

Merrijig Matters

Merrijig's Monthly Newsletter

May 2015

Issue No. 25

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Another milestone newsletter

This issue, number 25, means you are about to read the first issue of the 3rd year of the Merrijig Community Newsletter. The newsletter mailing list has grown to 160 + and it is a credit to you all for providing news to share and help to bond the community. We have a wonderful community here in Merrijig and your willingness to share your family's highlights and sad times and your attendance at community events and activities which support this newsletter will continue to keep this Merrijig Community wonderful.

New Newsletter email address:-

From now on if you have news to share via this media, please use this new email address.

merrijignewsletter@gmail.com is where you need to direct your articles, reports or promos for the upcoming activities of groups you belong to.

Please remember to welcome your new neighbours via the community news and share a few pictures of your most recent or exciting holiday adventure.

Quote of the month

Another good one from that fella 'Anonymous'

**“An entire sea of water can't sink a ship
unless it gets inside the ship.
Similarly, the negativity of the world
can't put you down unless
you allow it to get inside you.”**

Back issues of the newsletters can be viewed on the web at

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**,

Laurie Jacob, Buttercup Rd 0439 280 333

Catherine McNish, Sawmill Settlement 0429 482 309

Merrijig Defibrillator is located at Merrijig Motor Inn

The procedure in case of an emergency where a person is possibly having a heart attack is to dial **Triple Zero**. The call takers at **Triple Zero** have the location of the Merrijig AED registered and will advise the caller of its location if that is the closest unit to your location. If it is then the Merrijig Motor Inn should be contacted by phone.

The Motor Inn phone number is **5777 5702**.

May 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7 Pilates Stitching Group Rubbish	8	9
10 Mothers' Day	11 Successful Event Workshop 6 - 8 pm	12	13	14 Pilates Stitching Group Rubbish & Recycling	15	16 Family Fun Day After Party BBQ lunch
17 2nd Tri- Series Grass Track Motor Bike Club meet at Stoney's	18	19 Muscle Mob	20	21 Pilates Stitching Group Rubbish	22	23 Barrel Race Weekend
24 Barrel Race Weekend Shire Community Conference	25	26 Muscle Mob	27	28 Pilates Stitching Group Rubbish & Recycling	29	30
31						

Who's doing what lately?



Tess and Frank Johnson on a world tour so to speak

Tess said "We are in the Big Apple! Empire State Building yesterday, hop on hop off tour today. Statue of Liberty here we come! Oh and NY has put on some glorious weather!" the day before was not so glorious looking in the photo from Niagara Falls.



Then finally Skip, their faithful travelling companion gets to see some sunshine when they took her to Greece to see the Acropolis with A LOT of restoration work going on.



As you read this they are off to the Dutch countryside, Volendam/windmills.

Yet before they ventured into Holland Tess wrote "We have been in dock at Canakale/Turkey for the past couple of days. We've been to Anzac Cove, Lone Pine, the Nec ... A very amazing and historical place." Below is where our fighting men landed as seen on ANZAC Day 2015 from just 800 metres off the coast.



Frank was in a reflective mood just off ANZAC Cove on the day, 100 years after the ANZACs began.

While the Johnsons checkout Gallipoli, we at home were preparing for the centenary of beginning of our ANZAC heritage.

Be proud Merrijig

Our Merrijig Memorial site at the top of Buttercup Road to honour the men and women who served our country in order to protect our freedom has been upgraded. Timed to recognise 100 years since the ANZACs were taken to that ill-fated landing at Gallipoli.



At left, the 5 Pines Memorial site in 2009 the 2nd year of Merrijig Services.



At right the 5 Pines Memorial site today ready for 100 years of ANZAC

Cathy McGowan was present at the launching of two federally funded recognitions of this British debacle which bonded Australians and New Zealanders forever. Both of these were in Mansfield but were created with great input from Merrijig people. The first was a portable display presented by Merrijig's Graham Godber, who is the historian for the local RSL. Graham welcomed the standing room only audience with, "Mansfield RSL and the Mansfield Family History Group welcome you all to this the formal launch of our World War 1 Centenary Commemoration Project."

The Family History Group representative is Merrijig's Primary School secretary, Sheena Daykin, who with Graham's wife, Joan, each gave many long hours putting this project together.



Sheena Daykin, Joan and Graham Godber, Cindy McLeish and Cathy McGowan pictured with the display Graham, Joan and Sheena created.

When introducing the project Graham said “Our presentation briefly covers this birth of ANZAC.” He continued, “some 8,700 Australians died on the Peninsula with a further 18,000 wounded. New Zealand casualties were even greater per capita than ours.” “The major focus of our presentation here is the participation of Mansfield district men and women in the Gallipoli campaign. A total of 60 men and women from the district served on Gallipoli.”

