



WHATEVER THE WEATHER

Mountain cattlemen get together and tough it out

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THE PIPES ARE CALLING ...

Go green at Westbury St Patricks' Day Festival

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HEMP WASTE FINDS A HOME

Environmentally friendly building in Westbury

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Meander Valley Gazette

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February 2020

Meander Valley Gazette Your independent community paper



Local heroes facing the fires

From left, Shannon Ager of Chudleigh, Bob Muller of Deloraine and Kerryn Harris of Golden Valley – just three of the Meander Valley firefighters who were deployed in small towns across NSW to assist during the recent catastrophic bushfires. Photo by Mike Moores

By Sharon Webb

WHEN MEANDER Valley's firefighters headed for the mainland to help out, they didn't feel like heroes.

Some felt scared and a bit nervous. Many were newly-trained level one firefighters, so it was their first real fire-ground experience.

But when they arrived at the small towns in NSW, towns where local firefighters were

sick with exhaustion and the rest sick with worry, the locals treated them like heroes.

'No matter where you went, people came up and hugged you and said thanks for coming to help,' said 24 year old Shannon Ager, who works as a cheese packer at Ashgrove Cheese and went to NSW from the Chudleigh and Caveside Brigade.

Bob Muller, 60, of Deloraine, was located at the National

Trust town of Braidwood, on the NSW Kings Highway between Canberra and Bateman's Bay.

'When we travelled out to the firegrounds in truck convoys each day, people came out onto the road clapping and taking photos,' he said.

'Their fire fighters had been out for weeks and were exhausted so they were pleased to see us. It was very emotional.'

Kerryn Harris, 38, from the

Golden Valley Brigade, was with Shannon and based at Kempsey on their December deployment and at Nowra in early January.

'We were on night shift and at midnight people in Kangaroo Valley were bringing out coffee and Christmas cake, offering us everything,' she said.

All three firefighters are level one, having learnt the basics of fighting vegetation fires, how to use pumps and other

equipment and how to stay safe.

Kerryn, a full-time mum, left her four children at home with her husband Simon, whose employer kindly let him work from home to take care of their three year-old.

'Being away from the family is a bit of a worry – and they don't know where you are and if you're all right,' she said.

(continued on page 6)

Westbury needs prison jobs to avoid stagnation, say optimistic residents

By Sharon Webb

WESTBURY RESIDENTS who are in favour of the State Government's proposal for a Northern Regional Prison on Birrallee Road say it all comes down to one thing – jobs.

According to Grace Rock, a full-time mother of three children, the prison is simply a business whose jobs will attract younger people to Westbury.

'The jobs would attract a much younger population than the current average of 50 years,' she said.

'They will get mortgages and have children who will need activities, more doctors, hairdressers, another school, maybe a swimming pool and local PCYC.

'Through jobs, younger people will be attracted here and stay here. It's a project like any other. You can treat it as a disaster or an opportunity.'

Robert Anderson, a Westbury resident for 17 years, said the prison is the best thing to happen to the Meander Valley.

'We're not exactly busting for jobs in this area. Our kids must leave town to get jobs.

'It's appalling the number of people who've left Westbury and the number of businesses that have closed over the years.'

Kathryn Wynn, who has lived in Westbury for 17 years and commutes to Launceston



Surrounded by local residents who are opposed to the proposed Northern Regional Prison being sited at Birrallee, those in favour found it difficult to voice their opinions at the December public meeting with Minister Archer. Photo by Mike Moores

to work, is in favour of 'anything that would bring fewer empty shops, better parks and facilities'.

'This is the opportunity for a tiny town to have the services they need – and they say no!' she said. 'I can't see a downside.'

Leigh Watts, famed for being the only pro-prison resident to venture his opinion at the government's prison public meeting, believes Westbury is in 'desperate need of employment' so that it can grow.

'For us to have 250 jobs two kilometres down the road and lose that opportunity would be a tragedy,' he said.

'Not everyone working there would move to Westbury but even 10 per cent would contribute to its economic status without a doubt.'

Mr Watts, a Westbury resident for 30 years who runs an excavator business, pointed out towns such as Mathinna, Pioneer and Gladstone that were built on employment. Once the jobs disappeared, the towns died.

'Westbury is stagnating. We need wage-earning families so we can get facilities such as banks again.'

Berris Atkins, a Westbury shearing shed hand and rouseabout working across Tasmania,

also believes the prison will be good for Westbury.

'It's a great opportunity for employment, whether it's in the initial stages or later.

'Plumbers and builders may wish to live here, bringing their children. The prison is like any other business for people wishing to apply for the jobs, and the rates they pay to the council will benefit our facilities.'

Retired resident Kevin Olds who moved to Westbury two years ago agrees.

'Since we arrived there's been a heck of a lot of building here. House sales and land subdivisions are going gangbusters. Ultimately the prison will do some good for the place, bring business and revive it. It won't destroy it.'

Pro-prison residents believe it won't bring huge changes to the town and locals should take a positive view and get on with reaping the advantages.

Leigh Watts gives the example of Brisbane's prison at Goulburn, which he's heard

doesn't get a lot of inmate visitors. 'People will be in and out of town quickly to buy petrol or an icecream.

'We have next to no tourism in Westbury – we have a lot of history but that's about it. The history will still be here.'

Mr Anderson said 90 per cent of Westbury people to whom he's spoken want the prison but many choose to say nothing because they've fallen out with friends and had heated discussions with others over it.

'One old guy told me it was "déjà vu all over again" and when I asked why, he said it had been the same reaction when Tas Alkaloids was built.'

Kathryn Wynn believes rejection of the prison is mostly from regressive born-and-bred Tasmanians – 'rednecks and hysterical lunatics'.

'The hysteria is not based on anything I can see. I'm a mainlander by birth and I find second, third and fourth generation Tasmanians are fearful of development.'

Sunny with showers for Isabella



The Tasmanian Mountain Cattlemen's 33rd Annual Get Together took whatever this summer's unreliable weather had to offer. Heat, sunshine and heavy rain – participants and spectators just got on with it. Isabella Gleeson and her horse Sunny gave their all in the barrel races, despite the downpour. *Photo by Mike Moores*

Westbury whisky distillery hold up

By Sharon Webb

PROGRESS ON a whisky distillery planned for Westbury has hit a hurdle because of a query from TasWater.

Mark Kolodziej, the proposer of the distillery, aims to

produce boutique spirits for cellar door sales as well as tours of the facility and a café.

But while Meander Valley councillors at their November meeting voted to amend the 2013 Meander Valley Planning Scheme to allow the change of

use for the site at 67 Meander Valley Road Westbury, TasWater has requested extra information about sewage flow and water usage.

TasWater wants to determine whether there are water supply capacity constraints and

whether upgrades will be necessary to service the distillery.

Council officers said that under the technical requirements of the local government legislation, the TasWater query must be regarded as a 'representation'. Meander

Valley Council must report to the Tasmanian Planning Commission about the representation, delaying the project.

Council officers commented, 'When the applicant provides TasWater with the information requested, servicing details can be finalised for any permit that may be issued by the commission.'



Thane Bardenhagen

Sophie Poke



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Letter from the Editor

MY EDITORIAL this month was going to address big issues – but it was just too hot so I wrote this instead.

As the editor of this paper, I often get involved in all sorts of discussions with people who have quite different views about things from myself.

I try very hard to listen and consider their position, because that is (I think) what a good editor would do.

But, I ask myself why some people have such strong views about the way things are in the world, but do not seem to think that they can have any agency in bringing about change.

Some people refuse to vote because they do not feel that their voice matters.

Some people believe climate change is a natural phenomenon in which the human race plays only a small part. They see little point in environmental responsibility, as their personal contribution would be meaningless.

But isn't it better to do something, than stand by?

Very few of us would have the courage to face an out-of-control bushfire. Our gratitude and admiration for these brave people does not depend on the success of the outcome. Homes and habitats will be destroyed, regardless.

But how much worse would it be if everyone just stood aside and watched it burn?

Liz Douglass

Letters to the Editor*

THE ACTIONS of the Meander Valley Council and its officers which led to the Government's identification of Westbury as the preferred site for a maximum security prison raise a question as to whose interest in the process has the Meander Valley Council been representing – the Government's or the residents'. The residents' interest is in having the Valley maintained as an environment in which they can live and thrive in peace and security. The Council as the residents' representatives has an overriding obligation to maintain the amenity of the Valley to that end. The Government's interest is in relieving its overcrowded southern prison facilities by moving the problem north to a new maximum security prison. A more inherently incompatible set of interests would be difficult to imagine.

On 12 December 2017 the Council resolved to forward an expression to the State Government for a prison to be built adjacent to the Ashley Youth Detention Centre. As far as I am aware the Council had no mandate from Meander Valley residents for such an initiative. Some time between then and 2018 the focus seems to have shifted to other possible sites. In September 2018 the Council, in response to a Government request for assistance, sought expressions of interest from landowners in the area and ultimately the Glen Avon Farms site was settled on as a preferred site. Released internal Council emails disclose that the Council's officers went to great lengths to identify possible sites and ultimately to promote the Westbury site. On the face of it, it would appear that throughout this process the Council and its officers have, by assuming, in effect, the role of agents for the Government, undertaken to represent the

Government's interests rather than the interests of the residents who elected the Council.

In addition the Council could have an interest of its own to serve in seeing to it that the Government's proposal succeeds. Glen Avon Farms is reportedly indebted to the Council in the sum of approximately \$680,000 for service infrastructure works carried out by the Council on behalf of Glen Avon Farms on the Valley Central industrial development which embraces the proposed prison site. Repayment of the debt is said to fall due in 2022. Glen Avon Farms is alleged to be in financial difficulties. If this is correct, the Council's prospects of recovering this amount would doubtless be greatly enhanced were the Government to buy the site for the prison.

It is not entirely clear how far the Government has progressed this proposal. The Minister has assured residents that no final decision has been made on the prison's location. A further public announcement by the Minister, that no conditional contract exists for the acquisition of the site as a prison, would assist in allaying residents' concerns that the Government's and Council's consultation process is not being conducted in good faith.

