



MURRA-BIT-A-NEWS A FREE PUBLICATION

October 2021

Community News Contributions Gratefully Accepted

P.O. Box 3, Murrabit 3579

Website: www.murrabit.com.au

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Murrabit Advancement Association Inc.

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Murrabit Community News

It is October already and Christmas is just around the corner. The year is certainly moving fast!

Our October Murrabit Market provided some long overdue retail therapy after a two month break. Hopefully we are back on track and can hold our November and December markets uninterrupted. For those that don't know, our market raises much needed funds for lots of community groups - Murrabit Lions Club, Murrabit Hall Committee, Murrabit Promotions Committee, Murrabit Recreation Reserve (and all the associated sporting clubs) plus the Murrabit Group School and Murrabit Netball Club who partner to run the morning teas from the hall. The Murrabit Men's Shed, Murrabit Playgroup, Murrabit Tennis Club and Murrabit Fire Brigade all play a major role in the roster to ensure a smooth set up and clean up before and after each market. The market is organised by the Murrabit Advancement Association which consists of the leaders from 15 community groups. If you look around Murrabit, the funds raised through our market over the years has just about built everything you can see. It continues to fund a myriad of community owned assets, programs and services.

A big shout out to our enthusiastic and passionate volunteers who work together to make our little town not only a great place to live and raise a family, but a place where visitors flock to for our market and to enjoy the Murrabit River and all that our outdoor environment has to offer. The Murrabit Country Market is an iconic event and we will proudly celebrate its 44th Anniversary in November 2021. Some of our volunteers have been involved since the very first market back in November 1977! If you are new to the area and want to be part of the Murrabit culture of volunteering, please get in touch!



SPECIAL FEATURE

Murrabit Group School (No. 3859)

The original Murrabit School (No. 2486) was located in what nowadays we consider as the back blocks - a few blocks to the south of the Murrabit-Koondrook Road, on Young Road, between Myall and Koondrook.

This school was established all the way back in 1882 on land donated by Mr Thomas Guilmartin.

There were 32 pupils under head teacher Mary Ann Hampson.

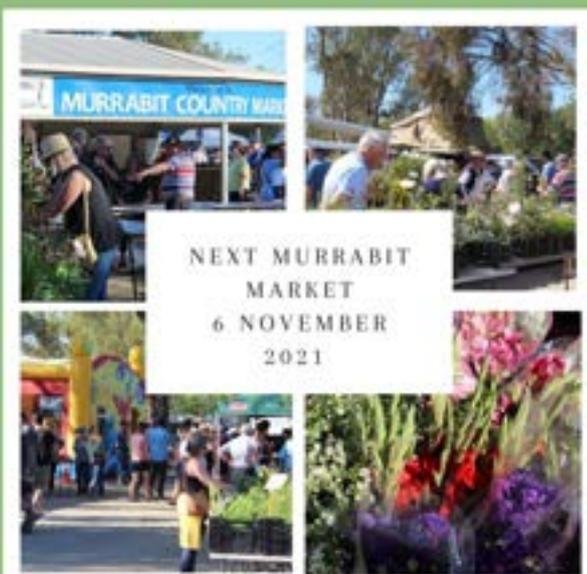
If you go for a drive you will eventually find the school site - it is marked with a granite rock and plaque thanks to the Myall community. Warning: fill up your car with fuel before going and allow plenty of time - you will be surprised how long it takes to find it!

Back in the 1800s though, this school site was surrounded by a number of large families. The school consisted of a 24ft (7.32m) x 16ft (4.88m) classroom and attached residence.

This original Murrabit School was located in the Parish of Murrabit, and the lower reach of what is now known as the Barr Creek was back then known as the Murrabit River. The property known as Murrabit Station was however located a long way to the north west, at the south end of Lake Boga.

As was common in those times, school numbers dwindled and school buildings were shifted quite readily around the district to accommodate need. In 1906 this school building was shifted to Teal Point. The school then became the Teal Point School, which burnt down in 1928.

The township that we now know as 'Murrabit' did not exist until 1924 when the railway came through. Head to the back page for more interesting history on the Murrabit School...