“The women engaged in treating casualties on hospital ships and in field hospitals off the Peninsula and larger Military hospitals in Egypt.” Graham continued, “Our project tells the story of 26 of them, including the four women involved. Nine of our local men died on the Peninsula. Our stories convey the tragedy of some who were killed within a day or two after arriving on the battlefield, in one case within a few hours of landing,” Graham concluded.

When Cathy McGowan took the podium she commented that of all the projects undertaken with Federal Government funding Mansfield stood out as being unique. Other districts elected to refurbish honour boards or their town’s cenotaph and she knew of no other project like this bringing the local families war heroes into today’s life. Cathy stressed the importance of sharing this history with the next generation and how knowledge and understanding is the key to the future. She cited how her grandfather, a WW1 veteran who had instilled in his grandchildren this very lesson, following being a witness to the destruction of war, he realised that knowledge through education was the one thing you could take with you to start life anew.

Merrijig can be very proud of the huge community effort involved in completing this project. Cathy McGowan then moved to the old Railway Station now the Historical Society to launch their pictorial DVD which was another federally funded project and also included one of our own local ladies Wendy Jubb Stoney who researched and presented parts of the top quality, albeit short, DVD historic record. Wendy explains in the movie about the Mansfield Memorial Arch and how it is unique in its design. Wendy also researched our local Memorial site known as the ‘5 Pines’ and engaged the grandnephew of Daniel Hearn, Mick Hearn, who donated the land to be included in the movie.

One of Merrijig’s favourite poets, who came to judge at the first Merrijig poets afternoon, Val Kirley, also presented her wonderful poem ‘Storm’ on the DVD. Our local 5 Pines site was not neglected by our federal member; she had her van in the Merrijig Hotel car park to meet the locals and was whisked away by Peter and Jan Howarth to see the newly created entrance to the plantation. Cathy presented two large Australian flags to be used on the newly acquired flagpole.

Ms McGowan was particularly impressed with our local memorial and its long history as well as the story of how in recent times it has once again become central to the local community when all service men and women are remembered on ANZAC Day. Cathy mentioned there was a federal government committee which will highlight various places which highlight this 100 anniversary of the first ANZAC Day and how our Merrijig’s way of recognising this will be provided to that committee.



When Federal Member for Indi Cathy McGowan visited mid-April she was whisked away from her caravan office to see the upgraded memorial. At left a few of the team who happened along for the flag presentation. Peter Howarth, Jim Blundell, Jan Howarth, Cathy McGowan and Adele McCormack. As more of the team showed up on their way to see Cathy at the caravan in the hotel car park they too were photographed. Added above right are Paul Jackson (who came up with the plan to use the Five Pines for Merrijig's ANZAC Day in 2008) and Noel Willaton. (President of the Merrijig Public Hall Committee which applied for and managed the grants.)

Cathy was genuinely impressed and followed up her visit with a personal message via Peter Howarth (who is the "Team Leader" for the memorial up-grade.)

"I wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed my visit to Merrijig last weekend and particularly wanted to thank you for going to all the trouble to make me so welcome. I was very pleased and proud to see the "War and Service Memorial" and will be thinking of Merrijig next Saturday as you all gather at the top of the hill! Warm regards and thanks, Cathy".

On site Cathy had mentioned that she has travelled around much of her electorate leading up to ANZAC Day and commented that our memorial upgrade would be the best she had so far seen, she was very impressed with our whole concept including the horses as an important part of our remembrance, as well as the commemorative rocks. Having had two grandfathers who served in WW1 she directly connected with the spirit of the memorial.

Since that visit, Peter and his labour force, on Wednesday, April 22, set up the park area, (which had been planted out by Delatite Landcare in 2000), so that it's ready for the Gunfire Breakfast which follows the service held on the roadside verge.



The Timbertop School student clean-up team



The students on a well-earned break

Jan Ash and Brett Shelley are holidaying in the USA

Following the wedding of John-Luke Shelley, who is a regular performer at the Hunt Club Hotel, to his bride Kahtaya, as well as some special family birthday celebrations, Jan and Brett hit the skies for a well deserved holiday in America.

They were not intending to share the honeymoon with the newlyweds, instead they would meet up here and there but it has worked out they enjoy sharing their holiday time together as when the boys want to go music shopping the girls can do their style of shopping Kahtaya said.

Jan writes "We arrived at 6.30 am dumped our bags and wandered around Hollywood. Of course we did the Aussie thing and sat with a cold beer while watching the Ferraris and Porches going by!

John Luke spoke about the photo above and on the right, we were "At the "House of Blues" in New Orleans in the booth that Clarence Gamemouth Brown used to sit in every time he came for a meal. Wow is all I can say"

Below centre John-Luke Shelley doing what he does best at Nashville

Then again below right in Fort Worth Texas





A WORD FROM THE SHIRE



Mayor Cr Marg Attley - Your local representative on Mansfield Shire Council. Available to be contacted on: 5776 2231 or marg.attley@mansfield.vic.gov.au

FREE COMMUNITY TRAINING WORKSHOP Managing Successful Events

Are you looking to start a new event?
Develop an existing event?
Just want to improve your skill set?

