



JUST CRUISING ALONG

The Deloraine Street Car Show hits the road

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LIFE AND MUSIC IN DELORAINE

Little Laneway Festival makes itself heard

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HOW GOOD IS HEMP?

Hemp – beer, burgers and building materials ...

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Meander Valley Gazette

Free every month

March 2021

Meander Valley Gazette Your independent community paper

The future of dairy farming ...

looks good for cows and farmers on page 2



The faces of Australia's dairy industry future, Rebekah and Nick Dornauf with son Angus, hope to inspire kids checking out their hi-tech robotic dairy at Deloraine. Photo by Sharon Webb

Poo in the Liffey spoils the summer swimming at Bracknell

Sharon Webb

MEANDER VALLEY Council has declared a popular swimming spot at Bracknell off bounds yet again because of poo in the water.

General manager John Jordan said people who swim in the Liffey River on the Esplanade should seek medical advice but did not answer questions about what symptoms might be caused by the contaminated water.

Nor did the mayor, Wayne Johnston, after the Gazette emailed him twice about the issue.

Neither responded to questions about what needed to happen to clear the contamination and would not comment on the cause of the problem.

Former Meander Valley councillor Ian Mackenzie said the problem happens most summers because drainage from the town's septic tanks goes into the Liffey upstream of the swimming hole.

'The council should have done something about it long ago when they owned the water system. TasWater will never do it. They're a law unto themselves.'

A 15 February notice on the council's website states that recent sampling identified water quality in the Liffey River at Bracknell as unsuitable for recreational use.

But when the Gazette visited the site a week later, campers there said they had watched two people swimming at the site that morning.

The *Public Health Act 1997* requires testing of recreational water and dictates closure of the site 'where two consecutive water samples are greater than 280 enterococci per 100 ml'.

Enterococci is faecal matter in the water.

A description on the US Environment Protection Agency website says, 'Enterococci are indicators of the presence of faecal material in water and, therefore, of the possible presence of disease-causing bacteria, viruses, and protozoa.'

'These pathogens can sicken swimmers and others who use rivers and streams for recreation ... Other potential health effects can include diseases of the skin, eyes, ears and respiratory tract.'

The council's website states that environmental health officers regularly sample water at four swimming

locations across the Meander Valley between December and March.

As well as the Bracknell site, council officers also monitor sites at the Meander River at Egmont Reserve, Birralea Road, Westbury, at the South Esk River at Lions Park, off Main Street, Hadspen, and at Lake Trevallyn at Blackstone Park Drive, off Kelsey Road, Blackstone.

Mr Jordan said, 'Any person who may have swum in the water and has any symptoms or other health questions should seek the advice of a qualified medical practitioner.'

Dornauf's high tech dairy robots inspire kids

Sharon Webb

NICK AND Rebekah Dornauf are the faces of Australia's dairy industry future, and now they're sharing their vision with Tasmania's future dairy farmers.

The couple hosted an open day on their Deloraine farm, Gala, last month, where their 100 plus Day in the Dairy visitors included 40 fascinated primary school students from Launceston Church Grammar School.

'We're passionate about the technology of our dairy. We enjoy breaking down the stereotypes of dairy farming and what a career in farming might offer', Nick said.

'We take pride in sharing with the next generation of wannabe farmers what a modern tech savvy career in farming can offer.'

According to Rebekah there's a problem across the world with the perception of dairying.

'We're just doing our bit. You can either be part of the problem or try to fix it.'

Looking down on the cows moving into the Dornauf's eight robots to be milked, the Grammar kids had a multitude of questions, from how many times a day the Dornauf's 600 cows are milked to the significance of the white tags in their ears.

The truth is, these cows wander in to be milked whenever they feel like it, 24 hours a day, and wander back out to their assigned paddock of the day.

It's all so easy. No herding, no inhuman early starts for milkers, no fixed milking commitments twice a day.

The dispenser in each robot? 'Lollies', Nick confided to the kids.

'Grain is like lollies to cows and makes milking more enjoyable for them, balancing their diet, along with the robot's brushes cleaning their coats and the tiny spa bath washing their teats before milking.'

But how do cows know to go for milking, one boy asked.

'The secret about cows is they love routine', Nick said. 'If we can provide the exact same consistency every day they are the happiest cows in the world.'

The white tag on each cow is like a driver's licence logging it into the computer system.

The tag tells Nick and Rebekah how often a cow comes to be milked and records the shape of the cow's udder for the robot where it needs to attach the cups to teats. Higher yielding cows turn up for milking three or four times a day.

Most importantly, the computer system records and

measures the composition of the cow's milk, allowing the farmer to identify the onset of diseases like mastitis (inflammation of the udder).

'This is one of the factors making a robotic dairy, of which there are only about 40 in Australia, worth the cost', said Nick.

Cows simply live longer in systems like these.

'We find cows' ailments faster and treat them earlier than under conventional dairy systems, thanks to the technology and meters available', Nick said.

'Cows live about a year longer than on conventional farms, and generally as cows get older they have the potential to produce more milk each year.'

When a student asked about the green stickers on the cows' backs, Nick said, 'It's like a scratchy'.

'We don't have bulls on this farm, so when a cow is in season, another cow will mount it, scratching the sticker and turning it grey.'

'When we see that we call the insemination technician. We use semen from the best bulls in the world.'

The Dornaufs are third generation dairy farmers and are no doubt hoping their son Angus, one year old, will be the fourth.

Nick's grandparents started in the 1960s with 60 cows in a traditional walk-through dairy.

Now the family owns 2300 cows on four farms around Deloraine. Gala is the only robotic dairy, employing around 20 locals who work on other Dornauf farms when not needed.

Nick and Rebekah, both university educated, installed their DeLaval robots two years ago looking to future proof their industry. They hope to inspire youngsters to take up high-tech farming too.

Surprise resignation sees council forced into damage control

Sharon Webb

THE MEANDER Valley mayor's personal pick for the position of business and economic recovery manager has resigned just nine months into a two year appointment.

Neil Grose's resignation was a bombshell the mayor admitted he didn't know was coming. He said he was 'disappointed'.

In May 2020, Cllr Wayne Johnston boasted on ABC Radio that he personally headhunted Mr Grose for the position,

specially created to bring new jobs, people and prosperity to Meander Valley after Covid-19.

Mr Grose's resignation came only weeks after the resignation of business development officer Victoria Purtell, who left the council for another government job.

According to one of the employees who resigned from Meander Valley Council in the past year, Mr Grose left because he was demoralised and dissatisfied with how the position had worked out.

Last month, the council tried to put a positive spin on Ms Purtell's resignation as it advertised three more positions on top of the eight advertised in January.

Cllr Johnston said the council had 'seen a number of staff changes as the organisation focuses on a new service delivery model to better meet the needs of our growing community.'

'We need to be in a position to effectively respond to the changing expectations of our residents. We have a responsibility to deliver the right services in an efficient and contemporary way.'

Cllr Johnston described Mr Grose's resignation as 'a temporary appointment', saying, 'We respect Neil's decision to pursue other opportunities and wish him well'.

But a colleague of Mr Grose understands that he was not resigning to go directly into another position.

Cllr Johnston said staff changes were initiated by

'recent restructure', where 'a small number of employees elected to take voluntary redundancies over redeployment or other options available under the council's enterprise agreement'.

That restructure was conducted by general manager, John Jordan, who was appointed to his position in early 2020.

But on top of the redundancies from the late 2020 restructure, it appears that at least twelve people have resigned from the council in the past year, including one of the council's four directors, Lynette While.

Ms While was replaced by Krista Palfeyman, who was appointed to the newly named position of director of development and regulatory services.

In May 2020, Cllr Johnston commented on Mr Grose's appointment on ABC Radio.

'We're pretty stoked to secure Neil from the Launceston Chamber of Commerce.'

'Considering there's not many good news stories about,

this will be a good one for Meander Valley.'

'We aim to look at what our strengths are – tourism, agriculture, getting some manufacturing back into Westbury industrial site.'

'I guess it's pretty open slather for the new role. We're hoping to come out of this really well.'

'We're pretty much a glass-half-full kind of council, not half empty, and we thought we needed someone with the nous and ability to talk to all walks of life.'

Eleven positions were advertised by Meander Valley Council in January and February 2021, including: manager community programs; team leader, project management and waste strategy; health, safety and emergency management co-ordinator; graduate environmental health officer; graduate engineer; administration officer; technical officer GIS; project manager waste services; PT town planner; community facility officer; general inspector compliance.

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Deloraine Street Car Cruise, 2021

David Claridge

WHAT HAS been one of Deloraine's biggest drawcard events every year since its creation five years ago?

The Deloraine Street Car Show. Only in cruise form this year, but still giving car enthusiasts a rare treat.

Holding the annual event for more than 10,000 people on the streets of Deloraine was a logistical problem, given the required Covid-19 restrictions.

To ensure the event still happened, the organisers decided to just 'cruise'.

'We would have had to fence off the whole area and contact trace everyone who came. Which, given our previous numbers, would have been hard to do', explained committee member, Carl Mansfield.

'There has always been a cruise as well, because we have so many people stay in the area before the show and bring their cars up. So we wanted to give them some entertainment.'

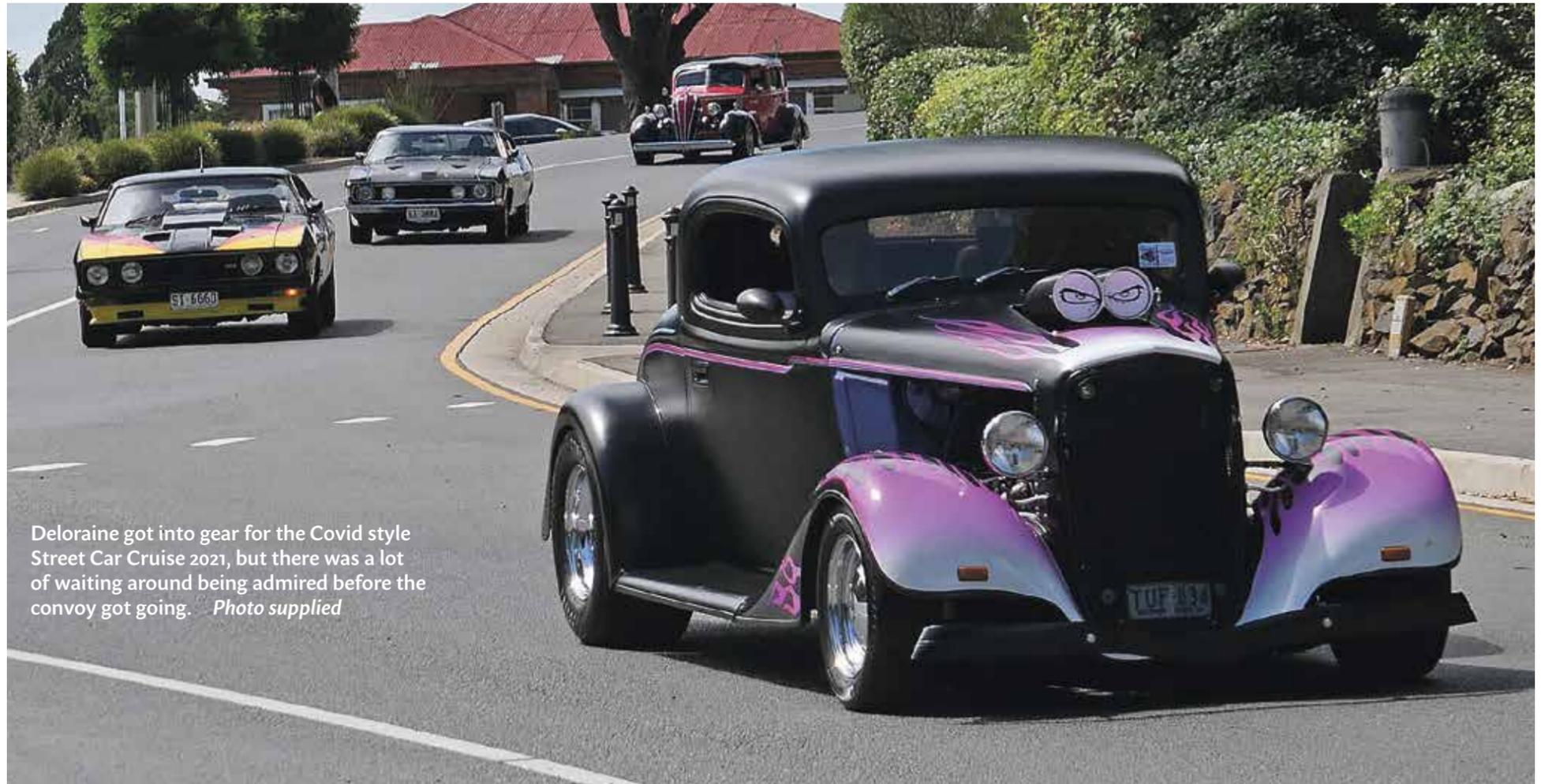
The 120 registered cars this year were taken on a mystery drive up to the Great Lake, hard to reach until a few years ago when the roads were sealed.