Meander Valley residents should not assume that they will not be affected because of their distance from Westbury and that therefore they need not be concerned. The reality is that in a variety of ways this proposal, if carried through, will affect the lives of all current Meander Valley residents and those of generations to come.

'No man is an island entire of itself ... therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee.' (John Donne)
Rod Paul, Deloraine

IT WAS with considerable interest that I read of the Meander Valley Council's decision not to declare a Climate Emergency, with several councillors maintaining that such a declaration was 'just words'. In this they are partly correct – a declaration is indeed made up of words.

However, words can be 'just words', without any particular meaning or influence, or, in a society which has moved beyond grunting and pointing, they can be the medium by which we share information, and convey ideas and concerns, or in this case, intent.

The intent of such a declaration by Council would be to recognise that we are indeed in a state of emergency in relation to the climate. There seems to be some doubt about this among our Councillors, in spite of the scale of bushfires in other states that have seen the loss of 6.3 million hectares of land, the deaths of over 25 people and half a billion animals, and the destruction of over 2500 buildings.

Neither do our councillors seem convinced by the reportage of farmers and firefighters with lifetimes of experience who repeatedly confirm that they have never seen fires of this scale and intensity before – ever. Perhaps our councillors believe that it can't happen here. It is not uncommon for conservative thinkers to pooh-poo scientific evidence, perhaps valuing their own immediate experience above data gathered from a wider base.

Such evidence was presented in a Council-sponsored forum in 2010 which spelt out the effects of climate change as

I FULLY support the five forest activists who were arrested last week locked on in Sus Timber Tasmania's office in Hobart. Given the current climate emergency, it is appalling that native forest logging continues anywhere in the world, least of all in Tasmania where we pride ourselves with our so-called clean, green image. We are all well aware that deforestation

AS A young resident, my concern for Westbury is building. If a prison is built in Westbury, what kind of stigma will this leave on the town?

How will it look for a young person trying to apply for a job when they live in the 'prison town'?

How many young people are stigmatised in employment simply because of the towns and neighbourhoods they come from, even though the large majority of these people do not wish to cause trouble and do not break the law, yet pay the big price of unemployment and compromised opportunity.

William Manche, Westbury

being the occurrence of more extreme weather events, and included modelling which highlighted areas of Tasmania most at risk. Unfortunately, the experience in recent years at Dunalley and on the plateau proved this modelling correct, but the fact that the science has been proved accurate does not seem to carry any weight with our elected representatives. One has to wonder why.

Is it because they fear that recognising the unprecedented intensity of current bushfires and recent floods will commit them to expensive Council-funded actions? Ironically, many measures that can be put in place to mitigate the warming of the planet ultimately or immediately save money. Council's initiative in fitting LED road lighting is one example among many, of immediate savings in running costs while also lowering harmful emissions.

If that argument doesn't hold water, one can only assume that our current Councillors lack the capacity to think beyond the fortunate present, to a time possibly not so far away, when we will be frantically playing catch-up with what is left of our green and pleasant land. The fact that it is Victoria and NSW, and not us, that are in the grip of unimaginable disaster and loss of life is no excuse for inaction in people whose role is to provide leadership and forward planning for the well-being and prosperity of their communities.

I hope that this Council gets another chance to reconsider their decision – our lives could depend on it!
Deborah White

contributes to climate change and that logging accounts for big greenhouse gas emissions. Why do we continue to plunder our natural resources in the face of this evolving climate crisis. It's time to do things differently Sus Timber Tasmania. Stop being climate criminals and start being climate custodians. Everybody will thank you.
Felicity Holmes, Blackmans Bay

WHILST NATURAL history has highlighted and delighted my 68 years, climate change is irrelevant.

Whilst becoming a white dwarf, the sun will fry the earth. Extinction is unavoidable, and nothing about us says longer is better.

Shorter is better – how else to stop logging old growth forests, at public commercial loss, funding corruption?

Concerned about descendants? In 25 generations – 600 years – an immeasurably tiny period in space time – nobody alive will have over 0.000003% of your DNA! Not a big connection.
Peter Anderson, Western Creek

* letters to the editor are continued on page 7

EST.
2013

Meander Valley Gazette

This newspaper is published by Meander Valley Connect Inc., 21 West Parade, Deloraine 7304. ABN: 89090614412.

9,400 copies are printed each month on paper made in Tasmania and delivered to all homes in Meander Valley.

Editorial enquiries

Contributions welcomed!
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For editorial, the closing date for the March 2020 edition is 21 February.

Advertising enquiries

Email: advertising@meandervalleygazette.com
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For advertising, the closing date for the March 2020 edition is 17 February.

Photo sales

Many of the photos in this publication are available for sale in varying sizes. For more information, please call 6286 8216 or email advertising@meandervalleygazette.com.

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Saint Distaff's Day on the Green



Above, in front, from left: Desley Leigh, Sybilla Scott-Smith and Barbara Regent get together on the Village Green with other spinners from further afield to enjoy a day of spinning and picnicking. Below: From Ulverstone, Dean Rivett is one of the rare, but not unknown, gentleman spinners, who attended on the day. *Photos supplied*

By Lois Rasmussen

EACH YEAR the Deloraine Spinners celebrate St Distaff's day on January 7, by gathering to spin and picnic on Westbury Village Green. This day ends the twelve days of Christmas.

Spinners from the North, Burnie and South as far as Hobart join the Deloraine Spinners for this gathering under the beautiful trees of the Green.

Everyone has a wonderful time of it, catching up with each other and admiring ongoing projects including dye lots, spinning, weaving, crochet and knitting.

There never was a Saint Distaff on the original calendar of Saints. Traditionally, the day indicates the return to the everyday woman's work of spinning and fabricating garments following the Christmas holy days in winter, when families could visit and rest from the year's work.

A distaff is a stick which holds the carded linen or wool before it is spun.

The distaff could handily be stuck in a lady's girdle if she used a drop spindle while walking around, or could be hooked onto her spinning wheel to keep the unspun fibre from tangling with the spinning.

Deloraine Spinners meet at Deloraine Community House on alternate Tuesdays from 10am to 2pm. There are resources for anyone interested in spinning, weaving and dyeing, including wheels that can be loaned to newcomers to try.

Many of the spinners are happy to mentor anyone who may like to give spinning a go. A welcoming group, the Deloraine Spinners' next meeting is on Tuesday 18 February.

Deloraine Spinners will also be demonstrating at the St Patrick's Day Festival in Westbury on 21 March and welcome folk to come and see them on the Village Green.



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Plan for bushfires is essential, experts tell Caveside meeting

Community bushfire groups

'Start with an informal community barbecue, get ideas on paper and then divide into smaller community groups to organise activities.'

Errol Gleeson, Tasmanian Fire Service Group Officer

Activities can include:

making a 2-3 page plan of community actions to be taken in a bushfire situation

establishing a communications phone tree

keeping a list of community assets such as water sources, equipment and safe locations

identifying things of value to the community and deciding what needs to be done to protect them;

making a list of vulnerable people who need to be evacuated

By Sharon Webb

A PUBLIC meeting has created a steering committee to work on a plan for bushfire-ready neighbourhood groups in Western Creek, Caveside and Dairy Plains.

Around 30 people attended the meeting at the Caveside Hall in January, advised by Tasmanian Fire Service group officer Errol Gleeson; TFS brigade chiefs from Chudleigh and Meander, Julie McGregor and Grant Flowers; Beth Williams from the Meander Valley Council's Emergency Management and Social Recovery Committee; and Cllr Rodney Synfield from Meander Valley Council.

The advice from Mr Gleeson and Cllr Synfield was straightforward.

Individuals should formulate their own bushfire plans and communities should work out their community-wide plan.

'Individual property owners need to plan so that if a fire is coming they already know whether they will leave or stay and fight the fire. If they're leaving they must leave early,' Mr Gleeson said.

'They should not just consider the situation of a direct attack by fire but also that on the mainland embers are travelling 20 kilometres.

'The first thing people with a lot of trees should do is to clean up underneath them. And they

need to make sure their property has a prominent number for identification.

'Local brigade members can assess your property for bushfire readiness.'

Grant Flowers also advised property owners to get equipment in case of power failure and to plan what to do with pets and livestock. All animals should be moved early because the TFS does not do this.

'Never rely solely on phones and computers,' Grant said.

'Be prepared with a solar power pack and a battery-operated radio so that you can get fire news from the ABC.'

Communities such as Jackeys Marsh and Meander have already established community fire plans where locals can be notified of fires via phone trees earlier than the TFC is able to contact people.

Cllr Synfield said, 'The critical thing to do is set up a group, make a plan and get guest speakers from the TFS to advise you on how to be ready for a fire.'

A community-wide effort was only effective with groups, and each group should have a manager who communicates with the TFS, Mr Gleeson said.

'That group needs to look at local risks and assets and decide what needs to be done.

'Start with an informal community barbecue, get ideas on paper and then divide into smaller community groups to organise activities.'

'The Jackeys Marsh group grew from a couple of people to a group of 20. They established a phone tree and bought a small fire truck.'

People who volunteered to be on the steering committee after the public meeting included Ann Crowden, Gary Taylor, Peter Barr and Sam Munroe from Western Creek, and Deb Hunter and Johanne Lang-Davis from Caveside.

Identified bushfire-safe locations include Deloraine Rotary Pavilion, Meander Recreation Ground and Golden Valley caravan park, depending on where fires happen.

Meander Valley's firefighters head for the mainland

(continued from page 1)

'It's completely different from what you see on the news.

'People panic when they know you're going to fight fires but I had really good training, and at the fires I had a good team and a good team leader.

'When we get there we're allocated to a leader and a truck. We patrol looking for hotspots and putting them out, doing house protection and backburning.'

Bob Muller, also at level one, has jumped out of the surf and into the fire – literally.

