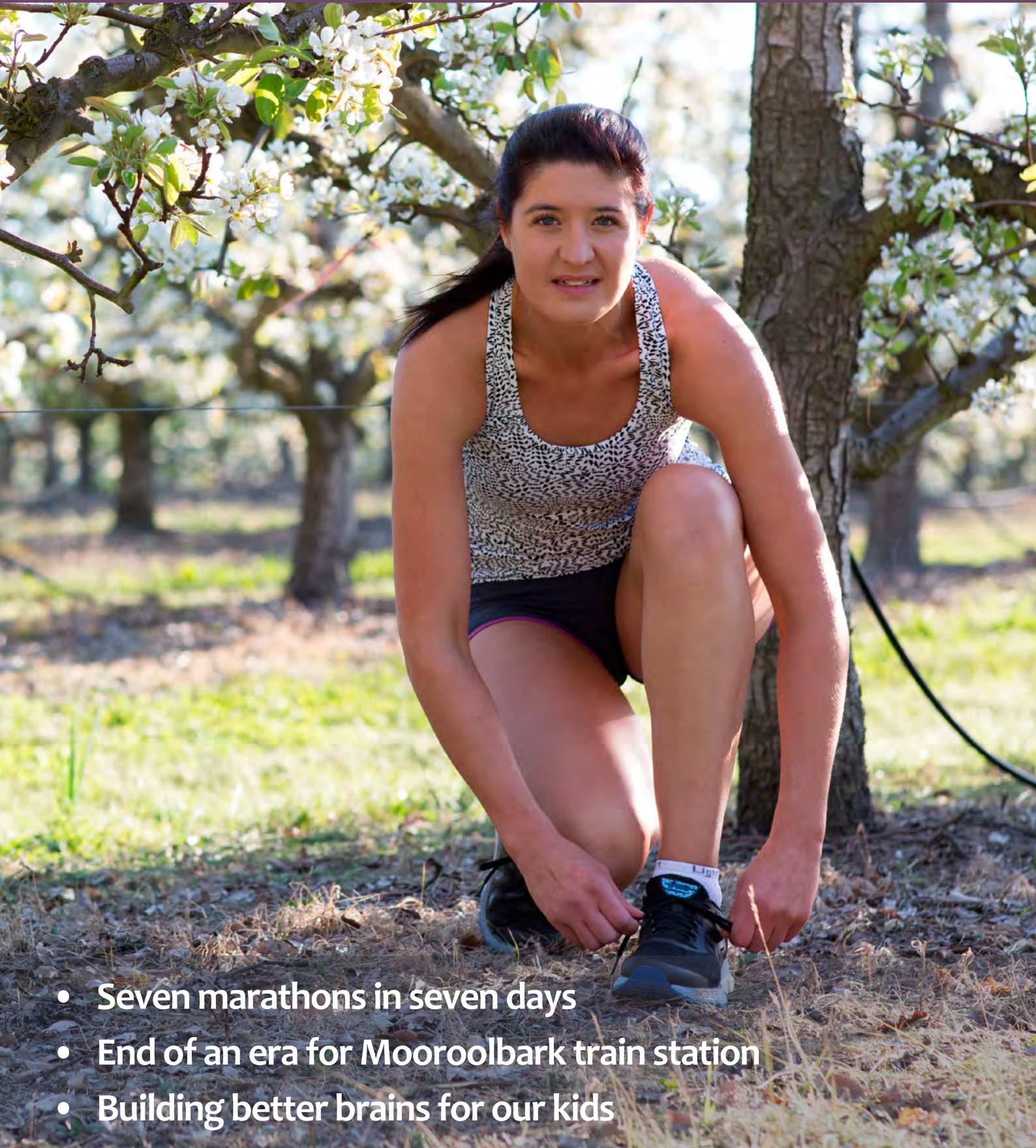


LIVING TODAY

in Mooroolbark and the Yarra Ranges

NO. 69 DECEMBER 2019



- Seven marathons in seven days
- End of an era for Mooroolbark train station
- Building better brains for our kids

Good news stories from your local community

The Accidental Teacher



PHOTO: RANDALL BOURCHER

In the 1985 novel *The Accidental Tourist*, protagonist Macon Leary is forced to travel for business. Macon dislikes travel and does so "with his eyes shut and holding his breath and hanging on for dear life." He soon has an "accidental" career as a travel writer, helping his readers feel at home while in new situations.

Recently retired teacher and Bimbadeen Heights Primary School Principal Leigh Johansen has also had a career guiding people through unfamiliar territory. Although most of the similarities end there, Leigh, like Macon, also started his career almost by accident!

Having grown up in Horsham and completed his secondary schooling, Leigh received the offer of a university course in primary teaching. He was uncertain about becoming a primary teacher, but commenced the course at Warrnambool in 1979. A week into the course, he received an employment offer from a bank. He sometimes wonders how his life would have unfolded had he taken up a banking career.

As it was, Leigh's uncertainty about a teaching career disappeared during his third year when he was given full control of a classroom of kids for three weeks. He was hooked! He recalls, too, the vital role of a "terrific, mentoring, supervising teacher."

After graduating in 1982, Leigh taught at Longford, followed by a stint as a relieving teacher in the Mallee, serving schools in the district around Charlton. He then spent time at Hastings before his first opportunity to lead a small school, in the dairy farming community of Nambrok.

The school offered Leigh a rich apprenticeship. He recalled, "There's nothing in Nambrok other than a school and a footy ground. It was a great community, though, surrounded by dairy farms. They were good people and I really learned the foundations of working with the community to build the school. The school was critical to the community—and in a small community, everyone's involved in everything—volunteering, playing football, netball and so on."

"I was drafted to play footy for the Nambrok seconds," he continued. "We won the athletic sports one year, and wow!—the joy of the

parents towards the school. It was momentous for them! And I remember thinking: This school is so important to this community."

"I was twenty-six and loving every moment of what I was doing! But I didn't know much about running a school. I'd been there a few weeks, and the president of the school council said to me, 'It's school council tonight.' And I said, 'Oh, right. Do I need to be there?' 'Well, you'd better be,' he said, 'because it's the AGM tonight and you're running the election.' I haven't stopped going to school council meetings ever since!"

Leigh's openness to learning is a theme that came across regularly during our conversation. He's done his share of formal learning, going on to complete a graduate diploma and a master's degree in teaching, but it's the ongoing on-the-job learning that's impressive.

"I've never stopped learning about the way kids learn," Leigh said. "There's still much to learn—but also learning about the ways parents and families grow and develop. Many became wonderful friends. It's an honour that parents entrust their precious children to our care."

Developing long-time relationships with children and their parents has been a privilege for Leigh. "As a principal, it's a joy to get to know a child over a period of seven years. It's not an 'in and out' relationship; it's a daily relationship. At times it can be a challenging relationship. But you're there for the long haul."

Leigh understands that any good outcomes in education, and in life generally, come through good relationships. "I admire the dedicated sacrifice of teachers," he said. "As much as I love kids, children can be difficult to work with at times, as can their families. Yet teachers keep turning up day in, day out, to what is anything but a nine-to-five job."

An example of this inspiring dedication occurred when Leigh told one of the Bimbadeen teachers about a new enrolment. The Grade 2 student had already been to four schools, and lived in a challenging family. "He was disengaged, unhappy and aggressive," said Leigh. He explained the situation to the teacher, giving the boy's history and a little of what she might expect when he came to the school. Leigh

was delighted when she responded, "I wonder what things I'll have to do differently to engage this boy in my class."

"It was just music to my ears," said Leigh. "That's what a great teacher does!"

That attitude is different to the prevailing view when Leigh was at teachers' college—"you don't smile until Easter."

"It was all about primarily asserting control, rather than building and growing relationships," Leigh recalled. "I maintain that there are three things that make a school stand out. Number one: build and value good relationships. Number two: build and value good relationships. Number three: build..."

Leigh acknowledged that it took him a while to learn the power of good relationships. "Imagine a child walking into a classroom on the first day, hoping that the teacher likes them—and being met by a stern-faced, remote teacher." Having learned that lesson, Leigh offers staff the following advice about the first day of school: "Make sure you smile, smile, smile, and that you find out something about each child and use their name as often as you can on that first day."

Rather than assuming that the earlier general approach of "one size fits all" will work, it is now understood that teaching outcomes are best when teachers can cater for each child. This makes it especially important to really know each child. "Kids start off from diverse backgrounds," said Leigh. "They learn at such different rates and in such varied ways that assessment is a constant part of the teaching process. Why teach the children how to count to ten when they're already counting to a hundred? We're learning to start from where the child's point of learning is."