'The cruise took the people up over the lakes, to Poatina and the little towns around there. It was somewhere different.'

The organising committee have high hopes of the full event returning in 2022.



Beep, beep, woof, woof



Deloraine got into gear for the Covid style Street Car Cruise 2021, but there was a lot of waiting around being admired before the convoy got going. Photo supplied

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Letters to the Editor

BIRRALEE ROAD is already dangerous. The speed limit should be lowered.

I seldom get from Birralee to Westbury without nervously encountering several large trucks on this narrow road – log trucks, quarry trucks, cattle trucks, farmers' utes. Large milk tankers on weekends.

For them and for tourists on their way to the Tiers or even to the nice village of Westbury with its tractor museums this is the only way south between the Frankford and Bass Highways.

Quite obviously putting a major development (and believe me folks the proposed prison is BIG!) on this road will make a bad situation much worse – and not only during construction.

Ron Nagorcka, Birralee

IT WAS shocking and humiliating to see a social media post from Meander Valley Council that appeared to discredit the Meander Valley Gazette and attack their leading journalist, Sharon Webb.

It was eerily familiar to the hype that a former US president had horrifyingly inflicted on his country. Not the type of behaviour we expect from senior public servants, such as the General Manager of our local council, here in Australia.

The Meander Valley Gazette has always appeared to show both sides and does publish corrections, and rights of reply.

They are a community managed newspaper running on a shoestring, with shoestring staff/volunteers, lots of issues to cover and many contributors to fit into a paper each month. They are going to make mistakes as all media services do.

Sharon is an award winning journalist, and Meander Valley is extremely lucky to have her and the Gazette.

The paper has a long standing reputation for covering a wide range of issues and doesn't hold back, which is what the community expects and wants to hear. We can make up our own minds about what we think of the content.

The author of the Facebook post should be reminded that their wage is paid by ratepayers/taxpayers. They are not being paid to publish their personal grievances on social media. We pay them to provide strong leadership (including effective role modelling) to council staff and manage the daily running of the council.

There is an abundance of ragwort at the Bass Highway exit to Deloraine that needs attention, footpaths to improve in Westbury, and regular overflowing rubbish bins at the Train Park in Deloraine.

Torey Taylor, Birralee

I AM disappointed that our council GM chose to criticise our local paper online.

This only serves to divide our community more.

Lately it feels as if the council is at war with the community, and that is sad and destructive.

Heather Donaldson, Westbury

FINALLY SUS Timber Tas has seen sense and has begrudgingly permitted the Bob Brown Foundation to put on its annual takayna Trail event in public forest in the Tarkine.

I wonder what changed their minds to allow runners to access public forests usually locked up by our short-sighted forestry industry.

Maybe the government recognised that the forests are not exclusively for cutting down.

Maybe it is also time to stop logging native forest.

Felicity Holmes, Tinderbox

WE OF the Meander Valley, indeed all Tasmanians, have been through so much these past twelve months. But, we seem to be finding some light after the long Covid-19 tensions, so far, and are hoping for this light to continue.

In that time, like this light we are seeing, the MV Gazette has always been a welcomed addition to the family's home reading, each edition.

However, it's been noticed, at least lately, that a kind of darkening has been occurring. It is becoming more and more evident that the Gazette is being subject to our Council's attack.

The level of attack is what concerns me, because in the past, Council didn't seem as intense about being analysed or being commented about, in regards to their activities and decisions, or for that matter, about the efficacy of the Gazette. (reference to the MV Council website, 'Council writes to the MV Gazette, 8 Feb, 2021')

Albeit that the democratic machinations have been illustrating both the pros and the cons of the community's viewpoints – vast and wide as they have been, and controversial as some have been, indeed – I really aspire to keeping the Gazette immune (pardon the pun) from the viral attacks that our Council have been subjecting it to.

The MV Gazette is an evolved community asset, to be left just as it is.

Neither a single person or a single Council, or any entity between, should be subjecting it to attacks. Healthy criticisms, OK.

But attacks as they've been occurring, not OK.

Jon Nelson, Westbury

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice's latest advertisement in the Meander Valley Gazette states that 'A new environmental consultant has been engaged and will continue the important environmental investigation required to build our understanding of the site'.

A cursory glance at the Natural Values Atlas (NVA) would surely give the DoJ an 'understanding of the site' that would immediately rule out a high security prison.

In the past several months numerous records of flora and fauna have been added to the NVA, and not just by the DoJ's previous consultant, who himself found yet another rare plant. When Westbury Reserve was first purchased for conservation in 1999, three native orchids had been recorded there. There are now fifteen.

The proposed prison 'footprint' is strewn with pellets of the Tasmanian Masked Owl (listed vulnerable EPBC 1999, endangered TSPA 1995), a sure indication of its presence. Wildlife monitoring cameras have captured Tasmanian devils (endangered EPBC 1999 and TSPA 1995) on two occasions.

Furthermore, numerous migratory and endemic bush birds, many of which we

know are declining, breed at Westbury Reserve.

With a bit more 'due diligence', they might have discovered that in 2014 it was recommended that because of the large number of populations at risk of continuing decline, blue pin-cushion (*Brunonia australis*) be retained on Schedule 4 of the Threatened Species Protection Act (1995) as 'vulnerable'.

And of all the sites with some sort of formal reserve status, Westbury Reserve has the fifth highest population of *Brunonia*, although it is likely to be elevated to fourth because plants have declined elsewhere.

They could even have taken a look at the map on their own website and seen that the contours indicate that a minor watercourse at the proposed development site flows north into Brushy Rivulet, which has a relatively intact catchment and riparian vegetation and a conservation value rating of 'high'.

Any clearing of vegetation, construction and storm water drains are likely to pollute and cause sedimentation in the aquatic ecosystem of Brushy Rivulet, further along the Meander River and ultimately into the Tamar.

Sarah Lloyd OAM, Birralee

MEANDER VALLEY Council's attempt to bully the Gazette over alleged misreporting will hopefully fail ('Latest Posts', Meander Council website).

Council is deaf and blind in its unpopular and short-sighted support for the proposed Westbury prison and clearly is irritated by the Gazette's fair and balanced coverage of the prison issue, which has become a stark example of government

ineptness and failure to consult. Council appears hopelessly out of its depth and desperate for any government coin that might fall its way.

I encourage the Gazette to continue its questioning of council's attitude and motives in supporting the project, and providing insight for the Gazette's readers into council's very ordinary performance generally.

Mark Westfield, Freshwater, NSW

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Editorial enquiries

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Email: editor@meandervalleygazette.com

Phone: 6286 8212 (Please leave a message – it will send an email.)

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Advertising enquiries

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Current stories can be read online or readers can search for older stories they may have missed.

All editions of the Gazette are available to be downloaded as PDFs from the website 'shop' free of charge.

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Please note

While every care is taken, the producers of Meander Valley Gazette cannot be held liable for any publication errors in written material or advertisements. The opinions expressed, whether by paid advertisement or editorial content, do not necessarily reflect the views of this newspaper. Some material may be abbreviated due to lack of space.

Letter from the Editor

LAST MONTH, a public statement from Meander Valley Council was shared on the council's website and Facebook page by general manager John Jordan with Councillor Wayne Johnston's approval, but without prior knowledge of the majority of councillors.

The post included four letters from Mr Jordan to the Gazette, but did not include my replies, which he had received, but has failed to acknowledge publicly.

Cllr Tanya King shared the statement and letters across several Facebook pages.

The Gazette has asked Mr Jordan, Cllr Johnston and Cllr King to take down these public posts. To date, they have not done so.

Mr Jordan wrote his four letters to the Gazette between July 2020 to January 2021, claiming the Gazette is 'inaccurate', that it breaches journalistic standards and displays 'bias' against the council and council staff.

Mr Jordan's first letter was published in the August 2020 Gazette.

As managing editor, I politely replied to his other three letters, but declined to publish them. An open offer was made to reconsider this decision, if defamatory statements were removed. Mr Jordan rejected this offer.

Do not be misled. This dispute is not just about alleged inaccuracy and bias.

Council and the Gazette have been in disagreement on how the Gazette reports on council business since early 2019.

In a letter to the Gazette in May 2019, Martin Gill was forced to address the issue of the council using its advertising as leverage with the Gazette.

In a letter to the Gazette in August 2019, Wayne Johnston reiterated that 'council did not threaten to withdraw its monthly double page spread from the Gazette. Council's pages in the Gazette provide a valuable community service'.

But the announcement of the Northern Regional Prison to be built at Westbury in September 2019 created additional pressure over the following months. That is, to cease reporting 'negatively' on the prison if we expected council advertising to continue.

The Gazette is published by Meander Valley Connect Inc., which is run by a committee.

In February 2020, a committee member unexpectedly offered to act as intermediary between the council and the Gazette. Without full committee approval and against the advice of Gazette management, he met informally with

Mr Jordan and Cllr Johnston, subsequently reporting that 'Wayne and John, personally and corporately, also expressed their belief that our coverage of the prison issue appears to them to be a little one-sided.'

Without committee approval, he then urged the newspaper to immediately remove all prison coverage and anti-prison ads and attempted to arrange a 'review' of the Gazette by Country Press Australia. When the committee was informed, it declined to take the member's advice and he hastily resigned.

On 3 March, Mr Jordan wrote that 'council's use of the Gazette as an advertising medium will continue ... based on need, timing and suitability of newsprint as the most effective information channel.'

By the end of April, amidst Covid-19, council advertising had ceased.

WE ARE now the subject of Mr Jordan's public statements which demonstrate naivety about how newspapers work.

He claims that one reporter writes most of the content, unsupervised. Yet as editor, I supervise all content.

Small newspapers are often owned, written and edited by one person, eg, the Northern Midlands Courier and, until sold, the King Island Courier.

Gazette staff understand the need for balanced reporting.

However, in this community, three vocal groups of prison opponents actively engage with the Gazette and other media. Many passionate prison supporters will only comment on social media.

We report government statements on the prison and the State Government has booked a full page advertisement for 12 months to provide regular updates on the project.

We also believe that qualifications, experience and salaries of council employees are matters of public record and of significant public interest, especially to ratepayers. As actions and comments made by council staff as part of their paid employment.

Reporting on these matters does not breach 'a person's reasonable expectations of privacy' as claimed by Mr Jordan.

MANY NEWSPAPERS maintain professional standards of integrity without belonging to the Australian Press Council.

The Gazette is a member of the Victorian Country Press Association (part of Country Press Australia). This association does not review or supervise members. We joined to gain access to more advertising, not because of council complaints.

When we get it wrong, we will publish a non-defamatory letter from the complainant. Where there is a proper need

for a correction, we will correct the record ourselves.

Ignoring the Gazette's established complaints process, Mr Jordan threatens to go directly to the Australian Press Council. He also threatens unspecified legal action. If he takes this path, any legal costs would be paid for by ratepayers.

Meander Valley Council does not own the Gazette. Nor has it any right to style itself as a protector or mediator between the community and the Gazette.

We present facts and observations of interest to the community. We allow readers to make up their own minds.

This is how journalism works in a democracy. For the broad benefit of readers, not to further the interests of those in positions of influence or authority.

The council is welcome to advertise with us or meet with us. It is not the Gazette that is unwilling to engage. The Gazette is simply striving to remain free from interference.

We have always preferred not to publicise this dispute, but Mr Jordan and Cllr Johnston have chosen to do so. We have therefore responded publicly.

Mr Jordan, Cllr Johnston and a few other councillors may be happy to shoot the messenger.