He spent 12 years in surf life-saving on the mainland. Now that he lives in Deloraine, he's visiting NSW as a firefighter.

'My first job with the Deloraine Brigade was as Santa, distributing lollies from the fire truck to Deloraine kids,' he said.

'But in NSW I was working with a team to help prevent a megafire happening if the Charleys Forest and Currowan Forest fires joined.

'I remember a day when I stopped to fill up the truck with fuel and a woman drove past. I guess she was 70.

'She stopped her car, turned around and parked at the servo, then came in and hugged me and said, "Thanks for what you're doing".'

Shannon, whose dad Paul Ager is also fighting fires, was nervous of what faced her as she took the flight to NSW.

'But it gets easier when you get to know your team,' she said.

'We have guidance all the way through. You trust that crew with your life and the experience means you have a bond that will last forever.'

Shannon's poignant moment came one night at singer Slim Dusty's original homestead at Nulla Nulla, an hour upriver from Kempsey.

After five hours at the fire, it was 5am and everyone was exhausted, some sleeping on the ground.

'There was a sign explaining the home's history and the words from a song, "When the rain tumbles down in July",' Shannon said.

'It mentions his favourite applegum tree – and the worst part was that we were sitting there watching that tree burn down. We just couldn't save it.'

The fire season isn't over in Australia, so if you're thinking of contacting a Meander Valley fire fighter to toast their safe

return with a beer or a champagne, take a raincheck.

Most of our local heroes have already gone on their next deployment.

Meander Valley firefighters who are helping out interstate

Carrick Fire Brigade:
Nathan Walker

Chudleigh Fire Brigade:
Shannon Ager, Paul Ager

Deloraine Fire Brigade:
Bob Muller

Golden Valley Fire Brigade:
Kerryn Harris

Hadspen Fire Brigade:
Ian Gabityes, Peter Hynes

Prospect Fire Brigade:
Trent Nicholls, Dwayne Leonard, Matt Buck

Westbury Fire Brigade:
Craig Johnston, Rodney Brewer, Jonathan Jarman

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Getting to the point ...



Sometimes, you just need to take things slowly. It's not time for hasty decisions – a thoughtful and steady approach is best. The ability to produce a trail of slime comes in handy too! *Photo by Mike Moores*

One more letter to the Editor

I am writing in response to the dismissing of the motion for Meander Valley Council to declare a Climate Emergency. From the comments by Councillors recorded in the minutes and the Meander Valley Gazette it was obvious that climate change was not in the forefront of most Councillors minds.

The most common comment seemed to be something along the lines of 'What's the point of declaring a climate emergency without a plan to back it up?'

I totally agree! However the Meander Valley Council has no plan!

Question?

Will Meander Valley Council implement a climate action plan as a matter of urgency given the many climate emergencies that have happened since the December Council

meeting? (Bush fires, dust storms, hail, flooding, more bush fires). I know they have not [all] happened here in Tasmania but more due to luck than anything else.

Simple measures that MVC might look at, or may be even looking at already might include:

- Asking the youth of the MV area what their thoughts on climate action on a local basis might be – they are the ratepayers and future leaders.
- Talking to the residents of the MV to get their views.
- Leveraging a bulk buy of solar panels/heat pump hot water for residents of MV – no loss financially to MVC and lots of publicity opportunities.

- More education around draught-proofing homes – publicising the existing Home Energy Audit Toolkits (HEAT).
- A replanting tree scheme to replace trees when cut down in numbers such as on the Osmaston Road recently.
- Much higher importance placed on areas such as Westbury Town Common – learn about the rare and endangered species that are there and what part they play in the MV ecosystems.
- More free native seedlings as happened a few years ago.
- More focus on the waste and recycling centres – they are atrocious and the level of service now is zero, none, useless.

- Encouraging the uptake in Council of electric or hybrid cars – do not just look at the economic bottom line but the social and the environmental as well.

Some more ambitious ideas:

- Use the Westbury Industrial Precinct to become the State's centre for recycling of waste.
- It has been a few years since Council did an audit of some of their buildings to become aware of their energy needs – maybe time to revisit that.
- Solar panels on more Council roofs – there are only a few at Prospect Park I believe.
- Encourage more people to visit Westbury Common to see rare species.
- Local community power schemes

Just to let you know, the Oxford English Dictionary defines 'climate emergency' (their 2019 word of the year) as 'a situation in which urgent action is required to reduce or halt climate change and avoid potentially irreversible environmental damage resulting from it.'

Climate emergency declarations in 1318 jurisdictions and local governments cover 810 million citizens. There are now 85 councils in Australia that have declared a climate emergency.

The Liberal Government of Tasmania now has a Minister for Climate Change (Peter Gutwein).

LGAT (Local Government Association of Tasmania) has declared a climate emergency

It is your children and grandchildren etc. that have to live with the legacy of our generation and those before us.

Time to act MVC!!
Sean Manners

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If you can't get hold of a big green tractor for St Patrick's Day, then a big green hat will have to do.

Photo by Mike Moores

Roll on St Patrick's Day!

THE WESTBURY St Patrick's Day Festival returns to the Village Green on Saturday 21 March for a day-long celebration of all things Celtic and Irish. This is the festival's silver jubilee year – 25 years of merry-making in the modern era.

Activities begin with a street parade from 10am and then roll into a rich performance program ably supported by food and craft stalls, church market, vintage tractors and children's activities.

There will be demonstrations of traditional activities such as spinning and blacksmithing. Guinness will also feature.

The intent is to create a village festival that celebrates Westbury's Irish heritage through the folk tradition and rural activities. Entry is by donation, in keeping with the Festival's commitment to being available to all.

An exciting feature of this year's program is the use of St Andrews Church as a venue for short acoustic performances and presentations. These St Andrews 'Spotlights' will provide an intimate alternative to the main stage action. Come along and enjoy a whistle player, a piper or a singalong.

Festival performers include: The Wheels, The Rolling Waves, Argo'on, Brian Owens, Barbara Palmer Irish Dancers, Eddie Tuleja, the Meander Men, Helen and Mick Flanagan, The U3A Strummers and Drummers, the Westbury Primary School Maypole Dancers, City of Launceston RSL Pipe & Drums and local session players.

For festival enquiries, stall registrations and offers of support please contact Amanda Taylor on 0467 097 791 or at westburyspf@gmail.com.

Hot news!

Young Irelanders

A special pre-festival event is to take place on Friday 20 March in St Andrew's Church.

This will be 'An evening with the Young Irelanders', a telling of the epic Irish exiles' story through live music, song, dance and narration followed by supper and music at the Westbury RSL.

Tickets \$20 and \$10 for U12s – available from Meander Valley Council offices, Westbury. Phone: 6393 5300.

Church service

A community service will take place at the Westbury Catholic Church on Sunday 22 March from 2pm.

Former MV mayor doesn't remember prison site search

By Sharon Webb

FORMER MEANDER Valley Council mayor Craig Perkins cannot remember discussing prison sites with his general manager at the time, Martin Gill.

Following an assertion at January's council meeting by current acting general manager Jonathan Harmey that in September–October 2018 Mr Perkins was aware of Mr Gill's canvassing of local landowners to express interest in a new prison being sited on their land, Mr Perkins said, 'I can't recall – I haven't had a need to put my mind to it.'

In addition, Mr Perkins, mayor from September 2011 to November 2018, said he can't recall discussions in council workshops on the subject and certainly has no notes about it.

Continuing over his mayoral years, Mr Perkins' current job as CEO of Regional Development Australia (Tasmania) depends on positive relations with the State and Federal Liberal Governments.

Mr Perkins blamed the current tenuous prison situation on the State Government for its 'poor consultation', the State Opposition for its lack of constructiveness, and 'emotional residents'. 'I understand people are emotional about it but the discussion and debate needs to be more settled,' he said.

Also at the January council meeting, questions asked by Cllrs John Temple and Cllr Rodney Synfield revealed that the council is out of the loop on the State Government's plan to survey Meander Valley residents about the prison.

Corrections Minister Elise Archer has said she expects to release a report on the social and economic impact of the

prison site in February – but residents have not yet been surveyed.

Mr Harmey said that in a recent meeting with Ms Archer, he and current mayor Wayne Johnston had reiterated the council's interest in the impact information being available to council and the community as soon as possible.

Answering a question about the government surveying residents outside Meander Valley on the prison, Mr Harmey admitted, 'We have received very limited communication ... The request that council has had is limited to: Could we provide them with assistance with property addresses for Meander Valley residents? But that is the only request which is probably limited to two emails.'

Cllr Synfield asked Mr Harmey when, given the close working relationship between a mayor and a general manager required by Tasmanian local government legislation, had former mayor Craig Perkins become aware of Mr Gill helping the State Government select a northern prison site.

Mr Harmey then responded, 'The mayor (Perkins) was aware that the general manager (Gill) would be facilitating those discussions between the landowner and the State Government, and supported those actions.'

Cllr Synfield questioned the appropriateness of Mr Gill's actions considering the only interest councillors had expressed in a prison site had been via a motion at its December 2017 meeting 'that Meander Valley Council write to the State Government to express interest for a northern correctional centre to be built next to Ashley Detention Centre'.

TANIA RATTRAY MLC

**INDEPENDENT MEMBER
FOR MCINTYRE**



Your full-time Independent
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Looking forward to being in the community
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Golden Valley family ordered to leave their home

By Sharon Webb

A MAGISTRATE has given a Golden Valley woman 90 days to vacate her home.

In September 2017 Meander Valley Council served a building order on Anita Jayne Kennedy to move out of her Bogan Road house because it had no occupancy permit.

But Ms Kennedy and her four children have continued to live there.

Magistrate Ken Stanton said Ms Kennedy had not taken the necessary steps to remedy the situation with the council and

he was not satisfied the house was fit for occupation.

'You have an email from a local person who seems to be a builder who has said the house is structurally sound but I find this email inadequate,' he said.

'You have said you want your children to grow up in this house and that your family will be made homeless by the order to vacate the property.'