Well this workshop is for you!

No matter what type of event you're planning - from sporting events and fundraising activities to major festivals - increased legislation designed to protect public and environmental safety means that the event management landscape is becoming harder to navigate.

This workshop will help you to cut through the red tape of developing an event management plan and provide practical tips and information on how to successfully plan and manage your events. **WHEN:** 6pm-8pm, Monday 11 May 2015

WHERE: Mansfield Community Education Centre (MACE), 145-147 High Street Mansfield

BOOKINGS: Phone 5775 2077 or email community.resilience@mansfield.vic.gov.au

FREE!! Includes resources and light supper

Kirsten Lingard wrote in to say "We would like to introduce you to nabo.com.au and the Nabo Community Grants. [Nabo.com.au](http://nabo.com.au) is a new social network for your suburb. It's the online place where you and your neighbours can keep in touch and connect with everything going on in your local community. And it's free. The Nabo Community Grants program provides community groups and charities with an opportunity to apply for one-off funding of up to \$10,000 for projects or programs that help build safer and stronger communities. Applications for the Nabo Community Grants is now open for projects and programs that will run in Victoria. If you have a project or program that helps support and strengthen your local community we strongly encourage you to apply for funding. To enter, simply become a member on nabo.com.au, create a group profile for your community group and complete the online application form. You can find all the information about the Nabo Community Grants including the Terms and Conditions, eligibility requirements, funding available to each state and territory, and key dates in the attached guide or at www.nabo.com.au/communitygrants." Kirsten signed off "Good luck!"

Jacky Noble, is one of the Merrijig people who's been attending the Resilience Program and she said "There are several members of the Merrijig community who have been working within this program, we will be involved in this conference." She wondered if "via the newsletter we could spread the word within our community and display (at the conference) what we have been up to in supporting our community when any form of loss occurs within the Merrijig Community"

Sue Arndt sent out information about; The 2015 Mansfield Shire community conference is being held on Sunday 24 May, 12 noon - 6.45pm, concluding with a dinner. We chose the Sunday afternoon timeslot after receiving feedback that people preferred not to spend whole weekend days in a conference, so it allows time to do the house jobs and gardening, play sport, go to church then settle in for a fascinating, worthwhile afternoon!

This conference is also the final stage of the Mansfield Community Resilience Leadership Program and will offer a chance for the participants to share their journey with their community members.

4 guest speakers are being finalised and the program is really innovative and social. There will be a variety of workshops and activities that will raise awareness of being prepared for a range of risks that could face our communities as well as take steps towards building resilience within our communities.

More information will be sent out in due course, but for now, please mark the date in your calendars and share this email around.

“Lest we forget” - Merrijig Did NOT forget - on ANZAC Day

Timbertop School head master, Roger Herbert, brought the school population to the Merrijig Memorial where they assisted with the ceremony presentation. Pictured below, they're standing in front of about 90 horse riders, leading the singing of both the New Zealand and Australian National Anthems.

– Photo by Rob McKenzie



Wreaths and memorial rocks were laid, followed by horse riders placing flags on the memorial wall refurbished in recognition of the 100 years of ANZAC.



Memorial rocks with one wreath of purple flowers for the animals which sacrificed their lives in all wars.

“It was the best Anzac day ceremony I've ever been to...so glad we all stayed” – This comment was put up on Facebook following a status from one of the riders who claimed it was “Awesome”. Andrew Jurrjens said on the following Sunday, “I spoke to some bike riders on Mt Buller today who said it was the best ANZAC Day service ever”.

A large crowd was expected for this centenary of ANZAC Day, and there was no disappointment on that level, it may have been even bigger than this picture shows had there not been a thunder storm only a few hours before followed by what would, on another day be called ‘good steady rain’.



Photo by Tom Swan as the parade reached the valley's top

Four experienced riders were invited to lead the column of riders four abreast and flag bearers placed intermittently along the column to keep order.

Pictured at left is Jan Purcell who said she was very honoured to take part in this year's parade as the significance of the occasion gave the experience such value.

The other flag bearing leaders were Latoya and TeAna Wards and Kane Lovick.

Latoya Wards who carried the New Zealand flag in honour of her father and his side of her family, said "It was such a great honour to carry the New Zealand flag in the Merrijig ANZAC Day horse march this morning. I was so proud to be riding alongside my sister TeAna commemorating the war horses. Lest We Forget." she and TeAna said that they were "so glad we did it - it's great to be a part of it..... it was amazing!"