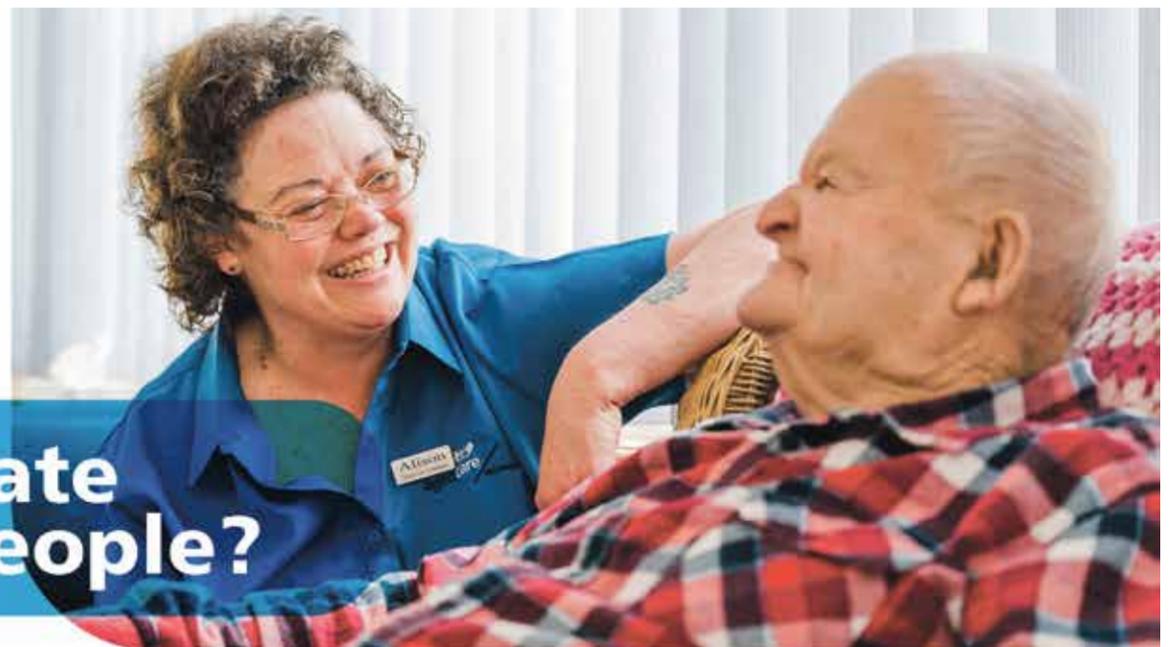
I doubt that most of our readers would feel the same.

Please let us know your views. You usually do.

Liz Douglass



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James Dean lives fast at the Carrick Cup



James Dean (inside) winning the Page Transport Carrick Cup. Photo by Stacey Lear

JAMES DEAN was the pacer of the day at February's Carrick Cup, leading all the way in a thrilling highlight of the day against challenger Buster William and the favourite, Mister Gently.

The former New Zealand horse was driven by Troy McDonald and trained by Ben Yole, brother of Carrick trainer/driver Mark Yole, out of his Sidmouth stables.

Mark Yole's horse Tisu Spirit ran fourth, disappointing after his win of the North-East Pacing Cup at Carrick a few weeks before.

A large crowd attended on a stunning summer afternoon, where competitors in the Fashion on the Fields delighted with frocks, fascinators and spiffy suits for the guys.

Casino development approved despite access concerns

Sharon Webb

A DEVELOPMENT planned for Casino Club Avenue in Prospect Vale has been described by Councillors as 'fantastic' and 'a high quality residential development'.

At their February meeting councillors unanimously supported rezoning 44 hectares of land at 100 Country Club Avenue from a major tourism zone to a general residential zone. They also supported inserting a specific area plan to provide for key features of the 380 lot residential estate.

Cllr Frank Nott commented favourably on the diversity of housing in the plan proposed by Kin Capital and Federal Group. It includes a multi-level retirement village for over 50s and open space, including bushland area and walking trails to the perimeter of the site.

Cllrs Nott, Rodney Synfield and John Temple were the only councillors who commented on the development or asked planner Jo Oliver questions about their concerns.

A major concern was the potential problems around Country Club Ave being the

single road into and out of the development. Harley Parade is to be restricted to local residents, pedestrians and cyclists.

Cllr Synfield said, 'I find it curious with a development the size of Blackstone Heights in its entirety that there's only one way in and out. I'm hoping the proponent will advocate strongly for that road to open.'

'If Harley Parade is not technically wide enough then we could maybe do something about that over time to make it a reasonable solution.'

Blackstone Heights residents recently expressed concern about the same single access/egress problem in a 95-home subdivision approved by the council for 68 hectares at 1 Panorama Road, mainly because of their fears of being trapped in a bushfire because of traffic bottlenecks.

On the Casino development, Ms Oliver said not using Harley Parade as a second access to Westbury Road was 'not ideal' but firmly discounted the possibility.

'Harley Parade was never designed as a substantive collector road', she said.

'This [changing it] will have a significant impact on existing residents who have

bought into and built in an area never designed as a substantive collector. Country Club Avenue was designed to handle those levels of traffic.'

Ms Oliver said Harley Parade not only wasn't wide enough for extra traffic but eliminating local parking down one side to widen it would 'go pear-shaped'. She maintained that widening Harley Parade would be 'phenomenally expensive' and that opening the road in an emergency was feasible.

'Emergency access via a gate is not an uncommon practice. If we do need to evacuate, there will be plenty of notice. Even though there will be a gate with a master key held by emergency services it will be well managed.'

Residents wishing to comment on the zone changes must submit them to Meander Valley Council by Monday 15 March.

The council is required to advertise the amendment in two Saturday newspapers and exhibit it for public comment for 28 days. It must consider public representations and report to the Tasmanian Planning Commission, who will hold hearings before making a decision.



Aerial view of the proposed rezoning 44 hectares from a major tourism zone to a general residential zone. Map reproduced from page 18, MV Council Agenda February 2021

Blackstone Heights rezone plan to be heard at planning commission

THE TASMANIAN Planning Commission will hear Meander Valley Council's application to rezone part of Blackstone Heights to include a local business zone.

The hearing at 10am on 16 March will consider rezoning

a 6.5h site at 2 Panorama Road and part of 12 Neptune Drive from low density residential to local business zone.

It will also consider inserting a Blackstone Heights local business specific area.

Councillors agreed in September to the rezoning application, which will allow Prospect developer Tasland to build Blackstone Heights Market Place, incorporating a fresh produce market, an event and meeting space, self-storage sheds and storage for vehicles, boats and caravans.

Currently no commercial or community services are available in Blackstone Heights for its population of 1270 people (2016 census).

Anyone wishing to attend the hearing in person, by phone or by video conference must complete a hearing attendance form seven days before the hearing. Forms are available at www.planning.tas.gov.au/assessment-resources/forms.



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Going nuts at Hazelbrae!

Below: Lexi Pietsch of Carrick demonstrates her superior nut cracking skills.
All photos by Darren Harris



Above: Ashlee Mitchell and Paula Connell from Hadspen tuck into pizza. Below: Debbie Smith of Deloraine with Saige (3) and Maya Smith (4) of Campbell Town, playing with water beads.



David Claridge

THE DOWNTIME for business during the Covid-19 lockdowns in Tasmania last year caused a lot of hardship.

For Hazelbrae owners Christie McLeod and Michael Delphin, it gave them the opportunity to plan an event that they had been wanting to do for many years.

The result was the first Meander Valley Hazelnut Festival, a sell out success.

Hundreds of people flocked to Hazelbrae in Hagley on Sunday 7 February, two days after World Nutella Day.

Christie shared how the event came together.

'We've had a festival in our minds for seven years, but

we've never had the time to organise it until now', she said.

'Advertising started three weeks before the event. All the tickets sold, so we had to unfortunately close the gates to walk-ins.

'Our Covid-19 plan limited the amount of people we could have at any time.

'People were able to bring an empty picnic basket and join in a "picnic circle" where they could pick their favourite foods from local producers, pick a spot to sit and eat, either on the grass or by the garden, and listen to the Pete Cornelius Duo.'

Children enjoyed the tractor rides through the orchard and the faerie hunt.

The big draw to the festival was the eating competition

where contestants had to eat one kilogram of Hazelbrae's own hazelnut spread made with Federation Chocolate.

Only one person was able to finish the contest.

'For next year's event we are thinking of making Ferrero Rocher cakes for the competition', said Christie.

Hazelbrae Farm Cafe is now back open for business, from Wednesday to Saturday 10am-4pm and Friday nights for dinner.

Bookings are being taken for the cafe and future group tours on 0482 945547. (Please leave a message or text outside opening hours.)

Product and wholesale enquiries can be made with Christie on 0438506988.

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Westbury in full bloom



Westbury Flower Show had a spacious, Covid-safe layout this year, and with 371 people through the door and 125 afternoon teas sold, it was a very successful day.

Charlie Smith of St Helens has been exhibiting at Westbury Flower Show for 58 years and was back again this year, winning the Reserve Championship.

Charlie won the Garden Clubs of Australia Inc. Award for Outstanding Contribution by an Individual to Gardening and/or Horticulture last year. With over 750 garden clubs across Australia, that is some achievement.

Charlie is also only the third person to win the Dahl Medal, in 2019, for service to growing, showing and breeding of new dahlias.

Charlie was one of this year's Open Dahlia judging panel. Society of Australia. Photos supplied

Council inflames dispute with Gazette by public accusations

Sharon Webb

FOUR MEANDER Valley councillors revealed at their February meeting they had no prior knowledge of a public statement by general manager John Jordan which made accusations against the Gazette.

In the statement on the council's website and Facebook page, Mr Jordan accused the Gazette of inaccuracy, bias and being 'at odds with Australian Press Council standards'.

The managing editor of the Gazette, Ms Elizabeth Douglass, has subsequently said Mr Jordan had been 'sparing with the truth' when he told

councillors at that meeting that she had responded only once to his four complaint letters.

'I responded four times, once to each of Mr Jordan's letters', she said.

'Also untrue is his comment to councillors that I said his letters could not be published because they would damage the reputation of the Gazette. We could not publish them because they contained defamatory content.'

In her 10 December letter to Mr Jordan and councillors, Ms Douglass wrote:

... we have made the decision not to publish Mr Jordan's letter ... because some of his comments,

without a proper basis, could be considered defamatory ...

If Mr Jordan would like to submit a revised letter, clarifying the council's decision-making process for our readers and adopting a more objective tone, then that letter will be considered for publication.

'Mr Jordan ignored that request, insisting that his letters be published without amendment,' she said.

Mr Jordan's accusations about the Gazette pivot mainly on a story about the appointment of the council's governance officer, Jacqui Parker, during Covid-19.

Mr Jordan said the story invaded Ms Parker's privacy and was not in the public interest.

He accused the Gazette of 'harvesting personal information' on Ms Parker after he had refused to provide the name, qualifications and experience of the person who had been appointed governance officer.

Mr Jordan is also dissatisfied with the Gazette's report that councillors supported the Mole Creek abattoir further to a recommendation by a council planner.

In February's meeting Mr Jordan confirmed that he had ordered the public statement be posted and that councillors had not been aware it would happen.

But according to the Local Government Act 1993, it is the mayor's function to act as the spokesperson of the council.

Cllr Frank Nott maintained that every councillor should have been made aware of the public comments, which were unsigned and made apparently on behalf of the council, before they were posted.

Cllr Rodney Synfield said he personally would not have made parts of the statement.

Cllrs John Temple and Andrew Sherriff confirmed they had not been aware of it.

Hot on the heels of Mr Jordan publishing the statement on 8 February, Cllr Tanya King posted it on several Facebook pages.

With the statement, Mr Jordan also posted the three letters which the Gazette has refused to print because they are defamatory of the Gazette and its staff.

Mayor Wayne Johnston stayed tight lipped after resident Emma Hamilton asked each councillor to indicate if they had been aware of it or approved the public statement.

Then twice he suggested that councillors could allow the issue to be handed over to Mr Jordan so he could respond instead.

In the website and Facebook statement, Mr Jordan wrote:

In recent months, the council has written (several times) to the editor of the Meander Valley Gazette seeking corrections on factually incorrect reporting about council staff and business. The editor has refused to publish council's most recent three letters, or correct the public record through a printed retraction.

When asked by Cllr Temple whether the Gazette had responded to his letters, Mr Jordan replied, 'We did receive a reply from the editor, and to paraphrase the response, they regarded it as inappropriate to publish the letters on the grounds that it would damage the reputation of the Gazette'.

Cllrs Stephanie Cameron, Susie Bower, and Tanya King said nothing during the discussion.

Cllr Sherriff said he didn't have a problem with the public statement posting.

Cllr Temple asked the mayor what practical things could be done to improve the relationship between the council and the Gazette. The mayor said, 'We'll have to wait and see'.

Cllr Kelly asked Mr Jordan whether any thought had been given to complaining to *The Examiner* newspaper about the Gazette.

Mr Jordan said, 'Yes there has. And we're also considering recourse to the Australian Press Council.'

Senator Claire

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Blessed are the cheese makers – Ashgrove wins big at Sydney Show

Sharon Webb

ON THE eve of opening an impressive new \$2m visitor centre at Elizabeth Town, Ashgrove Cheese has scooped the pool with five gold medals at the Sydney Royal Show.

The wins are confirmation that Ashgrove's two new cheeses, two years in the making, are cream of the crop among Australia's cheeses.

Ashgrove's Richard Bennett said the cheeses, Signature Vintage Eddington Cheddar and Signature Whitefoord Bush Lancashire, were superior cheeses at world standard. They are named after the company's local farms.

And the only place locals can buy them in the north of the state will be the new Dairy Door at Elizabeth Town, due to open in April.

The company's herb and garlic butter, full cream milk and farm light milk also won gold medals.

But if you're into Parmesan, then Ashgrove's Signature Parmesan wasn't far behind with a silver medal, as were their non homogenised milk, Whitefoord Tasty Lancashire

and Signature Cloverfield Double cheeses.

