

livingtoday

Good news. Locally.

Mooroolbark & surrounds.



For the love of books

Discover the joys of Mooroolbark Library

Also inside

Your guide to the

celebrate
mooroolbark 2025
festival

Hello from the Living Today team



One of my greatest pleasures is walking into a bookshop. There are not as many bookshops as there used to be but thankfully there are good ones at the places I frequent. Perhaps it is because of all those stories and histories, information and pictures. Or perhaps it is the latest offerings from talented wordsmiths. I often visit a bookshop on a rainy day, and I could stay there for hours.

A library brings similar pleasure, and the local library was a respite and quiet place for me when working from home. Just like a bookshop, the books on the shelves in a library seem to offer more than their content. What is there today will be there tomorrow. The daily newspapers, the 24-hour news cycle and incessant online scrolling – all here today, gone tomorrow – can't compete with the stillness and mental stimulation of a book.

Somehow time slows down in a library. You can engage with another's story, and another person's life. You can put yourself in their shoes and spend time thinking about another perspective that you hadn't considered before. In what can be a polarising internet-based culture, I believe we should all read more books.

This is why libraries have such an important place in our communities. They are custodians of our stories past and present. They are also wonderful places of community connection.

The lead article for this issue of Living Today features one of our local librarians and the many services they offer. Our annual autumn community festival, Celebrate Mooroolbark, is held in the same grounds as our local library in Mooroolbark and it works so well. However, local stories and connections are not always contained in books. I could be encountering someone at one of the stalls who has their own interesting story to tell.

This issue has a focus on libraries and more. We hope you enjoy it.

Matthew Gudze, Lead Pastor, Grace Communion Mooroolbark (sponsors of Living Today) on behalf of the Living Today Editorial Team

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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, contact us via the details above.

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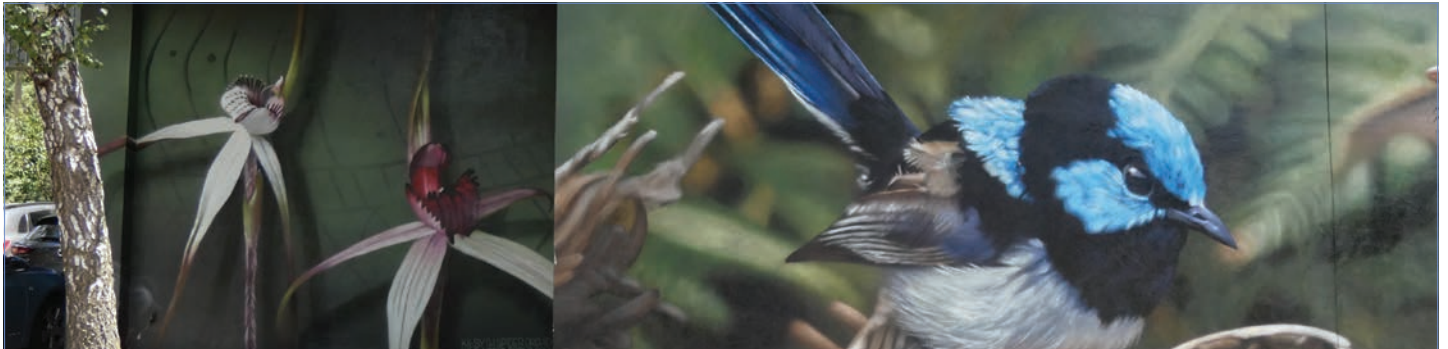


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Book shelves image by Freepik.com

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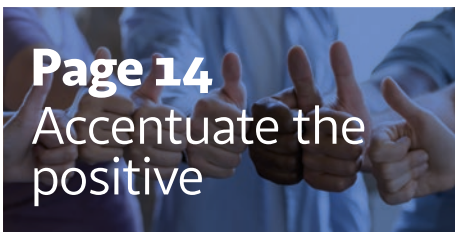


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mission statement

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



GRACE COMMUNION
MOOROOLBARK

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We meet every Sunday at 10.30am at the Mooroolbark Community Centre. Come along and enjoy a service and stay for a chat, with delicious tea, coffee and biscuits.

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For the love of books

by Randall Bouchier and Georgia B



As a child I loved books. I grew up in a household where books were treasured and I was taught how to care for books. One of my fondest memories is of my grandfather sitting reading in the kitchen.

