

THE FORREST POST

OCTOBER 2023

FREE

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land and waters around us, and pay our respects to Elders past and present. We respect their cultural heritage, knowledge here in Forrest where the waters flow over Gadubanud and Gulidjan Country



Forrest Police Station Presence at Threat

98 Victorian single police station employees, including our very own Matt Roberts of Forrest Police Station, are at threat of losing their role to be rostered out to larger regional centres and cities. This suggested policy change by the Victorian Police has come about as they search for ways to fill the shoes of their 800 employee vacancies and 900 employee work-related injury absences statewide. As these 98 stations cover a whole third of the state, it begs to question whether their relocation is really the answer to their staffing issues, or whether it would create larger problems for remote Victoria.

This move by the Victorian Police fails to recognise the importance of remote communities' safety and security, but also shows a misunderstanding of the role that these police employees play. Single police station employees shoulder responsibilities that a policymaker may never consider to be part of the role, as their reporting statistics are only meaningful in reflection of the needs of metropolitan areas.

A day in the life of a single police employee doesn't only entail responding to illegal activity as it happens and being the presence to ensure that communities aren't exposed to further crime, but also in being a first responder to show up at the scene within a reasonable time frame. With a strong geographical knowledge of our roads and the best 4WD vehicle for the job, Matt has been a first responder to people who have gone into cardiac arrest, been bitten by snakes, become lost whilst hiking, and has even been a collection point for injured animals when the animal rescue team couldn't arrive until the following morning. Matt engages with the local community and works with partner

agencies (including Forestries and Parks VIC) for many collaborations, such as joint patrols and to help in covering rosters in lieu of the CFA's staff shortages during fire danger periods.

Matt's efforts of being deeply engaged and committed to our community go far beyond his work life, and he is never truly off duty like a conventional policeman is. As the policemen stationed at Forrest before Matt had an active presence in sporting roles within the community, he has also been responsible for running our local gym and its boot camp, occasional kids boxing classes and the school's 'Tribes' program; as well as making home visits to isolated community members and being a member of our local committees.

Within a few years of becoming abandoned by our single police station, we might ponder how special it used to be to have such a strong rapport with the police, as we drive the long drive to the nearest police station to tell them all about the increase in crime rates and social issues. We may never get a service like this again if we lose it now, although we will continue to pay for it in our taxes regardless.

To voice your support for Matt and the 97 other remote towns, you can write to your local MP and the Chief Commissioner, or you can add your signature to the petition at <https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/view-sign-e-petitions/details/12/526> or via the QR code before the 17th of November 2023.

Lydia Waddell



THE END IS NIGH for the Forrest Post. The December issue will be the very last unless volunteers step in to assist with the roles associated with producing this little town rag.

Colac Otway Shire News

Best Value Review of Council's Aged and Disability Services

At its meeting on Wednesday 3 May 2023, Council resolved to undertake a Best Value Review of Council's aged and disability services in response to the Commonwealth Government changes to aged care. The Commonwealth Government has sole policy and funding responsibility for the delivery of aged services and has announced a new national system that will be implemented from 1 July 2025.

Colac Otway Shire Council has appointed Lake Advisory consultants to undertake an independent review of Council's aged and disability services.

The review will report on Council's provision of services to assist older people, those recovering from acute care and people with disabilities to continue to live independently in the community. These services include those funded through the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP), the State Government's Home and Community Care Program for Younger People (HACC PYP) and Home Care Packages.

During the review, there will be no disruption to clients, families or staff of Council's aged and disability services, with all programs and services to operate as usual.

As part of Council's community engagement commitment, all clients and their families, staff and community members are invited to complete a survey and/or make a submission regarding the current and future aged and disability services, and the barriers to living independently in the Colac Otway Shire municipality.

To make a submission:

Online: Visit Council's website and click Have Your Say from the homepage.

In Person: Collect a copy of the survey from Council's Customer Service Centres in Colac (2-6 Rae Street) or Apollo Bay (GORVIC, 100 Great Ocean Road).

Post: Complete the survey and mail to Colac Otway Shire Council, PO Box 283, Colac VIC 3250 (to be received by 4 October)

Email your submission to inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au with Aged and Disability and Services Review in the subject line.