Richard credited Ashgrove's high standard milk with its products' high standards.

'A big part of the business has been growing the milk business, concentrating the market in Tasmania. Tasmanians are wonderful supporters of local brands', he said.

Ashgrove started with a much smaller factory. Over 25 years, the entire site has been rebuilt into a modern production facility.

Communications manager Anne Bennett said starting off with an upcycled mining building from NE Tasmania, Michael, Paul and John Bennett worked with farm worker Ivan Flowers to hammer every nail into the roof during the dairy dry season.

'Since then they've taken walls down and expanded everything in the shop, all done with materials from the farm.'

But the new building, constructed on the footprint of the old one by Tasmanian companies, is foremost about showcasing the Ashgrove brand.

'We're positioning ourselves as being competitive on the



Ashgrove Cheese employees Gennaro de Santis, Richard Bennett, Anne Bennett and Anton van der Schyff celebrate big gold medal wins with Ashgrove dairy products at the Sydney Royal Show.

Photo by Sharon Webb

national scene, an incredible pasture to plate story.

'There's not many of us left who are supplying nationally to Woolworths or locally to IGA', Anne said.

The new Dairy Door is a huge area, incorporating an indoor/outdoor café and views into the cheese making factory.

Ashgrove's pictorial life cycle will be presented as an immersive experience through a self-guided interpretation room, boosted by local hosts.

There will be a large retail area showcasing Ashgrove and local products and an unmissable feature, Ashgrove gelato, freshly made on the spot.

Do you have the personality to be a retail legend or tourism host?

Locals are invited to apply for positions at Ashgrove Cheese's new Dairy Door.

Training will be provided.

Phone 03 6368 1105 for more information.

www.ashgrovecheese.com.au

Graeme walks in pioneer footsteps

Darren Harris

SEVEN SPEAKERS helped the indefatigable Graeme R. Davis OAM launch the second edition of his book *In Pioneer's Footsteps* at Seppenfelts, on Saturday 13 February.

The book is an invaluable guide to Deloraine's history, built heritage and scenic drives and walks in Meander Valley.

The Hon. Guy Barnett officially opened the book launch, with long term friend and 30 year Deloraine resident Michael McBain acting as MC.

Other speakers included Cllr Frank Nott, Judy Dixon, Pat Woods (Deloraine Dramatic Society), Channel 7 news presenter Kim Miller, and Philip Browne (organiser).

Graeme said he started updating the 2nd edition on 1 March last year and finished it in late December. 'I put my time during Covid to good use', Graeme told the audience.

Mr Davis was awarded an OAM on Australia Day 2009 for service to the community, particularly through the Rotary Club of Deloraine and a range of arts organisations.

The launch was well attended by Meander Valley locals and others who travelled in to support Graeme, purchase the book and get their copy signed.

Mr McBain said Graeme updated the book the old-fashioned way by visiting people and phoning them. 'Graeme volunteered at Deloraine House to take groups on walks and

drives through Deloraine and the valley for three years prior to the first edition. The second edition has 49 additional pages and a few errors corrected.

'Graeme was a farmer here in the area for years. He was involved with the Deloraine Dramatic Society, a District Governor of Rotary, and he launched more new rotary clubs than any other person in Tasmania.'

Mr McBain said the first edition took a few years for Graeme to complete. Philip Browne helped Graeme complete the second edition by acting as organiser, distributor, researcher, editor, and indexer.

In Pioneer's Footsteps is available at Seppenfelts in Deloraine and other stockists.



Graeme Davis at the well-attended launch of the second edition of his book *In Pioneer's Footsteps*. Photo by Darren Harris



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Meander School graduates step out into the world

Dr Olivia Smibert and her Sydney actor sister Grace were disappointed when their former school closed, and perturbed at the dispute over the site's future.

But the influence of Meander Primary School on their careers and attitude to life is undeniable, they told reporter Sharon Webb

Grace Smibert

GRACE SMIBERT clearly remembers when the urge to become an actor hit her.

'Our teacher at Meander Primary, Geraldine Pennicott, directed *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and my part was to jump out of a huge oak tree in the school grounds onto a giant crash mat', she said.

'That's what set me on my path.'

These days that path is as an actor in a small Sydney company, self founded in 2018.

Currently they are performing *Shakespeare by Night*, a new way of viewing Shakespeare entirely by candlelight. Think of a candlelit 400 year-old script, conspiracy scenes in *Julius Caesar*, and you'll get the picture.

Grace's avenue to life as an actor started, post her Tasmanian education and a Melbourne Uni degree majoring in cinema and literature, at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), one of Australia's top drama schools that also caters for ballet dancers, opera singers and musicians.

'In my third year I won the Sally Burton Award and worked with a director from the UK. He invited me to do the play, *Love Girl and the Innocent*, about the Russian writer and political prisoner Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn in London', she said.

Grace's parents, Deloraine artists Tony Smibert and Carmel Burns, admit seeing the play about Solzhenitsyn's life in



Gulag labour camp was challenging. But not only for the subject matter.

'In the first scene I was naked in a delousing chamber', Grace said. Tony's comment? 'It was serious, confrontational theatre. Powerful.'

In 2019 a 10-week master class at Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre had a significant impact on Grace's view of ensemble theatre.

'They take 24 actors a year worldwide. The only non-Americans in my group were two Canadians and me', Grace said.

'Steppenwolf was a power ensemble theatre company in the 1970s. John Malkovich was one of the originals.

'The class wasn't about me being the star. The amazing theatre is the connections between people. I learnt that my art form is dependent on connecting with other people, my fellow performers and the audience.'

'I thought I should be trying to do work that makes my ensemble proud.'

Since that life-altering experience, Grace brought that philosophy to Tasmania in her recent Deloraine Christmas break.

She invited 35 local amateur actors to perform scenes from 12 Shakespeare plays in Deloraine's Little Theatre, by candlelight.

Aged 11 to 75, they turned up to a week of workshops and a performance, including young people from Liena who stayed in Deloraine for the week's experience.

'It was challenging. Suddenly I had more people than I could deal with. Some people had never picked up Shakespeare before', Grace said.

'I'm an actor not a trained teacher but adults and young people learnt from each other.'

'I realised that I was teaching them but they were also enriching me.'

In Sydney, Grace takes other jobs to earn a living, waitressing, after-school care, selling Danish jewellery. She can't take a permanent job because she wants to be available to take on a play.

She tells an anecdote that underlines her perception of the nurturing nature of a family/creative/country town environment as she grew up.

'At uni, I lived in Ormond College where there was a real mix of students, international, metropolitan Melbourne, private school, public school.'

'When someone asked me what my dad does, I said, "My dad's a watercolourist".'

'The person said, "Yeah but what's his job?"'

'That's when I realised that the life I went out into the world with was really quite special.'



Olivia Smibert

DR OLIVIA Smibert that knows some people are surprised she could come from country Australia and be successful.

The 35 year-old who describes herself as 'a grateful Meander Primary School student' is now doing a PhD in the immune systems of people who have received transplants.

But in August last year, just back from a fellowship year at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard University in Boston, Olivia was thrown into Australia's COVID-19 experience which was nothing like she ever experienced before.

With her specialisation in infectious disease, Olivia suddenly found herself deputy director of the COVID unit at Melbourne's Austin Hospital.

'We banded together and stepped up to a level of seniority I'd never experienced before', she said. 'A lot of staff shied away from it. Everyone looked to people with infectious disease experience as if we'd been waiting our whole lives to do it.'

COVID patients were admitted to a unit where Olivia had developed the protocols for triaging and written treatment protocols.

In an extraordinary situation she describes how she used her US contacts to get treatment information 'because the US was well ahead of Australia' in the disease's progress.

'We shared information without waiting for treatment plans to go through the normal channels. It was just awesome.'

But some events at that time were shocking.

'It was very challenging to see junior colleagues and nurses get

infected', Olivia said. 'I found it quite traumatic but at the same time inspiring to see what people were capable of.'

Post COVID emergency, Olivia still works in the unit but has resumed her PhD under the proviso that she can come back at any moment.

Her Boston experience in the famous hospital's medical science hub will contribute to her studies, the interest in infectious diseases piqued during her undergraduate years at UTAS.

The Alfred Hospital is a cystic fibrosis centre for Victoria where there are around 100 lung transplant patients a year.

'It's not a hands-on specialisation but an academic one', Olivia said. 'I collaborate with peers and patients to come up with individualised treatment for people with transplants.'

'I love that aspect of it. In other areas there's no room for discussion because things have already been done a thousand times before. I can tailor treatment to an individual transplant patient because so few have gone before.'

After her time at Meander Primary School, Olivia went to Deloraine High, Launceston College and UTAS.

'I was offered a scholarship to Monash Uni, but I went to UTAS and it was the best thing I ever did', Olivia said.

'I'm a grateful Meander Primary student. I had a wonderfully happy time under the mountains out there. My parents gave me a great gift when they moved from Melbourne to Deloraine.'

'It's been of enormous advantage to me because I grew up with a diverse range of people – and these days I work with a huge range of people.'

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Little Laneway Life

Left: Halfway To Forth headlined the Little Laneway Festival on Sunday 7 February. Below: Volunteer Mary Jane Gerson, Musical Director Kat Jeffree and Neil Gibson. Photos by Darren Harris

Darren Harris

FOR SEVEN Sundays of summer, the Little Laneway Fringe Festival has brought live entertainment, good cheer and business to Emu Bay Road, Deloraine.

Situated in the little laneway between The Empire Hotel and Seppenfelts, this little festival promotes community, a place to play for local musicians, and a place for community to enjoy live music and make connections

Alfred Franssen, co-owner of Seppenfelts, is the co-founder of the festival and a volunteer committee member.

Alfred said he came up with the idea for the first Little Laneway Festival in 2015. 'The original idea came from trying to attract the crowds attending the Tasmanian Craft Fair across the river to come over to the main street in Deloraine.

'It is perfect for a little street festival of performance, poetry, music, good for local businesses, the street and for Deloraine.'

Audience member Moira Weber, an Emergency Dept Nurse from Devonport, travelled down to the festival with her husband for the 7 February show, which had 50-60 people in the laneway, along the street and inside the Empire Hotel.

'I love supporting local music and local towns. Yesterday I went to the Sheffield Flower Show and today it is the Little Laneway festival.

'I'm originally from Augathella (north of Charleville in Central Queensland) and being part of a community means participation in rural towns, where the people from local business participate to entertain each other.

'I also get to see familiar faces and make connections. It is about community.'

Kat Jeffree, festival Musical Director and volunteer, said the laneway is a place for the community to come and perform. 'Local bands come and play, some people have their first gig here, musicians get to meet and hang out. The duo Avalanche met at a previous laneway festival, formed the duo and then recorded an album. A local drum group Come Unity had a jam session here, kids and all ages were welcome to come and play and join in.'

Kat said the Little Laneway Festival is starting to draw wider interest from further afield, including acts from Launceston and Hobart, and one from the mainland.

'Performers are now calling me to ask if they can play in the laneway each festival. It really does support the community.'

'It gives a place for bands and performers to play, people can see live music in an all ages setting, and local businesses get supported.'

'New artists get to play to their first audiences, and it is a place where original songs and music is welcomed and supported.'

Mark Flanagan, owner of The Empire Hotel, is another volunteer committee member involved in organising each festival.

Mark said the Little Laneway Festival enlivens the 'Paris' end of Deloraine, brings people to the street, and for hotel guests staying overnight, it is an added surprise.

The Empire Hotel sponsors the headline act for each festival. Mary Jane Gerson volunteers to pass around the hat for donations to give to the musicians, whose livelihood has taken a dint because of Covid-19.

The festival committee is currently thinking ahead for a two day Little Laneway Fringe Festival over Easter (3-4 April).



Camels at Quamby Corner



ON SATURDAY 26 February, Kevin and Ditt Briggs played hosts to John Elliott and his camel train, Charlie, Ted, Jackson, Arthur and Bill the Bastard.

John, the camels and Brusky the dog stayed the night at Quamby Corner (Tasmanian Trail campsite 4).

John's epic walk along the Tasmanian Trail, saw him stop off in Golden Valley before heading north. It's usually hikers, cyclists and horse riders at Campsite 4, so this was a first!

Along his trek, John is raising awareness of skin cancer, encouraging people to getting checked for melanoma.

John's efforts are part of the Beards for the Bush fund raising campaign for Beard Season.

Beard Season is a charitable organisation dedicated to providing information and access to testing for the early detection of melanoma, especially in remote and rural parts of the country.



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Nikki Sabok visits Deloraine every Tuesday morning

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Northern Regional Prison Project Update - March 2021

Current activities and focus

In the February update we advised that there is a significant body of work either underway or required in order to progress the Particular Purpose Zone and Development Application. With the engagement of our new environmental consultant North Barker, the focus is currently on preliminary flora and fauna surveys.