Once assembled about 90 horses behaved beautifully from all accounts. There were many people who afterwards remarked that they came because it is so unusual to see so many local people riding to an ANZAC Day service. Photo by Rob McKenzie

Noel Willaton opened the proceedings with a welcome to all in attendance on this centenary ANZAC Day. He went on to say "The transformation of the Merrijig memorial and parkland is the result of significant community effort both financially and "In Kind". This project marks the Gallipoli Centenary and encourages our future generations to appreciate and understand the sacrifices made by all who served."

Unfortunately the loud speaker system broke down during Michael Ray's speech. Michael finalised his address on a poignant note by saying, "None who served in our country's name 100 years ago are alive today, but looking out from here to Merrijig and the magnificent high country, I hope their spirits are joining us in remembering their sacrifice that gives us our today."



The Last Post and Rouse were played on a 1916 bugle by Paul Jackson while two riders, Jeff Watkins and Graeme Barr, dressed as 4th Light Horsemen mounted guard on the memorial.

During his address he highlighted that this war, which was to be the war to end all wars, attracted our nation's young and not so young men and women, some lying about their age to appear old enough while others like Mansfield blacksmith Richard Carey to be young enough. There were whole families like the Greenways from Merrijig and several other locals who answered the call to arms.

Michael gave an outline of the maneuver at Gallipoli designed to be a diversion for a landing at Helles where French and British were to take Constantinople. Extracted from Michael's address, "Despite the opposition rapid gains were made, but indecisive commands with poor communication, compounded by brave and vigorous defense by forces under Mustafa Kemal and German commanders brought the initial advances to a halt.

By digging in, impetus was lost and the campaign at ANZAC was condemned to failure. Australian commanders rightly recommended immediate evacuation at ANZAC, but they were ordered to hold. One digger wrote in his diary "from the time we landed, we have passed and re-passed through hell.

"Every few minutes we have been under heavy fire – the noise is deafening and the air full of lead." Enemies became friends for a few stolen hours when the stench of corpses and the cries of the wounded brought about a ceasefire. To break the stalemate a new landing at Suvla was conducted with the idea of enabling the ANZAC front to break out. But the failures of command, more so than at Helles and ANZAC, saw Suvla as a beach too far. To compound the failure attacks at Lone Pine lead to hand to hand savagery and massive casualties as did the charges at the Nek."

Michael mentioned how highly regarded the Australian fighters were as they were given the title 'White Gurkhas' for their tenacity and one British officer reported "they (*the ANZACs*) are wonderful workers as well as the staunchest and most enterprising fighters."

"They", he said, "took no account of their officers and use their own good horse sense."

Where a bullet, bomb or shrapnel could end a life in a second a sense of humour helped. Michael told a story of an Aussie, choosing to throw a tin of bully beef into the nearby Turkish trenches instead of a primitive grenade. It came back with a note, "cigarettes yes, bully beef no!"

“If the aim of the landings had failed,” Michael said, “the success of the withdrawal and evacuation by the Australians at ANZAC in December 1915 was a masterpiece of military art without a single loss of life.” Left behind though, killed, were over 8700 Australians many with no known grave.

Michael briefly outlined how those who survived Gallipoli continued fighting in the war on other fronts and how that war did not end all wars and local people continue to present themselves when needed in all the wars and peace keeping operations since this significant date in our history.”

A Timbertop student followed reading “In Flanders Fields” then Louise Jacob read “The Message to Mothers” from Kemal Ataturk, a Turkish hero of Gallipoli:

‘Those heroes that shed their blood and lost their lives – you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore rest in peace. There is no difference between the Johnnies and the Mehmets to us, where they lay side by side here in this country of ours. You, the mothers who sent their sons from faraway countries, wipe away your tears; your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace. After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.’

Many people placed wreaths and named rocks while Adele McCormack sang only one verse and one chorus of Eric Bogles wonderful song called “No Man’s Land” chosen particularly to honour the fallen for this centenary service. The song tells of the thoughts provoked in a person resting for a while on the grave of William McBride who died in 1916 in the fields of France. The chorus asks “did the pipes play the Flowers of the Forest” and Stewart McLachlan then played the “Flowers of the Forest” on the pipes, for Willie McBride and all those who were buried where they fell without ceremony during WW1.

The horse riders organised themselves in the dark and headed off from the Merrijig Hotel car park before the sun came up behind a police car which showed the way. Paul Jackson who was in charge of the ride said “It was raining for most of the ride, yet there was not one complaint from the superb squadron of horse riders.” Including some young children aged between eight and four years who understood why they were riding.

By the time they arrived at the 5 Pines Memorial site it was good clear daylight but still drizzling consistently while the ceremony got underway.

