding, retain current clients and attract new clients to purchase its services to remain viable. Council will also need to introduce changes to the way it currently manages and provides community aged care services to meet future regulatory requirements and to remain feasible in a new market environment.

Given the introduction of changes as a result of the aged care reform, Council needs to consider and respond to these future arrangements and explore how it may best meet the needs and aspirations of its older residents and ageing community now and into the future.

Mount Alexander Shire Council's Manager of Community Wellbeing, Rosalie Rogers said Council currently provides aged care services to more than 800 residents across the shire.

"Our services help older adults, and those recovering from short term acute illness to live independently in the community," said Ms Rogers. "We know reforms in the sector are coming, and right now, we need to hear from our community before we consider any decisions on the future of those services. Input provided as part of this consultation will help us better understand community views, needs and experiences around in-home and other aged-care services."

Have your say

Council is holding a number of drop-in information sessions for residents to come along, ask questions, and provide feedback on their needs for in-home and aged care services. These are being held on:

- Monday 13 February - 9.30am to 11.30am, 4.00pm to 6.00pm and 6.30pm to 8.00pm
- Wednesday 15 February - 9.30am to 11.30am. All sessions are being held at the Castlemaine Town Hall, 25 Lyttleton Street, Castlemaine.
- Tuesday 14 February - 9.30am to 11.30am. This session



is being held at the Maldon Maldon Neighbourhood Centre, 1 Church Street, Maldon.

Other ways to have your say include:

- Visit www.shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au and complete the online survey
- Download and print the survey from www.shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au and send it back to us
- Call Council to provide input on 5471 1700
- Email your feedback to info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au
- Pop in to the Civic Centre in Castlemaine and provide feedback face-to-face.
- Pick up a hardcopy survey from the Civic Centre in Castlemaine, Castlemaine Library, in the mail (for all current direct clients), and at a drop-in session.

Submissions close on Friday 17 February.

Community feedback as part of the consultation will inform the development of a summary report, which will be used to assist Council in future decision making on the delivery of aged care services and support in the future. Council will continue to keep the community, current clients and staff updated as the review progresses via direct letters to clients, Council's email newsletter Shire News, Council's Facebook page and local print media.

For more information, contact Mount Alexander Shire Council's Manager Community Wellbeing, Rosalie Rogers on 5471 1700 or

r.rogers@mountalexander.vic.gov.au.

Taken from a Press Release.



Robin Haylett
Grad. Dip. Hort. (Burnley 1999)

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Electoral structure reviews for 12 rural shire councils

Throughout 2023–24, 39 Victorian local councils will undergo electoral structure reviews, with round one reviews for 12 rural shire councils kicking off next week.

The Local Government Act 2020 (the Act) introduced several changes, including that all small and large rural shire councils must now have electoral structures that are either unsubdivided, subdivided with single-councillor wards, or multi-councillor wards with an equal number of councillors per ward.

The reviews will be conducted by independent electoral representation advisory panels. Under the Act, the Electoral Commissioner (or delegate) must be a member of a panel.

‘The panels will consider if councils have an appropriate number of councillors and whether they should be one large unsubdivided area or subdivided into wards,’ Electoral Commissioner Warwick Gately said. ‘If the council will be subdivided, the panel will look at how many

wards the council should have, the number of councillors in each ward, ward boundaries and ward names.’

The Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) will provide technical and administrative support to the panels. The 12 councils in round one have been divided into 3 groups. For each group of councils, there will be 2 public information sessions to announce the start of the reviews, explain the processes, and open the submissions period.

The VEC encourages all Victorians, particularly those in the local council areas under review, to contribute to the review process and have their say.

People interested in making a submission can map their proposed electoral structure online using the public submission tool available from Wednesday 25 January on the VEC website at:

<https://www.vec.vic.gov.au/electoral-boundaries/council-reviews/electoral-structure-reviews>

Taken from a Press Release.



Have your say on the future of aged care services

We're talking to senior residents across the shire about Federal Government changes to aged care services, including those delivered by Council.

Come along to one of the following drop-in sessions and help us understand your needs for in-home and aged care services.

Castlemaine Town Hall

- Monday 13 February: 9.30am-11.30am, 4.00pm-6.00pm and 6.30pm to 8.00pm
- Wednesday 15 February: 9.30am-11.30am

Maldon Neighbourhood Centre

- Tuesday 14 February: 10.00am-12.00pm

Find out more at shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au.

Working together for a healthy, connected shire

mountalexander.vic.gov.au (03) 5471 1700

Reflecting on Australia Day – Survival Day

Thank you to everyone who came along to our Australia Day – Survival Day community event.

It was a fantastic day and included a Welcome to Country, a citizenship and awards ceremony, and a Survival Day concert programmed by Dja Dja Wurrung Elder Uncle Rick Nelson.

Read more at mountalexander.vic.gov.au/News.

Apply for a Council grant

Do you have an idea for a community project or event? Apply now for a Community Grant or Events Grant to get your project up and running.

Read more at mountalexander.vic.gov.au/Grants.



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BACK TO SCHOOL



AND WHAT CROSSES YOUR MIND?



Friends?

Packed Lunch?

Assembly?