MURRABIT MEN'S SHED

Men's Shed is held 1:30pm to 4pm on a Sunday. The Men's Shed sets up for each Murrabit Market - all welcome to come along and help out - meet at the Lions Park at 9am on Friday 5 November. Membership for the 2021/22 financial year is now due. Cost is \$35 per year to cover insurance costs and can be paid by dropping into the 'shed' on a Sunday.

Murrabit Men's Shed COVIDSafe outdoor BBQ Lunch Sunday 31 October @ 12:30pm.

Attendees must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 (or have a valid medical exemption in place) and bookings are essential due to COVID number restrictions for Men's Sheds across Victoria to Stephen O'Donoghue, Secretary 0418 577 238 This event is part of the Victorian Seniors Festival and re-Connect with your Gannawarra project; an initiative funded through the Victorian Government's Community Activation and Social Isolation Initiative and Drought (Mental Health) Package, and supported by the Gannawarra Community Resilience Committee.



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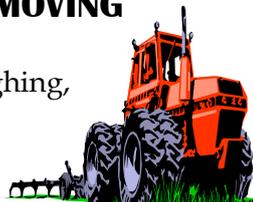
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OD JOBS

Get things ticked off your 'to do' list

Contact Stephen O'Donoghue
0418 577 238

- Fully automated garden watering systems and repairs
- Swimming pool maintenance
- Small engine and pump repairs
- Home maintenance
- General odd jobs

KERANG TO ECHUCA BUS SERVICE 1st Tuesday & 3rd Friday of each month Timetable, Bus stops & Fares

8am - Departs Kerang Railway Station -

8.25am - Departs Murrabit Hall

8.45am - Departs Koondrook Hall (side)

9.05am - Departs Cohuna Hall (rear)

10.15am - Arrives Echuca CBD

2pm - Departs Echuca CBD for the return service

One-way, part way and non-concession fares are also available. No bookings necessary. Tickets available from the driver and allow for free transport on Echuca buses whilst there. For more information, please call Public Transport Victoria on 1800 800 007.

Weekly Yoga in Murrabit Yes! Yoga IS ON – come and try it!

Sessions are back and suitable for EVERY body!

With Robyn: Gentle Yoga Monday 9am (Murrabit Golf Club), General Yoga Monday 6pm (Murrabit Hall)

With Neil: Men's Yoga Wed. at 6:30pm (Murrabit Hall)

Phone Neil 0490 830 641

or Robyn 0427 517 236

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Memories of Les Curtis

Recently, a past resident of Murrabit passed away suddenly. Les Curtis grew up in Murrabit, went to school here then on to high school in Kerang. Les finished school at 14 and started an apprenticeship with Laursen Bros as a builder starting in 1952. When Les' father die, his mother and brother shifted to Kerang, so Les shifted into a room at the back of Browning's Butcher Shop, which still stands in Browning Avenue. He eventually bought a vacant block of land in Church Street and built a shed on it with facilities so he could live there while working with Laursen Bros. In time, he met up with a local girl, the local baker's daughter, Elaine, so the next item on the block was a house. They were married in 1962 and raised their family there.

In 1976, Les eventually decided to shift to Kerang when work around here became a bit quiet. He could not find a buyer for the house, so shifted it into Kerang and set it on quite a large block and established the Ibis Caravan Park, the latest caravan park in the area. Les eventually went back to building, while Elaine managed the caravan park and also drove a school bus morning and afternoon. The Laursen Bros. were very disappointed to loose Les and they were very proud of his workmanship. Les often called on Bill (Laursen) if he needed an extra hand on the site.

While Elaine and Les lived at Murrabit, they were very active members of the Tennis Club. Les was one of the instigators for the grass courts. The late Bab Morton had established grass courts at Myall, so Les and two other members spoke to Bob about the grass used on the courts and he gave them some runners to see how they would grow at Murrabit, they were fine. So the club members went to work and court by court got rid of the hard courts and established the lawn courts they have today. When Elaine and Les sold the Ibis Caravan Park, they shifted into a house they built in Marne Street as a retirement home. Les couldn't retire as there was always somebody wanting a little job done. Les was a very obliging person and couldn't say no, so to have a break, every year about April/May they would head off for 4 or 5 months for the warmer weather, and leave the cold months of our Winter behind.



MURRABIT HALL

Now that Yoga and Line Dancing have started up again, the new blinds, from our last grant, are proving to be a real winner!