Peter Howarth the team leader of the group of locals who took on the project of upgrading the 5 Pines Memorial, finished off the program by acknowledging those “without whose help it would never have been possible. Beginning with VicRoads and the generous contributions of the following:

Mansfield Shire Council Merrijig Public Hall

Department of Veterans’ Affairs Al Seaton

Steve & Mary Chiodo David & Maya Hume

Jock & Sue Dyason Steve & Luke Bell

Jan Howarth Rennie de Maria

AusNet Services Gus Syme

Evan Lowing Rocky & Lisa Niglia

Dieter Buchholz & Joe Kirley Fred de Rijcke

Steve Curnow & Lisa Andreasen Erwin Hirt

Steve Srnec & Greg Coombe Maurie Stinchcombe

James Yencken Carroll & Richardson

D A Szabo & Associates

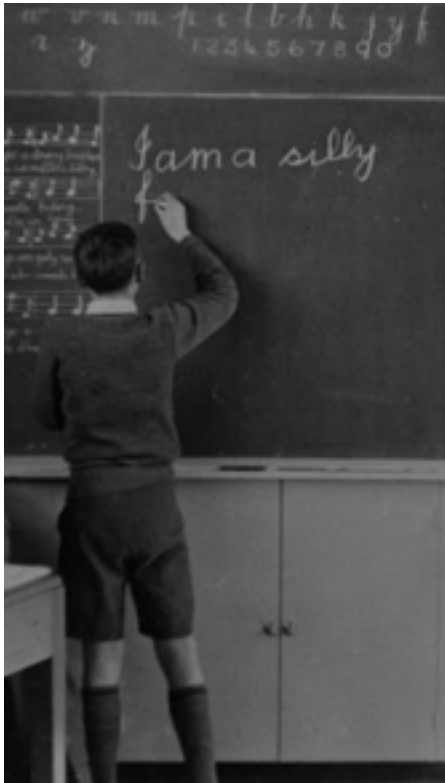
Thank you all for making our job easier” Peter concluded.

Merrijig Primary School News



*Merrijig school captains Holly and Byron were invited to visit
The Shrine of Remembrance in Melbourne.
Then on ANZAC Day along with vice captains Bradyn and Emily
they laid wreaths on behalf of Merrijig Primary School.*

Exhibition: School Days



Be transported back to olden school days at Melbourne's Old Treasury Building.

The ***School Days: Education in Victoria*** exhibition features classroom stories, school photographs, old text books, and memorabilia straight from the vaults of the state archives of the Public Record Office Victoria.

Through a range of nostalgic displays be reminded of the days when milk was delivered to every child and being caned was all part of a normal education.

See how Victorian education has changed since 1872 when Victoria became the first state to establish a public school system based on the principles of free, secular and compulsory education.

School Days: Education in Victoria
will be on display at the Old Treasury Building
from March until September 2015.

Visit oldtreasurybuilding.org.au to see what other exhibitions are currently on display.

The Old Treasury Building is located at 20 Spring Street, Melbourne.

Mansfield Walking Club

Weekend Walk - Mt Torbrek May 10th details have not been finalised.

Please go to website for final details closer to the date.

Monthly walk presentation - May 18th Delatite Hotel 8 pm Australian walk

April's presentation was one of the 12 Camino Portuguese walks

Past weekend walks - April Mt Samaria at the top

February walk - Crosscut



Experienced walkers welcome as well of course.

Contact person, Jacky Noble. - Secretary,
Mansfield Bushwalking Club
PO Box 344
Mansfield 3724 walkers3722@mail.com

Motorbike Club first Tri-series meet



*And they're off. In the first of the grass track series on Fridays' farm.
Photo by Jane Parks*

As the Junior Motorcycle Club fundraising activity begins again for 2015, parents and kids are very excited. This series conducted on members' parents' private properties allows mums and dads to also get on the track so the kids don't have all the fun.

The long awaited start of the tri-series got off to a fantastic start with a massive turn up on a lovely day following the rain on Anzac Day.



During the event a 'drone' was hovering over the racing action. That was Brad from 'Dragonfly Aerial Photography', Tania Allatt said. Brad took some great pics and video and provided samples to use on the Facebook page and club website. Some sample pictures are shown here. If anyone wants Brad's details please contact the club <https://www.facebook.com/groups/304528622973725/?fref=ts> or <http://www.mansfieldmc.com/>.



There was an emergency causing the cancellation of the final event, but no one was upset as the result of the dramatic incident was a relief to all present. A spectator watching his young adult son ride, had a massive heart attack and had stopped breathing. The quick action of Dr Friday and four nurses who happened to be in attendance revived him. The air ambulance took him to hospital where two days later a message came through from the family.... "He is still in a serious but stable condition, but is extremely appreciative and grateful for all the help that everyone gave on Sunday. He asked to convey his thanks to everyone involved."

A personal message from the son of the patient, Ash Borella of South Yarra, was posted on the club's Facebook page on Tuesday following the emergency".

"We are all so grateful and overwhelmed with the support we have had, Dad is improving each day and we can't thank Daniella Friday enough for what she has done for my Dad. We are forever in debt to you and the others that helped."