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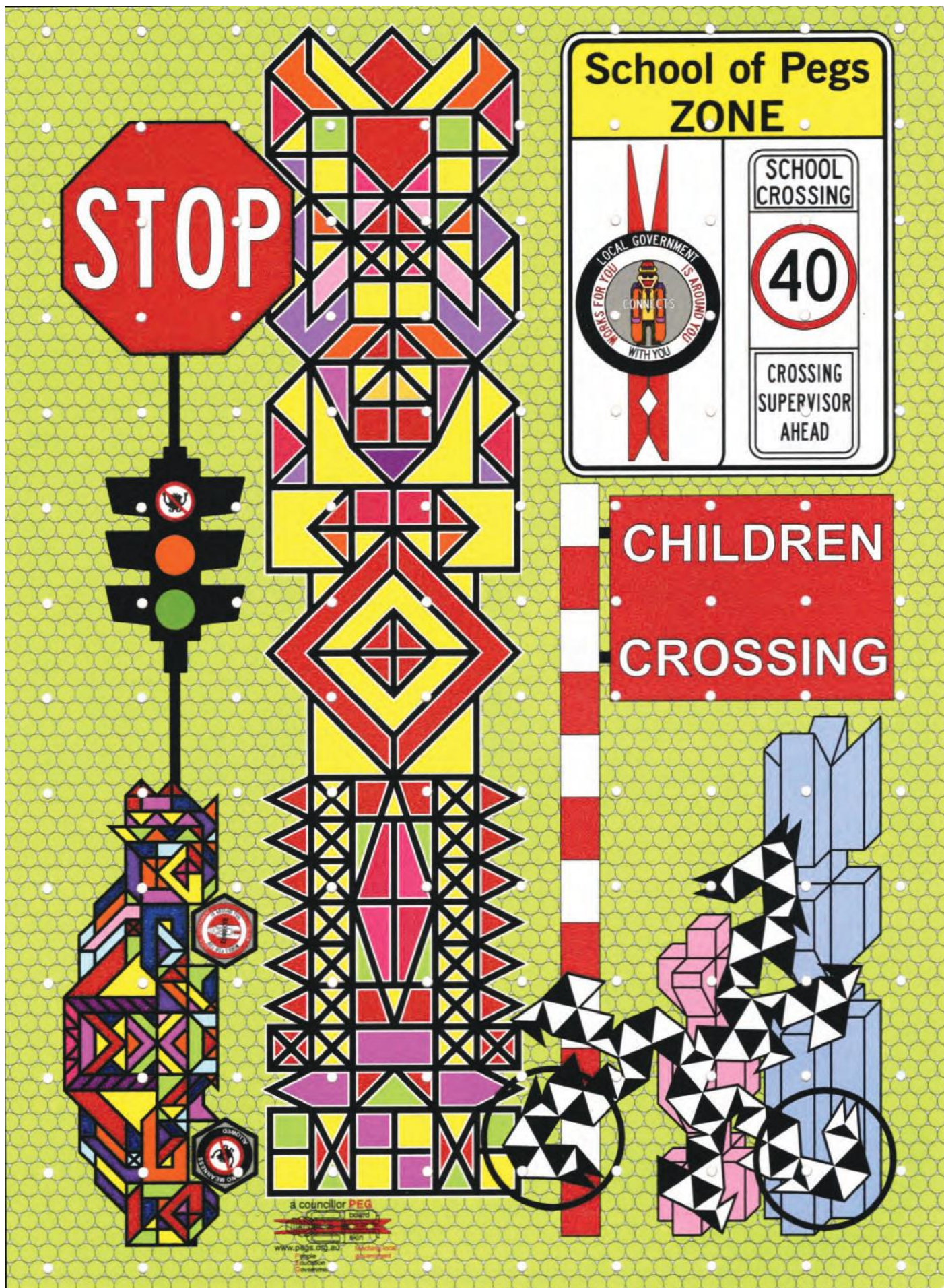
New teacher?

New Classroom?

Books?

Laptops?

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Real Estate Round Up

Not much activity in Chewton real estate since last month. There is a new vacant block listed. At the time of preparing this report, here is the Round Up for February.

Cantwell Property Castlemaine:

- 14 Steele St. Contemporary 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom well-presented Colourbond clad home on a large 1020m² block. The home is 6-star energy rated. The main bedroom has an ensuite and all bedrooms have built-in robes. Energy saving features include a 6.6kw solar system and solar hot water. 2 split systems and a Nectre solid wood heater provide year-round comfort. Externally there is a large entertainment deck, outdoor bar, landscaped grounds and water tanks. \$935,000
- CA 12C White Gum Track. Fairy-tale escape on 20 acres of completely private land accessed by a 4wd track. There are three hand-built structures and a water tower, walled gardens, solar system and a dam. No mains power or water but there is a telephone line. \$545,000

Elders Real Estate:

- 66 McCay Reservoir Road, 3-bedroom homestead on approx. 60 acres of picturesque land. Currently run as an alpaca farm this property has 15 fenced paddocks, extensive shedding, water bore, dam and tanks, and a granny flat (possible holiday let accommodation). The well-designed home has lots of natural light, hardwood floors, cathedral ceilings, double glazing, and two bathrooms with underfloor heating. \$1,300,000 to \$1,430,000

Keogh Real Estate:

- 1 Eureka St. 3-bedroom, 1-bathroom timber home with great scope for renovation. 738m² block includes 6m x 8m lock up garage and 3m x 4m shed. \$450,000
- 61 Main Rd. 3-bedroom, 1-bathroom home in need of renovation. 1000m² block in 2 allotments has scope for subdivision (STCA). \$590,000

Jellis Craig:

- REDUCED - 116 Fryers Rd, 1,034m² township zoned block with Castlemaine Diggings National Heritage Park along the rear boundary. Water and sewer connected and power nearby. Planning permit in place with Mt Alexander Shire Council and house, garage and studio plans have been drawn up which can be viewed upon request. \$298,000 to \$320,000
- 72 Steele St, 3,086m² vacant land. Backing onto forested Crown Land this land boasts large, towering gums, one with Aboriginal protection. There are cleared areas and great views. All town services excepting town gas are available. \$350,000

Waller Realty:

- NEW - 28B Steele St, 691m² vacant land. Clear block in a nice pocket of Chewton. \$260,000
- 1 Adelaide St, 1,350m² vacant land overlooking Chewton Soldiers Memorial Park. Mains services nearby. \$325,000
- There are also several bush blocks for sale on the Vaughan-Chewton Rd zoned Farm Zone which may or may not gain approval for building.

CPG and Maltby Property:

- No Chewton properties at present.

Jackie McMaster.



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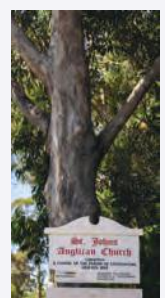
Services for February for St John's:

- Saturday, 4th 6pm Eucharist
- Saturday, 11th 6pm Eucharist
- Saturday, 18th 6pm Eucharist
- Saturday, 25th 6pm Eucharist

Into the Silence is continuing on Mondays 2.55pm to 4pm.