Ms Kennedy pleaded guilty to breaching the building order.

Initially the magistrate gave Ms Kennedy 28 days to vacate the house unless the council granted a temporary or

permanent occupancy permit, requiring her to pay court costs of \$68.04.

But Ms Kennedy said she needed longer to find another place for her family to live, to which Mr Stanton and Meander Valley Council were sympathetic.

Ms Kennedy jointly owns the house with her estranged partner, Justin Tatnell, who also built it.

In a previous court hearing she said the council's permit documents needed to be signed by both owners and Mr Tatnell refused to sign them.

House of hemp more than a dream



Sean Manners will harness the unique qualities of hemp for his environmentally friendly house at Westbury.

Photo by Mike Moores

By Sharon Webb

SEAN AND Mandy and Jade the Jack Russell Terrier are getting a new house in Westbury.

But not just any house. It's an environmentally friendly house.

Okay, that's not so unusual these days. Lots of people are into solar passive, double glazing and water tanks. They're up to their ears in insulation and can talk Tesla batteries till the cows come home.

Mandy and Sean Manners have all that. And more.

Because their house is made of hemp.

According to Sean it's about future planning, longevity, and having a house that doesn't cost a fortune in heating, cooling and maintenance.

And it's about minimalism and simplicity. It's built on an insulated slab and the floors will be polished concrete. No carpets because they're an unnecessary extra layer.

'We've kept it simpler,' Sean said.

'We've done away with floor joists, the cover for the joists, the floorboards, the carpet.'

Simpler doesn't mean basic though.

Mandy wanted a pantry, easy undercover access to the house, an easy-care environment and

the kitchen designed so that she could socialise while cooking. All of that is happening.

There is a sunroom for the solar passive aspect of the design. It heats up during sunny hours and can be shut off when it's cold.

The home's footprint is angled on the block to make the most of sunlight and large eaves will keep it shaded in summer.

The hemp?

'I looked at mud brick and straw bale but hemp seemed to be a logical choice. It seemed achievable,' Sean said.

'When Klara Marosszky, the managing director of the Australian Hemp Masonry Company came to Tasmania, we asked her to run a small workshop. As I started exploring the idea it made a lot of sense as a sustainable building material.'

Sean's building material, hemp hurd, he explained, is the inner part of the industrial hemp plant's stem. Industrial hemp is used for fibre and oil. The hurd is waste – but it has unique properties.

'It can hold 14 times its own weight in moisture,' Sean said.

'It naturally allows moisture, say from a bathroom, to pass through the wall and out of the house.'

There's more.

Hemp is fire-resistant.

And hemp is carbon negative. Most buildings are carbon positive.

Hemp hurd used for building is mixed with a lime binder, sand and water to make hempcrete. Some say it's harder than concrete. Finance-challenged owner-builders need stacks of friends to help tamp this mixture into the formwork because it's time-intensive.

But the lime in the mix gradually takes in carbon dioxide and carbonates over time.

'Over the life of the building it will take in more carbon than we used to build the house,' Sean said.

'Hemp stores a lot of carbon when it's grown, then this lime process adds more.'

'It helps in a small way to combat climate change.'

And hemp is an excellent insulator so Sean is hoping he won't need to heat the house. A small pellet heater is on stand-by because it is Tasmania after all.

The hemp for Sean and Mandy's house comes from NSW. While Tasmania grows more hemp than anywhere else in Australia, we don't use enough hurd to make it worthwhile for our growers to invest in the machinery to process it.

There are just two burning questions for Sean to answer.

When will we be able to see the finished home?

'It's almost to lock-up stage now and I'm aiming to finish it in August. People will be able to see it during Sustainable Homes Day in September.'

More importantly, anyone who enjoyed Sean and Mandy's inaugural pizza party at their previous home will be wanting to know whether they were able to move the Sean-built adobe pizza oven to the new house.

No is the answer. But he will build another one.

In August Sean and Mandy and Jade the dog will move themselves and their Hyundai Ioniq electric car into their hemp house.

Quiet house, quiet car, quiet neighbourhood. And all environmentally friendly.

Sean and Mandy Manners' house was designed by architect Will Goodsir and built by Andreas McMahon who have worked together on other hemp buildings.

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Authorised by REBECCA WHITE, 33 COLE ST, SORELL

Labor

Meander Valley Council

Locals honoured at Australia Day Awards

Judy Fellows was named Citizen of the Year at Meander Valley Council's Australia Day Awards celebration held on 24 January.

Judy is a local business owner and has lived in Meander Valley her entire life. She has always been passionate about the Westbury township and has worked hard to support local employment opportunities and the community.

For many years, Judy has generously donated prizes for fundraising raffles at local clubs, venues and regularly volunteers herself.

Community Event of the Year was awarded to Westbury Primary School's Westbury 180 celebration.

The event marked 180 years of government and community education and was celebrated with classroom tours, a fair, maypole dancing, the release of a new school song and the unveiling of a community mural.

"The event provided a wonderful opportunity for students, past and present, the staff and the community to reminisce and reflect on the school's 180 year history," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Joshua Flowers received the Meander Valley Sports Award.

Joshua participated in the Australian Fly Fishing Championships in Tasmania and Victoria and also participat-

ed in World Championships in Bosnia, Canada, New Zealand and Italy.



Above: Joshua Flowers addresses the crowd after receiving the Meander Valley Sports Award.

In 2013 at age 18, he was the youngest winner of the Australian Championships and has been selected to represent Australia as part of the World Team in Finland this year.

Meander Valley also welcomed two new citizens at the event and volunteers from the municipal area were recognised for their efforts, receiving awards for 1000 hours, 3000 hours and exceptional service.

"I am humbled to present these awards. They reflect the dedication, commitment and inspiring spirit of Meander Valley.

Thank you to all the volunteers who have contributed thousands of hours to serve others.

This strengthens our community and makes us proud to represent our municipality", Mayor, Wayne Johnston said.



Above: The Bootscootin' Bunnies were presented with an Exceptional Volunteer Award from Mayor Wayne Johnston.

Keep your trimmers handy this summer...



Residents are reminded that overgrown vegetation can cause pathways to become obstructed.

It is a resident's responsibility to ensure that vegetation is not encroaching onto public pathways and remains trimmed back to the property boundary.

Please check to ensure pathways near your property boundary are not obstructed and remain accessible to all.

Pedestrian links reach final stage of construction

Work involving the construction of approximately 1.6km of concrete pathway at Blackstone Heights is almost complete.

Council approved the construction of a new stage of footpath work along Blackstone Road from the intersection of Panorama Road to the intersection of Kelsey Road in 2019.

The footpaths were envisaged in the 2014 Prospect Vale - Blackstone Heights Structure Plan which was a future focused plan developed with input from the community.

The new footpaths will provide greater pedestrian connectivity and opportunities for cycling, jogging and general health and fitness.

"The construction program was carefully considered to ensure disruptions were kept to a minimum.

Council would like to thank residents for their patience while this significant project is completed," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Once finished, the work will provide links to Blackstone Park.



Above: Footpath construction works near completion along Kelsey Road in Blackstone Heights.

Work underway on major intersection upgrade on Westbury Road

Work has commenced on the construction of a new roundabout at the intersection of Meander Valley Road and Westbury Road in Prospect Vale.

This priority project is being undertaken at a cost of \$1.6m, with funding from the Federal Liberal Government's election commitment, the Commonwealth Government's Infrastructure Investment Grant Programme and Meander Valley Council.

"The new roundabout will improve traffic flow and provide better access to a number of facilities, including the Prospect Vale Park sports complex," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

The improvements include re-alignment of the road and will facilitate the safe movement of pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles in addition to promoting further residential, retail and commercial development in the area.

The installation of additional crossing points for pedestrians was an important part of the design and aligns with the objectives set out in Council's Community Strategic Plan.

The Community Strategic Plan guides growth and identifies the types of infrastructure that is of most benefit to the Municipality's diverse community centres.



Above: Work commences on the intersection upgrade along Westbury Road in Prospect Vale.

Recreational water safety

With summer in full swing and people enjoying the natural environments and recreational opportunities that Meander Valley has to offer, Council's Environmental Health Officers are sampling water at popular swimming spots at Blackstone Heights, Bracknell, Hadspen and Egmont.

Monitoring is undertaken to ensure the water is safe for public use and most importantly, human health. If required, public health warnings will be issued via signage at the site as well as on Council's website and Facebook page. This service assists the community to make responsible decisions. If you have any enquiries regarding recreational water quality, please contact Council's Environmental Health Officers on 6393 5320.





Full house at Mole Creek for Festival of Small Halls

Mole Creek Memorial Hall was well and truly full as 200 excited ticket holders of all ages converged to enjoy the Festival of Small Halls event.

The Mole Creek Hall was an impressive concert venue and members of the Hall Committee created a relaxed atmosphere and provided a delightful al-fresco setting for refreshments and displays.

Mayor Wayne Johnston kicked the evening off with some words of welcome which was followed by a performance by local legends, The Meander Men's Choir.

Scottish folk sensation, Siobhan Miller and Friends then proceeded to enthrall the capacity audience with a mix of sublime vocals and tight, melodic arrangements of traditional and original songs.

Australian singer/songwriter, Jack Carty then took to the stage, demonstrating his immense vocal range and working his magic on a punchy guitar.

The show concluded with Siobhan, Jack and the band uniting to cover a Neil Young and Bob Dylan classic to a sea of happy faces in the crowd.

"These concerts invigorate our local halls and strengthen our sense of pride and community connection and I would like to thank MC, Deb White, Arts Deloraine and the Mole Creek community for their great contributions," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

This Festival of Small Halls event was sponsored and coordinated by Meander Valley Council.

It is part of a national tour delivered through a partnership between the Cynnet, Woodford and Illawarra Folk Festivals.

"This is the fourth annual Small Halls show in Meander Valley bringing great entertainers to rural communities. The 2021 event is expected to be just as popular and we look forward to hosting it once again in Meander Valley," Mayor Johnston said.