I was an asthmatic until about age 10, at a time when the wonderful asthma medications of today didn't exist. Each year I'd spend two or three weeks confined to bed. However, they were happy times because despite respiratory discomfort I could read! I'd keep half a dozen books on either side of me under the blankets!

At school, I was motivated to complete my classwork quickly so that I could mine the large bookcase at the rear of the classroom while classmates completed the assigned task. Ah, bliss!

“And then I discovered libraries, and a lifelong, over 60-year love affair began.”

The much younger Emma Jahn, who leads the team of librarians at the Mooroolbark library, fell in love with libraries much earlier in her life than me. Visiting Ferntree Gully library with her mum and grandma, she had her first library card at age two and attended story time there until age six when the family moved house and transferred their library affiliation to Belgrave.

Emma completed her university studies in arts and science and quite by chance 'tripped' into librarianship after her mum told her about an advertisement for casual library staff. Emma successfully applied and discovered that her previous customer service experience fitted in very well as she worked in various roles across several libraries.¹

The rest, as they say, is history, with Emma loving her current role as team leader in our community.

In my opinion, the provision of our libraries is one of the better things our local government provides. And how libraries have changed, adding a large additional range of information sources to the former print and book-based collections.

Some might ask: “What's the point of libraries, when I can find all the information I need with a search engine like Google?”

It might surprise you that Sergey Brin, one of the co-founders of Google, states: “There is fantastic information in books. Often when I do a search, what is in a book is miles ahead of what I find on

a website.” A British author adds: “Google can bring you back 100,000 answers; a librarian can bring you back the right one.”

Come with me as we discover some of the ways your library can help you. As my granddaughter explains, the library is a comfortable and safe space:

Why I like Mooroolbark Library

by Georgia B.

In these few short sentences, I am going to write about why I like the library. In a list:

1. I love to read. And the library is full to the brim with books, and audiobooks and lots of other things.
2. There are never not enough books.
3. I know this sounds a bit funny, but I'm glad there's a toilet.
4. The librarians are very nice there, and they never make you feel stupid if you don't know where something is.
5. On the outside of the library, at the front, there are two massive pictures, one of an owl, and another of a possum.

The library is much more than the collections it develops and manages – books, periodicals, CDs, DVDs, e-books, audiobooks etc. It is also more than the services it provides, and there are many in addition to book borrowing. A good library is intentional about establishing and being part of a community.

There's much on offer for children and young families, including regular story times and activities along with special programs during school holidays. Hannah, the engaging and gifted children's librarian, who loves to foster a love of reading and learning from an early age, will be active during Celebrate Mooroolbark, offering story time and activities at the library for families, along with a festival scavenger hunt. Hannah also connects (time permitting) with local schools, kinders and playgroups – sometimes giving groups of children an 'insider's' tour of the way the library operates.

There's much, too, for adults. Trained staff are available to educate people about computer use and navigating the internet. The staff can



also assist with helping people navigate through computing and online difficulties – all free of charge.

And what if you want to explore a special subject interest? Or find other writers who write in a similar style to a favourite book you've read? You'll get all the help you need from the friendly staff, each of whom fits children's author Sarah McIntyre's description: "A trained librarian is a powerful search engine with a heart."²

As an example, you might become interested in some facet of family or local history. By asking for help, you'll unleash the curiosity of a group of Your Library staff who have specialised search engines and informed networks at their disposal. They can bring you back researched answers. In doing so, they may have reached out to some of our local history organisations.

The convenient online service is impressive, offering users the ability to search library collections, organise loans, book a PC, find out about hours of opening and dates of special programs, and more.

I'm encouraged to report, based on experience (I'm a regular borrower), that the library sees itself as an integral part of our community. Emma emphasised her desire to connect, cooperate and collaborate with other community groups to enhance our common good.

The library supports some community groups with publicity, and at times collaboration on a shared activity offered to the community.³ As Emma put it, "We love what we do and we love supporting the community, especially when it's a service we can provide for free. We want people to tell their friends and family about us so that others will come and check out what we offer."

When going to our library, it's rare to come away without a friendly interaction – maybe having chatted to one or more staff members on a first name basis or bumping into a Mooroolbark friend or two.

It's also a great meeting place. It wasn't only my generation that would arrange to meet up with a special friend – "I'm going to the library to study this afternoon, Mum." Or a group might meet for a chat or to enjoy a craft activity together.