Leigh also reflected briefly on the challenge of finding a balance between academic achievement and encouraging the development of emotional intelligence that enables children to get along with others, and to support and care for each other.

The proliferation of technology presents another huge challenge to education. "With the world as it is now, children carry knowledge in their pockets," said Leigh. "Social media

has changed our role. Instead of primarily offering a set of knowledge, the crucial role now for educators is to teach children that just because something is on Wikipedia doesn't mean it's true. We have to teach children to be critical thinkers, critical analysers of information coming from social media—geared as it is to cater to people's interests and prejudices."

Leigh spent 29 years as a principal—all but three years spent in our region, with stints at Warburton East, Wesburn, Launching Place, and Bayswater North before spending eleven years at Bimbadeen Heights. After his oversight of the rebuilding of the school into the impressive campus it is today, Leigh felt that the time had come to retire and hand over to a successor with fresh energy. At his retirement function, Leigh's supervisor referred to the guiding moral compass that helped shape Leigh's career, which he had acquired from growing up in a Christian family.

One of Leigh's colleagues talked about his relationship with staff and the entire school community: "Leigh was always attentive, a good listener. When you'd approach him in his office, he would swing his chair around and give you his undivided attention. In his engagement with children, his conversation and messages were always at their level and delivered in a way that emphasised that they were valued and that what they had to say was worth hearing."

"He always seemed to conduct himself positively with appropriate dignity when 'under the pump'. He was a great guy who was not

short of a sense of humour. Each week he produced a weekly email for staff called TGIF.¹ It summarised the week gone by and acknowledged staff members who'd gone above and beyond. He always concluded with the play on words 'Final-Leigh', followed by a quote of some sort."



Leigh and Tracey Johansen with sons Alistair (left) and Joshua (right)

Leigh knows he's going to miss the daily interaction with the children, and the privilege he felt in sharing people's lives—especially the privilege of offering leadership during times of loss and grieving within the school community, and extending a helping hand to people at their most vulnerable.

However, Leigh is looking forward to spending more time with his family—his wife Tracey, a primary school teacher, and sons Joshua

(18) and Alistair (17). This month marks the Johansens' 25th wedding anniversary. For the entirety of their marriage, Leigh has been a school principal and Tracey has been a teacher. "Our boys have only ever had a teacher and a principal for parents," said Leigh. "This may have meant that they didn't get as sympathetic an ear when complaining about their teachers or their school as they might have wanted!"

Leigh is anticipating exciting and interesting times in the next couple of years as his sons finish school and become more independent. For now, however, they are enjoying a busy family life—the boys are both active in local football, and they also enjoy challenging bike rides with their father. Leigh's hoping to spend more of his leisure time bike riding—as long as the wallabies don't try to join in, as one did two or three years ago, leading to a collision which resulted in Leigh fracturing his pelvis.

In retirement, Leigh will continue to play a valuable part within our township group, the Mooroolbark Umbrella Group, which honoured him with a Quiet Achiever Award in October.

Thanks, Leigh, for the contribution you've made to our wider community! We look forward to the continuation of the very pleasurable relationship, and extend to you, your wife and sons our grateful best wishes for the years ahead.

Randall Bourchier

¹ Thank God It's Friday

PHOTO: MSP PHOTOGRAPHY/NORTH EAST MIE BOURCHIER



Hard at Work: Staff members at Bimbadeen Heights Primary School take time out for the 2019 staff photo

celebrate
mooroolbark festival
20-21 March 2020



PHOTOS: NICOLE SQUELCH



Let's Party!

With even more activities for kids, next year's Celebrate Mooroolbark festival will be more fun than ever. From retro rides to futuristic imaginings, it's going to be a party like no other.

The theme for Celebrate Mooroolbark 2020 is "Red Earth Awakened—40 Years On..." We're celebrating 40 years of festivals in Mooroolbark: the Red Earth Festival, which ran from 1980 to 2001, and the current festival, Celebrate Mooroolbark, which from small beginnings in 2002 is getting bigger and better every year. We will be looking at the history of the festival, where we are today, and where we will be in another 40 years.

We know that the people of Mooroolbark love a good festival—so pick your favourite decade, dress up, and join the party. We will be re-creating the past with retro family races, an egg-and-spoon race, a sack race, a three-legged race, and maybe a tug of war. We're even planning a mud fight—so be prepared and come dressed appropriately!

The fun starts with Red Earth UnEarthed in the community centre at 7 pm on Friday 20 March, and the street parade kicks off the next day's activities at 10 am. After the parade, the day will get into full swing with some of our favourite activities and performers, as well as plenty of new activities and displays. In the Active Living Hub, taekwondo experts will demonstrate their skills, and we're looking forward to watching a display of dogs and their owners working together as a team. If you want to know what a silent disco is, look for a group of people dancing their way through the festival!

More Fun for the Kids

Celebrate Mooroolbark has always had plenty activities for kids, and this year we're adding a special children's area. It's still in the planning stages but is sure to include lots of interactive entertainment such as a puppet show, magicians, and storytelling. There will also be activities like finger painting, water beads, giant bubbles, instant snow, coding robots, slime, friendship bracelets and a blow-up wading pool full of sand.

Celebrate Mooroolbark Committee News

Paris Hindby, our youngest committee member, was awarded the 2019 Jean Mitchinson Youth Initiative Award. Paris, with her boundless enthusiasm and energy, supported Red Earth UnEarthed and the Youth Zone for our 2019 festival, and is very heavily involved with Bridge Builders Youth Organisation in Lilydale.¹

The committee is delighted to welcome back Robyn Dalton, who has returned to take over facilitating the main stage. We still need volunteers willing to commit themselves to one hour a fortnight for meetings, with the idea of taking on a future role at the festival. For more information please call Barbara on 0417 381 542.

Barbara Austin
Chair, Celebrate Mooroolbark Committee

¹ See our article on Paris Hindby in our September 2019 issue, and page 8-9 of this issue for more information about Bridge Builders.

Mooroolbark Miniature Railway
–Family Fun Day  Bendigo Bank



Following the very successful Family Fun Day at the Mooroolbark and District Miniature Railway and Steam Club that we had in February this year, the Mooroolbark Community Bank Branch of Bendigo Bank is pleased to announce that we will be sponsoring this event again next year.

The next family day will be on Sunday 23 February 2020 at the Mooroolbark Miniature Railway at Kiloran Reserve in Hawthory Road. There will be the usual miniature railway train rides and barbecue and picnic facilities, and our branch will be providing music, free face painting, and of course our Bendigo Piggy mascot will be there too!

This all makes for a fantastic day of fun for all the family, so please save the date! We will be providing more details closer to the time of the event.

David Green
Mooroolbark Community Bank Branch of Bendigo Bank

The Science of Play

One morning as I entered the Mount Evelyn Station House community reading room, I held the door open for a vibrantly dressed lady full of sparkle and personality. She was loaded up with drums, hoops, colourful scarves and a couple of bulging suitcases packed with exciting things for little souls. This was my first encounter with Sian Chambers-Vallance, a passionate, creative, knowledgeable, fun-loving human being, committed to helping young minds germinate and flourish. Sian was running music sessions for under 5s, and soon I was joining in the musical fun with my two year old.

As well as lighting up little people's lives with the joy of music, Sian is deeply interested in neuroscience—brain integration, mirror neurons, the power of music and sensory play in growing neural pathways—and what each activity does to young developing brains.



Sian Chambers-Vallance

Over 20 years of a richly tapestried career, Sian has interwoven her passions for creative expression, music, play, psychology and neuroscience. Starting out as a professional singer led Sian into teaching singing,

which launched her work with young people. "I am passionate about seeing young people grow their wings, their sense of themselves and their voices, and my work often was about bringing magic and connection into kids' worlds," said Sian. She has taught Mini Maestros, drama, art, singing, brain play sensory exploration, and yoga for kids, and also worked as a professional fairy. Alongside her creative work and raising her own family, Sian went back to university again to study psychology, and later, counselling and clinical play therapy.

On top of a full client schedule, Sian also runs music therapy for dementia clients, intergenerational music and creative arts programs for the community, and also works to grow our systems through training and capacity building in educators, parents and mental health professionals.

Sian has a particular interest and focus on early brain trauma and intervention, as well as neuroscience and the developing brain: "Early brain trauma—which can be caused by toxic stress, high levels of adrenalin and cortisol even in utero—leads to all sorts of issues that unfold later on. Often these issues are not recognised until school, and then kids are given labels and the message they don't fit into our systems." Early intervention is key and allows brain repair and rewiring to occur more quickly.