Survey responses (and any other submissions) to the aged and disability services review are open until 5pm Wednesday 4 October September 2023.

There will also be the opportunity to participate in a structured focus group during October. Please register your interest via the online survey, in-person, via post or email or call Council on 5232 9400. Information sessions will also be conducted at sites across the shire. Times, dates and venues will be advertised shortly.

Survey responses will help inform the aged and disability services review. A review report, including all feedback collected during the consultation period, will be presented at a Colac Otway Shire Council Meeting late in 2023. The review will enable Council to make a decision on Council's future role and provision of aged and disability services in the Colac Otway Shire.

For detailed information on the Best Value Review including Frequently Asked Questions, click Aged and Disability Services Review from the homepage.

Colac Botanic Gardens Masterplan – Have Your Say

We need your ideas! Colac Botanic Gardens has been a much-loved asset for generations of Colac Otway residents and visitors. We want you to have your say on the future of the Gardens as we develop a Masterplan for the next 10 years. What do you love about the Gardens? What can be improved? What would you like to see included in the plan?

Visit Council's website and click Have Your Say from the homepage www.colacotway.vic.gov.au

Have Your Say

Council has the following projects and initiatives open for community feedback:

- **Survey to assist future planning for childcare services**
- **Deans Creek Precinct Structure Plan (PSP) Community Reference Group – EOI**
- **Proposed Cat Confinement Order**
- **Colac Botanic Gardens Masterplan**
- **Best Value Review of Council's Aged and Disability Services**

For further information and to provide your feedback, visit Council's website and click **Have Your Say** from the homepage.



Colac Service Centre: 2-6 Rae Street, Colac, Open: Monday - Friday 8:30am - 5pm Ph: 5232 9400

Email: inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au or find us online: www.colacotway.vic.gov.au



The Forrest Post is auspiced by the Forrest Men's Shed. Every effort is made to remain current, accurate and non-partisan. Feedback, submissions and advertising are encouraged. Submissions may be edited. You can request an electronic version by email, find us on Facebook or online at forrestvictoria.com **Contact: theforrestpost@gmail.com**

Editors: Marita Kennedy, Susan Langridge, Noor Petersen **Contributors** Freya Bennett, Gillian Brew, Ian Davies, Mary Dracup, Sophie Fletcher, Adam Fry, Susan Langridge, Amanda Perry-Bolt, Noor Petersen, Matt Roberts, Pauline Rostos, Renee Taylor, Lydia Waddell

Design: Gillian Brew **Print:** Forrest Primary School.

All contributions to be received the 22nd of the month.

Gang Gang Cockatoo Recovery Program

The Gang Gang Cockatoo has now been listed as an endangered species due to loss of habitat and climate change. Birdlife Australia are currently running a free Education-Action Course called the Gang-Gang Cockatoo Recovery program to equip Australians with the skills they need to help save these birds. <https://birdlife.org.au/events/gang-gang-cockatoo-edu-action-course/>

Environmental Artist Peter Day, our Forrest resident who ran the Platypus Project here in Forrest in 2021-22, was invited to be involved with the Birds in Schools Project at the Beeac Primary School.

“At Beeac we have been observing the indigenous seasons with the coming and going of weather patterns and creatures in our landscape. Back in July we announced at assembly that Chinnup season was beginning, and suggested students should be on the lookout for various cockatoos usually seen at this



time of year. As if by magic, a week later, a group of Gang Gang cockatoos flew in to snack on the lemon scented gum tree at the front of our school and they stayed for a week. The Gang Gang spend winter or the Chinnup months in our habitat and then migrate to Otway areas to nest.

Thanks to the generosity of Junior Landcare the wonderful environmental artist Peter Day was approached to develop a Gang Gang artwork with our students. He chose Lily Milne's beautiful drawing to create a larger artwork which the kids helped to paint with ochres and colours. This final Gang Gang piece enhances the entrance to Warrabee, the art room and library. Students also planted melaleuca nesophillas shrubs which the Gang Gangs love to eat. We hope to see the Gang Gangs back next Chinnup season in July.”

