

# Merrijig Matters

## Merrijig's Monthly Newsletter

February, 2014

Issue 10

### Index

Feedback / local Justices of the Peace	2
Breaking News/ Rock 'N Roll at Merrijig	3 - 5
Who's doing what lately	6 - 18
Warning on Wild dogs	18
Welcome to Merrijig /Farewell to Marj Hearn	18
CFA summer alerts	19 - 21
Welcome Pack what do you think?	21
Do you need some FREE help?	22 - 23
Devanya O'Dea	23
i-Pads, Trees and 'Made in the Shade' Umbrellas	24 - 26
Merrijig Primary School News	26 - 27
Word from the Mansfield Shire	28 - 29
McCormack Park	30
Merrijig Rodeo	30 - 31
Merrijig Campdraft News	31 - 32
Motorbike Club News	32 - 33
What's on at the local?	33
What's going on at Merrijig Hall?	34 - 35
Local service advertisements	35
End of Newsletter Joke	36

### Quote of the month



About Darlene Ouimet:-  
Her entire life she  
struggled with dissociative  
identity disorder, multiple  
personality, chronic  
depression, and the  
effects of multiple abuse

including child sexual abuse— a survivor who  
has become a life coach to help others.

"Controllers, abusers and  
manipulative people don't  
question themselves. They  
don't ask themselves if the  
problem is them. They  
always say the problem is  
someone else."

-Darlene Ouimet

## Feedback on December's newsletter

I was very flattered and quite chuffed to be nominated for Mansfield's Australia Day Awards as citizen of the year for bringing out this newsletter. They do not tell you who your nominee is, so whoever you are I would like to say thank you. It was quite a thrill to be so acknowledged.

My daughter Michele and her two little girls and my eldest granddaughter Jessica holidaying from suburban Melbourne, all came with me to the afternoon tea at the Mansfield Shire Council Chambers for the presentation of the nomination certificates and announcement of the chosen award winners for 2014.

There were quite a number of nominations for citizen of the year from various areas of the community and all very worthy of acknowledgement, so it would not have been a simple job to choose one winner.

This year was not my turn, but I was thrilled to be nominated and knowing that what I do with the newsletter is appreciated makes this a most enjoyable job for me. Congratulations to James and Catriona Wilson of Mansfield for their selection as Citizens of the Year.

Back issues of the newsletters can be viewed on the Merrijig Community website at:

[http://www.merrijig.com.au/html/local\\_news.html](http://www.merrijig.com.au/html/local_news.html)

**Some articles in this newsletter may be picked up by the Mansfield Courier so consider this if you are submitting stories you could be sensitive about sharing with the community wider than Merrijig.**

If you're looking for a **Justice of the Peace**, here are our two local JP's

Dale Daly, Timbertop School

5733 6777

Laurie Jacob, Buttercup Rd

0439 280 333

After April 3, 2014

## Breaking News about Merrijig Rodeo

– a good news story

I am pleased to report that the iconic Merrijig Rodeo will be held as scheduled on Saturday, March 8. After much deliberation and negotiation, the Merrijig Rodeo and Sports Association interim committee is continuing the organisation of the event. Backed by the community the interim committee made up of the original committee and additional volunteers headed by Helena Simkin is busy finalising arrangements so this year's rodeo will be as enjoyable as ever.

Helena is well placed in this role as she was president of the committee in 2004 when she chose the new site, the current venue at McCormack Park.

Already there is a call for volunteers from the Merrijig Public Hall Committee which runs the barbecue. "Seeing there has been so much support from the community surely there will be keen people to help at the barbecue," Kerrie Purcell commented. "Shifts would be in two hour blocks. Any willing helpers could email me at [kartigi57@hotmail.com](mailto:kartigi57@hotmail.com)," Kerrie concluded.

See Page 30 for further information about the Merrijig Rodeo.

## Next Community event at the Merrijig Hall



**SATURDAY FEB 22<sup>ND</sup> IS THE DATE**

when Merrijig Hall will be Rockin' to the music of the 50's and  
60's Rock and Roll

Get your tickets now and come along a bit early  
for a lesson session prior to the beginning of the night.

Bulk ticket sale discounts are available for groups of friends who choose to get their tickets at the same time.

Buy 10 tickets and pay for only 9.

Menu of spiders & milkshakes, popcorn, hot dogs, chips and cheeseburgers,

then if a machine is available maybe even doughnuts.

All sold at cost prices hopefully reflecting the 1950's value for money.

**BYO alcoholic drinks ~  
soft drinks will be available.**

100 tickets are ready for sale with many already earmarked or sold.

Entry will be by ticket only.

A couple of Hot Rods will be on display out the front great photo opportunities for those who come in dress of the era.

Mark your calendar now & grab your tickets early so you won't miss out.

**Start time will be 7pm,  
\$10 per head for adults  
Children under 16 free**

Don't miss  
out now



Ring Frank 0400 315 344  
or  
Adele on 0409 600 655

## Who's doing what lately?

### Paige Webster in Vietnam



*Rear L to R: Aran Maloney ,Daniel Stow, Travis Dyball, Lachie Christopher, Jayme Rekers, Sam Lehman, Tim Hume, Sam Shipley  
Front: Sarah Bell, Molly Chiller, Alicia Foster, Paige Webster, Claire Murphy, Ruby Leiber, Tom Gardiner. Pictured at Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum, Hanoi – Photo by Cheryl Christopher*



*Paige playing what looks like a game of tug of war at a Vietnam school*

Cheryl Christopher kept all of us in Australia up to date with what the Mansfield Secondary College kids were up to in Vietnam. And Paige showed up in some of the photos posted on Facebook but had not been 'Facebooking' much herself. One can only assume that free Wi-Fi is not prevalent in Vietnam so teenagers are not able to keep updating their adventure!



*At left above, one of the hand knitted Topsy Turvy dollies Paige took from Merrijig with a not so enchanted kindergarten child. Photos by Cheryl Christopher*

Cheryl explained that - 15 Mansfield Secondary College students including local Merrijig girls Paige Webster and Molly Chiller, recently returned from a trip of a lifetime to Vietnam.