There's more to tell, but I'll finish with a brief insight into the compassionate, caring nature of our library in which volunteers contribute a major role.

For those who love to read, but for various reasons are no longer able to attend the library, volunteers deliver packages of books prepared by library staff to people at aged care homes and private residences. Sometimes they'll share a 'cuppa' and an encouraging conversation with housebound readers before heading off to their next delivery.

There's also involvement in what Emma described as "the literacy space". One way is through 'Conversation Circles' and/or one-on-one conversation practice for those learning English for the first time. Another is through 'Leap into Literacy' tutors, who help support adults with low literacy in improving reading, writing and numeracy skills on a weekly basis.⁴

Spread the word about our beautiful library and its services. And remember that it has comfortable outside decking and the beautiful 'Yerrin Biik' mural, and is set in shady Hookey Park with playground proximity.

All I can do is conclude with a thank you to a 'rippa' library and staff who are committed to collaboratively playing a part in improving the well-being of us all!

Mural: Yerrin Biik (Bush Country in Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung)
by Aunty Kim Wandin, Christine Joy and Jimmy Dvate

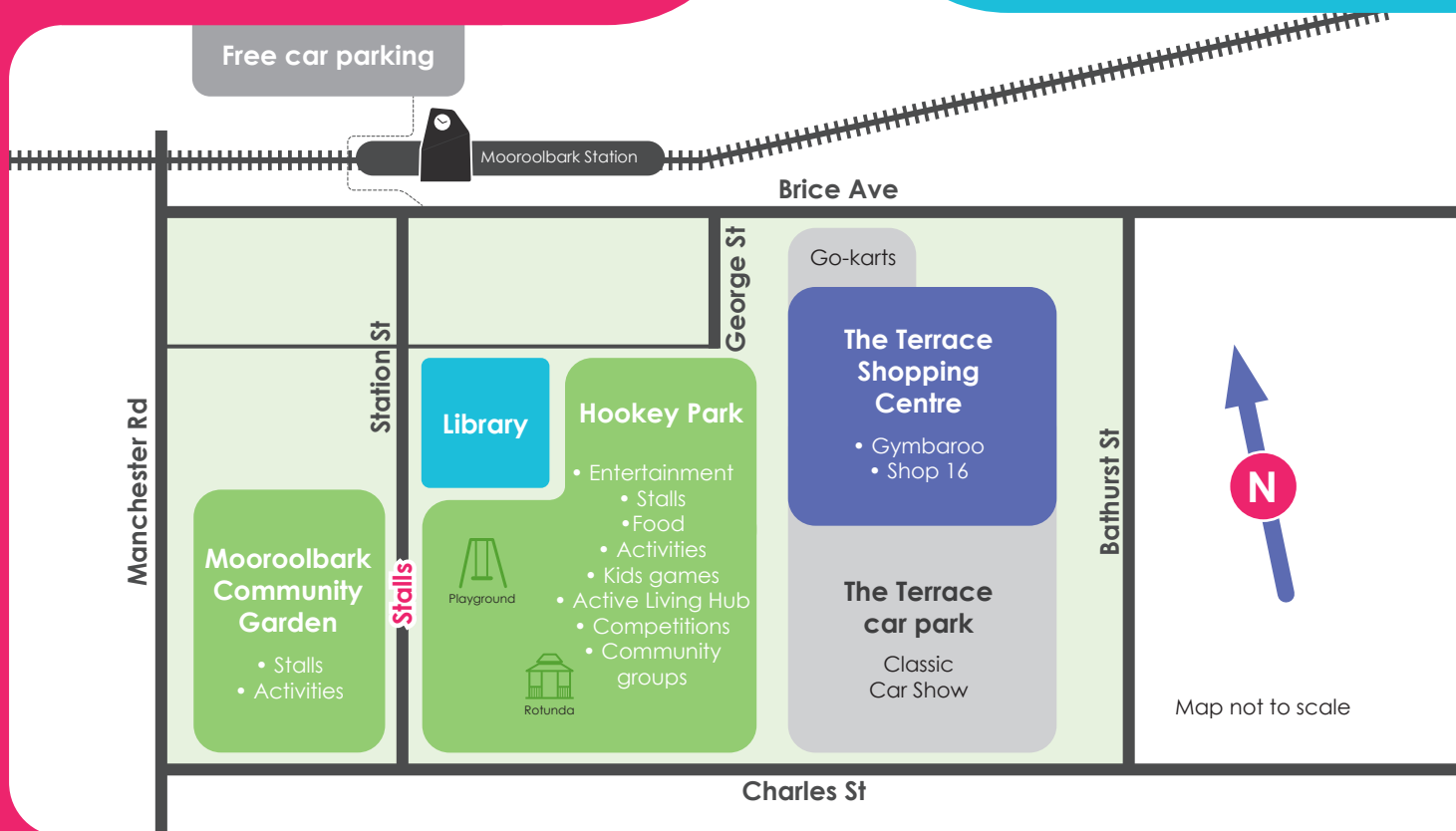
1. Knox, Maroondah and Yarra Ranges councils operate the banner organisation Your Library (formerly Eastern Regional Libraries) which is administered by a Board comprising two councillors from each shire.