We are having a good run with funding at the moment with another successful grant

application. Thanks to Gannawarra Shire Council's generosity and support, an extra \$5,000 will be a fantastic help for our planned upgrade to the hall surrounds and will enable us to offer an attractive and friendly space around the hall for the use of everyone.

Save the Date: 28/11 Paul Oswin Watercolour Workshop
Our Hall is available for hire. It is a well-equipped facility and is a terrific venue for a wide range of functions and activities. Contact Marlene Laursen 5457 2291 or Neil Hopkins 0490 830 641.



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Community owned and operated gift shop and visitor centre,
Gonn Avenue, Murrabit (part of the Murrabit Market Office Complex)

Currently open Murrabit Market mornings 9am to 12:30pm

Other times by appointment by phoning 5457 2205

Keep up to date by liking our

Facebook page: www.facebook.com/murrabitspromotions



MURRABIT & DISTRICT HERITAGE GROUP

Upcoming meetings: Monday 25 October 2021 and Monday 29 November 2021 7:30pm at the Murrabit Market Office.

COVID-19 vaccination (or valid medical exemption required to attend) as required by Victorian government. A supper follows each meeting and general finishing time is 9:15pm.

Contacts: President Neil Hopkins 0439 970 029
Secretary Narelle O'Donoghue 5457 2264



ACCESSIBLE DEFIBS AT MURRABIT

Two 24/7 defib machines are located at Murrabit - one at the Murrabit Hall and the other at the Men's Shed. These life saving machines are available in an emergency. Remember to always first call an Ambulance in an emergency by phoning Triple Zero (000).



Weekly sessions are 9:30am to 11am on a Tuesday. Anyone is welcome. Please bring along a piece of fruit to share.

Codie Laursen President
Olivia Monk Secretary

<https://www.facebook.com/murrabitplaygroup>

Murrabit Seniors

New people very welcome

Contact Evelyn Napier 5457 0280

For further dates when activity commences post COVID

or Gannawarra Shire Community Care Team on Ph: 5450 9333



MURRABIT GROUP SCHOOL NEWS

Students in Grade 3-6 have continued with their Remote and Flexible Learning on staggered days, while P-2 have been back on site this term.

We were all very excited though when we found out that everyone was back to on site learning from Friday 22 October. With the students in the playground the school is alive with laughter and smiles.

In the classroom children are enjoying the different tasks, discussing learning with their classmates.

Our MARC (Library) and MACC (Art) program has continued this term on site with Mrs McLaren and Ms Bentley, as well as our Italian and Music classes with Mrs Jones.

The staff have also set work for the students who have been learning via Remote Learning.

Themes for term 4 are Space (Grades P-4) and Aboriginal Studies

and Parliament (Grade 5-6). The students are keen to learn about these diverse topics.

*Greg Adams
Principal*



MURRABIT TENNIS CLUB NEWS

Welcome to the 2021/22 tennis season. We look forward to the season getting underway as soon as restrictions allow.

Training has already begun on Thursday nights (as we are allowed to train, but not yet play competition). It has been terrific to get down to the courts for a hit and to catch up with friends. The courts are looking terrific.

Each Thursday night after the junior coaching we have social tennis for anyone wishing to participate. A great opportunity to come down on a summer's night for a bit of exercise and (much needed) socialising.

Thank you to those who have put your names down to play Saturday tennis. Our numbers have dropped quite a bit from last season, so we are still hoping for a few more players. If you have decided that you would like to play, it is not too late to join. We are always looking for new members. Contact Ang 0408 313 257.

Season start date will be confirmed as soon as we are open to running competition tennis. Hopefully in the next few weeks.

At this stage, we have entered 2 senior teams and 1 junior team into the Northern District Tennis competition for this year. This will comprise of a Division 1, a Division 2 and a junior Division 2.

Our very popular junior coaching programs are set to start.

Junior Tennis Coaching Program
Starts **21 October 2021** for 8 weeks.

5:30pm for 'Hotshots' (from age 3).
with Sally McDonald

6:00pm for 'Tennis 4 Teens' (from age 10).
with Simon Morton

Cost is \$30 per child

(includes icy pole each week and Hot Shots t-shirt)
Juniors playing Saturday competition will receive a club polo shirt.

Bring your own drink bottle and hat.