Sian grew up in a family struggling with the immense challenges of raising a special-needs child, Sian's younger brother. "We were in survival mode years on end, and with the

intense daily stress and trauma I shut down." However, as suffering can bring great art, Sian has seen how her family life has shaped her and her work now. "Our work evolves out of who we are. Living with my brother helped me to see the human beyond the disability. My mum—a teacher—was one of the first advocates for an inclusive education and she lobbied hard for my brother to get into Billanook College."

Eric Bottomley, Sian's father, spent 25 years tirelessly building CERES¹ and received an OAM for the work he did. Sian talks of the dinner-time conversations her parents had with their friends. "My siblings and I would play under the dinner table listening to the conversations of my parents' friends—all intellectuals, artists, creatives, educators and environmentalists—discussing how we can change the world and environment for a better future."

Sian has taken up the cause to make the world a better place through education, advocacy and empowerment. She is joined in her pursuit by her husband, high school teacher Tony Vallance, who heads up the STEAM program (science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics) at Lilydale High School. Tony was awarded Teacher of the Year at the 2019 Australian Education Awards—a validation of his committed passion and the relational way he interacts with students. Together, Sian and Tony have created their consultancy and training business, Building Better Brains, in order to empower and educate parents, caregivers, educators and health-care professionals in becoming child centred, brain wise and trauma informed.

I was privileged to attend four Building Better Brains workshops that covered the brain and behaviour, trauma, mindful families, and building resiliency. As a parent I found these workshops insightful, educational, practical, relevant, refreshing and engaging. The more we understand how the brain is formed in

the early years, the more we are able to meet our children's needs and connect with them, forming deep nurturing relationships that will help their brains and nervous systems to develop in healthy and robust ways.

We are also becoming aware of the challenges facing generations to come and how our current systems are failing to meet those needs. The World Economic Forum states the skills needed for future jobs include complex problem solving, creativity, emotional intelligence, cognitive flexibility, and collaboration.² These skills rely on complex integrated brains with all parts of the brain working together. This is achieved through play and connection, securely attached relationships, and mindful and self-reflective practices.

Sian asks how we, as the adults in society, are questioning and changing ourselves and our systems to build brains that are capable of learning these skills. "It is a parallel process of growing ourselves in emotional intelligence in order to grow our kids. We need to be committed to educating ourselves, to be brain wise, trauma smart, and child centred," she said. "We need to model problem solving and have reflective conversations around the table about creative solution to things. We need to grow our own capacity around tolerating and normalising emotions—understanding that emotions themselves are not bad."

What keeps Sian going? "I delight in seeing the power of transformation in other people's lives and in my own life and I never stop learning and growing," she said. "We may not see the fruits of our work, but we tirelessly work to build a better future for our kids."

Sandra Gudze

More information about Sian's training programs for parents and educators, and her clinical work with children and families, can be found at her websites: buildingbetterbrains.com.au and artisticrevolutions.com.au.

¹ CERES (Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies) is a not-for-profit sustainability centre located on the Merri Creek in East Brunswick.

² weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-10-skills-you-need-to-thrive-in-the-fourth-industrial-revolution/



PHOTOS SUPPLIED

Moy Asian Grocery

In most families, the children follow in the parents' footsteps. In the Fu family, the opposite occurred—mother Kelly followed in the footsteps of her two daughters, all the way from China to Australia!

Kelly and Sam Fu's oldest daughter Iris came to Australia seven years ago to finish the last three years of secondary school. She is now 24 and has been here ever since, having graduated from university with a bachelor of business. The family's second daughter, Zoe, arrived in Melbourne in 2017 to begin her Year 10 studies.

Wanting to be with their daughters and liking the lifestyle and fresh air of Australia, Kelly and Sam decided to move the family to Melbourne. Kelly has been here since 2018 with their youngest child, Oscar, while Sam continues to work in China until the family's financial situation is more stable.

When six-year-old Oscar started school last year, Kelly began looking for a job where her limited English wouldn't be a drawback. It was decided that a small Asian grocery store would be an ideal family business, and in October, Kelly took over ownership of the Moy Asian Grocery in Mooroolbark.

Before the sale was finalised, Kelly's daughter Iris spent two months working at the grocery store, learning the business from the previous owners. Iris now helps her mother run the store.

Under the previous ownership the store's focus was on Burmese foods. Now, Iris and her mother plan to add more variety. "We already serve the Burmese customers well, so we want to expand the business," said Iris. They plan to add more Chinese foods, as well as enlarging the existing range of Thai, Filipino and Indian products. They also hope to add a delivery service next year, having noticed that many older people in the area don't drive. "If they buy something like rice they only buy a small bag," said Iris. "The big bag is better value, but they can't carry it home. We want to do



Kelly Huang in the new family business, which she runs with the help of her daughter Iris Fu.

PHOTO: JANET VAN DIJK

something good for the local community, so we are thinking that we could deliver to our older customers."

The Mooroolbark Traders Group has been very helpful to the new owners, welcoming them to the area and advising them about local matters such as the Level Crossing Removal Project (LXRP). "They have been helping us get in touch with the team [at LXRP] so we know how they will close the road and how it will affect our business," said Iris.

Kelly and Iris are looking forward to welcoming new customers to the shop and getting to know the customers who have continued to shop there since the change in ownership. Because those existing customers were used to the name of the business, they decided not to change it. And also, said Iris, "Moy means beautiful—that's a good meaning."

Janet Van Dijk

Moy Asian Grocery is open seven days a week and is located at 62 Manchester Road. For more information, phone 0422 975 586 or check out the store's Facebook page.

I am very pleased to introduce you to Joey Esterhuyzen, a local Mooroolbark A-grade electrician, and owner of Verve Electrical.

In part, the word "verve" means "with enthusiasm" and this encapsulates the driving force behind Verve Electrical. This enthusiasm was obvious when Joey used his electrical skills to help sponsor this year's Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival. Joey volunteered his time and expertise to the festival, providing electrical compliance works, testing and tagging, and of course, a cheerful smile! Joey's professionalism and obvious enjoyment of his job soon earned him a great deal of respect and gratitude from the festival organisers.

Joey's friendly smile and open personality is infectious, and I immediately felt comfortable inviting him into my home to interview him for this article. Verve Electrical has not been short of some very challenging experiences, but Joey's outright positivity left me wanting to know more—I look forward to learning more about him when he comes over to repair my garage security light.

For Joey, the journey to becoming an electrician wasn't a direct one. "I started out in retail and store management, before moving on to becoming a personal trainer and coach," said Joey. "Before long, I got bored with the routine and decided that the Victoria Police was a viable option for me. Thankfully I didn't make the gender quota in my first attempt, and opted to do a trade instead—something I'd always thought of. The rest is history." Joey said he enjoys the work, "especially being able to use all my skills in one domain—customer service, technical skills and management!"



Joey spoke about the constant need to "upskill" in his chosen industry, from business management and basic bookkeeping, to technical learning about the various sectors of his profession. In an ever-changing field, it's this approach that keeps Joey at the forefront of the electrical industry. Verve offers a range of electrical services and can tailor a solution to meet the needs of both domestic and commercial customers at a reasonable cost.

What's the bottom line behind the success of Verve Electrical? According to Joey, it's customer service. "I love serving my customers, and I take great pride in bucking the stereotype of the typical tradie," he said.

Joey explained that with a strong focus on customer education, Verve Electrical takes the time to make clear what needs to be done, and what options are available to customers. The company is committed to maintaining high levels of communication on all its projects, keeping customers informed and part of the process.

Barry Austin

Verve Electrical can be contacted on 0428 862 963, or on the company's website (verveelectrical.com.au) or Facebook page.

Join the Fun at Mooroolbark Men's Shed



The large workshop will be ready for full use once the \$8,000 dust-extraction system has been installed.



Mooroolbark Men's Shed is a relaxed place for friends to get together



Shed members can work on their own tasks or help with group projects



If you're near the railway line behind Red Earth Community Park on a quiet Tuesday or Thursday morning, you may hear the companionable hum of men talking and

the sounds of sawing, drilling and hammering carried toward you on the breeze. If you follow the sounds and come upon a hive of activity, you've just found Mooroolbark Men's Shed.

Although the Shed is tucked away out of sight from the main roads of Mooroolbark, the men aren't trying to keep its existence quiet—in fact, they're looking for more members.

After several years without a permanent home, the men of Mooroolbark Men's Shed are now settled into their modified premises at the corner of Croydondale Drive and Ellen Road, and would like more people from Mooroolbark and nearby suburbs to enjoy what they have to offer. Mooroolbark Men's Shed is a great place for men who are no longer working a nine-to-five job to get together, work on projects and develop friendships. With the increase of units and multi-storey dwellings in our suburbs, many men no longer have their own tool sheds where they can work on projects and hobbies—or if they do, they may not want to work alone.