2. All quotes: brainyquote.com/topics/library-quotes

3. As an example, when MUG hosted Qld aboriginal children's author Boori Monte Pryor as one of our annual forum guests, the library co-hosted his visit.

4. Prospective volunteers can chat with one of the library staff or check out volunteer opportunities under 'careers' on the Your Library website.

celebrate mooroolbark festival 2025



What's on?

Sunday 16 March 2025, 10am-4pm

Hookey Park, Station Street, Mooroolbark

- ★ Competitions (baking)
- ★ Activity tent
- ★ Active living hub (scouts abseiling tower, guides mini golf and sports/lawn games)
- ★ Animal farm
- ★ Go-kart (cost)
- ★ Amazing Mooroolbark Trail
- ★ Lucky Straws
- ★ Garden activities, e.g. plant a seed
- ★ Colouring competition
- ★ Community garden tours
- ★ Library story time, activities for families and a festival scavenger hunt.
- ★ Car show hosted by Mr. Excited
- ★ Gymbaroo

Entertainment

This year's Entertainment line-up is once again a wonderful exposé of local talent from Mooroolbark and surrounding suburbs.

The O'Connor School of Irish Dancing returns once again and is always a crowd favourite, particularly as St Patrick's Day is always close to or on the festival date. This dance group has a studio in Bayswater and was started by Mary Grantham over 35 years ago.

Returning to the festival after wowing audiences last year for the first time, the **Ballet Studio** will wow us again with an all-age presentation. Their studio is in Chirnside Park and was only formed a few years ago. Last year their performance was nothing short of magical!

Speaking of magical, **Steve the Magician** is always a favourite for young and old alike! He will be performing his bagload of tricks and illusions again to befuddle us and leave us all wondering how?!

Backdated from Mooroolbark have been a crowd favourite in previous years, and after a two-year break will once again be playing favourite rock and roll covers from the '70s, '80s, '90s as well as a few more recent songs!

This year for the first time **Flatbread** will be making their Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival debut. Recently formed and 'discovered' by Jimmy Dunne, they have garnered a strong following of fans, and have been regularly gigging at many venues in Narm/Melbourne. Predominantly performing original music, these lads are from Kilsyth!



Festival Competitions

For full details and how to enter visit celebratemooroolbark.com/competitions/



Baking Competition

Ready! Set! Bake! Step up to the challenge, share your delicious treats, and see if you have what it takes to be crowned the best baker in town. The categories are **Using Leftovers or Whole Fruit/Veg** (Open & under 10-year-olds), **Lemon Slice** (Open), **Something you would take on a Picnic** (Open & under 10-year-olds), **Anzac Biscuits** (Open).



Colouring Competition

Calling all young artists! It's time to get creative, have some fun, and showcase your artistic talent. This year's colouring-in can be found on page 11 or downloaded from our website (see above).

Biscuits photo from freepik.com

2025 Sponsors

We'd like to thank our sponsors in 2025: Jellis Craig, Croydon-Mooroolbark Lions, Bendigo Bank, Ross MacKay, Yarra Ranges, David Hodgett, Sonja Terpstra, Aaron Violi, Living Today, Comprehensive Tagging Services, Curly Spuds and Mr. Whippy.



Kids activities

Magic shows!!

Animal farm!

Amazing Mooroolbark trail

Gymbaroo

Library activities

Face painting

Colouring comp
GO-karting

Entertainment (continued)

The mum of the lead singer/guitarist just happens to be Josie who is our **Zumba with Josie** performer/entertainer who definitely knows how to get a crowd on their feet! Josie regularly performs at major festivals all around Victoria as well as local festivals, her most recent being at 5-day music festival Renaissance in Lang Lang over the New Year. We welcome her back!