The group left Australia at the end of December last year and returned home to excited family and friends on January 29 after an exhilarating and extremely busy month. The group reported there were so many highlights that it was difficult to say what was their most memorable.

Arriving in Hanoi was certainly a huge cultural shock and crossing the busy roads was something all had heard about but seeing was believing! In a matter of 24 hours the group had successfully worked out a system to effectively get themselves from one side of a street to the other and within days appeared as though they had been in the country for years.

The students visited the embalmed body of Ho Chi Minh at the Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum and for many this was a highlight.

The amazing reverence for the former leader is evident throughout the country however no more so than at the mausoleum where his preserved body encased in a glass refrigerated coffin is visited by thousands daily.

For some the trekking phase of the trip was a highlight and proved challenging for all – especially the teacher who certainly wouldn't have made some of the steep climbs without the assistance of the students.

The final ascent to Mt Fansipan, the highest mountain in Vietnam was memorable for all and there are some great photographs of the students at the small monument at the top of the mountain – proof that they indeed did make it.

The project phase at Mai Chau involved the students building a toilet block for an elderly couple. This saw them put all of their collective talents together to produce something which the couple were simply overjoyed with. Working as a team the group erected the building from scratch, with some technical advice from some local tradesmen.



*Paige in the orange trying to copy the boys - rather unsuccessfully it would appear.  
Photo by Cheryl Christopher*

Visits to both a kindergarten and a secondary college provided the students with an opportunity to interact and develop their Vietnamese language skills. There were games of tug of war and a soccer match at the secondary college and lots of time for play at the kinder.

The trip provided many with the opportunity to take advantage of the incredible tailors and seamstresses in the multitude of shops where a suit, dress or even a pair of shoes could be created in around 24 hours. Two of the students had deb dresses made and both were absolutely stunning.

The rest and relaxation phase of the trip came about quickly with students deciding to spend time at Halong Bay, Halong City and Cat Ba Island. There were bicycle trips to local markets, kayaking adventures, boat cruises, ventures to local food markets where speciality dishes were sampled. Most of the students reporting they love Vietnamese food. All became very proficient at bartering with locals both in small villages and the larger cities. Some would spend 10 minutes negotiating a price reduction of 10,000 dong (equivalent to about 50 cents)!

Local school teacher, Cheryl Christopher, who accompanied the students said she was enormously proud of each and every student and that the experience was certainly one which was life changing for each of the 15.

“I think there will be many from the group who will now put their passports to very good use,” she said. “This trip will be the start of great travels for many in the group,” Cheryl said.

“Tom Furey the World Challenge leader who met us in Hanoi was absolutely amazing. He was incredibly professional and knowledgeable as well as being a terrific role model for the students.” “He had previously had very little to do with Aussie kids and was very impressed with our group”.

“So much so that he’s considering a trip to Australia,” Cheryl said. “I congratulate all of the students on their remarkable conduct and achievements throughout the trip” she said. “As well as this I congratulate the parents of these students who have produced some outstanding young people,”.

**Report by Cheryl Christopher**

## **Diabetic camp for children**

During the early days of January, Frank Johnson who has been a diabetic for more than 40 years offered to spend time at the YMCA Camp at Anglesea as a Volunteer Mentor/Leader looking after 10 and 11 year old children with Type 1 Diabetes on a Diabetes Australia Junior Camp. With so much experience living with diabetes Frank was a great example of how this condition need not stop you living a ‘normal’ life, (*whatever that is*)! He felt it allowed him to assist the kids come to terms with their illness and demonstrate that if they look after themselves they can achieve anything, maybe even become a member of the Victoria Police.

Being in his early 60’s Frank found the kids rather wore him out, still “they were great and the week went quickly” he told me. One drawback was that there was only time for about six hours sleep a night – the kids are tested for blood sugars at 12 midnight every night to ensure they do not have a hypo (*low blood sugar*) whilst sleeping. Doctors, nurses, dieticians, diabetes educators and many

other volunteers (*a lot who have diabetes since childhood and have returned as leaders*) come to the camp and had loads of fun with the kids. This camp is a great concept and has been going on for many years and the 10 and 11 year old kids get the right information on how to look after their diabetes and have some fun, as kids should.

There is also a camp designed for younger children and their parents, so the parents learn along with the little children, some of the tricks on managing to live with diabetes. There is a camp for teenagers also with age appropriate direction, methods and activities to show how teenagers can have just as much fun as the next teenager who doesn't have to live with diabetes. This time though Frank was with the middle age group and even managed to get the better of some of the boys when they were playing rough house, thinking no doubt that Frank being an old bloke would be a push over they threw themselves at him as they had done the younger volunteers. Frank took an old Rugby stance and the boys bounced off him although he was also tipped over. Not to give up easily the youngsters attacked him again while he was down but he again employed his Rugby tackle tricks earning a different level of respect from the boys by proving he could still take on three at a time. It warmed his heart when some of the children spotted him shopping following the end of the camp and they called out "Hello Frank" and waved. Although it exhausted him initially after a bit of a rest he is not opposed to offering his services a second time – "maybe next year"



**Dave Lovick**, also on holidays in Vietnam, sent home some amazing photos.

He reports on Facebook that he's finding the place fascinating and the history astounding being thousands of years old where our Aussie history is by comparison a dot in time.

*Dave says 'hi' from Dung Hoi Resort*



*Near Sa Pa paddy fields are created in terraces on hillsides making a spectacular picture*

Dave has been on numerous tours and various tourist adventures including canoeing and cave exploration and of course he appreciates the farmer's laborious work being from a farm himself.



*Dave celebrating Australia day in Dragon Bar Vietnam.*

He reported one day that he "Had a great tour guide today. I taught him all the Aussie slang. 'No worries mate.' 'A coupla days.' 'Bloody oath'...!"

**Judy Kirkham and Fritz** are off to Florida on February 5 for 26 days where they will stay with Fritz's sister who has a holiday house in Kissimmee, Orlando. The couple also has plans to be spending a few days in Los Angeles on the way home and hope to have some photos to share for the next issue of the newsletter. Judy says she'll need to brush up on her German though or she will be missing out on the happy chatter between Fritz and his sister.

Having lived through our little heat wave Judy said "We will welcome the cooler climate around 24-26 degrees on average." Safe trip Judy and Fritz and we all wish you a ripper time, lots of laughs and sight-seeing.