The new site, previously occupied by a tennis club, has been updated and improved since Men's Shed took on a long-term lease over a year ago. The rooms of the tennis pavilion, now in use as club rooms, have been painted and furnished. Garden beds have been established around the building, and there has been talk about incorporating a community garden on the land. The men have also spent much of their time for the past 12 months working on the construction of a huge work shed.

The shed, complete with shelving, tool racks, and workbenches, is spacious and light-filled. With just the dust-extraction system still to be installed, the men are nearly ready to start moving some of their largest machinery and equipment into the workshop. "We've got four wood-turning lathes, and we've got a machine shop, a welding shop—so there's a good variety of things for the men of the area to do. They

can do metal work, woodworking, wood turning," said Mooroolbark Men's Shed President John Lowry. Three shipping containers have been placed near the shed, providing more storage and working space.

"We're just so very, very lucky with the facilities we've got," said John. "Most Men's Sheds have had to put a wall across their shed, and one end is for the Men's Shed and the other end is their kitchen or meeting rooms. We use the pavilion for our club rooms and it's completely separate from the actual men's shed, the working shed."

The Mooroolbark Men's Shed is open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:30 am until 2 pm and welcomes men—and also women—from surrounding suburbs and from all walks of life. "Our youngest member is 36; he used to run his own plastering business until he fell off a ladder and was injured," said John. "The majority of our members are from 60 to—whatever, really. We just got a new member who's 86."

John said that while they don't currently have any female members, his wife Margaret was involved for years, acting as secretary and writing grant applications. "She never worked in the workshop—she just worked behind the scenes and kept the wheels rolling." If enough women became members, the group may be able to open the Shed on an additional day just for women.

With its focus on improving men's health and also benefiting the community, the Shed is helpful for those who suffer from conditions like depression and anxiety. "Sometimes if people have been made redundant, they just sit at home and watch TV," said John. "We want to provide a friendly environment for them to come to."

John explained that Men's Shed is very relaxed. "I'd like people to feel comfortable in coming out to the Shed and feel that they're in a safe environment. They can come as little or as often as they like. If they just want to sit round and have a cup of tea with other people who aren't working in the shed, they can do that, or if they feel comfortable, they can go into the shed."

Mooroolbark Men's Shed helps out individuals and groups in the community by undertaking

repairs and other projects, usually just for a donation, a nominal fee, or the cost of the materials. The majority of the group's funds come from government and community group grants, allowing them to keep annual membership fees low. The Shed also holds fundraising barbecues and sells woodwork and other items the men have crafted in their shed. "We've had people who have come here feeling downtrodden or at a loose end, and within a couple of weeks they're much better," said John. "It gives them a reason to get up in the morning."

Janet Van Dijk

For information about how you can become part of Men's Shed, contact John Lowry on 0419 366 939 or visit the group's Facebook page.



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Up for the Challenge

Seven Marathons • Seven Continents



Beck Mitchell has had more than her fair share of challenges in life, and she's about to add one more. Next year, she will run seven marathons across seven continents, with the aim of raising \$250,000 to support Bridge Builders Youth Organisation.

Beck, from Mooroolbark, will compete in the annual World Marathon Challenge in early February. In this "triple seven" challenge, competitors will undertake seven standard marathons of 42.2 km each, across seven continents, on seven consecutive days.

The first marathon will take place in Novo on mainland Antarctica. From there, the runners will fly to marathon locations on six more continents—Africa (Cape Town), Australia (Perth), Asia (Dubai), Europe (Madrid), South America (Santiago) and North America. By the time they reach the final destination of Miami, entrants will have run 295 km across seven continents, all within seven days.



For most participants, undertaking the gruelling World Marathon Challenge is about pushing themselves to the limit and achieving their personal best. Some, like Beck Mitchell, are also using it as an opportunity to raise awareness and funds for causes they are passionate about. Beck is seeking donations for Bridge Builders Youth organisation, a not-for-profit charity headquartered in Lilydale, which provides support and assistance to people aged between 12 and 25.

Beck describes Bridge Builders as "a charity very close to my heart." Through its local and online programs, the organisation seeks to help young people feel loved, valued and accepted, and provide opportunities for them to develop skills and reach their full potential. Bridge Builders concentrates on prevention as well as intervention, and unlike charities that cater solely for people who have certain specified issues or disorders, the criteria for membership is simply being in the right age group and wanting to participate.

Beck has been involved with the development and running of Bridge Builders for the last 15 years and is currently a board member and the executive officer of the organisation. Through her volunteering at the charity, Beck wants to help other young people feel that they have a purpose in life, a place where they belong, and hope for their future. "I am incredibly privileged to wake up every day and provide support and guidance

to other young people just like me."

"When I was growing up, I experienced significant challenges in my world that made me feel like I wasn't of value, that I wasn't good enough, and that I wouldn't be able to achieve my dreams," said Beck. Now 31, she said her childhood was unconventional, which had an effect on how she related to the world around her. "It wasn't that it was incredibly difficult; it's just that it was very different," she said. "It took a fair chunk out of my self-esteem at a very young age."

Beck grew up on the family farm in Mount Evelyn, and didn't have any formal education until she was eleven years old. "I think my parents just thought it was the best thing for us, not to be part of the general school structure," said Beck. "So by the time I got to eleven years old I couldn't write my own name, or do times tables. Even learning how to make friends was a really big challenge for me. Grade 6 was my first year of school ever and that was definitely a shock to the system. From then on I continued with my schooling, but it was a very difficult process for me, not learning at the same rate as my peer group and not being involved socially at that age."

As a young adult, during a time that she describes as one of "incredible darkness", Beck found support at Bridge Builders. "I finally found a place where I was accepted and where I felt like I could belong."

Beck credits Bridge Builders with transforming her life and giving her hope for the future. However, because the charity receives no government funding, it relies upon financial support from fundraising and donations, as well as practical support from its dedicated volunteers. Beck is hoping that her determination and persistence in running the seven-continent marathon will inspire others to donate. Beck is not about to let anything—even health issues like living with an autoimmune disorder—get in the way of her goal. "Running is my passion," said Beck. "It is something that I can use to inspire and help other people."

Bridge Builders founder and CEO, Phil Stenhouse OAM, describes Beck as "an amazing influencer of young people." She is an accomplished speaker, having completed a two-year speaking, training, and leadership program. She promotes resilience, self-esteem, positive body image and leadership development through workshops and conferences, at Bridge Builders activities, and to school groups. "It's something I thoroughly enjoy doing," Beck said. "It's good to do something you're passionate about."

"A lot of it has been my own story—how to be resilient, how to overcome challenges in life. Recently I've spoken at places like Rotary clubs and Lions clubs, and exchange-student meetings. I want to inspire people and help them understand what I'm trying to achieve, and how they can get on board and help."

Beck is determined to raise a quarter of a million dollars, a feat that might seem daunting to some. Her campaign is being shared both locally and globally through mass media, online social networks, and word of mouth. If she hasn't raised the entire \$250,000 by the time of the marathon in February, Beck won't be slowing

• Seven Days

down. "I'm just going to keep fundraising until I hit that target."

Every little bit helps, and Bridge Builders is hoping that corporations, as well as individuals, will support Beck's marathon effort. Businesses who would like to make a significant donation and get a return on their investment can become sponsors. "They can invest anywhere between \$500 and \$12,000 to become a sponsor, and receive branding and marketing awareness as a result of that," explained Beck. All donations are tax deductible, and as part of Bridge Builders' commitment to financial transparency, its financial data is easily accessible on the website. The organisation's prospectus is also on the website, and provides information about the group's free youth programs, events and social activities.

"Our online services can be accessed by people around the country—actually, from almost anywhere around the world," said Beck. "We livestream our weekly youth meeting, so young people who can't get to our location can view our content and be part of the organisation

from an online perspective. We also have plenty of people who call us from other states and we provide referrals for mentoring and support."

Beck explained that Bridge Builders facilitates various events for the community, which have a two-fold purpose. "Firstly, events form part of our self-funding model. The funds and the profit we receive from holding each event go into sustaining what we do. The second part is that every one of our events, whether it has a large fundraising component or not, is an opportunity for young people to design and deliver."

"The kids get involved in the process of event management—leading a team, being involved with other members in our group. The whole process helps them build confidence. They have to work with other people, build their skills in public speaking and phone manner, and that sort of thing."

One recent event was the Run for the Young marathon in Lilydale in November, which offered several competitions, from a 2.5 km kids' run up to a full marathon. Organising the event was a good way for young Bridge Builders to develop their skills. "They managed all the design in the lead-up to the event and the facilitation on the day. They called people and tried to engage them as sponsors, met with people in the community we might be able to partner with, and encouraged people to buy tickets. They organised traffic management at the drink stations and the medals that the runners win at the end."