The purpose of the studies is part of the planning processes, and will provide a better understanding of the natural values of the site. Information from the studies will be assessed and reported in accordance with the required permits and relevant guidelines and legislation. This will include mapping of data, keying of plants and lodging of specimens where appropriate or as required.

In our last update we covered a number of specific issues that have been raised in relation to the potential impact of the project on the local community. This month we focus on some positive contributions made by the Tasmania Prison Service in the broader Tasmanian community.

Prisons in the Tasmanian Community

Installation of a park bench

A team from the Ron Barwick Prison in Hobart has demonstrated the benefit prisoners on authorised and supervised release programs can bring to the community.

The work team installed park benches at a nearby community park. This included a total of six seats, in addition to completing edging work over two days at the Warrane Community Garden.

The Warrane Mornington Neighbourhood Centre reported excellent feedback from locals and praised the Tasmania Prison Service for delivering a project with such a positive impact on the community.

Authorised supervised release programs focused on meaningful work are an important part of the rehabilitation of prisoners and are guided by restorative justice principles.

Artists With Conviction

The annual 'Artists With Conviction' invites entries from prisoners in all Tasmania Prison Service facilities, as well as those working with Community Corrections, including employees. Artworks include painting, drawing, photography, textiles, sculpture and literacy. The Tasmania Prison Service runs art workshops as part of providing meaningful and productive programs that play a key role in reducing reoffending.

2020 marked the 10th year of the *Artists With Conviction* exhibition and also saw the event moved online due to COVID-19. This enables greater access to the results of one of the Tasmania Prison Service's important rehabilitative programs.

The 2020 exhibition's theme was "Isolation and Connection", and approximately 50 works are available for viewing at the Artists With Conviction website www.justice.tas.gov.au/prisonservice/artists-with-conviction

Corrections Day

Corrections Day is an annual initiative held across Australia with a focus on recognising the important contribution of people working in corrections. This year's theme was "working together to reduce reoffending".

The work of Tasmania Prison Service staff was celebrated across Tasmania on Corrections Day in January, with functions at the Launceston Reception Prison and Hobart facilities. The events recognised the hard working staff, who work together to help rehabilitate people, acknowledging that the work can be both challenging and rewarding.

Partnerships with community organisations

Partnerships between the Tasmania Prison Service and community organisations play an important role in the work of prisons and prisoner rehabilitation. Just one of these programs is the long-standing relationship with the Dogs' Home of Tasmania through its "Pups on Parole" program. This partnership with the Ron Barwick Prison is highly successful, with benefits for both dogs and individuals.

One of the dogs in the program formed a strong attachment with prisoners in the Ron Barwick facility. Eight-year-old Caesar was having trouble finding a member of the public to adopt him. Prisoners from Ron Barwick raised more than \$1,000 to allow Caesar to become a permanent resident in the prison. Forming relationships with dogs and having responsibility for their care is one of many ways to help prisoners develop pro-social behaviours.

Where to find out more

For more information visit www.justice.tas.gov.au/strategic-infrastructure-projects/new-northern-prison

Or you can register to receive project updates by emailing the project team northern.prison@justice.tas.gov.au

For more information, visit
www.justice.tas.gov.au



Katherine's comment on the shifting world



Deloraine's Kath Willmott at the Eskleigh Summer exhibition with her winning painting *The Shifting*. Photo supplied

Sharon Webb

KATHERINE WILLMOTT'S childhood finger painting ignited her a love of transparency and colour, and set the scene for her recent win in the Launceston Art Society Summer Exhibition at Eskleigh.

Her work, *The Shifting*, is an acrylic on canvas, a semi-abstract comment on our constantly shifting world, both environmentally and socially.

'I like to find hidden worlds within our obvious environments', Kath said.

'Having lived in Tasmania two years now, I've found a medium I haven't tried before, acrylics on canvas. It is perfect for the clouds and landscapes now surrounding me.'

The competition's judge, Tasmanian artist and art

teacher Trudy Humphries, described *The Shifting* as having 'strength and rhythm, and shape and colour flicks'.

'It carries well from a distance, with variations through drawing, texture and hard and soft lines', she said. 'The work holds the judge's interest in its texture, line, colour and shapes.'

Ms Humphries judged 52 works, all from Launceston Art Society members.

Exhibition co-ordinator Aileen Gough said COVID-19 had placed limits on artists so there was no theme for them to work to this year.

Kath's art has been influenced by her watercolour artist mother and a youth spent surrounded by the plants and flowers in her family's nursery.

At TAFE she discovered a love of printmaking while



John Parish, words and pictures

John Parish explains his passion for art and wildlife. Photo by Darren Harris

bringing up a family. At university she majored in fibre art and printmaking.

Then all art faded into the background while Kath lived on a sailing vessel for 10 years.

'Photography became the medium to capture ideas. Water, light, reflections became the new muse', she said.

Since moving to Tasmania, Kath has also been highly commended in the Great Western Tiers Art Award.

The Summer Exhibition can be seen on Saturdays and Sundays, 10am to 3.30pm at Eskleigh, Perth, until 25 April.

ARTS DELORAINE'S first artist talk, with locally renowned artist John Parish at Trowunna Wild Life Park, Mole Creek, was well attended by a crowd of 30 people

John gave an intriguing talk about the evolution of his art practice, from laying down art paper in local caves to allow various animals to walk over it and make their mark over drawings, to his sculptures along the kooparoonia niara Cultural Trail in Deloraine.

John's passion for wildlife and 'making things' was clearly evident in his presentation.

John made his own rudimentary cameras to video four habitats in the region, and learned that each species made its own type of mark on the art paper.

John's work evolved to make wildlife sculptures, a commentary on how beautiful these creatures are and the loss of these animals in the wild.

For upcoming artist talks, contact Arts Deloraine.

At the movies with the Western Tiers Film Society

by Clare Andersen

April 10 THE IDEAL PALACE

2018 PG, Documentary/drama, France/Belgium, 105m Director Nils Tavernier

Set in the rugged Drome hills in south-eastern France, we follow the true story of Ferdinand Cheval, a 19th century country postman who rediscovers love and fatherhood late in life.

Though completely untrained, he obsessively decides to dedicate his spare time to building a stone palace for his daughter, Alice. For the next 33 years, Cheval picked up rocks during his daily mail round and carried them home to build 'the ideal palace'.

With a mix of different styles from Christianity to Egyptian to Hinduism, he drew inspiration from books and exotic postcards.

Completed in 1912, his palace was designated a historic monument in 1969. This museum is considered one of France's most important examples of the naive art movement.

'The Ideal Palace is a likeable, worthy and often quite moving film. Cheval occupies a tiny, mostly unknown speck of history, but his story mightily deserved to be told.' Graeme Tuckett, June 2019 rnz.co.nz

For information about the WTFS, email them at westerntiersfilmsociety@gmail.com or call 0418 389 868 for a membership application and program



One of the 'Frequently Asked Questions' we field at the WTFS is about how we choose movies. The answer is found in the critical reviews and audience ratings we access online from such sites as Rotten Tomatoes (RT), IMDb and Metacritic.

The ratings for films selected come from collation of the most respected critics contributing reviews. Films that achieve, or are nominated for awards at major festivals are also factored into our choice.

Rotten Tomatoes is the most commonly viewed site by audiences. It aggregates their, and critics' opinions, tabulating a score that is 'fresh' or 'rotten'. RT ratings are on a scale from 0-100, 0 meaning the film was terrible and 100 meaning both critics and the public think it is excellent.

Sometimes audience and critical opinion differ widely. Good critical reviews and poor audience ratings can mean too lofty a theme for what we know our members enjoy. The reverse (poor critical but excellent audience ratings), often means the film in question merits a further look.

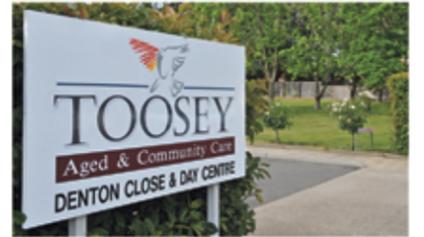
The Committee generally look for films which score well in both categories.

TOOSEY Caring for our community

Toosey offers Meander Valley and Northern Midlands community residents and others from surrounding areas the opportunity to stay close to their families and friends and to age in the community they have lived and worked in during their life.

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Artist in the valley

'PAINTINGS BY Graeme Whittle', an exhibition by award winning artist Graeme Whittle, can be seen at Deloraine Creative Studios, 59-61 Emu Bay Road, Deloraine until the end of March.

From left: Jude Fauvel of Cressy, Graeme Whittle and Natalie Sankey of Launceston. Jude and Natalie purchased a signed copy of Graeme's picture book *Becoming Elsie*, available for purchase at his exhibiton of paintings. Photo by Darren Harris

Deloraine pump track for kids at a standstill, say proponents

Sharon Webb

PROPONENTS OF a pump track for kids and teenagers on Deloraine's Alveston Drive say they are bewildered about the project's future because after they presented designs to the Meander Valley Council, council bosses have gone silent.

Project leader Fayth Drury, a 20 year-old Deloraine aged care worker, said the town's young people were disappointed, especially when they heard

about the recent launch of the West Tamar pump track.

'After we got the initial plans for the pump track we were so excited. It was all going so well,' she said.

'We've asked the general manager and councillors to meet us but they said no. They just didn't want to hear from us.'

A letter from the general manager John Jordan indicates the proposed pump track location appears mysteriously to

have changed from Alveston Drive to the Deloraine racecourse. That location was never discussed with the proponents and they firmly disagree with it.

Questioned by the Gazette about the future of the proposal, council general manager John Jordan has pointed out his January council meeting reply to a question from resident, Harry Schrepfer.

'The council has received the design of the pump track for Alveston Drive but is yet to consider the final location for the pump track with both Alveston Drive and the former race track precinct at Deloraine being possibilities', Mr Jordan said.

'As designed, the pump track will be more expensive than the council anticipated. A construction budget has yet to be allocated and will be considered as a possible project in the budget for 2021-22.

'Consultation with the community about the design and location is likely to occur after funding is secured.'

However Deloraine Lions secretary, Ted Carter, who is helping the young people on the project, reinforced Ms Drury's comments.

'I've been told privately by someone at the council that the general manager was going to quash the project', Mr Carter said.

'In a meeting last year I asked him point blank whether there was opposition to the project. He gave me the impression it would go ahead.

'We got a letter giving the impression the general manager wanted to locate the football club near the community complex and we would go to the racecourse.'

But project leaders oppose the racecourse location, which currently is so neglected it looks like wasteland.

They say it is prone to flooding, too isolated for young kids who would use the track for training and too close to the river for families.

The Alveston Drive location is surrounded by about a dozen houses and accessible to schools.

It's believed the communication mess is caused by the recent turnover of council staff.

'As long as Vicki Jordan was there we got regular updates but at this stage we haven't heard from the council since well before Christmas', Mr Carter said.

The mayor Wayne Johnston did not respond to an email on the issue and Cllr John Temple said he had heard nothing about the pump track.

'So much in this municipality seems to disappear without trace', he said.



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Giant Steps' footprint expands as they grow

Sharon Webb

GIANT STEPS in Deloraine is at capacity and has submitted plans for two new classrooms to Meander Valley Council as the first stage of a five stage development.

The development plans coincide with the school's purchase of the neighbouring property at 35 W Church Street.

Principal Tim Chugg said, 'That block connects to our existing block and fills in part of a rectangle. Our current playground hooks behind it.'

'We've grown from three classrooms to four but those four are now full and we envisage we'll have to add another class', he said.

'We need a lot of space to create a calm, roomy environment for our students.'

The five stages of the proposed Giant Steps development allow room to grow.

- 1 Two new classrooms incorporating a break-out room and a kitchen/dining facility.
- 2 The refurbishment of Tower Hill Cottage to house a speech therapy facility and the redevelopment of an existing classroom into a new library.

3 The major refurbishment of the Drill Hall for a new classroom.

4 The demolition of the Savage River building and construction of a new classroom, as well as provision of a performing arts / music room and the provision of three staff offices.

5 The modification of an existing classroom to incorporate a new kitchen / dining area and a breakout room.

Giant Steps caters for children on the autism spectrum.