Kofi Kunkpe Drumming will be performing at the Library Atrium, and his workshops are such a huge drawcard for adults and children alike. Make sure you get along and beat out some rhythms with Kofi and Friends!

FireOpal, from Belgrave who are regular buskers outside Coles on a Friday evening, return with original songs as well as covers. These young performers, Charlie (13 years old) and Amber

(15 years old) belie their age, having performed at many festivals as well as premiere venues The Tote in the city, Sooki Lounge and 12 Bar in Belgrave, to name but a few in their short illustrious career!

Adding to the festival fun, we will have **Giant Bubbles** with Catherine from Artily Parties, and possibly even more roving entertainers.

The **Car Show** will again attract car enthusiasts from everywhere, and live music from Phil Millard and the Viscounts will provide a music soundscape throughout the Terrace Shopping car park.

Live popup buskers will feature this year at different locations, and will also be entertaining folk at the Woolshow and Handcraft Festival on Sunday 30 March!

Barbara Austin Community Spirit Award

Barbara Austin was an integral part of Mooroolbark's volunteer community. She was involved with organisations such as the Disabled Persons' Group, People's Pantry and was our beloved Chair for the Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival. To honour Barb's commitment to community, the Celebrate Mooroolbark Committee have created the Barbara Austin Community Spirit Award. This award will be presented annually to someone in the community who embodies the qualities we saw in Barb; humble, passionate, positive, kind, welcoming, and persevering. The recipient of the 2024 award was Sandy McElroy.

Sandy was part of our committee and led the entertainment team for the never-to-be-spoken-of-again eight-day festival in 2021. Her passion for volunteering is evident and despite no longer being on committee she always assists us with our Bunnings fundraising BBQs and is always saying "I wish I could do more."

In addition to Celebrate Mooroolbark, Sandy is well known for her contributions to guiding. Sandy started as a leader in 1992 and has been a leader ever since. She is the Mooroolbark group leader as well as Yarra Ranges co-district manager (which covers eight groups in the Yarra Ranges). Sandy always makes herself available to support unit nights and regularly visits groups around the district. She is also a learning partner helping new leaders to complete their leadership training which often takes about 12 months and involves one-on-one meetings, visiting their units and being available for support and advice.

Congratulations Sandy! Your community spirit is an inspiration to us all!

This year the committee would like to award a 'Barb' within our local community. Details on how to nominate are on our website and the recipient will be announced at the 2025 Festival.

YARRA VALLEY Wool and Handicrafts SHOW

10am - 4pm
Sunday 30 March 2025
Mooroolbark Community Centre

- Woolshow
- Wool sales
- Huge Makers market (not just wool!)
- Competitions
- Fashion parade
- CWA scones
- Sausage sizzle
- Food trucks
- Demonstrations

For further information and competition details visit bit.ly/3XLqCHW

Wool Show Competitions

4 to 8 years, open category: Enter any handmade item! Inspiration includes knitting, crochet, embroidery, sewing, collages using wool or fabric.

9 to 12 years, open category: Enter any handmade item! Inspiration includes knitting, crochet, embroidery, sewing, collages using wool or fabric.

13 to 17 years: knit or crochet a garment, or upcycle a garment into something new.

18 years and over: knit or crochet a garment, or knit, crochet or weave a colourwork piece (garment, accessory, homewares).





Hand in to Shop 16 The Terrace by 4pm Friday 14th March 2025

FOLD UP AND BACK FOR DISPLAY

School or Preschool name:

Class/level (please circle) Preschool Prep 1-2 3-4

Student Name

Parent name and contact number



A Mooroolbark Traders and Community Group initiative

Yerrin Biik: A Tribute to Country, Culture, and Connection

by Yolande Pickett

At the heart of Mooroolbark, a striking public artwork invites you to step into deep time – the ancient and enduring presence of Wurundjeri Country. Yerrin Biik (meaning 'Bush Country' in Wurundjeri Woi-Wurrung language) is a breathtaking collaboration between Wurundjeri Elder and Artist Aunty Kim Wandin, Artist and Curator Christine Joy, and renowned muralist Jimmy Dvate. Located at Mooroolbark Library, this large-scale work reconnects us with the once-thriving biodiversity of this land and honours the resilience of the Wurundjeri people.