Because of her own involvement with Bridge Builders as a young adult, Beck understands

firsthand the benefit of undertaking such group projects. "It's an incredibly empowering process to give that responsibility and that opportunity to our youth."

Recently Beck was asked by a friend, who also has an autoimmune condition, "How can you do this? How can you possibly run seven marathons on seven continents in seven days, and have an autoimmune disease and have faced all these challenges, and still do what you're doing?" Beck replied, "Because of two things. One, I have learned to be resilient through the challenges of my life. Secondly, I have had so much opportunity at Bridge Builders and been surrounded by so many incredible role models. I'm very thankful for what I've been given."

As she laces up her running shoes each day as part of her training routine, Beck thinks of the issues that keep her moving forward, like the devastating statistics around youth suicide. "By creating awareness and by giving funds to an organisation that is making such a significant difference, we can do something about that."

"If we can help build up young people to be strong and resilient, and instil self-esteem and great skills and assets, when they do face challenges in their world they will have the resilience to overcome them."

Janet Van Dijk

For more information about Beck, Bridge Builders and how to support the marathon challenge, go to: au.gofundme.com/f/bridgebuildersyouth
Facebook: [Beck Mitchell - World Marathon Challenge](https://www.facebook.com/BeckMitchell-WorldMarathonChallenge)
[Beckmitchell.com](https://www.facebook.com/BeckMitchell.com)
Bridgebuilders.com.au



Photos and cover image courtesy of Danielle Benson Photography

The Power of Humility

The story is told about a time, in the fledgling days of the United States, when a rider came across a few soldiers who were trying to move a heavy log of wood without success. The corporal was standing by, just watching as the men struggled.

The rider asked the corporal why he wasn't helping. The corporal replied, "I am the corporal; I give the orders." The rider said nothing in response. Instead, he dismounted his horse, joined the soldiers and worked with them to move the heavy log. With his help, the task was finally able to be carried out.

Who was this helpful rider? None other than George Washington, the commander-in-chief of the army. He quietly mounted his horse, turned to the corporal and said, "The next time your men need help, send for the commander-in-chief."

Humility is one of the most respected characteristics a person can have. George Washington, an important military officer who later became the first president of the United States, did not think it beneath him to help soldiers with something that needed to be done.

Humility is about being modest, respectful of others and putting them ahead of yourself. It is not calling attention to yourself or thinking more highly of yourself than you ought. Of course, the great barrier to humility is pride.

Jesus noted this while eating a meal at the house of a leader of the Pharisees. He saw how guests chose the places near the head table to sit. So he told them:

"When you are invited to an important social function, don't be quick to sit near the head of the table, choosing the seat of honour. What will happen when someone more distinguished than

you arrives? The host will then bring him over to where you are sitting and ask for your seat, saying in front of all the guests, 'You're in the wrong place. Please give this person your seat.' Disgraced, you will have to take whatever seat is left. Instead, when you're invited to a banquet, you should choose to sit in the lowest place so that when your host comes and sees you there, he may say, 'My friend, come with me and let me seat you in a better place.' Then, in front of all the other guests at the banquet, you will be honoured and seated in the place of highest respect.

"Remember this: everyone with a lofty opinion of who he is and who seeks to raise himself up will be humbled before all. And everyone with a modest opinion of who he is and chooses to humble himself will be raised up before all."¹

Humility compels us to put others before ourselves, especially others who would otherwise be overlooked or forgotten.

In so many situations in life, we have the choice to give in to our pride. Or we can let the humility Christ points us to, lead us in our thoughts and deeds. Whether it's helping someone with a task that they should be able to manage themselves, or simply giving up your seat for someone else, may humility guide your response.

Greg Williams
Speaking of Life

¹ Luke 14:8-11



PHOTO: YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY, PUBLIC DOMAIN

George Washington was admired for his humility in leadership. This 1792 portrait by John Trumbull depicts General Washington after the Battle of the Assumpink Creek in 1777.

Faith and Hope in a Practical Way

Home League is a women's group that was started in England by Catherine Booth and instituted by the Salvation Army's founder, William Booth, in 1907. The concept was so popular that it spread to other countries, including Australia, within its first ten years. The group soon became an integral part of every Salvation Army Corps Community Centre, evolving into a weekly meeting with four different programs. These programs are:

- **Worship:** Includes Bible reading and prayer.
- **Education:** Addresses the needs, interests and concerns of women and promotes personal, family and community growth.
- **Fellowship:** Provides experiences filled with fun, food and warm friendships which offer an opportunity to build relationships, share concerns and receive friendly advice from other women. Includes outings, parties and social events.
- **Service:** Gives women an opportunity to make a difference in their community and their world. Offers a variety of service projects such as feeding the homeless, helping financially disadvantaged children receive toys for Christmas, baking cookies for college students, visiting nursing homes, and much more.

Home League is an inspiring, fun and educational place where women can learn practical living skills and opportunities for fellowship with other women. The program is designed to meet the interests and needs of women from all walks of life: working mothers, stay-at-home mums, career women, single mums, younger women, and mature women.

Mooroolbark Salvation Army Home League is coordinated by Major Catherine Spillers, Judy Montgomery (secretary) and Heather Bronstring (carer). There is also a driver, Alan Quantrell, who picks up the ladies who are unable to drive themselves.



PHOTO: BARBARA AUSTIN

Judy Montgomery, Heather Bronstring (second and third from top left) and driver Alan Quantrell with some of the regular members of Mooroolbark's Home League.

Judith, a mature woman who started going to Home League in Mooroolbark when her husband died, said, "It gave me company, which I needed, and a purpose for living."

The meetings are varied and aim to improve the quality of life of those women who attend. There are guest speakers, and activities include bus trips and musical mornings. The syllabus for December has a Christmas theme, with events such as Christmas crafts, a Christmas stall and carol singing. A Christmas luncheon at the Lilydale International on 10 December will mark the group's last meeting for the year, and meetings will resume again on 4 February.

Home League is held at the Salvation Army Mooroolbark Corps, 305 Manchester Road, Chirnside Park, every Tuesday at 10 am. As a church-based program, it offers women faith and hope in a practical way. If you would like more information, please contact the church office on 9727 4777.

Barbara Austin

Elsie Bolwell

Still a Woman at Work

PHOTO: BARBARA AUSTIN



Elsie in her Trefoil Guild uniform

The hand-written sign said: Woman at Work! At a busy local intersection a woman using a scythe hacked down waist-high grass—grass that obstructed drivers from safely viewing oncoming traffic. After repeated attempts to have the council cut the grass, Elsie Bolwell had taken matters into her own hands. She says: "The banks of grass were so high. It was so dangerous—you couldn't see approaching traffic. I'd asked and asked..."

This incident, described in the September 2007 issue of this magazine, was Mooroolbark's introduction to Elsie Bolwell, and the beginning of Elsie's lifelong connection with the community. Elsie celebrated her 90th birthday this October, and is still involved with many community activities, including Girl Guides, the Disabled People's Company and Mooroolbark Historical Group.

How does one fit 90 years of serving and giving into a few short words? Elsie lives by what she said in 2007: "Find an interest in

something you'd like to do. Don't be afraid to step forward. Take your interests a little further than your own four walls. You can get locked in too severely, become too isolated."

Elsie's strong work ethic began when she was a small child, learning from her parents, who owned an orchard. Although working the orchard was a round-the-clock job, her parents still found time to help others. When she was an adult and a mother herself, Elsie became involved in the things her six children were a part of: Guides, Scouts, church, and school. Her service to the Guides included officiating as district commissioner and eventually regional commissioner from 1981 to 1986, continuing as a representative on the state council from 1986-90. She is a member of the Trefoil Guild (the adult section of Guiding), and serves as president of Callamondah Trefoil Guild, in the Yarra Valley District of Guiding.

Along with Guides, Elsie's greatest passions are her family, local history, books, and her garden. Elsie now has 8 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren, and she is never short of something interesting to talk about or to be involved in. She still has family at home, so Monday is baking day, and on Wednesdays she facilitates the Disabled People's Company, along with all her other responsibilities.

Ten years ago, Elsie had some health issues and the doctor, thinking that she only had a few short months to live, advised her to go home and enjoy life. Instead, Elsie just took up where she had left off before she became ill. She still walks from her Mooroolbark home to the community centre or the shops, catching the bus home.

At 90, Elsie Bolwell is still a woman at work, taking her own advice to step out beyond her own four walls.