The Victoria Police Air Ambulance attended the patient. Photo by Jane Parks

A note from Ed Adamson - our local plant expert

Ed wrote to the editor when he read the April newsletter thoroughly and learned about all the wonderful events at Merrijig, and spreading all over Australia through walks and horse events.

"The Family Fun Day was a great start to what we all hope will be a great ongoing event, especially for kids and for adult fun lovers too. "Ed wrote

He remarked, "The Buttercup Corner ('Five Pines') area does look great now as a memorial. For this centenary, reminding us of those who served and those who died in Gallipoli and elsewhere in theatres of war, it is a fitting permanent point of reference. Thank you to those who have put in so much work to that project and its funding."

Being such a keen local flora person he went on to say, "Following on from Anzac Day, in the background it will be great to see some more shrubs maintained right to the ground to work with the little birds like Blue Wrens that nest usually about half a metre from the ground, and to provide shelter for other little birds that do such a great job cleaning caterpillars and lerps off the gum tree leaves,19 such as Thornbills, Pardalotes and Honey Eaters.



Above photo of Davies Wattles in the wild. They grow to about a metre in height.

Some shrub species to add will be Grevillea (Rosemary Grevillea - a good one for the area - the local Small Fruit Hakea with narrow leaves and great little white flowers, whose botanical name is *Hakea microcarpa*. This grows locally near Eagles Peaks and in the Nillahcootie area. You may know of it from elsewhere in the district.

Another great shrub that I found growing on the cliff face of Mt Buller before the drought was the local Lemon Bottlebrush, *Callistemons pallidus*. It is tough, dense, and can grow up to 3m high! River Bottlebrush, *Callistemon sieberi* is also a goodie for birds, bees and a bit of colour, turning up with white, pink, or red bottlebrushes, depending on its parents' genes. There are a few prickly shrubs that provide great shelter for the little ones against cats and predatory birds. The very showy Hedge Wattle *Acacia paradoxa* is one of those. I have it at my place at Merrijig, and it has not become a nuisance. Another is the Wedding Bush *Bursaria spinosa*, a more sparse miniature tree.

To encourage an Anzac Day show up of Gang Gangs and the Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoos, a few other varieties of Hakea and some Banksias would complete that picture. These birds love to split open the hard seed casings and eat the little seeds inside them, usually at this time of year.

And just for the sake of showing off the recently named *Acacia daviesii*, Davies Wattle which is only found in the Merrijig area, this would be a great little shrub on either side of the memorial. It grows only from cuttings, as it doesn't set seed - a very showy shrub with flowers all along the arching stems in October, never available previously, but coming into commercial production now. “

Ed concluded by saying “Merrijig's Geoff Davies, who has an abiding interest in plants and nature, really discovered this plant, and it is named after the family following his niece's botanical studies at Melbourne University.”

A first for Merrijig (for a little while) **Hay Bale Art in Merrijig**

Lots of towns have Hay Bale Art, there are bees in Yea at one end of town and a motorcyclist head first into the bale at the other end. Yarck has people sitting next to a bale saying “Here the Fark Is Yarck”²⁰ amongst other things. A real favourite is on the Melba Hwy on a corner where there are two scarecrows in an old wagon being taken around by two hay bale horses. There are some very clever people around.

It was thought we should join in so with Bruce McCormack's co-operation Merrijig had an Easter Bunny. Easter Bunny welcomed people to Fun Day, all school holidays and over Easter. This was a combined effort as Adele McCormack made the ears and eyes, while her daughter Michele Lunam put it all together with the help of her children, Ailish and Erin.



Erin with finished Easter Bunny

Timbertop Community Service - Report by Adele McCormack

This is the second time I have had groups of students to help me around the place. Although I do get a lot of help from friends and family the job list is always TOO long. When I was invited to take some students again this year to do some work around the place I didn't hesitate as my first year's experience was all positive and many of those students became Facebook friends following staying with me which I think is lovely.

This year already I have had a wonderful group of girls who repainted my Self Storage sign down at M'shed at Merrijig (*pronounced like G'day – one of the girls worked that out as many people call it Em shed*) as well as painting the two containers so they blend in with the rest of the sheds now all being "Mist Green" They were so efficient that after lunch I had them paint Rodeo's new container as it was also red.



My next group were boys who I took into Mansfield as my daughter's garden was getting beyond regular maintenance with her studying and mothering while running the household. They were amazing and in 1 ½ hours had done all the mowing, weed pulling and leaf raking leaving her house looking very neat and tidy.

The following day they worked very very hard carting eight loads of firewood from the paddock to my woodshed next to the house. The shed was full by load six, load seven went on the other side of the house so for load eight we took it across the road to Rhyll and Jack's wood shed as I now have enough.