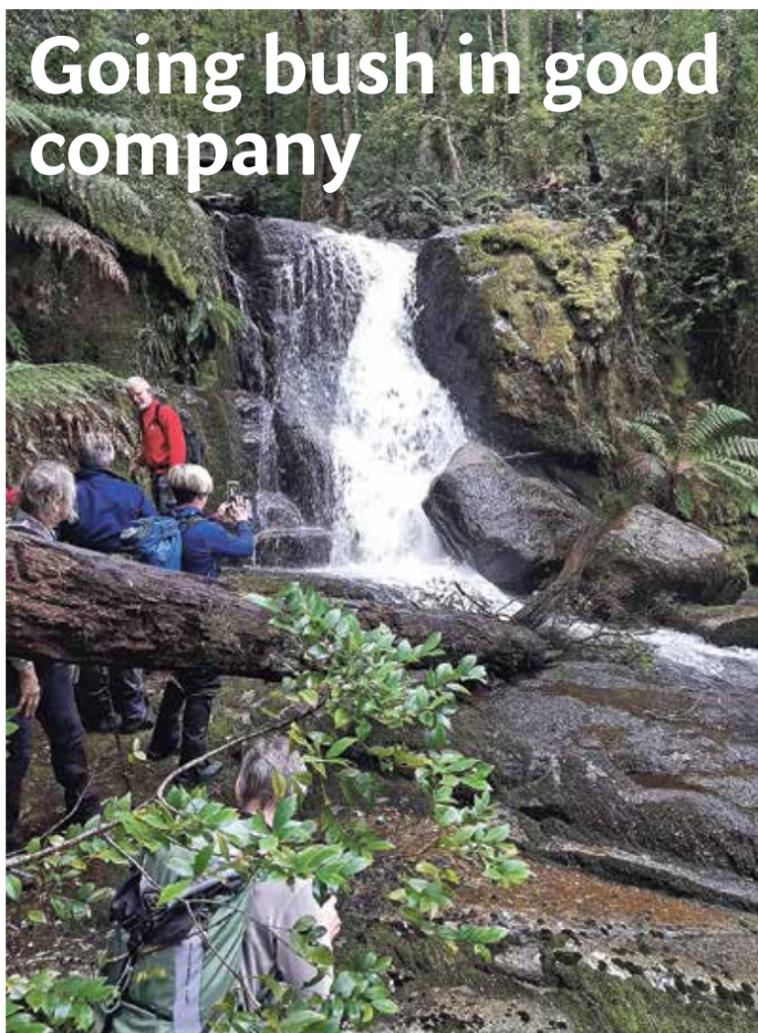
Currently 45 students attend the school.

One third of the students' families live in Launceston, another third in the Meander Valley and the rest are from the north-west coast.

'Many students come to Giant Steps after having trouble attending mainstream schools', Mr Chugg said.

'Recently, each year, one or two families have relocated here from interstate. Not just for their children to attend Giant Steps, but that is a factor in the move.'

'This year two families have come here and another will arrive soon.'



DELORAIN WALKING Club has been around for almost 50 years, with members enjoying bushwalks ranging from easy to challenging, at various locations nearby and further afield in Tasmania.

As well as walks, there are bicycle rides and enjoyable social activities.

If this interests you, why not give it a try and join us on a walk or ride? The club encourages guests to try out one of the activities. The club programs a walk or bike ride every weekend, usually on Saturdays.

The Club caters for anyone with a reasonable level of fitness, its priority the enjoyment

Deloraine Walking Club upcoming activities

13 March

Saturday walk

Lake Bill circuit, Lake Bill track to Lake Bill, returning via Juno Creek track
Rod How 0427 540 861

20 March

Saturday walk

Walls of Jerusalem, from car park to Pool of Bethesda, lunch and return same way
Pam Coleman 0409 549 199

27 March

Saturday walk

Bare Rock, Fingal, an easy walk, a short but steep climb to top for lunch and views
Martin Hudson 0417 304 620

11 April

Sunday bike ride

Westbury area, a reasonably easy ride followed by coffee, cake or lunch
Di Godfrey 0407 879 893

of the 'great outdoors' in a reasonably relaxed fashion, not as a competitive challenge.

For more information visit the Walking Club website: delorainewalkingclub.weebly.com or phone membership officer Diane Godfrey on 0407 879 893 for the full current program.

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NORTHERN REGIONAL PRISON PROJECT DELAY

The Premier has given his Government an extension of time, until the end of this year, to lob its development application for the prison onto Council's desk (*The Examiner*, 10 February 2021). This delay is unavoidable. It's the result of the Government's poor decision to rush its proposed prison onto Marneys Hill Reserve.

Marneys Hill Reserve is part of the Federal Government's National Reserve System. Sussan Ley MP (Federal Minister for the Environment) has asked the State Government to prove that the prison will not impact the natural values on the reserve. Minister Ley is in a position, right now, to knock the proposal off.

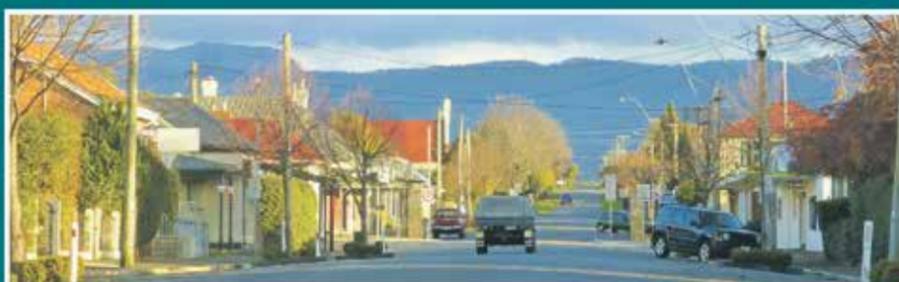
If you can see how ridiculous it is to place a maximum security prison on a nature reserve, please write to let her know.

Meanwhile, the State Government is keeping its plans and timelines for the prison completely under wraps (so to speak) so unfortunately we can't tell you what it's up to.

On the bright side, house sales in Westbury continue to rise. Of course, this is in line with the 32% increase in house sales right across the State (*Real Estate Institute of Tasmania Quarterly Report*, September Quarter 2020).

It is clear that Westbury does not need a prison to prosper.

We are doing just fine without it.



For more information, to join Westbury Region Against the Prison (WRAP), or to donate, please check out our website: www.westburyregionagainstthepriison.org or our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/WRAPTas/



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Something special in the Valley



THE FOREST Folk's inaugural Something in the Valley night was a huge success.

Fairy lights covered the walls, the stage was guarded by magnificent hand chainsawed wombats, a halo of myrtle hung from the ceiling and vintage velvet couches and lamps added to the lustre of the evening.

Jasmine Rocca of the Forest Folk reported on receiving so much positive feedback on the calibre of music, lighting show,

delicious food and transformation of the hall.

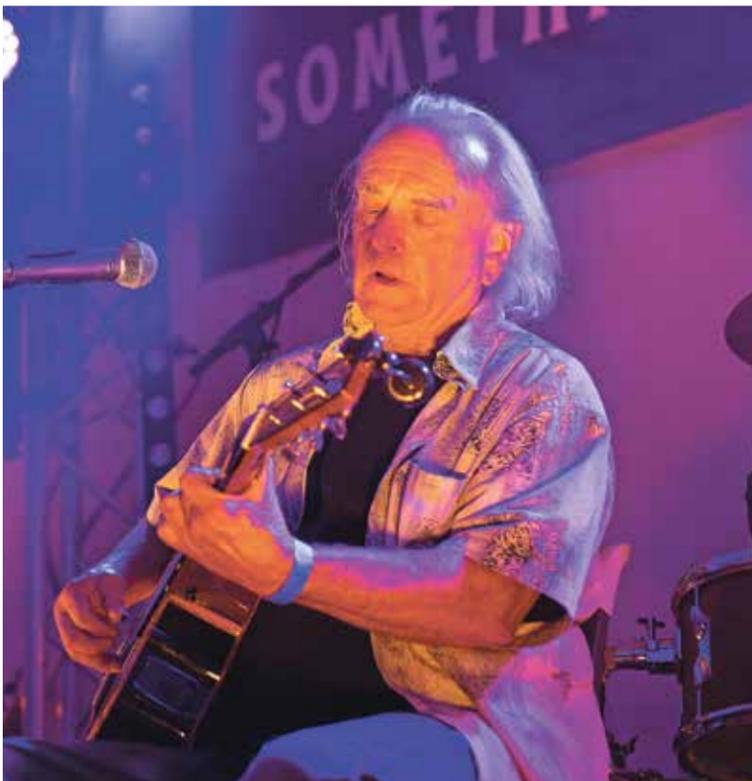
A team of volunteers helped pull the night together. The raffle, drawn by little locals Huckle and Rohie, was a huge hit and made the night exciting and fun.

The organisers were told the sound was 'the best it's ever sounded' in the hall. Emotions flowed, seeing the community come together so strongly. Many patrons emailed to say how special the evening was.

Jasmine concluded, 'I must give a huge thank you to the Meander Valley Council for their support, to the performers, volunteers and businesses who donated to the raffle, and to my friends for making this a most enjoyable process.'

'I think its fair to say Something In The Valley will be back next year!'

Top: Sundaze – Launceston reggae/surf rock duo Fletcher Bissett and Taylor Yates. Left: Meander's Eddie Tuleja. Photos by Linton Tuleja



To coincide with our 70th anniversary year, the Deloraine Dramatic Society is staging

CINDERELLA THE MUSICAL

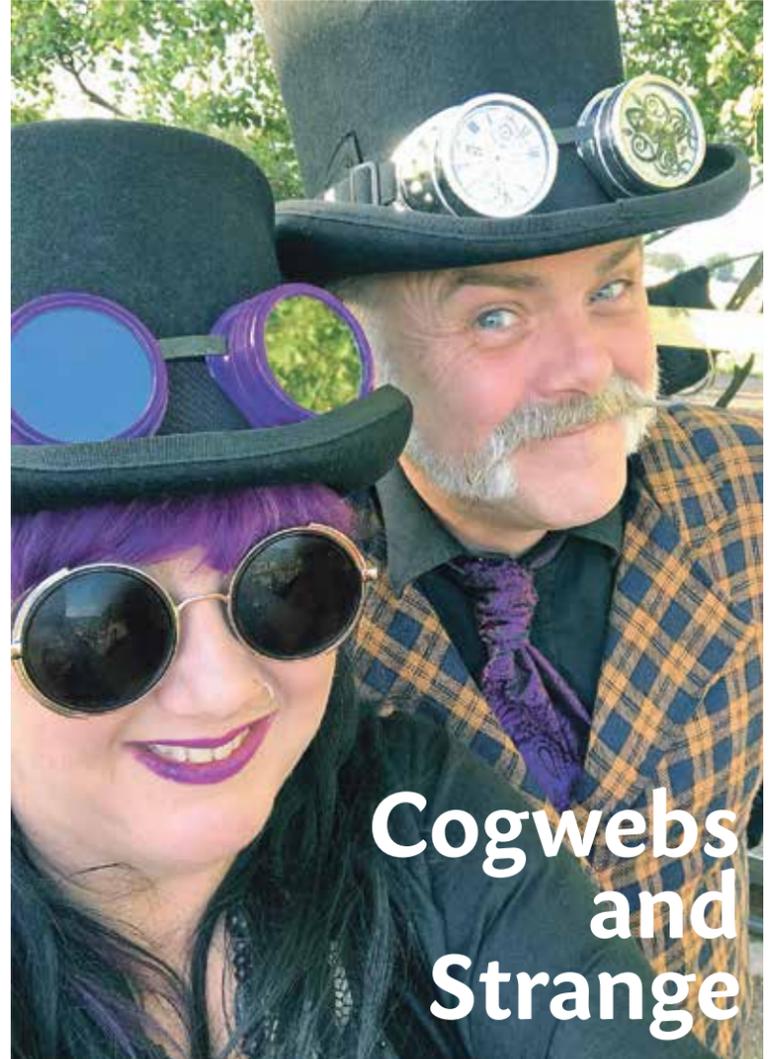
a theatrical-musical-cross-dressing extravaganza!

Auditions commence on 11 April 2021, with performances scheduled for August 2021.

WE WANT YOU!

Auditions are open to anyone and everyone, of any age, for a variety of singing and acting roles, chorus and technical crew.

Check out the Deloraine Dramatic Society Facebook page for details and contact for auditions and enquiries.



Cogwebs and Strange

The voices of MVFM

John Phelps

'HOW WOULD we describe our music? Well, it's steampunk, alternative, noisy at times, strange, Goth, Victorian, strange – no, we've already said that – interesting, diverse.'

Thus spake Julia Gosling and Gordon Stoker!

They were talking about the program they host on Meander Valley Community Radio. It's called 'Cogwebs and Strange' and its introductory music is based on a piece by The Who with a similar name.

This ebullient couple's program may be heard on MVFM 96.9 at 9 pm on Mondays and Thursdays.

Julia and Gordon left London, England, five years ago to make their home in Tasmania.

And they love living in Deloraine because, among other reasons, it's quiet, the air is clean and people are friendly.

They have been aficionados of Goth music for forty years or more so it's not surprising that they enjoy and take part in alternative music played by Tasmanian bands which, they say, really make an effort. And achieve national success!

Julia and Gordon say they receive lots of positive community feedback about their program, especially when listeners call into their shop.

Of course, just entering their shop in Deloraine is quite an experience in itself, with plenty of strange, Gothic items on display.

There is even a passageway displaying all you would ever want to know about the 'Whitechapel Murders'. Everything but the identity of Jack the Ripper himself.