The mural pays tribute to William Barak – respected Wurundjeri Ngurungaeta (head man), artist, and educator – whose footsteps once traced through this land as he advocated for his people's rights. His murrup (spirit) lingers, echoed in the swirling smoke of campfires, ceremonies, and cultural burns. Woven through the design are carvings by Barak's great-nephew, Lewis Wandin-Bursill, and imagery of local flora and fauna, from the endangered Buxton Gum (found at Mooroolbark College) to the rare Kilsyth South spider orchid.

Mooroolbark is located in the valley of Brushy Creek, near its confluence with the Birrarung (Yarra River), a place of great cultural significance and the birthplace of Barak. Once thriving Yerrin Biik, the area was home to towering Mountain Ash forests stretching from Mt Dandenong to

Mooroolbark. Much of this habitat was lost to European settlement, but small remnant pockets remain, including Manna Gum forests, an ancestral tree central to Wurundjeri identity, and Paperbark thickets, providing critical refuge for wildlife.

Aunty Kim and Chris expressed their heartfelt purpose behind the mural: "We want people to love and care for Wurundjeri Country. If we fall in love with Country, we would never hurt it or take it for granted."

Among the fauna in the mural is the Powerful Owl, a vulnerable species affected by habitat loss and rodenticide poisoning. As Jimmy shared, "The Powerful Owl image I've used is one of my photos from Healesville Sanctuary's rehabilitation area... Basically everything I've included in the mural is either threatened or endangered in the area. The only exception is the Superb Fairy Wrens, but I wanted to include them, and it's also nice to have a species people will hopefully have seen in real life."

Visit Yerrin Biik at Mooroolbark Library, where art, culture, and history intertwine to create a place of connection and healing.

See pages 4 and 6 for more photographs of this artwork.

Yerrin Biik was funded by a Living Local Suburban Grant from the Department of Jobs, Skills, Industry and Regions. Thanks to Your Library and Yarra Ranges Council for their support. We acknowledge ecologist Marianne Worley for her expertise on the region's ecosystems and Yarra Ranges Council's Parks team for working with Aunty Kim and Chris to integrate local plantings into the project.

mooroolbark.vic.au/msa/

The Winds of Coincidence

Part 7 of our ongoing kids story by Ross MacKay

There was a crackling in the air as the wind blew in with a faint smell of turnips.

"What the blazes do turnips smell like?" asked Nuttingale. "I've always thought of it as more of a *poppling* in the air with a hint of cardamom."

"Nah, it's more a *fizzling* and it's definitely the smell of rotting coffee grounds," added Abythwrd.

"THE WINDS APPROACH!" bellowed Herman, one hand on his chest, the other outstretched in an overly dramatic pose. He had it bad. "The smell of ancient pine is distinct and the air it *kracklepopwits* with the potential of coincidence... BEWARE! BEWARE! BE... oh dear... oh, that was a bad spell." Herman slumped to the ground – being dramatic having taken its toll on him again.

"Does anyone mind explaining to me what the Winds of Coincidence are?" No sooner had I said this, than a piece of paper flew into my face. I grabbed it and had a look. It was a flyer simply titled *All you need to know about the Winds of Coincidence*. "Wow! What a coincidence... Ohhhhh!" I said, realisation dawning.

"Exactly," said Nuttingale, "when the winds of coincidence blow, the chances of coincidences, happy accidents and serendipitous events increase exponentially. You can see how this could really help us get you up to that cave."

"Yeah," grinned Abythwrd, "now if only someone had left a cannon or human-sized slingshot around here somewhere... Oh, would you look at that! What a coincidence – just when we needed one!" and he began to make his way across to them.

"Oh no! No no no no no!" I said, "Coincidence or not – there is no way that you are shooting me up into that cave with *that*," I pointed at the cannon followed by the slingshot, "or *that*!"

Nuttingale's eyes lit up. "Oh, but think about it. Under normal circumstances, chances are we'd miss, and you'd end up with broken bones and whatnot. But with the winds of coincidence, you'd *probably* be fine! You'd *probably* bounce off a trampoline that had been left in a nearby tree and then *probably* land on bed of soft fluffy pillows that just happened to be lying in the mouth of the cave."

"That was a lot of probablys," I said.

"Well it's not an exact science, but you know, worth a shot. Can't hurt," she said, then winced, "OK, well it could. Quite a bit, but still worth it I'd say. Come on, we have to do something before the Storm of Misfortune and Ridiculously Unlikely Events rolls in!"