All Welcome.

Any queries phone the Anglican Office 5472 1137 or email castlemaineanglican@bigpond.com



How well do you know Chewton?



Which Chewton street is this?
Answer next month...



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The D-Word

There was a flash, a paragraph
Perhaps: or just a fleeting verse
Gone before I could record it
Erased from my poor memory.
An hallucination perhaps.?

Perhaps. Sweet Nature telling me
“It’s time to give up poesie”
Nature has to give a reason
“You have reached Life’s winter season
“You have become an empty shell.”

Welcome to the scrap heap of Life
Those final moments, of syncope
Lasting a few seconds
No time to regret
Promises unfulfilled

Or

A life sentence
In Death’s antiseptic foyer
Surrounded by strangers,
Learning the Macarena
Knowing that you will never be ready for
The Moment.

Cheer up!
Look on the bright side:
It isn’t Boot Scooting...

David Watson 2023.

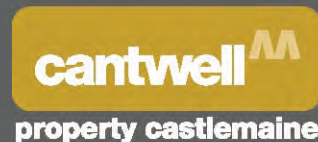
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Lifecycle Gym is a pin code entry system and staffed part time so calling first is recommended.

Gazumped in a huge way...



The grainy image of a wombat that showed up in the trail camera the other week had me excited. A wombat here, and I had an actual photo... wow!

...and then Julie Millowick went to Jirrahlinga and kazam!

Another great shot from the visit and the Chewton Chat is the lucky recipient!



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Mount Alexander Photographic Society

(formerly the Castlemaine Camera Club)

is Chewton bound...

The society will be kicking off the New Year with regular club meetings starting on February 14 at 6:30pm and these will be held on every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month in the Chewton Town Hall.

As a photographic club, the society has lots of things planned in 2023 - social activities and selective photo opportunities and field trips!

These planned events will give members an opportunity to enjoy activities, meet new people and continue to enjoy taking photos. Please contact the society if you have any questions, suggestions or if you need more information and clarifications...

0437 614 928

castlemainecameraclub@gmail.com


The society hopes to see many there on 14th Feb 2023, including new and prospective members. Spread the word if you can, and help us make this coming year the club's best year yet!

...and coming to a Town Hall near you!

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- Explore more about the Art of Photography
- Meet like-minded people
- Attend programs to learn new techniques
- Take field trips to exciting local photo locations
- Enter photo competitions
- Enjoy informal social coffee mornings



Photographers of all ages & levels are welcome

Starting on 14th February, we meet on
2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month
6:30pm to 8:30pm





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There is such a lot of organisation by volunteer Landcare groups that goes on behind the scenes to tackle the problem of weeds affecting the precious bushland in our area. Once the problem is identified then an appropriate program that will support the work is investigated. If it's on public land there's a whole process to go through before permission is given. On private land there's still many boxes to tick before the work can start - conversations, organising on site inspections, mapping, getting quotes, getting permission, interpreting and applying for a grant if one is available, complying with the guidelines and that's when the fun part starts! Getting the job done - and then making sure that the follow up work over the next three years is committed to so that the problem is under control!

A recent successful grant from the Victorian Gorse Taskforce, with matching funding from the landholders for the spraying of gorse by a qualified contractor, took place on private properties in the Forest Creek catchment. These important gullies lead down to the creek itself and if they can be treated and weeds brought under control, then the health of the Forest Creek catchment has a much greater chance of improving.

After the contractor had done their work one participant of the project was delighted -

"Dear Golden Point Landcare we just wanted to extend a more formal thank you to everyone involved in assisting us to try and get on top of the gorse weed on our properties in the last few months. We really appreciate everyone's efforts and we wonder if you could pass this thank you on to all involved?"

Also just to provide a formal note for you to keep that we will commit to funding the next two years of top-up work."

This note made all the background work worth the effort - and encourages the group to keep working!

If you would like more information about the work that Golden Point Landcare does you can contact our secretary Jennifer on 0423 900 590.

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Chewton PO

Post Office Hill Action Group – your community Landcare Group?

Summertime,
and the livin' is easy...

This summer, which I thought would never arrive, has been an easy time for Pohaggers and I hope also for most readers. Pohaggers? Well may you ask. Many of us do not like acronyms especially if they are not translated, instead an assumption is made that reader already has the knowledge necessary to decipher. The translation of the acronym POHAG, Post Office Hill Action Group, does not give anything away. Are we any the wiser as to what this Group does? What it stands for? I think not.

We read “Post Office” and immediately think of the current Chewton Post Office on Main Road. Whereas in fact, it refers to Post Office Hill named after the original post office (around 1852) which was built on a spur of a hill which ran down into Forest Creek. It was the Argus office (a Melbourne newspaper) to which the proprietor brought the paper from Kyneton by pack-horse. As a service to the diggers, and for a fee, the proprietor would then backload any mail to Kyneton. Due to the amount of mail, poor sorting and storage and a lack of staff it took a long time to process some of the mail. The post office was closed when a government service was introduced and thousands of items were found to never have been delivered. In the dead of night hundreds of bundles of mail had been dropped into unused mine shafts. Often, the mail would have been ‘sorted’ to find any money or valuables which may have been included. Post Office Hill, once clothed in natural vegetation, was practically denuded during the 1852 goldrush.

We read “Action Group” and wonder? In 2006 a large area on Post Office Hill and two pockets in the Wattle Gully (crown land) were earmarked by consultants preparing a Chewton Urban Design Framework as future medium density residential development and small scale business/retail development. Well, anyone who knows the local residents will not be surprised to learn that action followed! An on-site meeting of fifteen concerned people decided to form an Action Group to seek retention of this public land because of its cultural and environmental importance. So there you have it! DELWP (look it up!) delegated Post Office Hill Action Group with management of 22.6 hectares.