How would they describe the contents of their shop?

'Well, it's steampunk, alternative, strange, interesting, diverse ...'

Please!. Don't start all that again.

Rupertswood Farm Crop Maze

A wonderful day out for families and friends, the Crop Maze will be open for five weekends only.

To ensure a COVID-safe environment, visitors are encouraged to purchase tickets at www.rupertswoodfarm.com.au/ticket-bookings/.

Tickets are limited and a 10% discount is available to online ticket orders over \$60, by applying the 'save10' Coupon Code at checkout.

For further Crop Maze information: 0403 075 766 (Anna Clark), info@rupertswoodfarm.com.au, www.rupertswoodfarm.com.au

The Crop Maze will be open from 10am to 4pm (last entry):

Weekend 1 27–28 February

Weekend 2 6–8 March, long weekend

Weekend 3 13–14 March dogs (on leads) allowed 2–4pm, Sat 13

Weekend 4 20–21 March

Weekend 5 27–28 March dogs (on leads) allowed 2–4pm, Sat 27



Jen Butler MP

Your Local Member for Lyons

7A Wellington Street Longford

03 63242070

Tasmanian Labor

jen.butler@parliament.tas.gov.au



Never fail Rhubarb and Ginger Jam



Rhubarb and ginger jam, just perfect with scones and cream! Photo supplied

Jam making is very much a science, relying on the correct proportions of pectin, acid and sugar ratio to achieve the perfect 'set'.

Jam setting sugar has pectin and acid added to ensure success without prolonged boiling and deterioration of colour.

Experienced jam makers may like to use ordinary sugar and a little lemon juice for this recipe.

You can also reduce the amount of ginger in the recipe or omit it altogether if you are not partial to this flavour.

Rhubarb and ginger jam

Ingredients

Up to 30g fresh green ginger – peeled and sliced thinly
750g jam setting sugar (found in the sugar section of the supermarket)
750g rhubarb – washed, dried and finely chopped
75g crystallised ginger, finely chopped
A few drops of red food colouring (optional)

Method

Place the sliced fresh ginger in a piece of muslin or clean Chux cloth and tie into a little bag with string.

Combine the prepared rhubarb and sugar in a large bowl. Mix well and add the ginger bag. Leave to stand overnight.

Next day, transfer the rhubarb mixture to a medium size saucepan. Bring to the boil, stirring occasionally.

Boil for about 10 minutes or until setting point is reached.

Remove from the heat and take out the muslin ginger bag. Stir in crystallised ginger.

Return to the heat and cook a further minute or two. Add food colouring if using to improve colour.

Pour into warm, sterilized jars. Seal and label immediately. The jam can be used straight away but the flavour develops over time.

Wendy Hays

IT IS just as well I have generous neighbours who are great jam and relish makers because I must confess I am not much of a preserver. Having said this, I hate to see garden produce wasted.

This easy recipe for Rhubarb and Ginger Jam will be a winner if you are new to jam making and have a glut of rhubarb.

Rhubarb seems to be one of those foods people either love or hate. About the only way I really enjoy rhubarb is if it's disguised with other flavours.

Originating in Asia, the dried roots of rhubarb have been used in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years.

Rhubarb is botanically a vegetable but it is usually used as a fruit.



Heliopsis – late summer bloomers

THIS METRE high perennial belongs to the numerous Asteraceae or Daisy family which comprises one tenth of the world's flowering plants.

They inhabit every zone on the planet, from the Arctic zones to the tropics.

The herbaceous *Heliopsis* (pictured) grows to 1.5 metres and is both frost and drought tender, but as it disappears during the winter months, frost is rarely a problem, and this wet summer, irrigation has rarely been necessary.

Heliopsis are easily propagated by root division.

January rainfall of 66mm has been kind to gardeners and



farmers alike. The hose has only been used once, early in December, to keep very drought tender Hydrangeas alive.

In the vegie garden

Broad beans, broccoli, leeks, lettuce (those harvested leaf by leaf) can be sown. It is a little late in the summer to sow the big hearted varieties like Iceberg, but the smaller varieties come in different colours

and add interest to a late summer salad).

For best results, broad beans should be sown in the months of early Autumn.

Those sown in September do not do as well as those which are sown in March and April.

They should be ready for picking in October or November, at the time when there are very few fresh green vegetables about.

They also freeze well.



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A Hemp Day Out



Above: THA President Tim Schmidt addresses the group in front of the crop.
Top right: John McCausland and Anna Povey check out the Westbury hempcrete house.
Bottom right: A hemp plant from the current crop at Woodlands farm. *Photos by Darren Harris*

Darren Harris

A HEMP house, a hemp beer and a hemp burger were the attractions for the Tasmanian Hemp Association's Community Education Day on Friday 19 February.

Meeting at Woodlands Farm, just outside Deloraine, a group of about 50 people took the opportunity to inspect the mature hemp crop, where Tasmanian Hemp Association (THA) President Tim Schmidt opened the education event.

Tim said the crop contains the industry standard of less than 1% cannabis in a tightly regulated industry.

Next was a coach ride to Westbury to visit a hempcrete house. Then it was back to the woolshed at Woodlands farm to enjoy a tasty hemp burger and a hemp beer.

John McCausland travelled from Launceston to attend the event. John said he has invested in a company that is buying a machine to harvest the hemp crop, which will create the hempcrete.

'Hempcrete is the crushed stalk of the hemp plant mixed with lime and sand. Its advantages are the reduction of plastics and glues in the environment and also it is a more sustainable product and good for energy conservation.'

Anna Povey also travelled from Launceston to attend the event as she is building a hempcrete house in Stieglitz.

Sean and Mandy Manners, owner builders, started building their own hempcrete house in Westbury a couple of years ago.

Sean said the average house, when a negative pressure test is conducted, has 15 air changes per hour, whereas a hempcrete house has 3 changes per hour.

'When it is 28 degrees outside, it is 22 degrees inside. There are no cooling bills, and minimal heating bills (and with a battery installed there are no heating bills). The house is built to last 100 years and is environmentally sustainable.

'Hempcrete is a better-than-zero-carbon material because more atmospheric carbon is locked away in the material for the life time of the building than was used in its production and use.'

The Westbury hemp house has approximately 3300kg of CO₂ locked up in the hempcrete.

The Federal Member for Lyons, Brian Mitchell MP, attended the event. Brian is Deputy Chair of the House of Representatives' Standing Committee on Agriculture and Water Resources.

Brian said that historically hemp was used for many

things, until it was phased out because of the introduction of plastics in the 1920s.

THA Executive Officer Andi Lucas said hemp is a sustainable crop that can be grown three times per year, and results in a variety of useful products, including hempcrete, hemp fibre for clothes, hemp seed oil and more.

According to the THA website, growing industrial hemp has been legal and grown in Tasmania since the early 1990's, under very strict Federal and State legislation and laws involving numerous government departments.

On 3 March 2016, after extensive consultation with key hemp industrial stakeholders the new *Industrial Hemp Act 2015* came into force.

The THA offers its grower, associate, corporate and supporter members ongoing educational and agronomic support while facilitating critical networking and community events.

Its aim is to promote more sustainable agriculture and to continue to develop ways to increase the use of hemp as a renewable and sustainable source of food, fibre, fodder and extracts.

Farmers, investors and curious locals can contact the THA for more information.



Keeping cows out of creeks

THE STATE Government is helping farmers keep cows out of creeks to the strength of \$100,000.

Under the Cows out of Creeks program, the government is trying to convince farmers that cows trampling creeks which supply water to people is not a good thing.

Guy Barnett, Minister for Primary Industries and Water, said \$5,000 grants will be provided to 20 farmers across the state to build infrastructure and install offstream watering system aimed at preventing cows from accessing waterways.

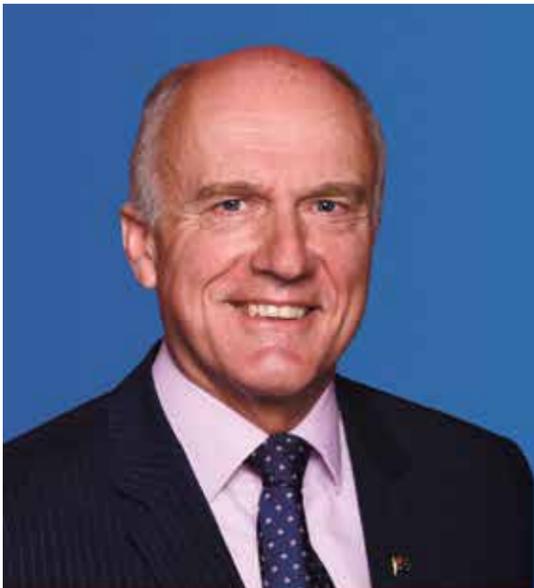
'This funding commitment follows the success of the past seven rounds of the Clean

Rivers and Cows out of Creeks programs', Mr Barnett said.

'I was pleased to join the Howe family at Caveside to announce the latest round of funding for the program which has assisted farmers to sustainably grow their businesses while protecting Tasmania's precious waterways.

'It has also helped to ensure that livestock are drinking clean water and are healthier, and by removing livestock from our waterways, we are reducing the nutrient, sediment and pathogen loads entering them.'

More information can be found at www.dairyaustralia.com.au/dairytas.



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Andrew Johnston with Dana Blair, recipient of this year's Tertiary Scholarship awarded by the Rotary Club of Deloraine. Photo supplied

Rotary opens opportunities

THE ANNUAL Rotary Club of Deloraine Tertiary Scholarship of \$3000 has been awarded to Dana Blair.

The cheque was presented by Andrew Johnston at the monthly Rotary breakfast at the Deloraine Deli.

The money for the scholarship was raised at the Tasmanian Craft Fair.

The Rotary Club of Deloraine has now committed to run the 2021 Tasmanian Craft Fair, which will be held from October 29 to November 1.

For information, please call Ann on 03 6362 2325, or go to one of our websites: www.rotaryclubofdeloraine.org.au/, www.rotaryfunctioncentre.com.au/, or www.tascraftfair.com.au/.



A golden opportunity to shop

THE GOLDEN Opportunity Shop on Emu Bay Road, near the bottom roundabout, is run by a group of over 20 volunteers.

All proceeds stay in the community, and the shop makes regular donations to several community organisations.

The Golden Op Shop also helps individuals in the community who may have unexpected bills and expenses, and the staff are always very

friendly and approachable.

Recently, the shop was revamped with extra shelving, gratefully obtained from the closing of Best & Less in Launceston.

At the moment, the Golden Op Shop is having its Summer Sale with 50% off all clothing and shoes in the store.

So take the 'op' to drop in to the new look shop and grab some bargain gold!



New shelving and a Summer sale makes the Golden Op Shop a great stop for a bargain. Photo supplied



Hadspen Women's Cricket, well on track and loving it!

David Claridge

HADSPEN'S WOMEN'S Cricket Team have wrapped up their season, learning a lot from what has been described as a development year.

Despite only two wins for the season, after winning their first match and round 12, the team is well on track to make gains next time around.

Club President, Corey Martin believes the benefit is that women who never played before had the opportunity to try it and found they love it.

'The women have a culture where they want to have fun first, while still wanting to win, an important aspect of the game.'

'They have improved every week they went out.'

The team plays T20 cricket, popular for its fast-paced play with only 20 overs in which to score as many runs as possible.

The club next year is looking to branch out and field an u14 skills development team.

'We encourage anyone in the municipality interested in playing, to keep an eye on our Facebook page for any opportunities that may come up.'

'Anyone wanting to make friends and try their hand at a different sport – this is a great game.'