**Georgie and Peter Deyell** have gone camping – Yes gone camping!



You can almost hear Peter saying "Duh Dah". With only the fly to go over then it's home sweet home and ready to move in to.

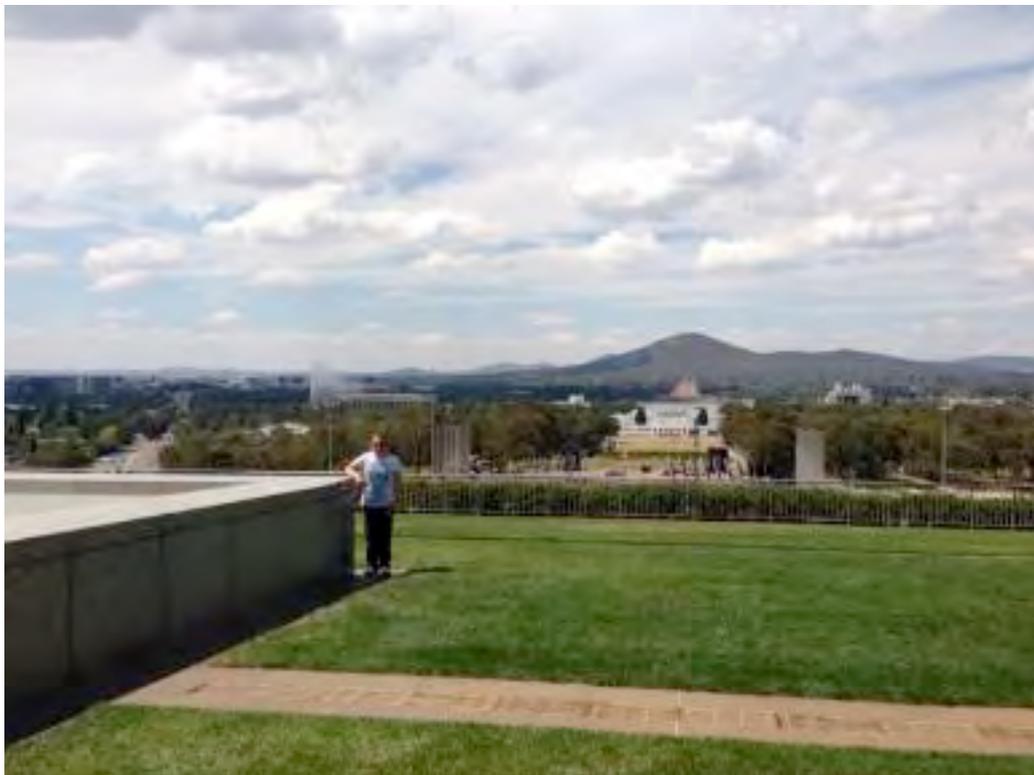
Time to de-stress - and to find a dog-friendly camping spot in the Tarra Valley in SE Gippsland, with phone signal, is a dream come true.

To be surprised by the visit of some friendly Koalas on two separate occasions was an unexpected pleasure.



**Jessie and Gran (alias Adele) do Canberra** after surviving the hot days in the first week of her holidays at Gran's farm, Jessie was thinking it may be better to go home, till Gran came up with the idea of hooking on the caravan and going somewhere for a few days. Canberra was decided on and after getting the OK from Mum and Dad via text messages sent immediately the idea was broached, the plan was set.

It took 6 ½ hours to get there as Gran needed a nap in the van on the side of the road, arriving at the caravan park at around 5:30 with plenty of time to jump into the lovely pool.



The following day began with a guided boat trip on Lake Burley Griffin. The carillon players were practising for a performance so we were treated to “some enchanted evening” played on the bells, it was beautiful. Gran was then conned into co-working a paddle boat. Next, onto Parliament House which I am pleased to say my 12 year old found interesting, as they had learned about the parliamentary system in Australia at school. Jess was particularly impressed with the symbolism of the people being able to walk on the grass above Parliament House meaning that the politicians were not above “the people”.



A drive up to the Telstra Tower on Black Mountain was our wind down before heading back to the van. With Gran rather worn out by then, Jess spent the rest of the afternoon in the pool and although we had thought to go to the concert at the Carillon it was back to the pool after dinner and Gran resting up.



Lucky she rested as the glassworks was the first port of call the following day then off to the war memorial (which I don't think my 12 year old was all that impressed with but I was) in the afternoon the miniature village at Cockington Green was a big hit as was the Dinosaur Museum. We finished our two days in Canberra with a look at the lights of Canberra from Mt Ainslie and we were both surprised at how big Canberra is from the lookout.

A six hour trip home and dinner at the Merrijig Pub with friends then dessert with the Campdraft people before passing out in the recliner in front of the movie finished Gran's Canberra adventure with Jessica.

**Frank & Tess Johnson** took their caravan away for a few days to the Hume Weir where the weather was so hot on the day they arrived and they had to put up the annex for Frank's granddaughters, Chantelle and Maddie, that they were exhausted by the time they finished. The girls on the other hand had changed into their bathers and gone for a cool dip. Afterwards following about two hours in the cooling water where steam was rising off the lake surface they found they were feeling much better. One day they drove to Yarrowonga where they met up with Tess's youngest son and his partner.

In the early days of February these two adventurers headed off again as they fly to Hawaii for seven nights at Waikiki Hyatt Regency and they are really looking forward to that trip. Friends will be moving in to look after Rusty the cat and his five friends – the chooks while they are away.

## Julie Webster takes a trip



For the first time in 25 years, since her son Benjamin was born, Julie very excitedly headed off on a ‘kid free’ holiday.

With Paige, taking off for a month in Vietnam with other Secondary College kids and Ben deciding to spend a few weeks with his Dad, Julie found herself able to accept an invitation from girlfriends to catch up and go to Tamworth to take in the famous Country Music Festival. One of her mates has a unit in Tamworth so all the girls gathered for some “Girls just wanna have fun” time together. In all her excitement to get away, guess what she forgot to pack – yes her boots and hat. Still Tamworth is the place to pick up replacements particularly on Australia Day weekend.