Those of us who volunteer with POHAG (oops, there’s that acronym, but at least now you know what it stands for – yes?), we “pohaggers” are concentrating on preserving the cultural and historical features of the area, complementing the natural regeneration of indigenous plants through weed control and removal, improving the habitat for fauna by installing nesting boxes and shelter plantings, as well as improving access for the general public. In many ways we are a Landcare group, and in that guise we work with Connecting Country and we would like to work with any of you who have the time and inclination to spend with us. Following is a list of dates for our meetings and working bees.

Kerry Bourke.



**POHAG WORKING BEES 2023
POST OFFICE HILL RESERVE
Cnr Railway and Hunter Streets
@ 9:00am on Saturday**

- January 7th
- February 11th
- March 11th
- April 15th
- May 13th
- June 11th
- July 8th
- August 12th
- September 9th
- October 7th
- November 11th
- December 6th

**POHAG MEETINGS 2023
MEETINGS
CHEWTON TOWN HALL
@ 10:00am on Sunday**

- February 12th
- March 12th
- April 16th
- May 14th
- June 11th
- July 9th
- August 13th
- September 10th
- October 8th
- November 12th
- December 10th

Facebook:
Post Office Hill Reserve - POHAG Chewton

Mapping our old trees of Chewton: we need your help!

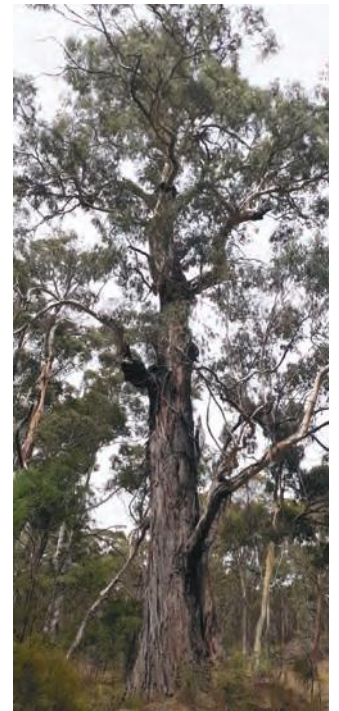
Local consulting arborist Siân Bloom and restoration enthusiast Joel Bloom are interested in hearing from Chewton locals who believe they have significant old indigenous trees on their property, and with the land owners consent and arrangements, we will record the tree location, size, species, age (if known), health status and habitat value.

By recording Chewton's large old indigenous trees on both public and private property, you will help build our understanding of the large old trees in our region, and contribute to the largest biodiversity database in our country, Atlas of Living Australia. As the database grows, you can also access the portal to learn about other wonderful large old trees in our area and view the photos.

This will contribute to Connecting Country's larger project, 'Regenerate before it's too late', a project that engages the community about the importance of old trees and how to protect them.

Please contact Joel.Bloom@yahoo.com to express interest in having your tree/s surveyed, or for further information.

A large old tree photographed by Joel Bloom



The Acupuncture Palette in Chewton is open for bookings



Hi everyone, I'm Lauren, a Traditional Chinese Medicine practitioner with a special interest in women's health, mental health, fertility, pregnancy and post-partum support. I like to remind parents that post-partum is for life and can manifest in many different ways over the weeks, months and years of birth, child rearing, and the demands of raising little people.

For a more in depth description of how Chinese Medicine works, specific conditions and their treatments, or to book in for a free 15 minute consult, head to

www.theacupuncturepalette.com

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“Scene” and snapped around Chewton...



That bridge has changed again... must be second only to Sydney's coathanger in numbers of paint coats applied - and numbers of photos taken.



They say when the Sydney bridge has been finished with a re-painting, it is time to start again. It seems to be that way here too!



*Up... Kangaroos - limbering up, showing affection and playing “Where’s Wally.”
Down... Finding the Welsh Village has just got a whole lot easier..*



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January 26th 2023 and all is quiet on the deserted oval. It was different during the Chewton Folk Festival days!

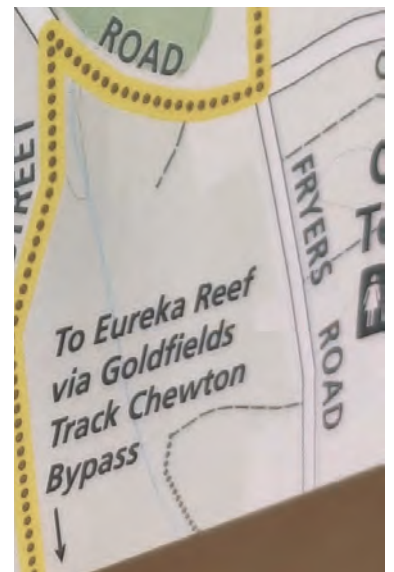


*Where to go at the Garfield?
So many trails, so many choices.*

*Where was this butterfly heading when
it landed on the tourist map?
Flyers Road perhaps?*

*That could be the perfect route
to flutterby...*

*"Was there yesterday - so many
butterflies," was a comment on this
Facebook post.*



Why not become a Chewton Domain Society member too?

The easiest and most efficient way to pay the \$10 membership is to make a bank transfer or deposit...

**Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000,
Account number: 106516479**

(and include your name for reference and our records.)

mainFM is an award winning radio station based in Castlemaine, broadcasting music, community news, talks and specialist programs and events throughout a large area of Central Victoria, serving our community.

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Walking together - towards Makarrata

Makarrata = 'coming together after a struggle, facing the facts of wrongs and living again in peace.'



WOMEN'S VOICES – LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Women's Voices (Wiyi Yani U Thangani): Securing our Rights, Securing our Future is a project that is a collaboration between the Australian Human Rights Commission and the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA). The first two stages of the project were led by June Oscar AO, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. Stage 1 was the national engagement of women and girls, and Stage 2 the delivery of the Report of the findings. Stage 3 is to happen this year.

The aim of the project is to recognise the rights and lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls, and to ensure their voices are heard in decision-making processes. It promotes the importance of basing actions on the strengths and needs expressed by the community of First Nations people. Truth-telling and healing is integral to addressing the inequalities they experience.