The students do all their own cooking for meals and this lovely group of boys even swept out the kitchen after wiping down all the benches. The girls were equally thoughtful. This is a very positive initiative for all concerned so if you have some jobs you could use some help with contact Jan Purcell at Timbertop - students are placed during term two each year.

Merrijig Family Fun Day

More fun photos from the Merrijig Family Fun Day. The inaugural event raised \$3000 which will be enough to kick off the event for next year. With such strong support from sponsors fun day can only get bigger and better.



The committee in its last meeting amended the mission statement to be; **“To provide a family oriented event with strong community participation, to allow community groups and local organisations to promote their interests for the overall benefit of the community.”**

Keep this in mind when you are looking to get involved in your community there will be a new committee of eight elected following an AGM sometime after the end of the financial year – you can put up your hand to be on the committee or part of the backup team called Friends of Fun Day.



Above, Cindy McLeish MP, enjoyed wandering around after the official opening - pictured here with Kellie Lovick Purvis with her boys Jake and Corey on horseback.



At right almost three year old Hunter Pollard with Daddy James and lead by Mummy Jenny (out of photo), stole the show in the fancy dress in his John Deer tractor pony.





National interest in Merrijig's ANZAC day ride

A young journalist Annabelle Beal, who along with family members has taken part in the Merrijig ANZAC day ride for several years was talking to Paul Jackson one day some months ago about writing about this rather unique take, on recognising the service people, as well as the animals who served our country. She said that she liked the overall acknowledgement of all who served and as each year, since it began in 2008, the interest has increased and with this year a hope for 100 riders to fit in with the centenary, she wanted to do an article for Stock and Land.

The article Annabelle wrote first came to notice in the week before ANZAC Day on April 20, when a friend in Tasmania, who also loves Merrijig, notified the editor to say this article appeared in their farmers' paper over the strait. Next the Stock and Land hard copy shows up at the editor's house followed by Facebook links to where it can be seen on the net. <http://www.theland.com.au/news/agriculture/general/events/tribute-to-the-forgotten-heroes/2730040.aspx?storypage=0>

On the Friday prior to ANZAC Day an abbreviated article appeared in the Melbourne Age as well. <http://www.theage.com.au/it-pro/riders-pay-tribute-to-horses-lost-in-battle-20150424-1mk19q.html>

Numerous comments have come in on what a wonderful article it is and how nice it is to see Merrijig getting this special attention. In less than 10 years, what began as an idea to make the 5 pines memorial at the top of Buttercup Road more relevant to the people of Merrijig today, the way we do it in Merrijig has now gained national interest. Another reason to be proud of Merrijig!

McCormack Park venue for next Australian Rodeo Queen Quest

Latoya Wards' next Fundraising activity for the Australian Rodeo Queen Quest is on Sunday, May 24 at McCormack Park, Merrijig. Main events start 9.30am

Details below for people keen on barrel racing.

Barrel racing for every age, gender and level! - Lots of prizes, trophies and ribbons.

Sunday 24th of May - Entries close midnight Friday 22nd - \$5 late fee applies for late entries (per event) Entries to be paid by 9 am Sunday.

Nominations and enquiries to: Merrijigbarrelrace@gmail.com Exhibitions 8 am-9 am (\$2 per minute)

Current prize pool across all events: \$1600

Prize pool will increase if entries exceed estimated number of competitors.

See flyer for events prize pool Saturday 23rd of May, arena use from 2pm onwards \$5 per person.

Barbecue, music and bar available for Saturday night.

Free camping

Insurance affiliated with Rodeo Services Association and included in entry fees.



Latoya carried the flag for the official opening on the Merrijig Fun Day

Friends of Changue Road Reserve Manned a stall site at the Merrijig Family Fun Day

Further information is available on website www.friendsofchangueroadreserve@weebly.com or contact the president, Nicole Gibson on 0400 868 748 or the secretary by email focri@gmail.com

Fun day success on Saturday, March 28, 2015

The fantastic feedback keeps rolling in. Merrijig - we are on a winner with the Merrijig Family Fun Day.

It's not only the grateful families who are passing on thanks and congratulations to the committee who put this event together, two businesses in Mansfield, who both were sponsors have passed on their thanks as holding the event created increased sales in preparation for fun day.

The number of parents of happy children who enjoyed the free jumping castles and participated in the free foot events and fun games are constantly saying that it was wonderful to have a whole day out entertaining their family at very little cost. Some people tell, that having passed on to their friends what a wonderful time they had, have fed back information along the lines of their friends will change their plans for next year to include attending Merrijig Family Fun Day. This is very pleasing feedback.

The very same reaction has been reported from the families who participated in the horsey events and games. A mother with tears in her eyes relayed how happy and proud her children were when they won their first ever pony ribbon and the smile on the face of the child who was with her, confirmed this pride. Jacquie Pollard who organised the gymkhana style horse program was repeatedly thanked and praised by participants and parents of children who took part. "This is what has been missing" was something often repeated as many riding groups and clubs have become too serious and precise for beginner riders or children.