Barbara Austin

Carols by Candlelight

Friday 6 December
Hookey Park Rotunda
Mooroolbark

6:30 pm Picnic dinner in the park — BYO, or purchase sausages in bread
7:45 pm Enjoy the sounds of Croydon Citizen's Brass Band, followed by community carols and performances by local schools

Bring your own rug or chair. Lions Christmas Fruit Cake (large or bite-sized) and battery-operated candles for sale.
Coffee, tea and biscuits (including gluten free) available — donations appreciated.



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What's the Future for Mooroolbark's Iconic Train Station?



English novelist and essayist George Orwell wrote that “The most effective way to destroy people is to deny and obliterate their own understanding of their history.”

The importance of history was on my mind recently as I thought about the proposed changes to the Mooroolbark railway station. In reviewing past copies of *Living Today*, I was struck by the number of times that the station was mentioned by people sharing their life stories.

In the early days, Mooroolbark station became a hub for local farmers transporting their produce:

Up until tenders were called for the construction of Mooroolbark station in December 1886, local farmers had transported their produce three miles or so, to the nearest station. Of course, this was both expensive and time-consuming.

For farmers in Mooroolbark, the opening of the station was of even greater significance: Its importance was evident... night and morning, when the Mooroolbark dairy farmers drove up with their milk and cream for despatch to various dairies between Box Hill and Melbourne. Many of them could now separate comparatively small amounts of cream, and establish a profitable piggery on the basis of the skimmed milk.¹ Later on, things got busier. Mooroolbark was the first country station, and as you couldn't send goods and parcels from a suburban station, people from Box Hill and the fruit growers at Mitcham and Donvale, all had to bring their goods here to send off. We even had tank makers sending off their product from here.²

Some of my favourite stories revolve around former station master and Mooroolbark resident Andy Bell. In 2010, Allen Brown shared with us his memories of returning by train with his mates after going to the movies in Croydon on Saturday nights:

We never, ever, had a train ticket. Andy Bell was the Stationmaster and he used to chase us every Saturday night. He knew we were coming. I think the bloke in Croydon rang and said we were coming, but Andy didn't know where we were. We'd either get off the wrong side of the train or get out at one end of the train and run to the other end of the platform. I don't know what he would've done if he caught us, but he chased us one night. We ran over to where the tavern is now and lay down in the long grass. He came over looking for us. We could hear his footsteps as he looked everywhere round the long grass, but he never found us. He knew who we were and where we were, but he never got us.

Allen recalled how Andy managed to fulfill his responsibilities as station master while still attending the Saturday night dances:

He'd be at the dance and he'd arranged with the train driver to blow the whistle fairly hard as he approached the station. And Andy would take off, and he could run! He could run like you'd never believe, and he'd be at the station by the time the train pulled in. He'd do what he

had to do with the train and then return to the dance.

Once or twice a year the community would run stalls and a BBQ to raise money for the community, and they had a wheelbarrow race, which would start at the Croydon Hotel (on the corner of Main St and Hewish Road) and finish at Five Ways. Andy Bell pushed my father in the barrow and they won it for four or five years straight. He was a fit man, Andy Bell.³

After interviewing Andy in 2004, I wrote:

Andrew - whose forbears settled Gulf Station recounts his memories of our township with good-humoured clarity. He chuckles frequently as he recounts an amazing range of stories - shooting rabbits for dinner from outside the station office door, collecting mushrooms from grazing properties in Manchester Road, or milking the house cow between train arrivals; the messy pan toilet system, and its sheer inadequacy when Edna Walling hosted crowds at her Open Garden weekends, discarding accumulations of old shoes left by passengers at the station when they changed into better shoes after walking through muddy paddocks: and his humorous tale about leaving Saturday afternoon cricket games in Hookey Park to meet incoming trains whilst on duty... "Excuse me skipper, I'll be back in an over or two..."⁴

Andy and his family lived in the station master's house, which was situated on the site of the current northern carpark. Edna Walling planted some oak trees on that property, one of which is still standing and is of huge historical significance, especially as the poplars which she planted in front of the station building were all removed as part of major works completed during 2014 to make the station a community hub.

When it comes to the significance of our history, many prominent figures from different walks of life have said something similar to the words of George Orwell. Pulitzer Prize-winning authors Pearl Buck and David McCullough, Britain's wartime leader Winston Churchill, Jamaican political activist Marcus Garvey, and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel, along with many others, have expressed similar opinions.



An artist's impression of how the proposed changes, with an elevated rail line, may look.

¹ *Living Today*, issue 21 p.7

² *Living Today*, issue 35 p.3

³ *Living Today*, issue 33, p.13

⁴ *Living Today* issue 10, p.4



Mooroolbark station in the 1920s and 30s was surrounded by farms and country roads.

Their views could be summarised by the words of English actor, comedian, and writer Stephen Fry. Speaking in July 2006 at the launch of the History Matters campaign to promote the study of history, Fry said, "How can we understand our present or glimpse our future if we cannot understand our past? How can we know who we are if we don't know who we were? History is not the story of strangers, aliens from another realm; it is the story of us had we been born a little earlier."

Imagine taking the wrecking ball to the Melbourne Cricket Ground with its rich history of Australian sporting achievement, or the Shrine of Remembrance which houses so much of our wartime history. Imagine tearing down Government House, or Flinders Street station, or St Paul's Cathedral, or the Royal Exhibition Building, or the Victoria Barracks in St Kilda Road.

Such buildings help preserve much of our heritage as Melburnians. They keep memory alive. They remind us of our roots; they illuminate our identity in the present and help in pointing to our future.

On a smaller scale, preserving local-built history is an important way of reminding communities of their heritage—of what made the community what it is today—of what was significant and valued in the past that led to a shared and coherent present.

Mooroolbark—this place that means so much to locals: our main street boasting seats and wide footpaths where friends stop to talk or greet each other in passing. Our wonderful, accessible shopping strip encourages neighbourliness, in contrast to the impersonal nature of shopping centres. Our main street pulsates with friendly life, with its prominent park, senior citizen's hall, community centre, cafés, and a diversity of businesses. And, unobtrusively but centrally, there's one structure that helps to define the whole area.

Mooroolbark station has 140 years of built history—the oldest surviving built history of our community's life together. It has recently come to light that due to its unique construction, it's of significant historic interest—but far more than that, the station has been for Mooroolbark the one building that speaks to us of our history, making us what we are today and providing direction for our future shared life as a community.

With the plans under way for the Level Crossing Removal Project, there's the threat of the wrecking ball being taken to this iconic structure—not to serve the common good of the community, but the convenience of the planners.

Community voices—the Mooroolbark Traders & Community Group, the Mooroolbark Umbrella Group (our local township group), the Mooroolbark History Group, and many residents—are seeking to have the proposed plans amended so that our community is enhanced rather than diminished. We're urging that the existing station building be preserved instead of being demolished for ease of engineering or convenience of vehicles.

We're asking that this iconic building, so central to who we are as a community, be retained in its current location or moved to a nearby location (perhaps Hookey Park) so that it will continue to define our landscape and form the central point of a family-friendly, safe, open community space. The building could be repurposed as a meeting space for community organisations and as a permanent home for the display of artefacts and exhibitions of our rich Mooroolbark history.

Like the train station itself, station master Andy Bell was a Mooroolbark icon. He was invested in the Mooroolbark community—there seemed to be little that took place in town where he wasn't involved, as this final snippet

about Andy and the so-called "bread wars" indicates:

To save manpower during the war, the government didn't want to have two bakers in one particular area, so bakers were zoned. After the war, when the zoning was officially finished, bakers were supposed to be able to go where they wanted.

At that time, Mooroolbark used to get bread from Lilydale twice a week in the backseat of an old Dodge Tourer. When Rex Wyatt built a milk bar, he decided that people needed better than that – so he stocked bread from Croydon. One day the fellow from Lilydale pulled up outside in the old Tourer and said: 'That's it, you've had it!' Next minute the baker from Croydon rang up saying: 'I'm sorry, I'm not allowed to sell you any more bread – the Master Bakers threatened to cut off our supplies if I continue to sell bread to Mooroolbark.'

Rex wasn't going to put up with that. He had a little Prefect utility, and said to me: 'They won't serve me but if you go in and get a couple dozen loaves of bread, we'll do it that way.'

After an article on the front page of the Truth things changed. As it turned out, we were able to get bread from a big baker somewhere in Surrey Hills, who wouldn't be stood over by the Master Bakers Association – and, not to be outdone, the Lilydale baker stocked bread in the old general store opposite the railway house. That was the bread wars! We won the war, too. We ended up with a choice between Surrey Hills bread or Lilydale bread!

We can all benefit from Andy's advice: "People would do well to get out of their homes and get involved in the community, not just travel to work and back and then keep to themselves."⁵

Randall Bouchier

Please see the following page for a list of significant dates in the history of the train station. I'd encourage all of our readers to make their voices heard about the preservation of this iconic Mooroolbark railway station building. You may do so by emailing us at moor.umb.group@optusnet.com.au. I'm looking forward to hearing your views.