*Julie in Tamworth – wearing two hats, not going to be caught hatless again!*

**Lesley Dunlop** on Facebook announced she had arrived safely back into Victoria after an epic three week trip to the Top of the World, Gulmarg, Kashmir. What a stunningly strange place it is. Huge thanks to Bill’s Trips for their amazing guiding and to the Mansfield Riff Raff that shared the experience.



*Climbing to 4000m*



*Photo taken from Bill's Trips entitled 'Lesley' on Facebook January 29*

### **Buttercup to London 2014** - taken from blogspot by Louise Jacob

In December 2013 Laurie finally retired after working for 33 years at Timbertop School. Wahoo. With another extremely hot Australian summer obviously set in for the long haul and when we had another opportunity to return to London to look after the four-storey Georgian house on Earls Court Rd, Kensington, we didn't hesitate.

We took the 'bus to London' - that is jumped on the V-line bus in Mansfield headed for Melbourne where a friend collected us from Southern Cross Station, our flight was late afternoon out of Melbourne on an A380 upstairs, still in economy alas, however with only 60 passengers in our section the experience was great. We were just two seats together so no leaping over anyone else plus great legroom and a sizeable storage compartment next to the window.

The weather in Singapore where we had a stopover was sunny and amazingly not humid. It was like a spring day in Melbourne - very pleasant. We still took taxis wherever we wanted to go though. They are quick, sometimes too quick, cheap and clean.

We had arrived on Chinese New Year's eve. It's the Year of the Horse and the locals were up for a big celebration. Lots of decorations and relaxed locals. We headed for Chinatown where there was lots of colour especially hundreds of larger-than-life horses 'galloping' along New Bridge Rd. These had been constructed by many Chinese artisans brought to Singapore for the occasion.



*The view of the city from the Pan Pacific Hotel.*



*One of the 'galloping' horses along New Bridge Rd celebrating the Year of the Horse. They were magnificent lit at night.*



*Laurie at the enormous South East Asia Aquarium on Sentosa Island in Singapore.*

I was a bit keen to visit the SEA Aquarium which was stunning - the largest in the world according to the Guinness Book of Records. It did not disappoint. What an amazing place.

We hope the weather in Australia is cooling a little from the unbelievable heat we'd had so far this summer. It's certainly mild in London compared to this time last year.

Warm regards to everyone.

**Wild Dog Problem** seems to have quietened down a little from last month as there have been no more sightings locally in recent weeks but the "DSE and the local farmers are keeping an eye on the back paddocks in case there is a return of the pack" Jack McCormack said.

## Welcome to Merrijig

**Nick & Sarah Dunn** along with their two children have joined Nick's sister Megan and her partner Cameron Dobson who have been running Blue Gum Ridge Cottages. Here's hoping you enjoy being a part of the Merrijig Community Nick and Sarah and the children become happy little Merrijiggers.

## Farewell Marj Hearn



Kerrie Purcell provided a brief but local statement following the passing of Marj, a lifetime member of the Merrijig/Boorolite community.

“Marjorie was one of the Merrijig Hall stitching ladies, and we shall miss watching her complete items like beautifully neat, knitted socks, and delicate hand-embroidery.” Kerrie said.

“She was always helpful with her handcraft knowledge and we enjoyed her quick wit and entertaining stories.” Kerrie continued. “This photo of her was taken only last year with a tablecloth she embroidered.”



## Glenroy ~ Merrijig CFA

**fire restrictions are now in force  
no more burning off.**

**Keep an eye on the notice board showing fire danger in our area as  
you go past.**



The other alternative is to check the CFA web site -  
the link for our area is:

[http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/north-east-fire-district/  
#municipality](http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/warnings-restrictions/north-east-fire-district/#municipality)

**You can also download the Fire Ready app for your smart phone and set it to send you alerts as situations breakout.**



There have been a couple of incidents in the Merrijig area in recent weeks, one as reported in the Courier where a man discarded his cigarette still lit which caught onto his own possessions in the ute. He stopped, pulled out the burning items and threw them to the roadside which caught fire. This demonstrates how quickly one thoughtless act can create a potentially serious incident. The fire was contained to a small area fortunately. Another was a lightning strike in Bakers Creek area before the rain fell. Our brigade was quickly into action and that fire was brought under control very promptly.

Stay tuned to local radio and observant, have your own place prepared and safe with no debris available for embers to create a danger at your home. We have a wonderful volunteer CFA in Merrijig but they are not magicians and cannot save your home if you have not prepared it as best you can to prevent it falling victim to a summer fire. Given your preparation there is more likelihood that these well-trained firefighters can make a serious difference if disaster strikes.

### **Transcript from Craig Lapsley - Fire Conditions Update - on 7 February 2014**

Link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9HqfBvRsvc&list=TLDOK0qKZ1aQjyzRyh0uJ4kDvDaLkf6pz>

“It's the 7th of February, 2014, which is the fifth anniversary of the February 7, 2009 fires. That's something all of us should stop and remember and reflect on. Let's take a little bit of time and think about those who have been directly impacted. Those who have lost loved ones, those that are still today struggling to cope and understand what happened.

It's a very important day, a day that firefighters, community members, and people across Victoria should look back on. It's also important to look at what the next period brings. The next three days - Friday, Saturday and Sunday - will be very hot across Victoria, and not only hot, we'll see some of the most severe fire weather that we've experienced in the last five years.

The forecast for Saturday and Sunday is clear - it will be very hot, very dry and will bring severe winds with it over Saturday night and into Sunday. So this weekend we need to take extremely seriously. It's the most serious weather we've seen. It will bring the potential of fire and will bring the potential of fire that will interact with communities. So that's something we need to be conscious of.

Everyone needs to have a plan. Think about your plan, the plan for this weekend is critical. We always say people should have a plan, if you've got a plan revisit it, think it through today, Saturday and Sunday are critical. If you haven't got a plan it's not too late. Sit down and think through what you're going to do. It's important for your safety, it's important for your family's safety, it's important for the people you love and that you care for. So that's the critical thing.

To explain the weather, I think people need to stay attuned to it. Total fire bans have been declared for all of Saturday and Sunday, for all districts across Victoria. That tells you we can see the weather. It also tells us we've got extreme and severe fire dangers in all districts. Depending on the day people need to stay attuned to what that means.