Throughout 2018, well over two thousand First Nations women, of all ages and descriptions and every part of Australia, met in 106 engagements, to discuss their needs and views. The roles of women in their families and communities are central to the new, inclusive and cohesive society we need to develop in Australia.

The carefully-presented Report of these sessions, released in 2020, captures what women and girls consider are their key strengths and concerns, the principles they think should be followed in the design of policies, services and programs, and the measures they want that would lead to the fair enjoyment of their human rights.

The seven overarching recommendations in the report called for a National Action Plan and an Advisory body, a Leadership Summit, empowerment of women and healing of inter-generational trauma, revival of cultural practices and knowledge systems, and actions based in the place or region where relevant - rather than centrally designed.

The findings of the Report are being disseminated in accessible ways aimed at improving understanding and participation in the Leadership Summit to come.

The government released its Response to the Report in April 2022, supporting the recommendations, aligning them with aspects of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, and listing the relevant Commonwealth Agencies that could deliver the desired outcomes, Equality and Gender Justice.

To implement the seven overarching recommendations, long-term, secure and holistic funding is essential, if Closing the Gap is to be achieved. Gender Justice is vital in this. Equality is not to make all people

the same, but to appreciate and build on our differences.

It is to be hoped that all agencies, at every level of government, will listen to the people directly involved, designing culturally sensitive programs and policy frameworks for specific individual locations. It needs to be differently done than formerly. So many of past actions were based on a Western conception of 'fixing' the issues.

The project is now into its third stage, preparing for the First Nations Women and Girls National Leadership Summit this year.

A document has already been prepared, the Wiyi Yani U Thangani Implementation Framework, to be used and refined in the First Nations women and girls leadership Summit. It will form the basis of the National Framework for Action.

It makes visible and prominent the work, knowledge and initiatives already shown by women and girls in areas such as climate change, developing collective leadership, establishing Birthing on Country centres, financial institutions which invest in social projects, and prevention approaches to end violence against women and children.

The Summit is intended to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls and their communities as they participate in government processes, programs and policy frameworks at all levels. A First Nations worldview sees human and non-human beings as equal and existing within interdependent relationships. Over tens of thousands of years, they have lived in and sustained thriving ecosystems.

Non-Aboriginal people, surrounded by a Western worldview that is based on individualism, hierarchy and compartmentalism, may have difficulty understanding the consequences of this different, more holistic worldview. Making an effort to embrace it will bring a thriving and united Australia much closer.

Nalderun is a service that supports the Aboriginal Community, led by Aboriginal people. Many people and organisations in the Mount Alexander Shire contribute to Nalderun; the name is a Dja Dja Wurrung word meaning "all together".

More information can be found at www.nalderun.net.au

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Authorised by Lisa Chesters, ALP,
16 Myers St, Bendigo

Dig a little deeper with GardenSafe

A new EPA program is uncovering the gritty mysteries in your garden. GardenSafe is a soil screening service that analyses your dirt and tells you what might be in amongst your vegetation. By sending EPA a soil sample from your home garden you can have the data you need at the tip of your green thumb.



This is part of a global initiative that helps you investigate soil health and potential contaminants in your garden so you can work out the best use for your patch of paradise.

EPA's Chief Environmental Scientist, Professor Mark Patrick Taylor, says GardenSafe is a great way to dig a little deeper into your soil.

"If you are growing fruit and vegetables at home, you should use GardenSafe to check what is under the surface of your seedlings. The only cost to you is the postage," Professor Taylor said. "Our scientists assess each sample they get for trace elements and general soil quality indicators, including soil texture, composition, nutrients and organic carbon."

"As a science-based regulator we need this data. The findings from GardenSafe help us to build an understanding of potential contamination levels in residential gardens across Victoria. This information will help gardeners better understand what's in their soil. It will also help to reduce potential risk and exposure if soil contamination is present," he said.

GardenSafe data will not be used for EPA compliance or enforcement activities.

"As a partnership between EPA Victoria and members of the community, GardenSafe is a great example of how we can work together, after all, the environment is everyone's business," he added.

Victorians can send the GardenSafe team three soil samples from their gardens. They must be from a residential property. EPA scientists will analyse the samples and provide a short report detailing the results and how to interpret them. Participants can also access information on growing fruit and vegetables safely in their gardens.

Find out more about GardenSafe on the EPA website <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/get-involved/citizen-science-program/gardensafe>

Taken from a Press Release.

Native pollinators on your property: who, where and what they do?

In 2023 Connecting Country is excited to present *'The Buzz project: promoting pollinators of central Victoria'*. This project celebrates the pollinators of our ecosystems and encourages us all to learn more about our local pollinator heroes.

Globally we have seen a serious decrease in pollinators, which has implications for ecosystems, agriculture and in turn the food we eat. There is still much to learn about the pollination services insects and other pollinators provide for food crops and the natural environment. However, we understand that fragmentation of habitat leads to a decline in pollinator activity.

To launch the Buzz project, Connecting Country is pleased to present *'Native pollinators on your property: who, where and what they do'*, a presentation by Dr Mark Hall, Senior Biodiversity Officer at City of Greater Bendigo.

Join us for an evening to learn about this fascinating topic, and find out which pollinators you might see across our region and the many ecosystem services they provide for our natural landscape.

When: Wednesday 15 February 2023, 6.00 pm to 8.00 pm

Where: Dja Dja Wurrung Country, Campbells Creek Community Centre, 60 Elizabeth St, Campbells Creek.

Bookings are essential. To book please go to <https://www.trybooking.com/events/landing?eid=1011737&>

Supper will be provided and you will also receive a free copy of the *'Insects of central Victoria'* booklet thanks to the Mount Alexander Shire Council.

The Buzz project is funded by the North Central CMA through the 2022 Victorian Landcare grants.



Image credit: 1millionwomen.com.au

Taken from the Connecting Country website.