Amanda Perry-Bolt

Community Bushfire and Emergency Planning

With the official declaration of LaNina - a warmer, dryer summer, the FLARE Team was excited to bring 22 community and agencies members together from around our area to have input into our Community Bushfire and Emergency Plan draft. 79% of respondents to a recent bushfire preparedness survey said a community plan would help them feel safer and better prepared. After looking at other community plans and talking to agencies and emergency services, the FLARE Team focussed on 5 areas to help answer the question ‘What goes into a Community Bushfire & Emergency Plan for Barramunga, Barwon Downs, Forrest and Gerangamete.

BEFORE: What activities, resources and information does our community need to prepare and plan for a bushfire or emergency? E.g. How can people learn about and better understand their risk?

DURING: What activities, resources and information does our community need to respond to a bushfire or emergency? E.g. How can people access up-to-date information?

AFTER: What activities, resources and information does our community need after a bushfire or emergency? E.g. How can people access a power source if power is down?

Places to Protect: What community places are most important to protect?

Community Connections: History shows the importance of knowing your community, access to local information, who is around, who has left, who may need or provide help. What ideas could connect our communities?

It is important to stress that we live in one of the most bushfire prone areas of the world and people need to have their own personal/family plan including having somewhere to go when leaving early on Catastrophic days before there is fire in the landscape, when a fire cannot be controlled and will spread quickly.

A Community Bushfire and Emergency Plan does not replace or duplicate what emergency services do, eg. provide official emergency warnings & information - but can help community members to:

- to be as prepared as possible before an event
- stay safe and calm until emergency services arrive
- support emergency services and volunteers to do their jobs

The next task for the FLARE Team is to collate this information into a Draft Plan to present to the community for input and testing.

If you could not make it to the workshop, we have developed a Community Bushfire & Emergency Planning form to collect your ideas based on the same questions from workshop. You can fill in the [form online here](#) or collect a hard copy from the Forrest General Store and Neighbourhood House until 10th October.

If you want more information about the plan or to find out how to be involved FLARE project please give me a call on 0422 585 227 or email fpac3236+flare@gmail.com



Gillian Brew FLARE coordinator

A Community Bushfire and Emergency Plan does not replace or duplicate what emergency services do, for example it does not replace official emergency warnings & information

Flourishing Indigo in Forrest

The *Indigofera australis* is flowering at the Hennigan Crescent revegetation site, AKA the holly site. Just by chance, a new baby called Indigo was born at Colac Area Health at the same time to Lydia Waddell and Brent Field who have lived in Forrest since October last year.

Lydia and Brent have worked their way around Australia as a hospitality duo. Lydia as front of house and Brent as head chef. They were en-route to Kangaroo Island from Innamincka, Outback SA to take up work at a luxury resort, when a chance stop-over in Forrest made them fall in love with the greenery, the pine trees and the smoking chimnies. They couldn't stop thinking of Forrest whilst in KI. They came back after the job finished to take up positions at the Brewery. As Brent says "The beauty of the area attracted us first, but we've stayed because of the people."

Neither have family close by; Lydia's are in Canberra and Brent's are in Maitland. But as Lydia says, "The Forrest community is a good replacement for family that is so far away." Brent now spends his time working at Bulla and at the Brewery. Lydia is taking maternity leave and making



Brent, Lydia and baby Indigo

use of her degree in sociology and social policy, writing for the Forrest Post, whilst simultaneously nursing Indigo! See her first story about rural police on page one. Lydia is also a wedding planner and currently completing a Kundalini teacher training course. Meanwhile Indigo Allie Phyllis Field is thriving and changing rapidly as babies do.

Susan Langridge

Be prepared, not scared this bird breeding season

Victorians are being reminded that with spring just around the corner, native birds such as magpies and masked lapwings may begin swooping during their breeding season - but there are steps we can take to remain safe at this time.

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) Senior Wildlife Projects Officer, Abby Smith, said some native birds swoop to defend their eggs and young for the six to eight weeks until they leave the nest. "Swooping can catch us by surprise, but it is normal behaviour for some territorial birds," Ms Smith said. "Swooping is basically a scare tactic to warn people and animals not to come near their nesting young. Birds may swoop people or animals, so be mindful of your dogs too."