COVID guidelines will be followed.

Register at: www.hotshots.tennis.com.au

Looking forward to the season ahead.

Golden Rivers Electrical Pty Ltd

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Please feel free to contact my office with any matters concerning the State Government or its departments.

Funded from Parliamentary Budget

CLEANING JOB AVAILABLE

The Murrabit Lawn Tennis Club is seeking a cleaner to clean the clubrooms for the season (October – March). Job will consist of cleaning duties for around 2 hours per week. Contact Ang 0408 313 257 or Sara 0439 380 604 if interested.

MARKET CLEAN UP ROSTER 2021

November Market
Murrabit Fire Brigade



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Murrabit Football and Netball Season Wrap-Up

Due to Covid lockdowns the 2021 season was concluded with no finals held.

Congratulations to our Minor Premiers who finished on top of their ladders for

the interrupted season. Our Reserve Footballers, A Grade Netballers and B Grade Netballers all finished on top for 2021. A disappointing finish not to be able to play it out in finals but a fantastic effort to finish on top.

From a GRFNL perspective we had Jordan McNeil nominated as our Rookie of the year and Sarah Copland nominated for the Junior Distinction, fantastic junior players, and a key to Murrabit's future success. Kalinda Stanton had a standout year in 2021. She was awarded the A Grade MVP award and went on to claim the League A Grade Best and Fairest. Congratulations Kalinda a fantastic reward for your performances in 2021. We also had Emily Copland (B Grade) and Imogen Cummins (U14) as Runners up in their respective grades. Congratulations.

Leading on from Kalinda's League performance, our Vote Count and Awards for 2021 were held remotely via Facebook on Friday the 15 October. It was no surprise that Kalinda claimed the A Grade club best and fairest to cap off her amazing year. Attached is a full list of our award recipients and Best and Fairest in 2021.

A full list of Football Trophy Winners and Netball Club Awards for 2021 can be found on the www.murrabit.com.au

The season will officially conclude with a Christmas Party and Presentation Day on Sunday 28 November. Here we hope that Covid conditions allow us to present our award recipients with their trophies and wrap the season up officially.

Stay tuned for further information on this as they become available.



NEWSLETTER DETAILS

To put an article into the **Murra-bit-a-News** please have it into the **MAA Office** by

THURSDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2021

Information can be emailed to murrabit1@bigpond.com delivered or posted through the door.

Community interest info is free.

Advertise from \$10.

To add your contact details to our newsletter email list simply send an email to the address above.

MURRABIT AND DISTRICT LIONS CLUB

Members were pleased to be back operating at the October market. There was a steady trade - great to see our customers back and supporting our food stall. We are now looking forward to the November market.

Under our Covid Safe Plan for the market, we are now required to ensure that all our volunteers have been double vaccinated.

Good News - we have recently been notified of a successful Council Community Grant. This will allow us to purchase a 'Square' point of sale unit to assist us with take orders more quickly and avoid queuing at our market food stall.

The grant will also purchase a data projector and screen at the Murrabit Golf Club which are our clubrooms as a great addition to our meetings and other community events.

On a sad note, our long-time member Chris Veldman has sold his house in Murrabit and will be moving away, closer to his family. Chris will be missed as he is a great contributor to our Club. Chris held the position of President of our Club in 2002/03 and was always at our working bees. He pruned the roses at the Cenotaph and was also the barman at our dinner meetings. He collected the money at the market carpark after handing out the trestles and made sure that there was a warm fire for Pattie at the carpark entrance on cold winter mornings.

Chris will also be missed by the Murrabit Golf Club. He was one of the groundmen keeping the fairways watered and mowed and long time Treasurer for the Club. Because of Covid restrictions, we are unable to have a send off for Chris, but when things settle down, we will invite him back to officially send him off. He will always be welcomed back to Murrabit.

MURRABIT BOOK CLUB

Despite Covid we have been able to meet for most months of 2021. Our Murrabit Book Club has been operating for 40 years. This really has been a remarkable achievement for our small community to sustain a group like this for so long. We have always had between 11-15 members (15 being the maximum). When you look at the number of people who have participated over the years, it is quite a small number which shows that our members stay for a long time. Maybe next year we can have a belated anniversary celebration. It is that time of the year when we are busy choosing our books for next year - we hope we make 'the right' selections!