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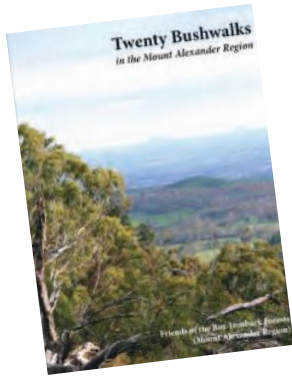
Without them there would be no Chat!

To celebrate 25 years of **Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forest**
an exhibition is being mounted...

Responding to Country: FOBIF 1998-2023

at the Newstead Arts Hub.

The exhibition will be on from the 25th of February to 13th of March 2023, with the launch on February 25 at 10.30 a.m. There will be a new photo show, geology exhibits, children's art, and posters, pamphlets and photos about FOBIF's history. For more information go to <https://www.fobif.org.au> or check Instagram or the Facebook page.



Twenty local Bushwalks

Castlemaine in north central Victoria is famous for its goldfields, but they are only a part of the region's story.

These self-guided walks offer insights into the layers of meaning in these fabled landscapes, and invite the reader to see an amazing story of destruction and revival.

Some of the walks are long, some are short, and one is ... just a mooch in the bush. Some are close to townships, and some are quite remote. All are the product of collective thinking by members and supporters of Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forests who have been involved in walks in the region for many years.

Detailed maps accompany walks descriptions, and the text is generously illustrated with photos. Suggestions are offered to help bird identification, and useful references are provided for people to better read the landscape of this fascinating region.

The book is published by Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forests with financial assistance from the Wettenhall Environment Trust.

Recommended Retail Price: \$15.00 plus \$3 postage and handling (\$18)

Price for buyers outside Australia: \$23.00 (includes postage and handling)

From <https://www.fobif.org.au/>



New fungi book by Alison Pouliot

'In the gloom of the forest floor, fallen branches are sheathed with fungal stripes of yellow and purple. But beneath the colourful surface, the fallen litter is alive with the clandestine workings of fungi.'

What can we learn from the lives of fungi? *Underground Lovers* brings us to our knees, magnifier in hand, to find out.

Fungi offer a way to imagine life differently. In *Underground Lovers* Alison Pouliot reaches down to earth, and deeper, to dwell with fungal allies and aliens, discover how fungi hold forests together, and why humans are deeply entwined with these unruly renegades of the subterrain. Told through first-hand stories Alison Pouliot shares encounters with glowing ghost fungi and unearths the enigma of the lobster mushroom. Melding science and personal reflection, she explores the fungi that appear after fire, how fungi and climate change interact, the role of fungi in our ecosystems, and much more.

Alison's new book will be launched at Radius, 76 Main Road, Hepburn, on Wednesday 15 March at 6pm. All welcome.

From <https://www.fobif.org.au/>

Habitat Nest Boxes

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Hand made timber nesting boxes - includes mounting fittings. These are being sold at the cost of materials price point only. It is a not for profit exercise with the aim to distribute lots of new wildlife homes throughout the Goldfields!

0412 339 617

Mount Alexander Shire Council's annual community satisfaction survey began on Monday 30 January

The annual survey is coordinated by Local Government Victoria and assesses the performance of Council-delivered services in Mount Alexander Shire. It is also a chance for Council to learn the value the community places on these services.

The telephone survey of a random representative sample of 400 residents will be undertaken by independent market research agency, National Field Surveys, from the end of January to mid-March. Shire residents may receive a call over the next few weeks.

While the overall results are provided to Council, individual details and responses remain confidential.

Mount Alexander Shire Council's Mayor, Cr Rosie Annear, said that the annual survey is a great opportunity for Council to hear directly from members of the community.

"We want to know what matters most to our residents and how they think we're performing," said Cr Annear. *"The results give us an inside look at the needs and expectations of the community, and help us identify areas for continued improvement. We encourage residents to take this opportunity to provide feedback if they receive a call."*

Council delivers a range of services including maternal and child health care, home and community care, town planning, and cultural and recreational activities. It also maintains local roads, footpaths, bridges, drains, parks, playgrounds, community buildings and much more.

The majority of Victorian councils participate in this state-wide survey. The results are benchmarked against a state-wide average and similar sized local government areas.

The survey informs mandatory reporting requirements of the Local Government Performance Reporting Framework. The results from previous years are available on Council's website.

Find out more at

[www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/
CommunitySatisfactionSurvey](http://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/CommunitySatisfactionSurvey)

or contact Customer Service on 5471 1700.

Taken from a Press Release.



Mount Alexander Shire Council invitation for input to help prioritise spending in the 2023/24 financial year.

Using the Council Plan 2021-2025 as a road map, the annual budget sets out how Council will fund the delivery of more than 100 services in the community. These services include roads, bridges, drains, open space, waste and recycling, animal management, maternal and child health, aged services and early education, emergency relief and recovery, as well as other key projects.

In preparing its 2023/2024 budget, Council is inviting the community to consider how they would prioritise spending through a short survey and budgeting allocation tool available online at www.shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/budget-2023-2024

"Community feedback is an important part of Council's budget planning", said Carolyn Ross, Executive Manager of Corporate Services at Mount Alexander Shire Council. *"We want to know what services people feel Council could pay more attention to and why. The online budget tool is a great opportunity for residents to tell us how they'd like us to prioritise Council spending. The tool allows users to drop and drag Council service areas into a priority format. By getting input from local residents, we aim to create a budget that aligns with our community values and aspirations."*

Previous feedback received on Council budgets have resulted in funding for several projects across the shire, including Christmas decorations, removal of invasive weeds, a youth internship, minor improvements at Harcourt's James Park, as well as a feasibility study into the Castlemaine-Maryborough rail trail.

Submissions close on 2 February 2023.

All community input received will be collated and provided to Councillors for their review and consideration during the budget process. Councillors will consider the draft budget for adoption at the meeting of Council in June 2023.

Find out more at

[www.shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/draft-
budget-2023-2024](http://www.shape.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/draft-budget-2023-2024) or call 5471 1700.

Taken from a Press Release.



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SIZE 3
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\$20

SIZE 4
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\$20

Thinking of advertising in the Chat?