"Is that likely?"

"Have you *seen* what Morag is doing to our world? Anything's possible!"

I sighed. I wasn't even sure if any of what had just happened was actually a coincidence – wasn't it more just improbable? What was the actual definition of coincidence? Coincidentally I had read an article on types of coincidences just the other day.

"OK," I said, thinking aloud while at the same time realising that this was probably unnecessary due to the mind-readery-ness of the Aquatians. "If I remember correctly one form of coincidence is when a group of people all do or say the same thing... Or turn up to a party with the same card, or gift or... oh I know, check your pockets, maybe we have all brought something that could be helpful!"

I began to rummage around and pulled out the only thing I had in my pocket, which was quite embarrassing really. "I've got a mouldy old marshmallow," I said despondently, "what about you two?"

"Well, what a coincidence!" exclaimed Abythwrd, "I've got a mouldy old marshmallow too! What are the chances?!"

I looked at Nuttingale and one glance at the mouldy old marshmallow in her hand told me all that I needed to know.

"OK, so that is certainly coincidental, but not exactly helpful.

Um, what about this place, this location? Is there anything about it that might help us? Some coincidences are to do with where you are, being in the right place at the right time."

"There used to be a ladder factory here," said Abythwrd, "but I can't see how that would help us."

Both Nuttingale and I stared at Abythwrd for what was possibly a bit too long because he started to look at us funny. "What? Have I got a snot on my nose? Because rather coincidentally you guys both do too."

After we'd all given ourselves a quick facial tidy up I got back to the matter at hand. "You do realise that we're trying to find a way to get me up to that cave and that a ladder factory might just be the coincidence we're looking for!?"

"I remember the place," said Nuttingale suddenly. "It had a funny little jingle, oh how did it go?" She began to hum a ridiculously catchy tune, the words to which I, ironically, didn't catch except for the last line or two: "...they may not have a brain or be real clever, but we guarantee our ladders will last foreverrrrrr!!!"

"Oh yeah it was a great little jingle," said Abythwrd and joined Nuttingale in a second and more rousing chorus of the song. If I hadn't interrupted the newly formed marketing department of *Ladders R Us*, we might have been there a while. They were really into it.

"Thanks for that guys, glad to hear they will last forever, but two questions – why was the factory abandoned and where are we going to find a ladder – all I can see is woodland!?"

"Soon after it was discovered that Morag was in that cave," Nuttingale explained, unnecessarily pointing at said cave. "Those who lived or worked nearby moved away. The thinking was that the effects of the unreality were going to be concentrated around here so no one wanted to stay. In the end the unreality spread across the entire planet indiscriminately. But still, this area was severely affected by the time distortion, causing it to quickly become overgrown and a forest once more. If you look closely, you'll see the remains of houses, shops and factories amongst the shrubbery."

I looked and she was right. I could just make out a front porch here, a post box there, a garage door, the front of a shop selling baked goods. And sticking out from behind a small bush there was a sign with three simple words (OK, two simple words and a back to front letter).

Ladders R Us.

I wasn't sure what the bigger coincidence was – that the ladder factory just happened to be right here where we needed it – or that I'd correctly guessed the name of the place. I suspected it was the latter. Time to go ladder shopping!

To be continued...

Accentuate the positive

Adapted from Greg Williams,
Speaking of Life

Image by Freepik.com

Do you ever notice how often we are drawn into the negative rather than the positive? You give a presentation and several people comment on how helpful it was, but one person tells you it was a waste of their time. Which comment do you spend the most time thinking about? For many of us, we allow the negative to outweigh the positive. We can look at the Bible in the same way. Rather than seeing the positive in what is being said, we focus on the negative. The story about three servants is a good example of this.

In this story, Jesus talks about a man who is preparing to go on a journey. He calls his servants in and entrusts part of his property to each one. To one servant he gives \$5,000, to another he gives \$2,000, and to the third he gives \$1,000.

When he returns, the one given \$5,000 had invested wisely, doubled the value and now has \$10,000 for the owner. Likewise, the one who received \$2,000 doubled it and now has \$4,000. But the one who had \$1,000 didn't do anything with it; he buried it and simply tried to return it because he implied he was afraid of the owner. I've heard many explanations focusing on the unprofitable servant – and certainly, there are lessons there. But we fail to see the good news in this story. Note how the man responded to the other two servants.