Book Club meets on the third Tuesday of the month at 8pm, usually in member's homes. Our Book Club still has vacancies.

If you are interested in reading and would like to join, please contact Jeanette Coulter (5457 2331) for more information.

School Paver Project

Unfortunately the 50th Anniversary of the Murrabit Group School (1971-2021) was not able to proceed. This is an important occasion in our small community and a team has been working to ensure that this milestone is still recognised despite these trying times.

Instead of a physical celebration, the Murrabit Heritage Group is putting together a series of special features on the Murrabit Group School, current school students will complete drawings and stories to be displayed at the December Murrabit Market, Anniversary Stubby Holders will be available for purchase through Busy Bees of Murrabit (great Christmas presents!) and you can still order a commemorative paver. If you would like an order form, please contact Judi at the Murrabit Group School Ph: 5457 2284 for it to be sent or emailed to you. Copies of order forms are also available from the Murrabit website: www.murrabit.com.au

The original Murrabit School (No. 2486) closed in 1906. A new Murrabit School (No. 3859) was opened in 1914 at the corner of Rabbit Point Road and the Murrabit West Road.

At the time, this location was on the road from Kerang through to the Gonn Crossing, which was the main village for crossing the river at the time. Gonn Crossing had a post office, blacksmith, citrus packing shed, and the all important punt across the Murray River. This was the stock route from New South Wales through to the saleyards in Kerang.



Murrabit School at Rabbit Point 1925

The township of Murrabit was created in 1924 when the railway came through from Kerang. A new school was built on the current site of the Murrabit Group School in 1926. When the new school building was ready, the children carried the desks loaded up with books from Rabbit Point to the new school. The school was reported to be the most modern rural school at that time. The parents and teachers took a great interest in the grounds and many trees were planted, then lawns and garden. This landscaping greatly enhanced the appearance of the new school and the new township of Murrabit. The original school building has undergone a complete restoration in 2021 and continues to serve as a classroom for our district's children 95 years after it was first opened!



Murrabit School at Murrabit 1934

As was common back then, schools dotted the countryside with many being relocated from place to place to match the changing population of children.

The first school in our area was No. 2321 opened at Benjeroop in November 1880.

The Benjeroop East School (No. 2615) building is still there as a private residence and located on the corner of the Murrabit West and Benjeroop-Lake Charm Road. It opened in 1883. There were 57 students enrolled here in 1897!

The Murrabit West School (No. 2616) opened September 19, 1885 and moved to the Murrabit West site in 1908, about halfway between Murrabit and Benjeroop on the Murrabit West Road. There is a granite rock with a plaque on the right-hand side of the road where the school was once located.



Murrabit West School

The Gonn Crossing School (No. 4566) was set close to the bank of the Murray River where people travelling from Kerang crossed via the Gonn Crossing Punt to 'Gonn' Station and New South Wales.

The Gonn Crossing school was officially opened on July 14, 1938 by the Kerang Shire President, Councillor Lester Smith. The original building was a single room wooden structure. It was a rough and ready building accommodating 18 students with a verandah built by the parents. After a year, a school building was transferred from Capel's Crossing to Gonn Crossing. This building burnt down in 1948 and another school from Yarrowalla (near Pyramid Hill) was transported to the site. Fire threatened again in 1951 but prompt action by local residents saved the school from serious damage. The school building remains in place on the corner of Punt Lane and River Road.



Gonn Crossing School 1957

Murrabit combined school sports were held as far back as 1932. The sports were held in conjunction with the swimming championship for which Mr Percy Bryer donated two gold medals each year. The event was a gala occasion. After the sports the children had drinks and ice cream – a treat in those days – and the day ended with a picnic.

On a number of occasions district people made representation to the Minister for Education to have a consolidated school at Murrabit. This was successful in 1969. Two classrooms, a storeroom and an office were added in 1970 and the schools of Murrabit, Murrabit West, Benjeroop East and Gonn Crossing combined. The Murrabit Group School as we know it today opened on February 3, 1971 with 115 pupils and 5 teachers. Additional rooms were added in 1973 and a new oval constructed.

The Murrabit Group School is an integral part of our town and as a community we acknowledge the 50th Anniversary.

Stay tuned for the next newsletter for another Special Feature on the Murrabit Group School...