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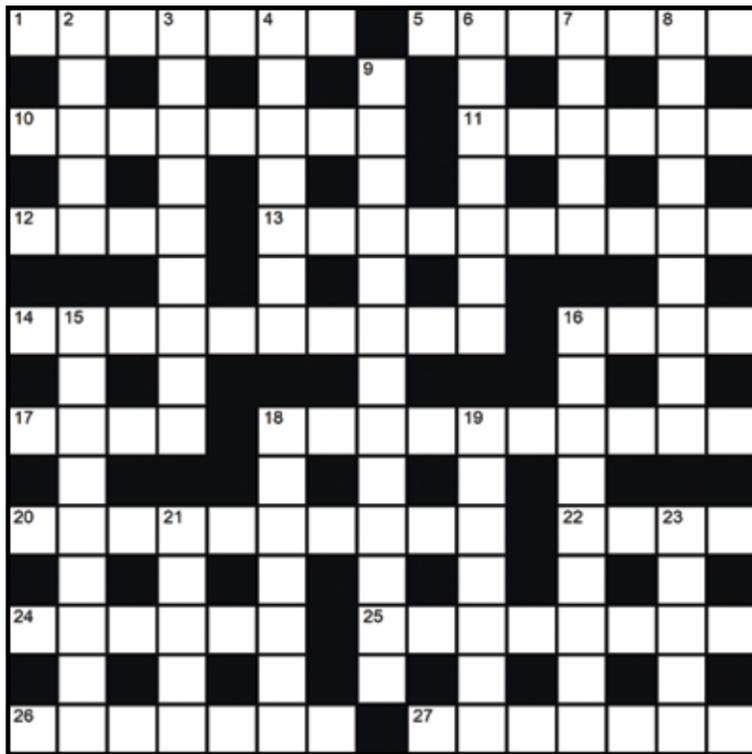
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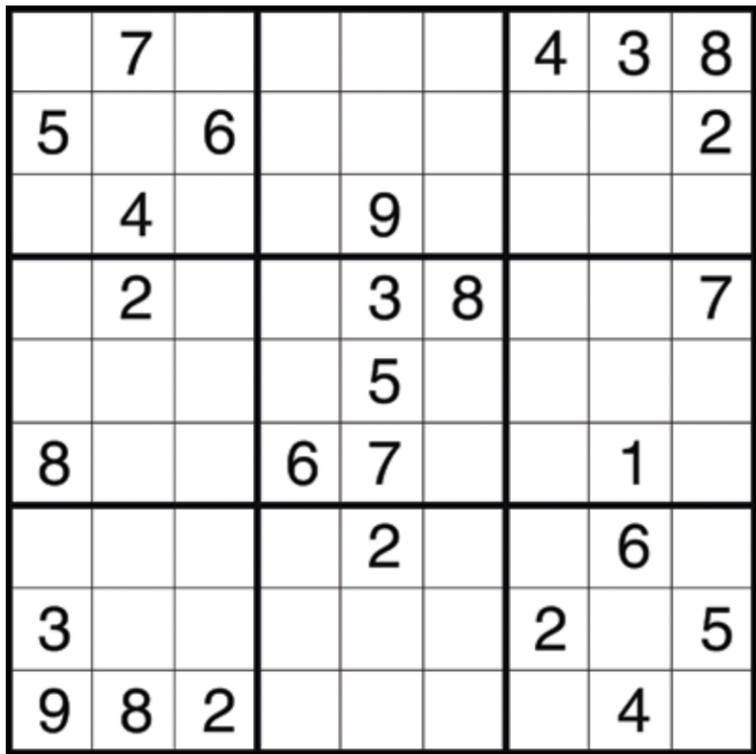
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21 West Parade, Deloraine

Crossword



- Across**
- 1 Illness indicator (7)
 - 5 Warning not to trust technocrats (7)
 - 10 Type of bobsleigh (8)
 - 11 Turbulent (6)
 - 12 Wine press residue (4)
 - 13 Where Oliver Twist and Jane Eyre were, for a while (10)
 - 14 Dressmaker (10)
 - 16 Complain bitterly (4)
 - 17 Render speechless (4)
 - 18 Apelike son thrashed a hockey player (6, 4)
 - 20 Bolder lady regenerated as punk rocker (5, 5)
 - 22 Sharp to the taste (4)
 - 24 There's nothing in it (6)
 - 25 Christian rockers (8)
- Down**
- 26 Former Deputy Prime Minister Doug ____ (7)
 - 27 Led down the aisle (7)
 - 2 Hard work (5)
 - 3 Claim peon is beaten up for a public servant (9)
 - 4 Frontier settlement (7)
 - 6 Student's whereabouts, preferably (2, 5)
 - 7 Hawaiian hello (5)
 - 8 Fuzzy (9)
 - 9 Sydney Harbour feature (7,6)
 - 15 Amuse (9)
 - 16 Held in esteem (9)
 - 18 Middle part (7)
 - 19 Follow-up punches, in boxing (3-4)
 - 21 Moolah (5)
 - 23 Banjo Paterson speciality (5)

Sudoku



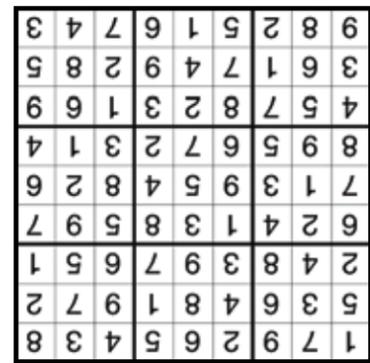
© 2021 Syndicated Puzzles

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 March 2021 solution



Sudoku March 2021 solution



Meander Valley Gazette is looking for volunteers with office and administration skills, or proofreading and editing skills. We are accredited for Centrelink, so if you are thinking of volunteering, you can find us at Deloraine Online Access Centre, 21 West Parade, Deloraine. Call 6286 8212 or email us at editor@meandervalleygazette.com.



Events diary

GREAT WESTERN TIERS VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE
Incorporating Yarns Artwork in Silk and Deloraine & Districts Folk Museum
98-100 Emu Bay Road, Deloraine, Tasmania 7304
Phone 03 6362 5280 www.greatwesterntiers.net.au



NOTE that events listed here may be cancelled or changed after publication, especially if they are affected by Covid-19 restrictions. If you have an event you wish to publicise, email the details to advertising@meandervalleygazette.com and we will add them to the list.

Date	Event or business	Details
Any time	Bonorong Wildlife Rescue	Call to report finding injured & orphaned birds & wildlife 0447 264 625
Every Monday, 1.30-3pm	Music therapy for NDIS participants	Magic of Music Deloraine High School Music Room Info Dee 0499 179 055 or Alex 0409 891 118, booking essential
Mon-Fri, 10am-4pm	Community House	Deloraine House, 112 Emu Bay Rd Call 6362 2678 for advice on a wide range of services & programs
Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm	Community Health Centre	Westbury Community Health Centre & Day Centre Call 6701 2150 for health & community services
Every Tuesday, 10am-12 noon	Hadspen Playgroup	During school term Uniting Church Hall, corner of Clare & Main St Contact Andrew Keena 6393 6324
Every Tuesday, 10-11.30am	Happy Hands Art Time for 1-5 year olds	During school term Deloraine Seventh-Day Adventist Church Hall, 4445 Meander Valley Rd www.happyhandsart.com.au
Every Thursday, 10-11am	CHAT Westbury Play Gym for 0-5 year olds	During school term Westbury Sports Centre, Franklin St \$3.50 per child (under 12 months free) 1st visit free
Saturdays and Sundays	Deloraine Walking Club	Walks and bike rides https://delorainewalkingclub.weebly.com for program of events, contact and membership information
Sat 13 March, 9am-1pm	Liffey Community Market	Old Liffey School Phone (03) 6397 3670 or email quentonhiggs@gmail.com
Sat 13 March, 10am-12.30pm	Poetry @ the Liffey Community Market	Ten Days on the Island Poetry Truck Hosted by Bert Spinks, features poets, storytellers and musicians - free, no registration
Sat 13 March, 7pm sharp	Western Tiers Film Society <i>Babyteeth</i>	Little Theatre, 2 Meander Valley Rd, Deloraine NR comedy/drama 2019 Australia 117m Info 0418 389 868
Sat 20 March, 9am-1pm	Mole Creek Market	Mole Creek Memorial Hall, cnr Pioneer Drv & Caveside Rd Maree Martin 0419 631 210
Sat 20 March, 9am-1pm	Westbury Market	St Andrew's Anglican Church Hall, 11 Lonsdale Prom, Westbury Rob Menzie 0417 931 619
Sat 20 March, 10am	Deloraine Lions Biggest BBQ	Tranex Solar, cnr Emu Bay Rd & Parsonage St All funds raised go to Australian LIONS Childhood Cancer Research Fund
Sat 20 March, 6-9pm	Valley Events Kid's Disco	Meander Hall All ages welcome Register on Facebook Gold coin donation greatly appreciated
Sat 27 March, 9am-2pm	Carrick Easter Market	Carrick Public Hall and Recreation Ground country market, coffee and food vans, car boot sale, kids activities
Sat 3 April, 9am-1pm	Deloraine Market	Showgrounds, Highland Lakes Rd, Deloraine Bodhi McSweeney 0409 695 321
Sat 10 April, 7pm sharp	Western Tiers Film Society <i>The Ideal Palace</i>	Little Theatre, 2 Meander Valley Rd, Deloraine PG documentary/drama 2018 France/Belgium 105m Info 0418 389 868

Jobseeker ending will impact on community

Darren Harris

THE ENDING of the Jobseeker and Jobkeeper payments at the end of March are likely to have harder impacts on families already doing it tough in the Meander Valley community.

Deloraine House Manager Deb Smith said Deloraine House has already seen an increase in people looking for support during Covid-19.

'More people have been coming in looking for a no interest loan or emergency relief food. There has been a dramatic increase in numbers over the past 4 to 6 weeks.'

Deb said they are preparing for another increase when Jobseeker ends on 31 March.

'Before Covid we would see mainly elderly people and people from low socioeconomic backgrounds, but now we are seeing a lot more, what you could call the working poor, people on low income who are just above the Centrelink threshold.'

'They may have had reduced work hours or had two part time jobs and lost one of them.'

'They may not have the internet, or it doesn't work, and it costs them to travel from remote rural areas to Deloraine House just to get help.'

'We have been seeing an increase in mental health unwellness too.'

Deb said that the reduction in Jobkeeper on 28 March will likely see a reduction in the market place for a lot of businesses. 'It will be a make or break time for them and they may not be able to keep all

their staff on. Tourism is definitely down too, and this region relies on a lot of tourism.'

Deloraine House was established in 1989 as a community owned centre, which enabled it to remain open during the pandemic.

Deb said other local and state government owned community centres closed and this led to a big increase in numbers accessing Deloraine House.

'A lot of people needing help also came from outside of the area when Covid hit, and a lot of seasonal workers were unable to head to the mainland and did not have cold weather clothes.'

'The Meander Valley is the biggest municipality in Tasmania, and the Northern Midlands don't have a community house.'

This led to Deloraine House recently being presented with the 2021 Meander Valley Council's Australia Day Award for 'Exceptional Service to Community' for its efforts during Covid-19 in 2020.

Deloraine House is funded through the state government's Department of Communities.

'We also rely on the generosity of the community, smaller grants and through reduced equipment costs from businesses.'

'Our 85 registered volunteers help out in the Harvest Helper program, Community Gardens and at the house itself.'

Deloraine House plans to cope with the end of Jobseeker and Jobkeeper through a range of programs, including distributing food and vegetables via



Volunteers Chris Riley, Michael Bishop and Eve Taylor, with Manager Deb Smith, in Deloraine House's industrial fridge. Photo by Darren Harris

the Pantry Cupboard, accessible to everyone at Deloraine House.

'Deloraine House has an industrial fridge which can store cryovac vegetables up to 12 months. Over the recent holiday season, a refrigerator and microwave, along with our fresh produce share pantry, were added to the front verandah to assist in supporting community. We also provide free access to a community shower and laundry facility for those in need.'

Community members in a position to help can do so by donating excess produce, or by donations such as clothing, especially winter clothing for the coming colder months.

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Deloraine Football Club, Racecourse Drive, Deloraine Tuesday March 16, 6.30-9.30pm, free dinner.

Tickets essential. Go to www.bootsonthegroundtas.org to book or to find other dates and venues.

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Get a wriggle on this summer!

David Claridge

A SNAKE going for a swim at Lobster Falls in Mole Creek was caught on film that made it onto the ABC recently.

This is a scary reminder to keep vigilant for snakes over the hotter months.

In fact, according to local snake catcher Olivia Dykstra, they are entering their mating season and are more likely to be unpredictable at this time of the year.

Fresh from removing a 'decent' tiger snake from a property earlier, Olivia explained that male snakes are

not going to be looking before crossing roads and will be more defensive than usual.

'You need to keep away from snakes, she cautions. 'If you come across a snake, don't get close or they will get defensive. Give them a wide berth and leave them alone. Get kids and dogs inside and call a snake catcher.'

There are three species of land snakes in Tasmania, the Lowland Copperhead, Tiger snake and White-lipped snake. They are all venomous.

Olivia runs her business, Snake Catcher Tasmania, from Whitmore.

She relocates snakes that she catches to areas where they won't cause harm.

'I'm also in contact with a few farmers that are happy to have them on their property to keep the pests away.'

Olivia has some tips for avoiding snakes on your property. 'Keep grass short and the yard tidy. Get everything up off the lawn. They can also be found in burn piles.'

Olivia can be contacted on 0438 558 782.

Snake catcher Olivia Dykstra, of Whitmore, with one of her catches. Photo supplied



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Anna completed her classical music education in Poland, under the instruction of Polish and Russian music teachers. Her main instrument was piano, and her second instrument was flute. She took part in many national and international piano and choir competitions, with top placings in a number of those.

Anna is moving permanently to Deloraine in February 2021, where she will be offering piano lessons to adults and children of all ages, in the Launceston and Deloraine areas. Anna will be equally happy to provide the lessons in her home and in students' homes. Should you be interested in starting with Anna in February, please call her on 0400 654445, or email: brownmargaret117@gmail.com

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