Mooroolbark train station in 2012 (above) and in 2015 after a major upgrade (below)



History of Mooroolbark Railway Station

The following timeline shows events significant in the history of the Mooroolbark railway station and surrounding areas. The timeline, supplied by Mooroolbark History Group, is part of an ongoing project to document the importance of the railway station to the community.

1880	28 December. Construction of the line from Hawthorn to Lilydale.
1881	2 June at the residence of Mr T. Turner: largest meeting ever held in the district re a station. Deputation re Brushy Creek Station. 15 September. 20 miles 10.03 chains. Amount £79,865.10.
1882	Opening of Lilydale and Warrandyte 2 December [renamed Croydon August 1884]. Gatehouse, staff porter paid 6s. 6d a day. Gatehouse, staff porter paid 6s. 6d a day.
1883	Request to provide more accommodation at Brushy Creek siding for passengers and goods. First need to improve road access to proposed station.
1884	"Octopus Act" by Minister of Railways: Thomas Bent authorised the creation of 59 new lines throughout Victoria.
1885	Deputation again requested the promised station at Brushy Creek.
1886	Definite information re providing a shelter shed and siding platform, plans drawn up to go to tender. First need to improve road access to proposed station. Land donated by Lithgow & Blair, from Griffin's Corner, adding Manchester Road northwards to become 'Five Ways'.
1887	Mr George Clewett made rapid progress in building the platform and station proper for £343.12s. Name changed to 'Mooroolbark' after the parish in lieu of Brushy Creek. Monday 10 October: opening of Mooroolbark station
1888	Three trains run daily.
1889	Slowing of the Victorian housing boom.
1890	Depression, which soon rendered many lines unviable.
1892	Tender to remove the gatehouse.
1894	<i>Dastardly Outrage—Railway Bridge Tampered With</i> . Timber struts sawn mostly through.
1895	Woman-in-charge station. Caretaker-gate keeper 4s. 6d a day.
1896	Gates removed.
1909	Crossing with gates at Manchester Road.
1913	First store, north west on Manchester Road. Carronvale Estate, £10 deposit and ten years' terms.
1915	Postal service housed in the store.
1918	Arnwood Estate, 103 acres divided into 33 grand blocks. Three acres of 'Arnwood' purchased from James Hewish by Edna Walling to build her first home, 'Sonning'.
1920	North-west corner Cardigan and Pembroke Roads purchased by Edna Walling piece by piece, building and selling, creating Bickleigh Vale Village. Farewell to Mr and Mrs Fahey and family at Sherlock's house. Mrs Fahey was the caretaker in charge of the station for three years, assisted by her of two daughters. 11 December, Mooroolbark Township Estate opposite the station, 12 shop sites on Taylor Road [now Brice Avenue]. 92 garden sites. £5 per lot deposit, 20s. per lot monthly.
1922	11 April, opened as an Interlocked Electric Staff Crossing Station.
1924	Station master: Mr C Whitelaw. Land on corner of Station and Charles Streets donated by Mr John E Taylor to erect a public hall. Next station master: Mr J H Smith.
1925	Progress Association, electricity, silence cabinet for telephone.
1927	Mountain View Estate passed through many hands until Harry Sherlock purchased the estate for £ 50 an acre.
1928	Station master: Mr T Barter.
1930	Signal porter: Mr E Staline. Mooroolbark will be working under caretaker conditions, with signal porter in charge under supervision of Lilydale station master.
1931	First memorial to Dame Nellie Melba: Fifty silver birch trees planted by Edna Walling and friends on either side of Taylor Road [now Brice Avenue] beside railway line.
1933	Signal porter: Mr J R Harris.
1935	Party at Sonning: fundraiser for seat with plaque. Miss Edna Walling submitted application for permission to plant trees and shrubs.
1937	Report on 14 poplars, 5 tubs on platform, in excellent condition.
1940	Porter in charge: Mr Andy Bell.
1947	Sherlocks Hill Estate, 75 building lots, sold slowly.
1949	Crossing flashing lights at Manchester Road, 20 miles 41 chains.
1954	4 March, residents shelter under oaks to watch Queen Elizabeth and Duke of Edinburgh go by on Royal tour train to Warburton and back, hauled by B60 and B85.
1956	<i>Park Here Free</i> , 14 spaces at Mooroolbark. Post office and English Scottish and Australian Bank move into building on Brice Avenue.
1957	8 September, duplication line from Croydon opened.
1958	Became a suburban station.
1961	Assistant station master: Mr A Powell.
1962	Taylor Road, from Manchester to Hull Road, renamed Brice Avenue. Old store demolished and new self-service store built.
1963	Assistant station master: Mr J T Morgan.
1964	Station building alterations. Assistant station master: Mr J R Craig.
1968	Block and signal inspector: Mr A C Harradence and Mr B W Varney.
1969	Relieving assistant station master: Mr P J Butler.
1973	Station house in structurally poor condition. To avoid further expenditure, station house abolished.
1979	West Riding councillors speak up about poplar trees being threatened.
1983	Boom barriers installed at Manchester Road. 34.247 kilometres.
1985	New signalling arrangements implemented.
1990	<i>Raising a Stink about the Drains</i> : Lilydale Express.
1991	Pedestrian gates provided at Manchester Road.
1994	Station facelift: MP Lorraine Elliot announced \$2 million upgrade, Mooroolbark in the first 28 to be refurbished.
2001	<i>Brushing up for Rail Station</i> : painted from cream to gumleaf green. Federation wall painted at Manchester Primary School.
2009	Steam Rail Victoria ran K153 shuttle back and forth for the passengers between Mitcham and Mooroolbark.
2013	Derailment of passenger train between Croydon and Mooroolbark.
2014	\$2.4 million upgrade: new entrance shelter and ramp, removal of poplars, southern car park. \$1.4m for reconstruction of northern car park. Manchester Road Level Crossing Removal Project: notification of proposed design of elevated rail line and stations. Thursday 10 October: 132nd anniversary of Mooroolbark station
2019	August-November. Community drop in sessions held by Level Crossing Removal Project to discuss Manchester Rd Mooroolbark and Maroondah Highway Lilydale crossing projects. Community members seek to have architecturally significant railway station building integrated into the new design or have it retained and repurposed for community use.

Culture Tracks

Wrap up the Year in Style

Culture Tracks, the Yarra Ranges Council's year-round program of arts and entertainment, offers some wonderful ways to wrap up your year.

The Melbourne Welsh Male Choir is back for some Christmas magic! These legendary lads sell out the Mooroolbark auditorium every year with their lilting voices and community spirit. This ensemble of sixty splendid voices has performed all over the world, including at the Royal Albert Hall. Come along to celebrate the end of another year with the choir and enjoy a lovely afternoon tea at interval.

NGV Kids On Tour: The National Gallery of Victoria is on the road with activities that engage children in crafts focusing on famous artists and recent exhibitions. A craft station will be set up at Mooroolbark Community Centre over the school holidays, so children can come and engage their imaginations for hours of constructive play. They can create animals like Alexander Calder or mystical creatures inspired by the museum's Cai Guo-Qiang exhibition. These free and educational activities are a



lovely way to spend an afternoon!

"Out of the gate and off for a walk went Hairy Maclary from Donaldson's Dairy." These iconic words were written by Dame Lynley Dodd, children's author and illustrator extraordinaire. **The Lynley Dodd Story** (from 7 September to 26 January at the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum) is a free exhibition of original illustrations from the beloved writer. Come and visit Hairy Maclary and his friends, and step inside the mind of one of the most cherished children's authors of our time.

Also coming to the Yarra Ranges Regional Museum, from February to May 2020, is a

stunning exhibition of textile pieces from **Art Quilt Australia 2019**. These incredible pieces showcase the talent of skilful quilt artists with the very best in art quilts from Australia, New Zealand and worldwide. From *Eucalyptic Transition*, a celebration of the quintessential Australian tree using wool dyed from its leaves, to *Whitewash*, a dizzying seascape, Art Quilt Australia reimagines a centuries-old craft. Marvel at these intricate creations as you support Australian textile artists.

New to Mooroolbark, or simply keen to engage further with your local community? Participate in our regular oil painting and pottery workshops or join in on the crafting fun with the Sandwiches group. At Mooroolbark Community Centre we have a noticeboard full of pamphlets and flyers that our wonderful community members have posted—drop by to see what groups or classes you might want to join!

Be sure to visit culturetracks.info for inspiration on other great performances at any of the five cultural centres around our shire.