Not all birds swoop to protect their eggs and young during the breeding season, so don't be concerned simply because there are magpies or other common swooping birds in the area. During this time of year less than 10 per cent of birds actually swoop and even fewer make contact. You can do a few things to protect yourself.

- Avoid your local swooping hotspots
- Move quickly, but do not run
- Cover your head with a hat, helmet or umbrella, but don't wave it around
- Do not harass or feed birds

To plan your route around known swooping hotspots or to report a swooping incident on Victoria's interactive swooping bird map, please visit <https://www.wildlife.vic.gov.au/managing-wildlife/swooping-birds>.



All Victorian native wildlife is protected by law, and it is illegal to harass or harm native birds and other wildlife without authorisation.

DEWLP Media Release

Comedy for a Cause

Saturday 14 October 2023

Doors: 7pm / Show: 7.30pm / 15+

**Featuring comedians from
Sydney & Melbourne
International
Comedy Festivals**

Book your tickets at:
comedyforacause.net/FDNH

Forrest Community Hub
GrassTree Building
47 Grant Street Forrest
BYO refreshments!

In Support of:

Forrest & District
Neighbourhood House

Police Beat

POLICE

POLICE

POLICE

Over the last few months numerous people have visited the Otways and have been detected committing the following offences:

- Drink/drug driving x 3
- Illegal hunting/Possession or discharging firearms on private property without consent x 4
- Assault x 1
- Possession of drug of dependence x 17
- Driving whilst suspended x 3
- Unlicensed driving x 1
- Criminal damage x 2
- Theft x 3
- Breach of an intervention order x 1

As a result a number of these people will be returning to the Otway region via the Colac Magistrates Court.

During this period I and other emergency services attended numerous vehicle accidents and there have been a number of serious push bike accidents whereby patients were transported to hospital due to their injuries. One of these cyclists was not wearing a helmet!! They were transported to Geelong Hospital and luckily escaped serious injury. On that note there has been an increase of locals observed not wearing bike helmets.

Even if you're only riding up and down the footpath outside your house or a couple of hundred metres to the General Store, not wearing a helmet is dangerous and incurs a fine of approximately \$207.

A 15 year old boy was also lucky to escape serious injury after legally riding his bike along Birregurra Forrest Road Forrest when a driver veered into the cyclist knocking him from his bike. The driver briefly stopped his vehicle some 50 metres down the road before driving off without

exchanging details. The collision totally destroyed the cyclists' bike and mobile phone. The vehicle is described as a white Ford Ranger with a red pin stripe along the side and was driven by a male about 40 years of age who has yet to be identified.

Over the coming months, including the holiday period, we can expect an increase of patronage to the area that increases the workload. In recent weeks I have detected dozens of speeding drivers coming through town with one driver detected travelling at a whopping 117 kilometres through the school zone. So please take care whilst crossing the road and particularly taking kids to school.

Unfortunately there has been an increase in illegal activity in the area, particularly thefts. This includes 500 litres of diesel stolen from a local farm, 20 litres of cattle drench valued at \$1500 from another farm, diesel siphoned from a truck parked overnight at a road work site, and four batteries and a solar panel, valued at \$1500 stolen from the Forrest Caravan Park.

Please know that despite the fact I am based in Forrest, I cover a large area that includes Carlisle River, along the coast from Apollo Bay to Lorne and whilst I do conduct a lot of traffic duties in the main street, I do have these other areas in my response zone that require attention.

Please be safe and if you see something, say something. I am always up for a chat or alternatively you can anonymously contact crime stoppers on 1800 333 000 or make an online report through their website. If urgent or you require immediate police assistance please call 000

Matt Roberts

Native plant propagation workshop

Are you keen to know more about native seed collecting, plant identification and propagation?

The Upper Barwon Landcare Network and Gerangamete and Forrest Landcare Group are sponsoring a plant propagation workshop with Mike Robinson-Koss at Otway Greening near Deans Marsh on Saturday 18 November.

The workshop includes tips to identify many local species, a discussion on ethical and ecologically-sound seed collecting techniques; plus information on how to prepare, dry and store seed.