The displays were very popular, particularly the wonderful display of vintage Indian Motorbikes owned by Peter Arundel, and the Fergie Tractors including the 1953 McCormack family Fergie now called "Cyril's Pride" which was recently restored and rebuilt by Fergie lover Bob Bretherton. The children were particularly keen on the emergency vehicles the SES with its team of rigged out manpower and the local CFA unit.

When going through the survey forms collected on the day, by far the most popular was the Monster Raffle. As adults were filling out the form I guess this would be natural, still with 14 prizes up for grabs varying in value from \$680 to \$45 with draws throughout the day and tickets remaining in the draw from the first ticket sold it's no wonder this was popular. All the businesses and individuals who made donations to the raffle - be assured that your donation really added to the fun of the day.

The free games, jumping castles and pony program were not far behind closely followed by the novelty events and face and plaster painting.

There was space on the form for comments, which included the Storyteller Magician was amazing, Great day for families. Kids thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Parents happy/Good fun/ Great Day/Good/Loved the whole day/Well done/Bikes and Cars./ the German Sausages/ Dog jumping./ Well organized/wonderful time had by all/Fantastic Day Thank You/ Fantastic Family Day/Thank you so much, maybe start a little later in the day.

The starting time was to accommodate the horse program and the people with horses were not concerned about the early start. The majority of the visitors came between 11 and 3, by 4pm there were very few visitors left.

All this information will help the new committee when planning for the 2016 Merrijig Family Fun Day- keep your eyes out for the AGM in the future - you're welcome on the committee of this successful event.



Merrijig Hall is available for hire for any function
at most reasonable rates
when looking for a venue
for a birthday party, wedding family reunion
keep your community hall in mind - it's there for your use
Call Sen Weir 0407 565 962 or 5777 5656



"Which" Craft?

The group gathers on Thursdays at 11am, finishing up around 3pm. Everyone brings along a small plate of goodies to share for morning tea and/or lunch. Tea and coffee are supplied.

New members welcome. Cost per session is \$4. For further details contact Kerrie on 04 3738 0384

St Merrig Hall
 On Tuesdays
 between 10 to 12
 & only costing \$3.00




Muscle Group

Don't do any of
 these workouts
 pictured.

Its good fun & light
 muscle strengthening
 exercises









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 filling in for sick staff. As well as
 Group catering, Private parties,
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 including advice and preparation
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Phone Paul Jackson
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EVER NEEDED A FACE PAINTER

*Keep Michele in mind for
 when you find you need a childrens' entertainer.*

**Michele has been busy face painting for a birthday parties
 And was a big hit at the Christmas market in Tolmie
 To hire Michele for a birthday party or club fundraiser
 check out the notice below.**

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



AJ's Laundry Services

4 Stirling St Merrijig
Juliet mob 0419 210 468
Merrijig Office: (03)5777 5967

NOW FOR A FINAL GOOD LAUGH!

A teacher gave her class of 11 year olds an assignment: To get their parent to tell them a story with a moral at the end of it.

The next day the kids came back and one by one began to tell their stories.

Ashley said, 'My father's a farmer and we have a lot of egg-laying hens. One time we were taking our eggs to market in a basket on the front seat of the car when we hit a big bump in the road and all the eggs got broken.'

'What's the morale of that story?' asked the teacher.

'Don't put all your eggs in one basket!'

'Very good,' said the teacher.

Next little Sarah raised her hand and said, 'Our family are farmers too. But we raise chickens for the meat market. One day we had a dozen eggs, but when they hatched we only got ten live chicks, and the moral to this story is, 'Don't count your chickens before they're hatched'.'

'That was a fine story Sarah.'

Michael, do you have a story to share?'

'Yes. My daddy told me this story about my Aunty Sharon. Aunty Sharon was a flight engineer on a plane in the Gulf War and her plane got hit.

She had to bail out over enemy territory and all she had was a bottle of whiskey, a machine gun and a machete.

She drank the whiskey on the way down so it wouldn't break and then she landed right in the middle of 100 enemy troops.

She killed seventy of them with the machine gun until she ran out of bullets.

Then she killed twenty more with the machete until the blade broke. And then she killed the last ten with her bare hands.'

'Good heavens,' said the horrified teacher, 'what kind of moral did your daddy tell you from that horrible story?'

'Stay away from Aunty Sharon when she's drunk.'

Bye for now Adele

Adele McCormack
45 McCormacks Rd
Merrijig 3723

☎ 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.

Enquiries can be directed to enquiries@merrijig.com.au or regarding the newsletter content to merrijignewsletter@gmail.com

The website is designed and sponsored by Merrijig resident, Steve Thompson of Appaloosa Films www.appaloosafilms.tv