If a fire starts anywhere in Victoria in this period, it has the potential to run, run hard, be very intense and do damage. That's why you need a plan, because these fires have got a huge potential over this weekend. Couple that to the heat that we'll experience, up into the mid 40s, overnight temperatures will stay in the high 20s and may even go close being 30 degrees on Saturday night.

That brings fatigue, puts pressure on us, and if you think about that and then couple the fire issue it puts a lot of pressure on us and we need to think it through. Fire services, emergency services and emergency management agencies across Victoria are geared up. We've got everything that we can possibly have in place, we've got extra aircraft, firefighters on full alert, the relief system, the recovery system. All of those things that make it happen are there.

What we now rely on is people to take this seriously and do not start a fire. Anything that could start a fire, don't do it. Total fire bans are in place so you can't have a barbecue, you can't have solid fuels, you can't use grinding or cutting machinery, it's common sense. And we certainly don't need people starting campfires out in recreational areas.

It comes back to the common sense approach. It's not just about you doing the right thing, it's about monitoring others to make sure they don't do something that's foolish and end up starting a fire that does huge damage. It's the worst place anyone would want to be, to foolishly start a fire, not understand the consequences and this thing runs away and does huge damage to other people.

So let's all take that away, let's take it as a very serious weekend, the most serious weekend we've seen since I believe '09. It's got huge potential. So let's make sure as Victorians we get through fire free and manage the fatigue of heat. Thank you."

\*\*\*\*\*

## Welcome Pack

Some time ago Jackie Noble and Adele were working on the idea of creating a welcome pack for new residents. After gathering useful information with the change of the financial year and the New Year, it dawned that a lot of the information would already be out of date before we even get it off to be printed. This means that over a 12 month period practically everything would need to be altered or updated. So the idea of creating an actual physical pack full of useful information to give to new residents of Merrijig was not going to be feasible.

Then Jackie had a brain wave that as we have the wonderful [merrijig.com.au](http://merrijig.com.au) website already up and running, why not have the information on the website which can be far more easily updated than printed material. This way the new resident purchasing land or a house from a real-estate office in Mansfield could be given a welcome business card with the web address of [merrijig.com.au](http://merrijig.com.au) for all the latest information.

We thought we should run this extension of the welcome pack idea by you all, and if you can imagine you have just come to the district please let us know what sort of things you would want to be able to find out about.

Please email Adele at [adelemac15@bigpond.com](mailto:adelemac15@bigpond.com) or Louise at [info@merrijig.com.au](mailto:info@merrijig.com.au) with your thoughts on this idea.

## Do you need some FREE help?

A new intake of students are ready to volunteer on the “Timbertop Community Service” annual program commencing late April and running through to early June. The students arrive on Tuesday afternoons and depart on Thursdays, around lunch time. In a nutshell people who can offer the students something to do, take the youngsters to help out.

When asked what sort of people they were looking for, Jan Purcell, who is the personal assistant to the Head of the campus said “They would just need to have a Working with Children check current and we would make a quick visit to them to introduce ourselves. Then the kids would be sent out on the date or dates that the host wants them.” Jan went on to say, “It is a great program and our way of providing service to the community.”

I also asked Jan how one goes about getting a Working With Children’s check and she replied, “For a WWC, you go to the Post Office for the application form and complete it as a VOLUNTEER for Geelong Grammar School. You need to get a passport shot taken there too. A Volunteer WWC is free of charge.” She said, “It takes around two weeks for processing, and the Department of Justice who issue them send you back a clearance. They send one to me at the same time so I know you are good to go.”

For more information on Working with Children check see this link:

<http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/utility/home/>

“Then I do a massive ring around to all of the people who have put their hands up and sort out what dates suit them best. They can just have some kids for one of the weeks or a couple of the weeks, whatever suits them.” Jan said in casual conversation.

I wrote an article about this in one of the later issues last year and now is the time to get in touch with Jan to grab some FREE assistance to get that jobs done.

Imagine you could have people paint your fence, just like a Tom Sawyer trick, or have that garden bed turned over that you have been putting off as it’s just too hard to do it on your own.

I think I will get the kids to help Bruce and I to put up a farm fence I have been wanting for years to keep the livestock away from my garden, trailers and caravan. I have only been thinking for one day and have a few more things like finishing painting the storage containers at M’shed at Merrijig.

There may be some jobs they can do at McCormack Park too and help the whole community not just doing jobs for me.

Perhaps the Hall committee could take some youngsters for work around the hall while they are staying on my place or the CFA, both community buildings are not too far away.

So put your mind into gear and make a list of the jobs you have been putting off because you need help. You don’t have to be in Merrijig to take advantage of this free labour force, if you are in Mansfield or Jamieson or anywhere in the district just get in touch with Jan at the school.

Her contact details are:

**Jan Purcell**

*Personal Assistant to the Head of Timbertop*

Telephone 03 5733 6777

Facsimile 03 5777 5772

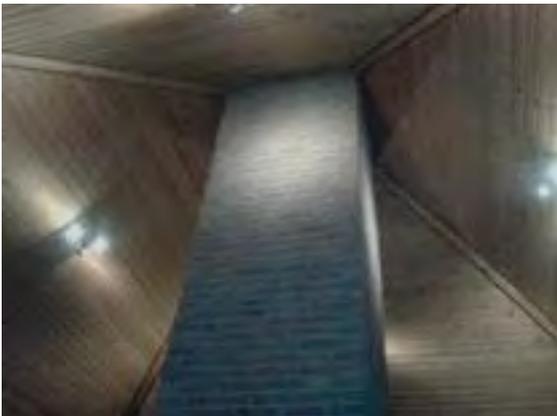
[janp@ggs.vic.edu.au](mailto:janp@ggs.vic.edu.au)

**Devanya O’Dea**

Some older Merrijiggers, (for instance those who lived here in the 1980s,) would remember young Devanya O’Dea whose parents built the 50 cent house (octagonal shaped X four levels of house on Mt Buller Road). “Oh how I miss that house.” Devanya wrote to me. “If I ever got the chance I would buy it back again for summer holidays. It was such a lovely home sitting right on the river and my beautiful gum tree at the bottom! Ah the memories!”