Cemetery centrepiece begins to take shape

Work is underway at the Deloraine Lawn Cemetery with a new structure beginning to take shape. A naturally inspired shelter is being constructed to provide visitors with a place to pause, gather and reflect. The shelter is centrally located and has been designed using a range of natural materials including timber and stone.

"The structure is sympathetic to its surrounds and features heat curved timber arches and natural stonework," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.



Council engaged local artist Kim Clark to assist with construction with the work which is expected to be completed by the end of February.

Landscaping around the structure will be considered in the future as a second stage.



Carrick benefits from entrance upgrade works

The eastern entrance to Carrick is receiving an upgrade with work well underway on improvements.

Road widening and the installation of piped stormwater has already taken place with kerbing and sealing due to be completed soon.

"The removal of open drains and the construction of designated parking areas will improve amenity and delineate the entrance to the township," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

The project is expected to be completed within the next few weeks.



If your cat or dog becomes lost, you are far more likely to be reunited if you have your pet microchipped.

Each microchip has a unique number that is recorded on a registry with details about the animal and the owner. If your pet is found, vets, animal shelters and Council can scan your pet and contact you via the registry.

Got a new pet?

Microchipping of dogs is compulsory from six months of age. If you have an older dog that has not been microchipped, make an appointment with your local vet to do so.

Have your contact details changed?

It is important to keep your details up to date on the registry so you can be easily contacted if your pet is found. If you are unable to do this online, contact your vet to have your details updated.

Microchipping helps keep your pet safe.



Important changes to recycling

Liquid paperboard must now be disposed of in the general waste bin.

Liquid paperboard is sterilised packaging used for products such as longlife milk, soy and almond milks, poppas, custards and liquid stocks.

"Previously, many of these items were placed in recycling bins, however, there is now no market to recycle liquid paperboard and it must be disposed of in the general waste bin," Mayor Wayne Johnston said.

Recycling must now be of a much higher standard and facilities no longer accept packaging made from liquid paperboard. Placing this type of packaging in the recycling bin only causes con-

tamination of other recyclables.

Residents are encouraged to consider alternatives where possible and, if disposing of this type of packaging, ensure the items are flattened prior to placing in the general waste bin.

Residents are reminded that even if a package has a recycling logo printed on it, that does not mean it can go in the recycling bin.

In some cases, the recycling logo only indicates that the packaging is made of recycled components or is capable of being recycled. This does not automatically mean that it is accepted at recycling facilities.

For more information visit www.rethinkwaste.com.au

Date Claimers

Westbury Flower Show
Saturday 8 February

Chudleigh Show
Saturday 15 February

Deloraine Street Car Show
Sunday 16 February

A Day at the Creek
Saturday 29 February

Rupertswood Farm
Crop Maze
February: 29
March: 1, 7, 8, 9, 14,
15, 21, 22, 28 & 29

Tasmanian Tomato
& Garlic Festival
Sunday 15 March

Westbury St Patrick's
Festival
Saturday 21 March



Meander Valley Council
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26 Lyall Street Westbury
Tasmania 7303

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www.meander.tas.gov.au

Midnight messages

'REGGAE IS music for dancing and grooving. Reggae is a feeling, an attitude that says listen to the people because we sing of hope and peace and truth, but mostly we sing about connectedness.'

Arts Deloraine presents Midnight Messengers, a band held together by respect for the ideology and the grooves sent from Jamaica to the world by the legends of reggae, with Bob Marley as the main spokesperson.

'We love playing it and we love seeing people enjoy it.'

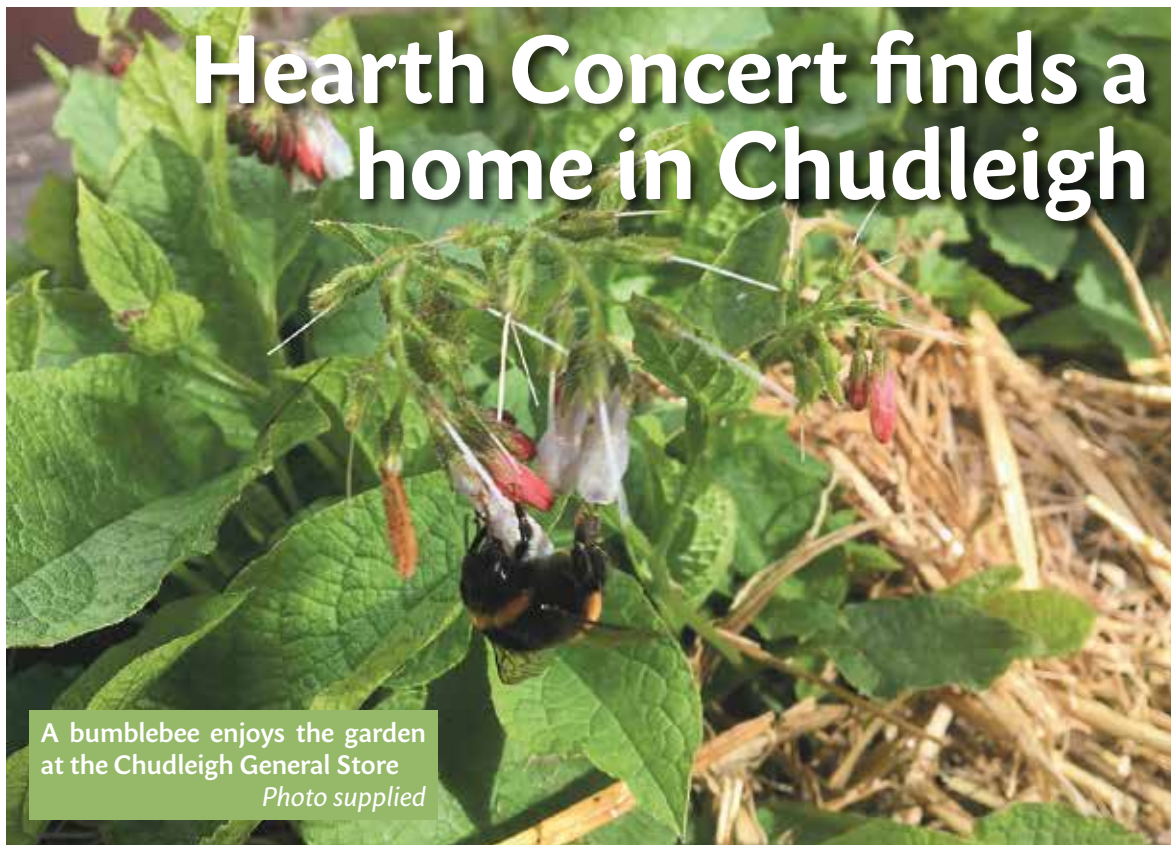
Midnight Messengers are a stellar line-up of passionate reggae-loving musicians.

Fronted by Neil Gibson, the band includes Tessa Lee, Josh Berryman, Fintan McCullough, Ian Howard, Bruce Innocent, Steve MacFarlane, Mike Lizotte, Teresa Beck-Swindale and Pete Rissie.

They will be supported by Meander local Eddie Tujela.

Midnight Messengers perform on Saturday 22 February at the Little Theatre in Deloraine.

Bar 7.30pm, music 8pm. No BYO. Tickets \$25 door or \$20 pre-sale/Arts Deloraine members at the Alpaca Shoppe or online at www.trybooking.com/596657.



A bumblebee enjoys the garden at the Chudleigh General Store
Photo supplied

Hearth Concert finds a home in Chudleigh

THE HEARTH Concert, being held in Chudleigh General Store gardens on Valentine's Day, is a celebration of love for nature, good music and hearty food under the night sky.

The February 14 concert is an encore by Uke Nomad, after a January 4 sell-out of Ukuleleland, in which the duo featured.

After selling their Queensland home, the Townsville pair have appeared at the Cygnet and Tamar Folk Festivals, among other locations, embracing the life of musicians on the road, .

They now tour small communities, in both Australia and New Zealand, writing songs about the people and landscapes they encounter. They will be singing a song inspired by their visit to Chudleigh.

Chudleigh General Store proprietor, Mandy Wyer, who has owned the store for a year, is keen to build on the community spirit, which she says is Chudleigh's heart. Mandy says such soul and reciprocity should be shared with those who appreciate what she terms 'handshake values'.

It was with this in mind that she, and Anu Grace of Uke Nomad, devised the value of a Hearth Concert, because they were both inspired by the effect of Chudleigh's atmosphere on the quality of performances at the previous event.

'Standing on the back veranda of Mandy's shop, and looking out at so many happy faces and the hills beyond, it really lifted me to a higher level,' Anu said.

The fact that the Chudleigh Show is the next day, along with an opportunity to increase

one's ukulele skills with a chord melody workshop with Anu Grace, makes the event even more worthwhile. (Details: www.anugrace.com).

The adjacent Chudleigh Show Grounds, which regularly offers camping facilities for the small sum of \$5 per vehicle, will have a very limited number of spaces on the weekend of the concert for people wanting to spend the weekend in Chudleigh to enjoy both the concert and the show. Places are limited because of the show but alternative camping is also available near town.

Mandy said Chudleigh shop renovations were also under way to add another room from the adjoining house to increase the floor space and create a kind of theatre where people could share music, stories and even a skit or two. This would allow more entertainment in Chudleigh during winter, with two fireplaces to create a cosy atmosphere.

The store is currently open for business as a convenience store and café, Monday to Sunday 9am to 5pm, excluding Saturday afternoons, when the store closes at 2pm. Private functions including weddings, children's birthday parties and bus groups are also catered for in the gardens.

For Hearth Concert details, call Chudleigh General Store proprietor, Mandy Wyer on 03 6363 6138.

Avalanche, one of the popular live music acts appearing in the Little Laneway Summer Sessions, setting up the stage for their performance on January 19, in the lane between the Empire Hotel and Seppenfelts.