Yarra Ranges Council

Volunteers Needed for Outer East Foodshare

Community groups helping vulnerable community members to access food are calling for support from residents and businesses, with volunteers and donations needed.

Outer East Foodshare, which provides donated food to agencies across Yarra Ranges, is asking community members to lend a hand. Secretary Marilyn Lambert said that support could be volunteering to drive the van to collect donations, donating grown or surplus food, or making phone calls from home. "We're keen to work with our volunteers to find what works for them and their time," Ms Lambert said. "We have a person who is growing silverbeet for us, because she can and it's nutritious and healthy. That's not a really big time commitment, but it all helps."

Outer East Foodshare distributes food to residents across Yarra Ranges through partner agencies such as Discovery Community Care in Lilydale, the Redwood Centre in Warburton, and Healesville Interchurch Community Care (HICCI) in the Yarra Valley. The group is supported financially by Yarra Ranges Council's multi-year Partnership Grant Program.

"The people who use our organisations know about the network and they'll suggest places to their friends, but there isn't a huge community awareness of what we do," said Shereen Barker from Discovery Community Care. "If you have

excess food, I would say there are a lot of agencies in Yarra Ranges that would appreciate a call."

Volunteer Eddie Dong said, "I have a history of working in the food industry and catering for companies. One of the things that stood out for me was a lot of places I worked had a lot of food waste, and we need to solve that problem and how to better utilize the food we have. It's fascinating that Melbourne is one of the more livable cities, but there are pockets of inequality and we need to ask as a community, how can we help ourselves and others to grow?"

Melba Ward councillor Terry Avery encouraged residents to support Outer East Foodshare and their local food relief agencies by volunteering, donating food or making a tax-deductible donation. "We have a fantastic amount of people across Yarra Ranges who give their time and skills to help make a difference through



Eddie Dong, Cr Terry Avery, Shereen Barker and Marilyn Lambert at Outer East Foodshare in Lilydale.

organisations like Outer East Foodshare, but there's always room for more people to lend a hand," Cr Avery said. "Lending a hand can be as simple as donating some fruit and veggies you've grown at home, picking up extra food in your weekly shop to pass on, or helping with the van or phones for a couple of hours where you can."

For more information about donating or volunteering, visit facebook.com/OEFInc or call 0409 253 489.

Jesse Graham
Yarra Ranges Council

Community Events Calendar

First Sunday of each month	Craft and Produce Market: Bellbird Park, Swansea Road, next to Lillydale Lake. Rotary Club of Lillydale. All proceeds to local and overseas projects. Contact Rotary Club Lillydale: 0423 558 833.
Mondays except public holidays	Gifford Arts: Painting & creativity afternoon, 1–4 pm. Gifford Village Community Centre, 389 Maroondah Highway, Croydon North. All ages welcome. Further Information: 9051 3000.
Monday evenings March to November	Scottish Country Dancing: Mondays 8 pm (except public holidays). Beginners and experienced. Minimal charges. St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. Enquiries: 9725 9074.
Second Monday of each month	Mooroolbark Country Women's Association: 1 pm at St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Road. New members always welcome. Contact Helen Linnie: 9726 0477.
Every Tuesday	Food and Friendship Lunch: 12 noon. Gifford Village Community Centre, 389 Maroondah Highway, Croydon North. All ages welcome. Further Information: Uniting Harrison 9051 3000.
Tuesdays & Thursdays	Mooroolbark Men's Shed: 9 am–3 pm. Cnr Ellen Road & Croydondale Drive, Mooroolbark. For more information please contact President John Lowry on 9726 9970 or 0419 366 939.
Tuesdays – Thursdays during school term	GymbarOO: Formative Sensory Perceptual Motor Program for babies, toddlers, and pre-schoolers. Mooroolbark Community Centre. Ph: 9726 8740 mooroolbark@gymbaroo.com.au.
Wednesdays during school term	Kilsyth Primary School Playgroup: Painting, story time, activities and games for children 0 - 3½ years. 9:15 am. More info: 9725 4320 or kilsythps.vic.edu.au
4 December 11 December	Disabled People's Company: 10 am–noon, Mooroolbark Community Centre for morning tea and a chat with other people who have a disability. Info: ring Elsie 9726 4004. Resumes 5 February
Thursdays during school term	Music Together Program: 0–5 years. St Margaret's Uniting Church hall. 9:45 am. Morning tea & playtime included. \$10 per session per family. Contact Nancy Isherwood on 0413 389 441.
Thursday evenings each week	Maroondah TOWN Club: (Take Off Weight Naturally). Weekly, starting at 6:30 pm. St Margaret's Uniting Church. Hull Road. For more information call Kaye: 0414 984 062.
Friday nights during school term	Fridays@Kids Domain: Activities for primary school age kids. 4-6 pm. Oxley College stadium. phone 9726 8111 or lmc.org.au
6 December 20 December	People's Pantry: 6–7 pm. Three course home-cooked meal for the homeless and lonely. St Margaret's Uniting Church, Hull Rd. Enquiries Barbara: 0417 381 542. Resumes 17 January 2020.
1 December	Puffing Billy: Sunday 1 December, 5:45pm in Belgrave. Join Life Ministry Church for a fun evening! Book tickets here: lmc.org.au
3 December 10 December	Home League: 10:00 am–11:30 am. A fun, inspiring and educational time for women. Salvation Army, 305 Manchester Rd, Chirnsdale Park. Resumes 4 February 2020. Ph: 9727 4777.
6 December	Community Carols: Hookey Park Rotunda. Picnic dinner from 6:30 pm, and carols from 7:45 pm. BYO rug or chair; food & battery-operated candles for sale. More details see page 11.
15 December	LMC Christmas Carols: FREE ENTRY. Sun 15 Dec. 7:30 pm at Life Ministry Church, Chirnsdale Park. Pre-show 7:15pm. Live band, choir, nativity, sausage sizzle and LMC Light & Sound Show.
15 December	Melbourne Welsh Male Choir 2019: 11 am & 3 pm, Mooroolbark Community Centre. Tickets \$15-\$18. Bookings phone 1300 368 333 or online: culturetracks.info.
15-24 December	LMC Christmas Light & Sound Show: FREE ENTRY. 15–24 December, 9 pm–11 pm each night at Life Ministry Church, Chirnsdale Park. Wednesday 25 December: 10:00 am service at LMC.
13- 25 January	NGV Kids on Tour: Mooroolbark Community Centre, no bookings required. For venue opening times and contact information, visit culturetracks.info.
17-20 January	Life Ministry Church Youth and Young Adults Summer Camp: Christian camp for teenagers and young adults in Bairnsdale. Register: lmc.org.au
Until 26 January	The Lynley Dodd Story: 10 am–4 pm, 7 days a week, except public holidays, Yarra Ranges Regional Museum. Free exhibition. For more information phone 1300 368 333 or online: culturetracks.info.
3 February-22 May	Art Quilt Australia: 10 am–4 pm, 7 days a week, except public holidays, Yarra Ranges Regional Museum. Free exhibition. For more information phone 1300 368 333 or online: culturetracks.info.
23 February	Mooroolbark Miniature Railway Family Fun Day: Sponsored by Mooroolbark Community Bank Branch of Bendigo Bank. Train rides, BBQ, and mascot Piggy. More details at Bendigo Bank.
20 March	Red Earth Unearthed: Talent Quest. Mooroolbark Community Centre; new starting time of 7:00 pm. Entry \$5 per person. celebratemooroolbark.com/competitions/red-earth/
21 March	Celebrate Mooroolbark: Your local community festival. 10 am–4 pm. Red Earth Community Park, Brice Avenue.

Our Community Events Calendar offers a free service to local clubs and organisations.

To include entries for your group's community events in future issues please contact Janet Van Dijk on 0407 110 051 or email calendar@livingtoday.org.au

Note: *Living Today* is distributed quarterly—in the first week of March, June, September and December. Calendar entries need to be submitted one month prior to the distribution date.

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LIVING TODAY in Mooroolbark



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Like to contribute?
If you have a good news story about people or groups who are an inspiration to the community, please contact the editor on our church-office phone number or by email (details above)

PDFs of this issue and all past issues of *Living Today* can be accessed at: livingtoday.org.au
To join the email distribution list please send a request to editor@livingtoday.org.au

MISSION STATEMENT

To contribute towards and to help to foster a *growing community spirit* within our neighbourhood.

We seek to achieve this by:

- highlighting the many positives within our community
- encouraging partnership in community initiatives
- contributing to the process of identifying and addressing community needs and concerns

OUR SPONSORS

Living Today greatly appreciates the valuable contributions made by several businesses which partner with us in serving our local community through this magazine. Their financial sponsorship makes the magazine possible, and we gratefully acknowledge those partners in each issue.