She misses Merrijig and loves reading the newsletter as it brings her closer to what she always thinks of as ‘home’. These days she is very happily married to Bart Sinkeler who hails from the Netherlands and they have two delightful children who have now, after having moved back to Holland, lost their Aussie accents, much to Devanya’s mild disappointment. She found it delightful to have her little Aussie/Dutch children Elise and Xavier showing their two nationalities at the same time.

Fortunately it has been a mild winter this year so far she said, as with their home under renovation the heating is not working to full capacity at the moment as they change to floor heating throughout. Last winter Devanya posted photos of the children snow sledding and ice skating on the river at the back of their home. So it can be imagined how grateful the Sinkeler family is for a milder winter this time with no snow or ice to contend with while the heating is not yet functioning properly.



*Before renovations begin*



*Bart getting ready to pain the ceiling*



*The ceiling with fresh coat of paint.*

They are a good team and are bringing their lovely home up to 21st century standard.

\*\*\*\*\*



My little granddaughters Ailish and Erin asked their mother "what's this?"

" Eye pads" she said

"Oh wow, I-Pads, how do they fit in there ?" was the response

Michele didn't realise she'd had I-Pads for years!

\*\*\*\*\*

## Looking for some well grown trees?

Brett Shelley and Jan Ash who often come to Merrijig Pub when John-Luke is performing now run 'Howqua River Trees' at Sambar Park. They have it opened to the public by appointment. They have on offer and ready for purchase a variety of mature trees to suit local properties. They feel sure that they will have something to suit anyone looking to line a driveway or to shade a special space and all at very reasonable prices.

Feel free to phone 5777 3340 anytime to arrange a time to come out and have a look, more to make sure someone is around as anytime is OK. On hand for free advice is horticulturalist in Alastair Carroll who is more than happy to share his knowledge with any tree purchase or pre selection advice.

## And the Winner is 'Made in the Shade' Umbrellas!

The business owned by part time Merrijigger and former feature Newsletter person Eliza Foster, won the Business Award for the Frankston region! Presenting the award, Christine Richards made the comment that "Small business in Australia is the backbone of our economy, even micro businesses with less than five employees make a huge contribution to the health and well-being of local communities by providing employment "



From left Karin Hann of Frankston Chamber of Commerce, Eliza Foster receiving the prize cheque and Christine Richards presenting the award.

Having appreciated the acknowledgement that she is doing a good job with her small business she wanted to mention one of our own local businesses closer to Merrijig, she said, "I can thoroughly recommend John Coffey for his work on mowing the grass at the River Cabin ... Not only is it cleaned up and ready for the fire season, but now the snakes will have to slither elsewhere to find a hiding spot!"

We are lucky in this district to have several very reliable home maintenance businesses John's being one of them. When my mower broke down just prior to Christmas, Greg Sullivan of School Lane, whose business is 'Buttercup Property Services' stepped up with his tractor mower, mowed the grass around the storage sheds which was well overdue for a trim. Greg also mows the spectator area at McCormack Park as well as the area around the three pines at the top of Buttercup Road for Anzac Day as a free contribution to the Merrijig community. Then there's Kris at TLC property services - another very reliable operation. I am sure there are others but off the top of my head these are the wonderful small businesses I can think of servicing our area. Small business is very important to any community but they are of a particular importance in smaller communities like ours.



*Hang Glider over Bally Patrick Shearing Shed on Australia Day.*

## **Merrijig Primary School news**

Back to school on January 28 for the staff with the children following the next day brought the end to the long summer holidays.

Principal, Carole McCluskey said "We especially welcome our new students, Preps, Chloe and Nathan Tremmel, Joshua Bargerbos and a new family to the school, the Bergmullers, whose son Jasper will be starting in Prep. We welcome his parents, Kate and James to our school.

Also the McCormacks return to Merrijig School. Each generation since the school began there have been McCormacks at Merrijig Primary School and now the little school has welcomed "our newest students, Prep Jaxon and Year 1 Cobie McCormack to our swelling rank of students. Welcome also to parents Rhyll and Adam,' the newsletter read.



WELCOME TO  
MERRIJIG PRIMARY SCHOOL

The teaching staff is also welcomed back:

Andrea Cousins will have the P-2 students Tuesday to Friday

Carole McCluskey will be working with the Years 3-6 students

Mrs Drysdale will be returning to take French lessons

Monica Sketcher will be returning to take music class on Wednesdays

Lucinda Hutchins will continue her integration support with the younger class

Mrs Daykin will be working on Mondays and Tuesdays in the office.

Danny Cahill will also return to teach tennis at Merrijig on Friday mornings (at the conclusion of the swimming program).

The swimming program will be each Friday culminating in the school sports on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Some of the students will be travelling by bus to Mansfield Aquatics (located at the 'Farmhouse'). Some of the children will attend lessons with Lucie Hutchins and Mrs Cousins at the Mansfield Swimming Pool.

**Mobile Area Resource Centre VAN** comes on Wednesday, February 12 and will continue to come to Merrijig Primary once a fortnight. Libby (MARC teacher) takes all students for a library class and the children are allowed to borrow books.

During the last 22 years, MARC has offered a three-day writer's camp for children in Grades 3-6, where the children work with an author or illustrator. I am very pleased to continue with this very popular camp at Rubicon Outdoor Centre. Information will be sent to your schools in term 3.



## A WORD FROM THE SHIRE

**Cr Marg Attley:-** Your local representative on Mansfield Shire Council.  
Available to be contacted on: 5776 2231 or [marg.attley@mansfield.vic.gov.au](mailto:marg.attley@mansfield.vic.gov.au)

### Group Email lists for better communication

Hello all from Sue Arndt,

At Council we have found that communicating by email is the quickest and easiest way to share news and information. Most of the clubs and groups listed on our community directory have supplied us with a contact email address so we can send out relevant information when it comes to hand.

However, with changes of committees and volunteers, when we have been supplied with a personal email address often the email address changes but is not updated, so your group may be missing out on information and opportunities you could use.