Please contact John to discuss your advertising needs
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183mm w x 135mm h
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SIZE 5
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\$10

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The local rag?

Community newspapers abound across Victoria and often spring to life in response to a community issue. Over time the papers evolve into something much bigger than the single issue – or they fade and die.

Write ups in the Mount Alexander Mails of 4/11/1908 and 19/11/1908 give some of the early history of newspapers in this area. It must have been quite a competitive environment...

Chewton never quite managed one in those days, but look at us now!

Up to December, 1853, there were no local newspapers, the papers circulating on the field being chiefly the "Argus" and "Morning Herald," which were sold at 1/6 per copy. The local advertising medium up to that time was a large gum tree growing near the south-west corner of Market Square, near the intersection of Barker and Forest streets. On this tree were posted all sorts of notices, such as Missing Friends, Horses for Sale, Claims for Sale, Lost Horses, etc.—a most interesting collection and a most novel newspaper. Similar trees were in existence in other parts of the field. In December Mr Hitchcock, who was a man full of energy, started a small single sheet paper and named it "The Castlemaine Yarn and Diggers Gazette." It was issued weekly, and lived for a few weeks, when it merged into the "Victoria Times and Goldfields Advertiser," the first copy of which appeared on January 21, 1854. It was published by Mr Henry Melville, who had previously owned a paper at Hobart (now Hobart), and he was backed by Mr Hitchcock and some others. It was a weekly 8-page demy, and was sold at 1/ per copy. It remained in existence for about four months, the last issue appearing on April 29th. In the following week, May 6th, the "Mount Alexander Mail" appeared as a weekly at 1/ per copy, and soon became very vigorous and prosperous. It is still with us and the office is still on the same allotment as it was in 1851. It was started by some of the "Morning Herald" proprietary with Mr E. Hawkins as publisher, and after being in existence for about four months, it was, on September 1st (1854), purchased by Messrs Matthews and Saint, who conducted it for many years and during its most prosperous years. The "Miners' Right" followed in 1855, then at intervals came "Our Daily News," "Castlemaine Advertiser," "Representative" and "Leader," the latter being in existence to-day as an evening paper. The golden days of local journalism were in the late fifties and sixties, some of the finest literary men in the colony being connected with the local press.

(To be Continued.)

ADVANCE CHEWTON!—On Monday night, there was a meeting at the Red Hill Hotel, to consider the practicability of establishing a local newspaper at Chewton. A majority of those present believed the project to be both advisable and feasible. Eventually, it was resolved that a prospectus of the proposed journal should be drawn up and submitted to an adjourned meeting on Monday week.

Above: *Mount Alexander Mail* 1 February 1861

Below: *Mount Alexander Mail* 15 February 1861

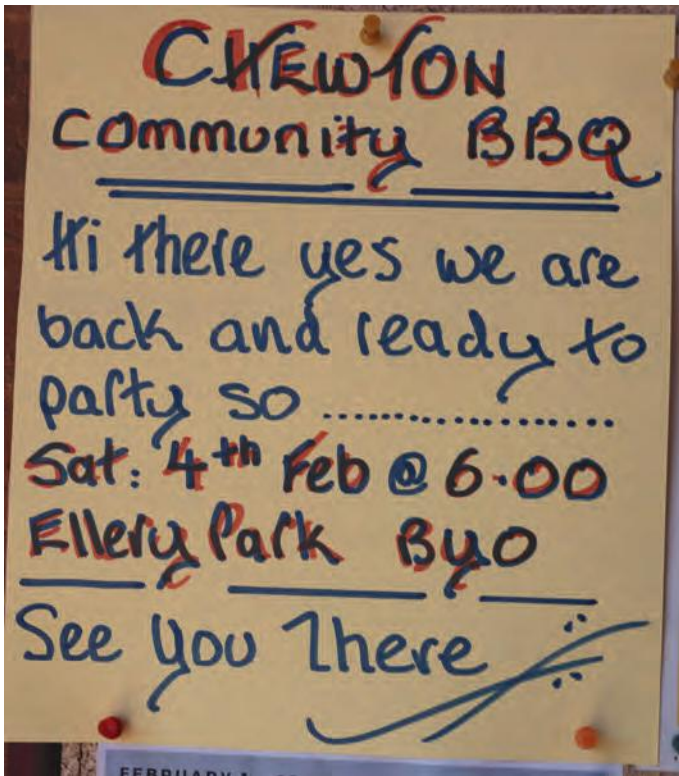
THE PROPOSED NEWSPAPER—The adjourned meeting on Monday night, to receive the report respecting the establishing of a newspaper at Chewton, proved a complete failure. The smallness of the attendance indicated great apathy among the people of Chewton on the subject of a local journal. It is now generally believed that the project is premature.

Left: *Mount Alexander Mail* 4 November 1908

Below: *Mount Alexander Mail* 19 November 1908

Some exceptionally capable and highly cultured men were digging on the field (and no doubt often were the subject of a license hunt) who were of much value to a newspaper, and the "Mail" was fortunate in having many such contributors.

In regard to the "Mail," it is desirable for the guidance of the reader to say a word or two about it, the value of which will be appreciated later on. Starting in May, 1851, as a weekly paper at one shilling per copy, it was issued as a tri-weekly in the following year, and its Friday's issue contained almost as much reading matter as the "Age" does now. It was almost on an equality with the "Argus" and "Morning Herald" in regard to appearance and influence, and superior to the "Age." There were very few newspapers in the colony, and as it was as difficult to get news in Melbourne then as it is in Castlemaine to-day, the papers from Castlemaine, Bendigo and Ballarat were eagerly looked for by the metropolitan journals, and copious extracts published from them the result being that Castlemaine doings and Castlemaine public men were known in every part of the colony. This state of things lasted till the town went down as a mining centre. Politically, the "Mail" was a power and frequently fought the metropolitan papers, and was usually very successful in getting its candidates elected, and its support was sought not only by local aspirants for Parliament, but by those in the metropolis. These remarks will in some degree indicate the influence the "Mail" had on the formation and progress of the municipality.