The man to whom he had entrusted the \$5,000 brought him \$10,000. "His master praised him for good work. 'You have been faithful in handling this small amount,' he told him, 'so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Begin the joyous tasks I have assigned to you.' Next came the man who had received the \$2,000, with the report, 'Sir, you gave me \$2,000 to use, and I have doubled it.'

'Good work,' his master said. 'You are a good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over this small amount, so now I will give you much more.'" (Matthew 25:20-23) (Living Bible)

Jesus is showing that God wants to do good for us. He wants us to experience his joy. He gives us gifts so that we can use them, investing them in relationships, service, and loving others. The result is greater bounties and living in his joy.

What is the Father's joy? Among other things, being with us, listening to us, walking with us, and loving us because we are his children.

Jesus uses this story to show us his Father's heart. He will never force us to love him or to use the gifts and talents he gives us, but when we do, he multiplies them beyond our wildest dreams. That's the heart of the Father.

Speaking of Life is a public resource video on the Grace Communion International website: gci.org/videos/media-speaking-of-life/

This magazine is sponsored by Grace Communion Mooroolbark (previously known as Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship), a congregation of Grace Communion International. If you would like more information or pastoral support, our local congregational contact is Matthew Gudze on (03) 9737 0126.

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Being present

Live in the Moment

by Dr Amy Isham
Centre for Public Christianity

I recently went to the funeral of a former colleague and was reminded of how I want to live.

Even though I hadn't known Steve very long, we had spent many hours together in Zoom meetings or chatting in the office. I was deeply moved during the eulogies but also laughed when his love language was described as "random facts". Steve loved a north-facing house, native plants, and cycling, and he believed there were no bad foods if you rode enough kilometres to compensate. He had a lot of great advice on how to choose a wine. I remember him raving about his amazing wife and discussing his children, equally worrying about and praising them.

A common thread in all the speeches from family and friends was how much he enjoyed a chat. During the funeral, it struck me that the reason

for this was that Steve was completely invested in every conversation. His eyes met yours, his body turned towards you. He listened and responded to you in ways that made you feel heard and interesting. When he shared his many stories, he seemed to re-experience the emotion he felt during the experience and vividly recalled what was said. He could remember so well because he had been fully present in those experiences too.

In contrast, I'm almost always distracted. I'm half doing one thing while starting another. I play games on my phone while I watch a show, and I always have too many different tabs open. "How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives," said Annie Dillard. My life is incrementally happening, whether I notice it or not. I'm technically only halfway there, so there's still time to be present. .

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Easter CELEBRATION



Thursday 17 April: Maundy Thursday
7.30pm - Remembering Jesus' last meal

Sunday 21 April: Easter Sunday
10.30am - Resurrection Service
with light lunch provided

125 Brice Avenue, Mooroolbark

All are welcome!

mooroolbark.gci.org.au



For other local church
Easter services please visit
their websites below:

Life Ministry Church
lifeministry.church

Mooroolbark
Baptist Church
mbc.org.au

Mooroolbark Salvation
Army Corps
**salvationarmy.org.au/
locations/victoria/
v330/mooroolbark-corps**

Mooroolbark
Uniting Church
**mooroolbark.
unitingchurch.org.au**

St Peter Julian Eymard,
Mooroolbark Parish
spje.org.au

upcoming events



celebrate
mooroolbark 2025
festival



YARRA VALLEY
Wool and Handicrafts
SHOW

Sunday
16 March 2025
10am to 4pm

Hookey Park,
Station Street,
Mooroolbark

Sunday 30 March 2025
10am – 4pm

Our annual show is the perfect destination for discovering a diverse range of yarns, from hand-dyed skeins to unique fibres, all crafted by talented artisans from near and far.

Whether you're an experienced knitter, a crocheter looking for inspiration, or just curious about craft, there will be something for everyone.

For more information and the 2025 competitions please visit: bit.ly/3XLqCHW

FREE
community
event

Enjoy a fun-filled day with
entertainment
activities
food, stalls
and more

celebratemooroolbark.com



Mooroolbark Miniature Railway (mmr.org.au)

4th Sunday each month (except December), 11am-4pm, lunch break between 1-2pm when trains and the kiosk close. Train rides are \$3.00 each, with children under four riding free.

Community Garden Market



Last Sunday of every month
9am-2pm, 8 Station Street, Mooroolbark (opposite Hookey Park)

Jellis Craig

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