A number of groups are now turning to generic email addresses that can be handed from person to person as committees or volunteers change. These email addresses are usually hosted by a free email service such as Gmail or Yahoo and require someone to register for the account. A user name and password are then forwarded and these should be saved somewhere safe and given to anyone who needs to access the emails (it could be more than one person).

This is an example of a generic email address: [mansfieldphotogroup@gmail.com](mailto:mansfieldphotogroup@gmail.com)

It clearly defines who the recipient is, it belongs to the club/group and it can be handed on to someone else.

For instructions on how to create a generic email for your group, click on the link below.

[Creating a generic email address](#)

Or give the community development team a call on 5775 8555.



## Social Media for community groups

If you're a community group looking for tips and tricks on how to make your activities known to a wider audience, then this free workshop is an opportunity to learn more about how to grow your audience via social media.

Social media is a new way organisations can connect with community.

Social media is a great tool for spreading information; it's fast, it's free and it's a good way to encourage conversation with people from different backgrounds.

Organisations can raise their profile by interacting with larger groups and engaging with existing members, new members and supporters.

This workshop will provide a general introduction to social media.

- ☑ Focus on LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter
- ☑ Tips and tricks, including online resources
- ☑ A hands-on Twitter 'How To'



MANSFIELD SHIRE

### MANSFIELD WORKSHOP

Tuesday 4th March 2014

5.30pm - 8.30pm

MACE, High Street, Mansfield

No cost – bookings required

Places are limited so bookings are essential.

Please bring a smart phone, tablet or laptop with internet access (Wi-Fi will be available). If you don't have access to any of these devices please let us know when you register.

To register please contact Anne Shaw, AVCLP Leadership Development Officer by Friday 28 February 2014.

Phone: 0417 221 010

Email: [leaders@avclp.org.au](mailto:leaders@avclp.org.au)



Our Neighbourhood

Proud 2013 grant recipient

Connecting our communities

## Merrijig Campdraft

Merrijig Campdraft was nominated as the Event of the Year in the Australia Day awards. President Geoff Webb was accompanied by his wife Nan and Campdraft Secretary, Andrea Pickett. to be presented with a laminated nomination certificate. The Mayor, Cr Ray Robinson, praised the Merrijig Campdraft for their 12 months of work improving the arena and attracting 500 people to the event which stimulated Mansfield's and the Merrijig economy.

With many events nominated including Relay for Life and a fundraising event for a young cancer sufferer by teenagers, the winner turned out to be the Mansfield Races in 2013.

By the end of this year Merrijig Campdraft will probably need to move the draft back into November to secure more livestock as one of the biggest providers of cattle won't be able to hold them till December from now on.

As for structural improvement to McCormack Park, the next project to be undertaken will be a fence with two huge farm gates to keep cattle out of the 'people area'. When the double wide gates are opened up people can wander through without even noticing there is a livestock fence there.

## Merrijig Rodeo - Full steam ahead for our iconic Merrijig Rodeo at its home on McCormack Park.

**You can get involved and give the interim committee  
your physical support at a working bee  
at 9 am on Saturday, February 16.**

The following information has been extracted from the Merrijig Rodeo website with a couple of alterations from the incoming committee (*there may yet be more minor changes - but just to whet your appetite*).

The Merrijig Rodeo is a fantastic family orientated APRA associated annual event. It's held every Saturday of the Labour Day Weekend. It is the second of the Kyabram, Merrijig, Chiltern APRA Tri-Series. Complete with terrific kid-friendly sideshow entertainments, a variety of food stalls & a licensed bar (BYO alcohol is PROHIBITED & Children 17 and under must be accompanied by an adult) there is literally something for every member of the family to enjoy.

**Saturday 8th March 2014 – Merrijig Rodeo Grounds, Merrijig.**

Gates Open 3 pm – Main Events From 6.30pm

Adults(18+) – **\$30**

Children(17& under) – **Free But Must Be Accompanied By An Adult.**

Senior/Pensioner – **\$20**

The Merrijig Rodeo Includes the following events:

- Bareback
- Barrel Race
- Break Away Roping
- Bull Ride
- Saddle Bronc
- Steer Wrestling

As well as plenty of sideshow entertainment such as stalls, mechanical bull, kids play area and face painting.

There is a **Cash only** licensed bar. Selling cans of beer, pre-mixed spirits and wine. Due to licence restrictions, we can only supply two drinks per person at any time. Under 18 year olds and intoxicated patrons will be refused service.

There is also the Rodeo Association BBQ kitchen operating and other food stalls will be available.

### **Camping**

Camping available Saturday night only – cost \$25.00 per vehicle

### **Shuttle Bus**

\$10 Per Person Each Way

Departs Mansfield MMBL Depot 5:30 – 6:30 – 7:30

Returns Mansfield MMBL Depot 9:30 – 10:30 – 11:30

Nestled in the heart of Merrijig at the foot of the High Country & Mt Buller in the Great Dividing Range on “McCormack Park”, the action packed event couldn’t be set in a more beautiful location, in fact Merrijig was the setting for both of the highly successful “Man From Snowy River” movies, such was the natural beauty of the place, not to mention the cattlemen, horsemen and horsewomen who inhabit it.

There will be genuine and unique Merrijig Rodeo merchandise exclusive to the event (though purchases can be made via email contact). Fun and good times are a given and there are always genuine cowboys and cowgirls a plenty.

## **Motorbike Club news**

**NEXT CLUB DAY: SUNDAY 23rd 2014 (National Come & Try Day)  
McCORMACK PARK MERRIJIG**

**Extracted from the Come and Try website:**

Motorcycling Australia (MA) is excited to launch the *2014 National Come and Try Day*, which will see motorcycle tracks burst into action across the country on the weekend of 22-23 February 2014.



A collaborative project between MA and our State Controlling Bodies, the inaugural *National Come and Try Day* will throw open the doors of motorcycle sport to the public with a diverse menu of hands-on events and activities.

The day will see a jam-packed schedule of events across metropolitan and regional New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania.

The schedule will cover the full range of disciplines including motocross, road racing, enduro, speedway, moto-trials, dirt track and quads. For more information go to [www.ma.org.au](http://www.ma.org.au)

Events will be hosted by affiliated clubs, with skilled riders and officials on site to provide guidance and support to make sure riders get the most out of their *National Come and Try Day* experience.