Photo supplied



Summer in the laneway

LITTLE Laneway SUMMER SESSIONS

④ THE EMPIRE

Sunday 9 February
Tom Willis

Sunday 23 February
Sheyana & Mahlah

Sunday 1 March
Georgina Harvey and Matt Kinch

Supported by local performers
3pm-6pm in the Little Laneway
between the Empire and Seppenfelts

MUSIC TO GET YOU TO MOVE!

Beef and vermicelli salad wraps

By Wai Lin Coultas

MARRYING THE essence of Vietnamese beef salad, fresh rice paper rolls with Thai and Straits Chinese influences, and the season's herbs and vegetables yields a salad wrap breaming with refreshing healthy goodness – the perfect light tasty starter without any need for a dipping sauce.

Ingredients

- 450g rump steak, thinly sliced
- 1 iceberg lettuce, whole leaves only
- 100g dried vermicelli, soaked in boiling water till tender, then drained, cooled, cut into manageable lengths and tossed in 4 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 brown onion, peeled and thinly sliced into rings
- 1 1/2 small carrots, finely julienned
- 180g red capsicum, finely julienned

- 85g sweet pea pods, diagonally sliced finely
- 11g fresh chives, chopped
- 36g fresh basil leaves and sprig tips
- 1 heaped handful fresh mint leaves and sprig tips

For beef marinade

- 4 tbsp light soy sauce
- 2 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 tbsp maple infused syrup
- 2 cm piece fresh ginger, finely grated
- 1/4 tsp ground chilli

For salad dressing

- 3 limes, juiced
- 4 tbsp sweet chilli sauce
- 6 tbsp fish sauce
- 2 tbsp maple infused syrup
- 3 tbsp sesame oil
- 2 tbsp poppy seeds

Instructions

- 1 Marinate beef for 2 hours before stir frying until just cooked through. Set aside.
- 2 *Optional* – stir fry onion rings in olive oil till caramelised.

- 3 Toss onion rings in salad dressing, drain off excess dressing and set aside.
- 4 Repeat step 3 with saved dressing and repeat in sequence with carrot, capsicum, pea pods, basil, chives, mint and lastly the vermicelli.
- 5 To assemble 12 salad wraps, evenly distribute the dressed basil onto 12 lettuce leaves, followed by equal amounts of the dressed vermicelli, beef, pea pods, carrot, mint, capsicum and lastly, chives.
- 6 Fold in both ends of lettuce leaf and roll into a sealed parcel.

Makes 12 salad wraps

Beef, vegie and vermicelli rice paper rolls combine flavours of Vietnam with Thai and Straits Chinese influences – a perfect light tasty starter.

Photo by Wai Lin Coultas



Gaillardias, or Blanket Flowers, are drought tolerant and self-seeding.

Photo contributed

Be there and be really square!

TASMANIA'S NEWEST Square Dance Club, Upbeat SQRZ, celebrated its 1st Birthday on January 10, with club members and visiting dancers from Victoria, Queensland and Launceston.

The club is very fortunate to be able to dance at the Deloraine Bowls Club – a fantastic venue for the activity.

Partners are not needed for square dancing, so singles are most welcome. The club has

chosen to hold their dances on Friday nights, to encourage families and people with work commitments to join in.

Gary Petersen, the club caller, uses a large variety of music styles every week and there are theme nights throughout the year.

Gary describes square dancing as a bit like a human puzzle where you learn some rules, then play a bit and then go back to start all over again.

Square Dancing is a great way to meet new friends while exercising your body and mind and having FUN!

Upbeat SQRZ are starting a New Class on 7th February at the Deloraine Bowls Club. Don't be shy, give it a try.

Upbeat SQRZ 1st Birthday.

Photo contributed



THIS COLUMN is being written as this district has been enjoying a copious summer downfall. At the time of the deadline, on January 24th, 55.6mms had fallen over two days – a lifesaver for farmers and gardeners alike. However, dry conditions could well return for the next two months, so the subject remains relevant.

Few flowering plants are more drought tolerant than Gaillardias, or Blanket Flowers.

A friend who was travelling in US noticed a whole field of these bright orange and yellow daisies on an arid hillside in Texas.

The one pictured grows amongst Salvias, most species of which are both drought and frost resistant.

Gaillardias will self-seed when the flowers dry off. Any surplus in the bed can be transplanted or discarded. Experience has shown that they will not tolerate a wet summer.

Those planted in the arid bed in the Deloraine Community Garden disappeared in one very wet summer.

Most Salvias can survive in dry summers. Some of those

that are both drought and frost resistant are *Salvia leucantha*, the Mexican Mint Bush, (purple flowers), the red flowered *S. greggii*, (Autumn Sage), *S. trijuga* (blue purple flowers), and *S. officinalis*, which is the culinary sage, but with its flowers of a striking bright blue it is not out of place in the ornamental garden. The shrubby Salvias should be trimmed back after flowering.

In the vegie garden

A warm, moist soil is ideal for sowing winter vegetables. February is the last month for sowing carrots and parsnips.

The latter are much slower and more picky than carrots. Their long roots require deep topsoil, and they need regular water.

Unlike carrots, parsnips have to be dug, rather than pulled out, to avoid breaking off the very long, slender roots. Sow them in seed raising mix and keep them moist.

Seeds are slow to emerge – three to four weeks, and should be thinned out to 10cms apart. They will take from 18 to 20 weeks to grow to maturity.

ADVERTISEMENT

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Labor

Westbury prison a disaster – financially & for inmates, says expert

By Sharon Webb

A FORMER Tasmanian prison chief believes the State Government will have huge problems staffing a prison on the proposed Westbury site – forever.

Mr Peter Hoult, former deputy secretary of the Justice Department and for three years Secretary of Corrective Services, categorically stated, 'I guarantee you it will run badly; I can't see how the government is ever going to afford this.'

Mr Hoult chaired the planning process for the redevelopment of Risdon Prison in the early 2000s under then Attorney General, Peter Patmore.

He also was responsible for Ashley Detention Centre for the year he was Secretary of Health. He knows what it takes to deliver services to a regional facility and the capacity of the north and north-west to deliver services to a northern prison.

'At that time Peter Patmore was interested in whether we should put a prison up north.

'It was never a matter of public conversation. We had quiet talks with Launceston City Council and it seemed there might be a couple of suitable sites in Launceston's outer suburbs,' Mr Hoult said.

'Even at Risdon there are issues around recruitment and retention of officers. At the time we were looking at Launceston for a prison I argued it was wrong to pretend Launceston's service infrastructure could support it and there's little or no reason to think it could do so now,' he said.

'In the end the decision was made to develop the Risdon Vale site.'

Because it was already designated a prison under planning rules there were no local objectors at Risdon Vale.

'And because we needed a secure mental health unit for people with mental health

issues who could not be in the regular prison system, the Health Department insisted nowhere but the south was suitable. The major resources for running it were linked to the clinical base of psychiatric and psychological services there.'

At the time Mr Hoult said, the service base for Risdon was poor. 'Right now it's the best it's ever been but you need competent staff. Well over half the prisoners have mental health issues and a similar number have addiction issues. They have huge education deficits, poor education and come from dysfunctional families with criminal baggage.'

'Our experience of trying to run Ashley Detention Centre has been pretty horrible – it's difficult to provide services in a small regional town. Can you imagine trying to provide medical services for 250 high-needs people in a prison?'

'Conservatively you'd have more than 200 people needing

addiction and mental health services. But currently even in the general community there are not enough addiction services.'

According to Mr Hoult, running a two-prison system in Tasmania would be extremely expensive.

'Some people say you just cut 250 beds in the south and the overall cost is the same,' Mr Hoult said. 'That's just not true. If you split the Royal Hobart Hospital in half and put half in Devonport you'd still need to duplicate some facilities and staff.'

'While I am sympathetic to the geographical issues involved in family visits, on balance I don't think that justifies the highly risky business of building a prison outside an urban centre that can sustain it.'

'If we're serious about better access, build a prisoner visit facility and run a coach from the north and north-west. These would be less costly.'

Mr Hoult says he is

disappointed in the quality of political debate on the prison issue – a debate resulting in over-crowded prisons across Australia.

'There is a blithe acceptance that prisons are warehouses to put people in,' he said. 'They are not. They are complex environments requiring lots of inputs if they're going to do their job properly.'

'The last thing we need in Tasmania is more prison beds. The growth in the prison population is not a good thing. Government should invest in preventative and better service delivery in the community.'

And the design of the proposed prison at Westbury?

'That six metre wall is for political purposes – so people can't see in,' Mr Hoult said.

'Having layers of wire fence with electric fencing between is much more effective.'

'Putting people in a cave where they can't see out and can only see the sky is appalling.'



On January 15, trucks moved onto the State Government's proposed Northern Regional Prison site on the Birrale Road, Westbury. A government spokesperson said contractors were doing soil testing to determine the site's feasibility and to further inform the Government's future decision making processes. He said, 'This testing is not part of any construction works and is in no way an indicator of a decision to proceed or otherwise with the preferred site.'

Photo by Mike Moores

Council shuts down recording meetings

By Sharon Webb

MEANDER VALLEY Council has banned the recording of its meetings without permission.

The ban follows, as described by the council's acting general manager Jonathan Harmey, 'a small number of members of the public gallery videotaping our council meeting' on December 10.

In addition, Meander Valley has 'invited' local police to attend meetings when anti-prison community members give notice that they will be asking questions at council meetings.

When asked about this Mayor Wayne Johnston said, 'The general manager requests police if needed. On both occasions that you refer to I have invited Inspector Flude to attend if he wishes. On both occasions he accepted.'

Cllr Johnston said he was not concerned about an outbreak of violence but would not give reasons for his invitation to the police.

According to the statement released by Mr Harmey, following the December 10 council meeting, councillors and office staff met privately to determine 'a revised process for meeting conduct'. The decision was not made in a public monthly council meeting.

The move is out of step with other councils around the state who make meeting recordings available to the public in the interests of transparency.

More than half of Tasmania's 29 councils record their meetings. Six of those stream vision.

Meander Valley does neither.