Participants will be sowing seed they can take home to germinate, and will prick out plants from seed trays, which they will also take home to raise. They will learn about cuttings, mycorrhizal relationships, how to look after pricked out plants, plant nutrition, site preparation, tree guarding, and so on.

The workshop will finish with a guided walk through the bush discussing how to identify species, ecological vegetation class observations, and natural area habitat hectare appraisals.



The cost is \$25 (very generously subsidised from the usual rate) which includes the plants you will take home at the end of the day. First priority will be given to Gerangamete and Forrest Landcare members and numbers are capped at 25, so get in quick. Final numbers are needed by 15 October. Email gerangametelandcare@gmail.com to secure your spot.

Freyja Bennett and Mary Dracup

From Little Things

On the 14th of October, all Australians will be asked to vote on whether we should recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as being here first, in Australia. Enshrined in the constitution, means this recognition can't be removed by the government of the day. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have asked for this recognition, also want to have a Voice to parliament, to talk about matters that affect them.

The Uluru Statement from the Heart outlines why this voice is needed.

"Proportionally we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future. These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is the torment of our powerlessness.

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a rightful place in our own country. When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish.

They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country." Uluru Statement from the Heart.

I've worked in Community Health for a long time and I recognise in The Voice proposal the most basic tenet of delivering health to communities, always ask the community what they need to fix the problem before you design a program or come with a ready-made solution, otherwise it will fail. Communities will always have the answer. They need to be listened to.

To vote Yes is a small thing for non-indigenous Australians to do. Why wouldn't we vote Yes when the vast majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have asked us to do this? Why would we say No? I'm old enough to remember how it felt in this country after Cathy Freeman won the 400 metres at the Sydney Olympics. How proud we all were as a country, that our Cathy had triumphed on the world stage. I remember thinking if only this vibe could be permanent. How would it be to live in a country that was proud of it's First Nations and respected them. Perhaps after October 14th, we will feel that way again. Look into your heart and vote Yes.

Susan Langridge

LOCAL FISHERIES UPDATE

River Black Fish closed season

Closed season for River Blackfish started **September 1st**, for everywhere in Vic, South of the Great Dividing Range. Closed season runs until **31st December** inclusive.

Rock Lobster closed season

Closed season starts from **September 15**, helping to protect males during the moulting period when soft shells increase their vulnerability. The new season starts on **16th November**

For more info, check out the recreational fishing guide through the Vicfishing app or website <https://vfa.vic.gov.au/>

Barwon Water Updates



50%

West Barwon Reservoir

↓ Down 5% since last month



98%

Wurdee Boluc Reservoir

↑ Up 4% since last month



5ML

Current minimum daily passing flow at West Barwon

You're invited: Forrest wastewater listening posts

We're holding listening posts in Forrest and you're invited to drop by and speak with us.

We will provide an update on the Forrest wastewater investigations, as well as the opportunity to ask questions.

For more information, visit the dedicated YourSay page below.

Forrest General Store

- Thursday 21 September between 1-3 pm.
- Wednesday 1 November between 3.30-5.30 pm.

Forrest Public Hall

- Thursday 5 October between 11 am-1 pm.
- Thursday 19 October between 11 am-1 pm.

We hope to see you there!

Annual performance scorecard

Our year-5 annual performance scorecard provides a snapshot of our performance against five service outcomes our customers told us they most valued and expected from their water and sewerage services.

To view a copy of the scorecard, please visit www.barwonwater.vic.gov.au.

Did you know?

Over the past 10 years, our region's water use has remained relatively stable from 192 litres per person, per day in 2013-14, to 178 litres per person, per day in 2022-23.



Forrest Flicks Film Society presents

The shape of water (2017)

Thursday 12 October
7 for 7:30pm start
Forrest Public Hall

Complimentary
wine, cheese,
tea, coffee

\$15/\$12
donation to
'try it and see'

All welcome



THE SHAPE OF WATER

WRITTEN BY GUILLERMO DEL TORO DIRECTED BY GUILLERMO DEL TORO CASTING BY GUILLERMO DEL TORO & VANESSA TAYLOR COSTUME DESIGNER GUILLERMO DEL TORO

Social: @otwaysoap

Ph: 0408 365 948

E: contact@otwaysoap.com

Otway
Soap.