Each event is guaranteed to be unique, with participating clubs encouraged to plan their own program for the day to best showcase their discipline and their club. Clubs will also be able to run a Club Practice Day alongside the event.

Participants who have never held a licence before will receive a FREE *Come and Try Day* licence to cover the day. Participants can also apply for a free Annual Recreational Licence on the day which will be mailed out by your SCB afterwards.

**Scott Parks** was nominated for Australia Day citizen of the year award for his seven years service as the President of Mansfield Motorcycle Club which has its home at McCormack Park, Merrijig.



Scott was accompanied by his four children for the afternoon tea presentation at the Mansfield Shire Council Chambers on January 16. He was praised by the Mayor, Cr Ray Robinson for his long Presidential tenure and great work with development of the club. With numerous very deserving nominations announced he was in good company with people who all work in their various areas of interest for the betterment of our community.



**Ben & Joey Garlick with Will & Frankie Campagnolo** are part of the (*Whitten Brothers Racing*) WBR team Junior Race team for 2014. These boys all learned the basic skills of how to ride safely on Merrijig's McCormack Park MX track from when they were only four years old. Thanks to their supportive parents all four boys have taken to the sports associated with motorbikes and are doing really well in just about everything they enter.

The green team includes 4 MMC boys Will Campagnola on the Maryborough track on January 19.

All four fellas will be competing in the Victorian Northern Region MX championship events, off road events and State MX events this year.

This means that our Merrijig track boys selected for this team are sponsored by Whitten Brothers Kawasaki. Pictures are of the team's first training day at Maryborough on January 19, they put in another practice day at Broadford on the 27<sup>th</sup>, it looks like they are determined to get the most out of this experience.

**L  K WHAT'S GOING ON AT OUR LOCAL**

Happy hour is still on Thursdays between 5.30 to 7.30 with a lucky draw at 7.30 for a slab. Meals offering everything from pizza through fish, steak and pasta are on from 6 till 8.

Keep an eye on the notice board on the roadside to catch when live music or special events are coming up so you won't miss out. It was a ripper night on Australia Day with John-Luke Shelly and his band.

## What's going on at the Merrijig Hall ?



The Merrijig Public Hall Committee is an integral part of the Merrijig Rodeo providing the volunteers for the running of the barbecue. In return the hall is one of the beneficiaries of the profits from the rodeo and these funds have supplemented grants and other income to continue the many improvements which have been made in recent years to this valuable community asset.

They need volunteers who can spare two hours on Saturday, March 8 to man the barbecue. You don't need any connection with the hall at all, you will be very welcome and made to feel a valued volunteer. Please contact Kerrie Purcell, on [kartigi57@hotmail.com](mailto:kartigi57@hotmail.com) and she will give you the run down on what is required and if it suits you she will include you on a roster.

The new sign has been put in place and the solar panels installed recently will be generating lots of kilowatts to help minimise the electricity bill and therefore help with the running costs of the hall.



*The new sign erected to advise passing motorists of coming events at the hall.*



*The solar panels on the roof of the former CFA shed helping with hall running costs.*

The solar panels grant from the Mansfield branch of the Bendigo Bank made the project possible. Thanks to grants worked on by one enthusiastic lady in particular Georgie Deyell, but with the assistance and support of the whole hall committee. Georgie will not blow her own trumpet but I know she puts so much time into chasing up everything needed to jump through the grant application hoops, that I thought it wouldn't hurt for me to tell you how much she puts into the Merrijig community even though she is not a full time resident.

## Ever needed a face painter ?

*Chele's Face~Painting,*  
\$50- p/h.

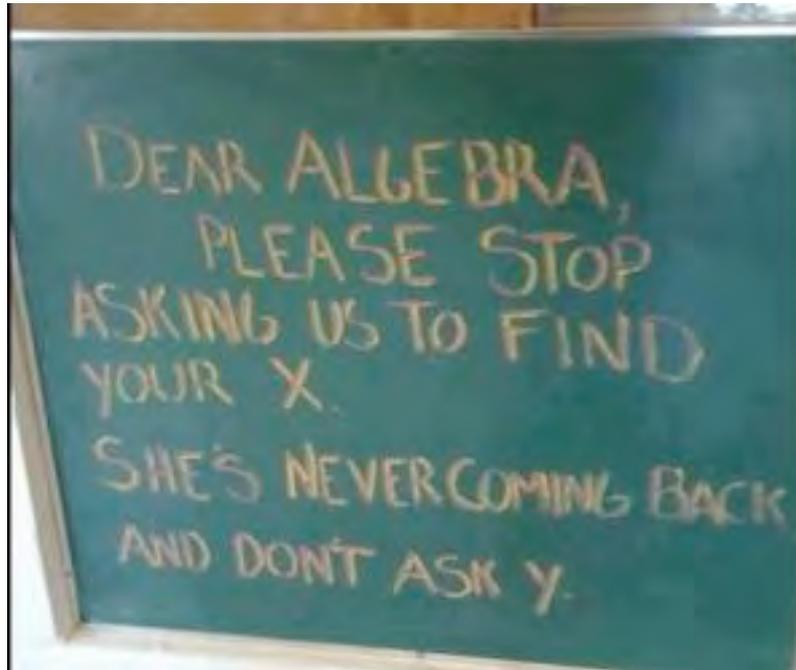


*Fundraisers*

*Having a Family Fun Day, Fete, Trash & Treasure?*

*Pay for 2 hours get 4 hours and charge a minimum of \$6 per full face and \$3- per cheek to keep for yourself.*

**NOW FOR A FINAL GOOD LAUGH!**



Bye for now from Adele

Adele McCormack  
45 McCormacks Rd  
Merrijig 3723  
Ph: 03 5777 5637 Mob: 0409 600 655

This Merrijig Community Newsletter is compiled by Adele McCormack of Merrijig and edited and published on this website by Louise Jacob also of Merrijig, as a community service.

The newsletter is an outcome of the Merrijig Community Plan initiated by the Shire of Mansfield Council.

Every care has been taken in gathering and presenting the information on this site. Inquiries can be directed to [info@merrijig.com.au](mailto:info@merrijig.com.au)