Every month, council places a PDF version of the meeting minutes on its website – without the questions and comments of councillors on agenda items unless councillors provide them in writing.

Neither is there a record provided of councillors' debate on agenda items, just the final vote by each councillor on each motion.

Meander Valley's ban on meeting recording comes after Westbury community members recorded questions and answers on the issue of the government's proposed prison on Birrale Road.

At the time those community members justified recording saying that they believed council minutes did not reflect accurately the answers to their prison-related questions in council meetings.

When Mayor Wayne Johnston asked that they stop recording 'because the council has no policy on recording council meetings' they laughed and several continued recording.

In his recording crack-down statement, Mr Harmey quoted 2015 local government regulations.

Visitors may not use a recording device (audio, video and still camera equipment or mobile phone capable of recording speech) at a council meeting without the prior permission of the chairperson.

Council reserves the right to revoke permission at any time. A request to the chairperson must advise the express purpose for any recording.

Unless expressly stated otherwise, Meander Valley Council

claims copyright ownership of the content of any recordings. The recordings may not be uploaded, displayed or reproduced.

Mr Harmey said that anyone found recording without authority would be asked by the meeting's chair to stop and if the recording continued, the meeting would be suspended and the person recording asked to leave the meeting immediately.

Which Tasmanian councils record their meetings?

Audio recordings

Break O'Day, Burnie, Central Highlands, Derwent Valley, Devonport, George Town, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Glenorchy, King Island, Kingborough, Launceston, Southern Midlands.

Live streaming/ video recording

Break O'Day, Clarence, Glamorgan Spring Bay, Hobart, Latrobe, Launceston.

No recording, PDFs of minutes and agendas

Brighton, Central Coast, Circular Head, Dorset, Flinders, Huon Valley, Kentish, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands, Sorell, Tasman, Waratah-Wynyard, West Coast, West Tamar.

Launceston, Break O'Day and Glamorgan Spring Bay Councils provide audio recording and live streaming

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Authorised by: Guy Barnett, 76 Emu Bay Road, Deloraine Tas 7304

Weekend delights at Mole Creek

MOLE CREEK Photographic and Visual Arts Inc. is holding an exhibition of work on the weekend of Saturday 29 February and Sunday 1 March 2020.

The exhibition will feature artwork from members, and is a way of sharing with the outside community some of the beautiful scenery that is to be found in the region, and the diverse talent of local artists.

Visitors are invited to come along and talk to the artists themselves and discover the stories behind their work.

Various artworks and cards will be available for sale. Copies

of the club's annual calendar of images from the region will be available for purchase during the exhibition.

On the same Saturday as this feast for the eyes, 'A Day at the Creek' music festival at the Mole Creek Hotel will be providing a feast for the ears!

For more information about the exhibition, or the arts group, please call Suzanne on 6363 1361 or email whatthedickens@activ8.net.au

The exhibition will be held in the Mole Creek Memorial Hall from 10-4pm on Saturday and Sunday. Entry is by gold coin donation.



The many talented artists and photographers of Mole Creek celebrate the beauty of the region. Photo by Leanne Osmond

A Show for everyone at Chudleigh

By Mandy Wyer

MEN SCALING wooden pylons, several metres into the air while gouging at them with axes, is just one of the famed spectacles of the Chudleigh Show.

Wood-chopping, together with vintage farm machinery, veteran cars and bikes is a major attraction at the show, which draws hundreds of people each year.

Held on Saturday 15 February, Chudleigh Show is in its 131st year and is believed to be one of the oldest running agricultural shows in Tasmania.

Sheep dog trials, equestrian events and beef and dairy heifer competitions will also run throughout the day, with ongoing entertainment from the Deloraine Big Band.

The talents of some highly skilled artists, cooks and flower arrangers will also be exhibited,

along with some up-cycling pieces made out of otherwise discarded objects.

And for the children, entertainment includes a jumping castle, face painting, pony and train rides.

A men's muffin competition is also expected to cause a few laughs. The contestants will be required to bake four muffins of their own choosing with a strict stipulation that no packet mixes are allowed and all ingredients need to be brought with competitors to the show-ground, by 11am on the day.

Local police officer Will Smith – the current Young Tasmanian of the Year – will officially open the Chudleigh Show and the Hagley Rural Youth members will conduct the dog jump and the Chudleigh Cup events.

This year for the first time, the Chudleigh General Store will host a music event in the adjacent store gardens, the evening before the show (see page 12 for details). The encore show by Townsville's Uke Nomad follows a sell out event at the store on January 4, when 100 people enjoyed soulful music under the night sky.



The 2019 Chudleigh Show was a grand day out for all comers. Photo by Mike Moores

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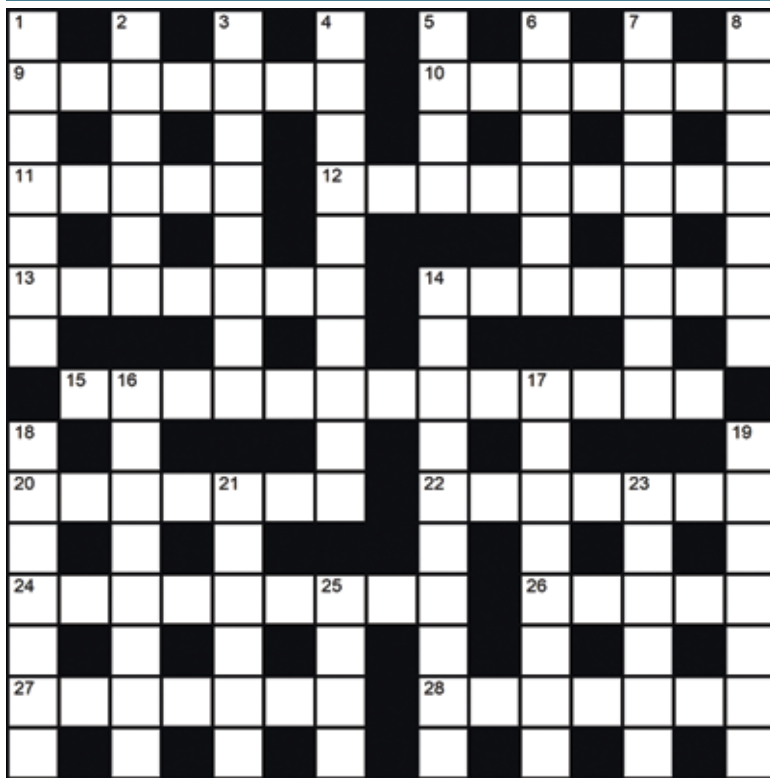
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0419 575 193

Writers wanted!

The Gazette is looking for people in the Meander Valley who are interested in contributing stories about people and events across the entire Valley. All you need is access to a computer and email, enough ideas and the ability to write a 200–400 word story every month or so. If you're interested, then please send an email to: editor@meandervalleygazette.com
Training provided!

Crossword



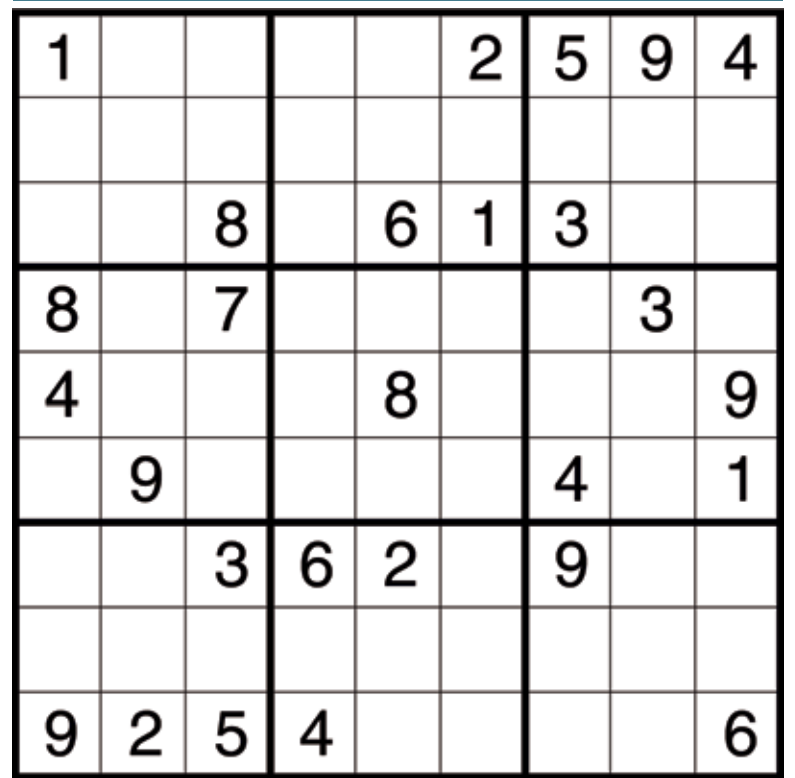
Across

- 9 Fit (7)
- 10 Small long-tailed bird (3-4)
- 11 Claire Hooper, for example (5)
- 12 Misnamed fruit bat (6, 3)
- 13 Utopian (7)
- 14 Some arts (7)
- 15 Sydney-born country singer (7, 6)
- 20 At the start (5, 2)
- 22 Flat-bottomed canal or harbour barge (7)
- 24 Corner of 'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it' (9)
- 26 Register (5)
- 27 Mocked (7)
- 28 Developed over time (7)

Down

- 1 Clairvoyant (7)
- 2 Consternation (6)
- 3 Powerful (8)
- 4 Enforce pit discipline to achieve improvement (10)
- 5 180-degree turn (4)
- 6 Disposable mobile phone (6)
- 7 Some wall art (8)
- 8 Banished (2,5)
- 14 Popular NSW National Park (5, 5)
- 16 Bombastic monologue (8)
- 17 Enlisted (6, 2)
- 18 Mass-to-volume ratio (7)
- 19 Musical introduction (7)
- 21 Like fresh bread (6)
- 23 Prosper (6)
- 25 Chucks in (4)

Sudoku



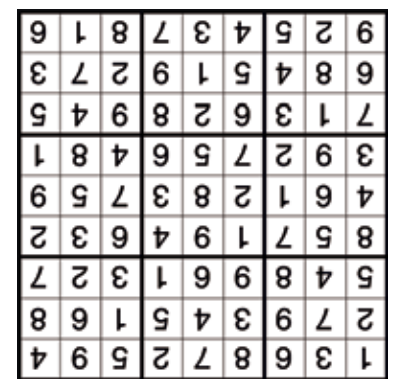
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How to play Each row must contain the numbers 1 to 9, each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9 and each set of 3 x 3 boxes must contain the numbers 1 to 9. Best of luck!