=The finest soap, hand crafted in the Otways=

Otwaysoap.com

Birregurra Pharmacy

- PBS Prescriptions
- Free medication advice
- Webster packing
- Medical Certificates
- Repeat Scripts on file
- Vitamins advice
- Cosmetics & Fragrances
- NDSS (Diabetes Australia) Subagent
- Workcover & TAC
- Instore medication reviews
- eScripts & MySL



OPEN 6 DAYS

40 Main Street, Birregurra, VIC 3242

Monday - Friday: 9.00am - 5.30pm

P: 03 5236 2288

Saturday: 9.00am - 12.00pm

F: 03 5236 2280

birrepharmacy@hotmail.com

THE FORREST OP SHOP

OPEN SATURDAYS 10.30-4PM

Clean donations in good repair welcome during open hours or by arrangement. Call Gillian 0422 585 227



FREE WIFI AT THE SHED

Forrest Men's Shed - 6 Blundy St, Forrest
email fdms3236@gmail.com to request
a username & password

Woodwork lathe machines - table saw
- mitre saw - metal welding

BUILDING PURPOSE BUILDING INTEGRITY BUILDING COMMUNITY

MATHEW SILVEY PLUMBING

- New homes & renovations
- Hot & cold water services
- Spouting & downpipes
- Stormwater
- Motorised drain cleaning
- 1.5t excavator hire
- Solar hot water installation
- Roofing

Mobile: 0417 342 531

Licence No. 47995

All About

Mowers & Chainsaws

Winchelsea



Ph: 03 5267 2266 www.allaboutmowers.com.au

ADVERTISE WITH US

Reach local customers and visitors and support your local volunteer run news sheet.

Proceeds go to the Forrest Primary School or Neighbourhood House for printing costs.

CONTACT US:
theforrestpost@gmail.com
for rates or more information

School students lend a hand with revegetation



Forrest School students lending a hand

Forrest Primary School children planted out another 114 native plants on the Hennigan Crescent bush rehabilitation site one sunny morning in September. It was great to see the enthusiasm with which they took to the task, guided by Gerangamete and Forrest Landcare members and school staff. The site was absolutely buzzing with activity!

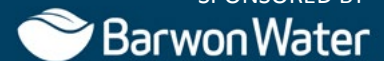
The children visited the plants they planted last year and are building a lovely connection with this part of their community. Landcare members are looking forward to working with the school more in future, both on the bushland site and at the school.

Barwon Water have recently donated another 1100 local native plants for the Hennigan Crescent site, including mint bush, running postman, Banksia marginata, poa, lomandra, sweet bursaria, hazel pomaderris and native violet. Almost half of these are now safely in the ground and the Landcare group will be busy planting the remainder during Spring. Feel free to join in—we are usually at the site on the first Sunday and second Tuesday of each month from 10am to 12pm, with morning tea and a chat at the end. For more information contact Mary on 0488 522 448.

Freya Bennett and Mary Dracup

BIRDS OF FORREST

SPONSORED BY



Flame Robin

The Flame Robin is another of our moderately common species. It is found throughout South Eastern Australia and Tasmania. This Robin is also a partial altitudinal migrant, arriving in our parts in Autumn, staying in the more lowland areas for the Winter before returning to higher altitudes in the Spring. Like all of the other red breasted Robins, the male displays a bright red chest, while the female has a more subdued colouration, mainly brown, sometimes with a paler red wash on the chest, especially with the Scarlet Robin.

They can be seen quite often around the Forrest district. Some places that they can be seen include the road to the West Barwon Dam, and indeed I have seen them along the dam wall, and surrounding areas. In fact any area of open Woodland, Farmland and Grassy areas such as the roadsides to Colac and Barwon Downs can support these birds. They are seen mainly singularly, or in pairs in the breeding season, but at other times they may form flocks of up to 20 birds. Like other Robins they are insectivorous, and build a rough bark nest, laying 3-4 freckled greenish white eggs.

Male Flame Robin



Ian Davies and Adam Fry

Visit Forrest online at www.forrestvictoria.com