CASTLEMAINE FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

The February meeting will be on Friday the 10th at 7.30 pm will be at the Uniting Church hall.

Speaker will be Georgie Custance

"Monitoring Fryerstown Grevillea, a threatened species in our region"

(This was rescheduled from last October when floods prevented our speaker travelling here.)

EXCURSION: Saturday 11th February,

NOTE 9am start

"The Grevillea obtecta project and app., Fryers Ridge". Leader: Georgie Custance

PO BOX 324,

CASTLEMAINE 3450

<http://castlemainefnc.wordpress.com/>

The last word this month belongs to...



...Tehree and her wonderful welcoming team at the Dingo Conservation and Wildlife Education Centre.

Spaces to pause and reflect abound and the central philosophy of Tehree and Jirrahlinga really shine through...



Advertisers in this Chewton Chat

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CAE Performance Products	P 18
Cameron Stewart, Podiatrist	P 11
Cantwell Property	P 22
Carole Kernohan, Bowen Therapy	P 26
Castlemaine Field Naturalists	P 38
Castlemaine Mini-Diggers	P 31
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Chewton Chat

- 2007 - Winner - best editorial comment
- 2008 - Finalist - best hard news reporting
- 2009 - Finalist - best history article
- 2010 - Special mention - best community reporting
- 2011 - Finalist - best editorial comment
- 2012 - Winner - best editorial comment
- 2013 - Winner - best news feature story
- 2013 - Finalist - best editorial comment
- 2014 - Winner - best history article
- 2015 - Finalist - best editorial comment
- 2018 - Runner-up - best community content
- 2020 - Winner - best history article
- 2022 - Winner - best photograph
- 2022 - Finalist - best community content

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P.O. Box 85, Chewton 3451

chewtonchateditor@gmail.com or 5472 2892

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The Chewton Chat wishes to advise that the views or remarks expressed in this publication are not necessarily the views of the editor, the management team or the Chewton Domain Society and no endorsement of service is implied by the listing of advertisers, sponsors or contributors.

Printing of the Chat is now generously provided
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*Chewton Chat!***

It's been dry all month

What a change January has been. I have recorded only one day of rain this month. Suddenly, the paddocks are not only dry, the patches of green grass no longer show through the brown vegetation and the creek is drying up. It seems to be all blue, white and green as the agapanthus blooms everywhere. Summer has made it after all, but has brought with it 'still-days' and windy days. The wet and cloudy winter and spring has produced lots of new growth in our trees. But, I have never noticed so many brown, dead looking leaves on our trees before, many of which have become detached from their home to form a surrounding carpet of leaf material.

Our highest daytime temperature this month was 36.5 degrees Celsius, the average was 28.6 degrees and the mode 29.1 degrees C. We had twenty-eight days when the temperature was in excess of twenty degrees, of which twelve were above thirty degrees Celsius. Significantly, not a forty-degree-day to be seen. The lack of forty-degree days seemed unusual, but a check over the last ten years showed that we had seen none of them since 2019. In that year I have recorded seven of them. In the preceding years, forty-degree days occurred at least once or twice a-January, sometimes as many as five or six.

Our nighttime temperatures have been quite variable. Our highest overnight temperature was 18.5 degrees Celsius, the lowest 4.4 degrees C. This gave an average overnight temperature of 13.2 degrees C, whilst

the mode was 8.1 degrees C.

The hottest time of the day usually occurs between 4.00 and 6.00 p.m., whilst the coldest time is often between 5.00 and 7.00 a.m. Some warm days can be quite long. Occasionally the temperature can remain as high as 20 degrees C until midnight, and some thirty-degree days can remain above thirty for eight or ten hours. These days are often the ones that deliver an electrical storm in the evening. As I have been told that the number of thirty-degree days are significant in the ripening of summer fruit and vegetables, especially tomatoes, it is worth keeping an eye on.

Rain is only noteworthy this report by its absence. I have recorded only four-and-a-half millimetres in the gauge this month. All fell in one day, though I did feel a few days in which there was not enough to register other than on my hands and face. A quick inspection of the Coliban Water website indicates their storages are at least 85% capacity, and some at more than 90% operational capacity.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) report a weakening of the La Niña effects, moving towards an ENSO-neutral level, in which neither La Niña nor El Niño is dominant. The Indian Ocean dipole has little influence on our weather at this time of year. However, warmer Australian tropical waters are likely to result in greater evaporation, humidity, cloudiness and rainfall.

John Leavesley.

Calendar of Events

Feb 1st First film screening in 2023 by Chewton Film Society (see page 23).

Feb 4th Eucharist Service 6 p.m., St John's Anglican Church Chewton.

Feb 4th Chewton Community BBQ 6 p.m., (see p. 38)

Feb 4th CFA Fire Safety Planning Workshop (see page 8).

Feb 6th Chewton School Playgroups starts.

Feb 11th POHAG Working Bee (see page 28).

Feb 11th Eucharist Service 6 p.m., St John's Anglican Church Chewton.

Feb 12th POHAG Meeting, 10 a.m., Chewton Town Hall

Feb 14th Mount Alexander Photographic Society meeting in the Chewton Town Hall at 6.30 (see page 26).

Feb 17th Closing date for Aged Care Services submission to MASC (see page 18).

Feb 18th Eucharist Service 6 p.m., St John's Anglican Church Chewton.

Feb 20th Chewton Domain Society Management Committee meeting 5 p.m. Chewton Town Hall.

Feb 20th Deadline for the March Chewton Chat.

Feb 21st MAS Council Meeting 6.30p.m., Civic Centre, Castlemaine.

Feb 25th FOBIF Exhibition opens (see page 34).

Feb 25th Eucharist Service 6 p.m., St John's Anglican Church Chewton.

Feb 28th Distribution of the March Chewton Chat.

**Wesley Hill
Community Market**

Every Saturday
Now 9am – 1pm

An old fashioned Country Market
Opposite the Albion Hotel
New stallholders always welcome.

Call the Market Manager
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