Crossword February 2020 solution



Sudoku February 2020 solution



Events Diary

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Running an event? Then make sure everyone knows about it. Email the details to editor@meandervalleygazette.com. Remember to plan in advance so you don't miss out!

Date and Time	Event	Details
Every Mon, Tues & Wed 9am–4pm	Deloraine Community Shed	Alveston Drv, Deloraine For men & women to enjoy woodworking Fully equipped workshop Ph 6362 4522
Every Monday 10–10.30am	Story time for preschoolers 0–4 yrs	Deloraine Library During school terms Ph 6701 2100
Every Monday 1pm	Story time for preschoolers 0–4 yrs	Westbury Library During school terms Ph 6393 1439
Every Tuesday 10am–12pm	Hadspen Playgroup (during school terms)	Uniting Church Community Centre, cnr Claire & Main Sts, Hadspen Anna 0423 939 304
Alternate Tuesdays 10am–2pm	Tuesday Spinners & Weavers Group	\$3 room rent, Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd new ppinners welcome, spinning wheels for loan. Lois 0433 191 831
Every Wednesday 1–4pm	Deloraine Indoor Carpet Bowls	Western Tiers Community Centre, Parsonage St, Deloraine Elaine 0417 561 837, Philip 0418 877 744
Every Wednesday 7.30–9pm	Meander Valley Choir practise	Westbury Uniting Church More info Helen Walker 0418 538 422
Every Wednesday 10am–1pm	Mah Jong	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd \$5 Ph 6362 2678
Every Wednesday	Community Garden Westbury	For information Fiona Thowe 6701 2154
Every Thursday 10–11am	Physiotherapy & exercise classes	Westbury Community Health Centre, Meander Valley Road, Westbury
Every Friday 6.30–7.30pm	Alcoholics Anonymous	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd Debbie 0439 695 081
Every alternate Friday 5–7pm	Youth Group for Grades 7–12	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd Food provided Come & hang out & meet new friends Ph 6362 2678
Every Saturday 9–10.30am	Radiant Light Yoga	Deloraine Primary School Hall \$15 casual, beginners to advanced– All welcome thehealingyogini.com or Kat 0406430833
Every Saturday 11am–12pm	Produce Swap	Deloralne Fountain (near the Library)
Every Saturday evening	Computer games	Deloraine Online Access Centre 4–6pm for ages 8–15 rated G From 6pm for ages 16+ Ph 6362 3537
Every Sunday 10–11am	Dragon Boating	Meander River, Deloraine (near swimming pool) Experienced or beginners All welcome Andy Dunn 0409 537 372
Saturday 15 February 9am–1pm	Mole Creek Market	Mole Creek Memorial Hall \$10 per table Bookings and enquiries Ross Quick 0413 681 252
Saturday 15 February 9am–2pm	Westbury Market	Anglican Church Hall, 11 Lonsdale Promenade, Westbury Rob Menzie 0417 931 619
Monday 17 February 12.30–2.30pm	Deloraine Writers Group	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd All welcome Ph 6362 2678
Tuesday 18 February 10am–4pm	Housing Connect	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd Help with any housing inquiries, bonds etc. Book on 6362 2678
Wednesday 19 Feb, 4 March 1–3pm	Rowdy Ruggers	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd Hook rug group Donation \$2 Child friendly
Tuesday 25 February 6pm	Shrove Tuesday Pancake Night fundraiser	Uniting Church Hall, William St, Westbury For drought & fire relief All welcome Further information 0413 437 720
Monday 2 March 12–2pm	Eating with Friends	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd \$7 Bookings essential Ph 6362 2678
Tuesday 3 March 1.30pm	Meander Valley Diabetes Support Group	Community Health Centre 89 Meander Valley Rd, Westbury Small plate afternoon tea +\$1 More info 0428 576 795
Wednesday 4 March from 6pm	Mole Creek Photography & Visual Arts Group	Presbyterian Church Hall, Caveside Rd, Mole Creek Email Karen philipnkaren@bigpond.com
Friday 6 March from 6.30pm	Eat & Greet Westbury Community Tea	63 Meander Valley Rd, Westbury (Westbus shed) All welcome Bring food to share More info 0408 134 057
Saturday 7 March 9am – 1pm	Deloraine Market	Showgrounds, Highland Lakes Rd, Deloraine Bodhi McSweeney 0409 695 321
Saturday 14 March 7.30pm sharp	Western Tiers Film Society <i>Who Do You think I Am</i>	Little Theatre, 2 Meander Valley Rd, Deloraine MA15+ Romance/drama France 104m More info 0418 389 868

Good health for all! Roos bounding ahead

THE DELORAINE & Westbury Medical Centre is pleased to welcome and introduce three new doctors this year.

Dr Jacqueline Chua and Dr Upali Mapiitigama joined the practice in January and Dr Fara Poursafavi will be starting in March.

These three new full-time GPs will help reduce the extended waiting periods that some patients have experienced. They will assist in giving all patients prompt access to consultation and treatment.



For the present, the new GPs will be working at Deloraine but will see patients at Westbury as well, as demand increases.

Recently, it has often proved difficult for patients to obtain an appointment when they needed one. Because of demand, there have also been very long wait times to see some of the doctors at the practice.

D&WMC want to acknowledge and thank the Meander Valley community for their patience.

By David Claridge

THINGS ARE getting even more exciting at the Deloraine Football Club with a string of new recruits to bolster the club in their push for a 2020 premiership.

In particular, the team is talking of the return of favourite local, Tait Hight.

Coach Lochy Dornauf said, 'We were hoping he would return one day and we are quite

thankful that day is sooner than we anticipated.

'He is a Deloraine local, and has really established himself as a quality footballer.'

The team had always hoped Tait would return. Deloraine's best senior player a few years ago, Tait played for Devonport last year in the NWFL.

He expressed his excitement for playing again with the Kangaroos. 'It's great to be back. Coming off a knee injury

last year I have recovered well. There shouldn't be much stopping us this year.'

Coach Lochy was pleased with how the players were keeping up their fitness over the break. 'We have a good structure around accountability. Many members are using the 'Do your two' hashtag on Facebook - which is do your two trainings a week during the off season.

'There are some other exciting new recruits from Deloraine and Latrobe including Brayden Butler and Tyler Kelly.'

Sports unite for a good cause

By David Claridge

ON JANUARY 17, Hadspen Oval saw four sports clubs united as one for an important cause.

Hundreds of people came to watch the Bushfire Appeal T20 cricket match on with Hadspen Cricket Club and St Pat's FC versus the Westbury Shamrocks Cricket Club and Meander Valley Suns FC.

After the event, Hadspen Cricket Club were proud to announce a total of \$23,561.50 to be donated to the Red Cross Bushfire Appeal.

Daniel Murfet, the Westbury Shamrocks captain, described how special it was to have the combined event. 'The amount we raised was beyond anything we could have thought possible when we first started.'

'It was great that the four clubs could put on something for the public and rally behind the cause to help those in need at the moment.'

Hadspen Cricket Club president Corey Martin said it was in aid of doing something about the devastation that people were seeing on a daily basis.

'It's all around the country including in our own state at Fingal,' he said.

'The four clubs were thinking about doing an event, so it made sense to do something together. The support from the community was fantastic, even before the event.'

Australia Day celebration

MEMBERS OF the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community organised an Australia Day BBQ for locals on January 26, which was attended by 52 guests.

Dr Aamir Mahmood, President of the Community's Tasmania chapter, welcomed the guests and thanked them for attending the event.

Speaking to the guests, Dr Mahmood said, 'Islam teaches us that loving our country is a part of our faith. Australia has been our home for the past 10 years. We have received so much love from the community

here. We really wanted to share our feelings with the community on this and are so glad to see such a great turnout. We will continue to organize such events that can unite the community and allow us to understand each other better.'

Dr Aamir and his family left Pakistan in 2010 due to religious persecution.

Dr Mahmood's son Qinwan shared his feelings with the audience about why he is grateful to live in a country that allowed him and his family to freely practice their faith.

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Calling a service or retail business advertising in these pages? Let them know you found them in the *Meander Valley Gazette* ... and thank you for supporting local businesses!

MEANDER BLUE

Delicious biodynamically grown blueberries Ph: 63695510 for home delivery \$20 per kilo

What a racquet!



It might not be centre court at the Australian Open, but a dedicated group of players make the best use of their local facilities at the Deloraine Tennis Club. With hard and grass courts and club house renovated not so very long ago, a sunny day sees everyone taking advantage. Debbie Kearns shows her style on the court.

Photo by Mike Moores

Water restrictions are now in effect.

These restrictions have only come in after advice from our engineers and scientists who monitor our systems across the state. Their aim is to manage the uncertainty around rainfall in the immediate future and protect drinking water supplies.

Communities affected stretch from greater Hobart to Wynyard with restrictions expected to remain in place until 31 March 2020.

Communities already on water restrictions remain unchanged, except for Bridport which will be increased to Stage 2.

Reasons for restrictions:

Continuing dry conditions and the long-term weather outlook

The needs and projected demands of residential customers, irrigators, visitors and firefighters

Our priority will always be to provide reliable, high-quality, safe drinking water for our residential customers. Community support and assistance is much appreciated.

For a full list of areas affected visit taswater.com.au/waterrestrictions

Taswater