

# The Toodyay Herald

Your locally owned  
community newspaper  
Est. 1902

5000 copies circulating in Toodyay, West Toodyay, Goomalling, Bolgart,  
Calingiri, Morangup, Northam, Coondle, Hoddys Well, Wattening, Dewars  
Pool, Culham, Bejoording, Nunile, Julimar, Bakers Hill, Clackline,  
Wooroloo, Wundowie, Gidgegannup and local districts.

June 2020  
Edition 391

## Care urged as crowds return

Michael Sinclair-Jones

WHEATBELT health officials and Toodyay police are cautioning people not to become complacent about observing social distancing rules and to keep washing their hands regularly as the State Government moves to ease Covid-19 restrictions in WA.

Permitted gatherings will increase from 20 to 100 people from Saturday June 6 but the illness can still be spread by people without symptoms who may be unaware they are infected.

Federal health officials said people need "to stay home if they have any cold or flu symptoms – no matter how mild – and get tested for Covid-19".

This would help prevent a "second wave" of infections after earlier restrictions had enabled Australia to "very successfully flatten the curve" of new Covid-19 cases, particularly in WA.

Toodyay residents are also being urged to seek clinical help for virus-related anxiety or distress after a 20 per cent increase in referrals to psychological support services.

Local cafes and shops showed a big increase in trade from Perth visitors in the last two weekends of May when the State government ended its Wheatbelt lockdown and eased social distancing rules.

However, many visitors appeared to be



A long queue of visitors blocks the pavement in Stirling Terrace during the long weekend at the end of May after lockdown restrictions on Perth travel were lifted the previous Saturday.

ignoring social distancing rules on crowded pavements and in the Charcoal Lane car park.

The virus has killed 370,000 people worldwide and more than 100 in Australia.

WA's interstate and overseas borders stayed shut at the start of this month but travel to Perth and elsewhere in WA was allowed to resume from the third week of May.

Official figures show that about 10 per cent

of Australia's 7000 known infections were spread locally from unknown sources.

Infected people remain contagious for up to 14 days unless the virus takes hold and develops into a cough or fever.

State health officials say people still need to "keep 1.5m away from others where possible and maintain good personal hygiene" after restrictions ease from June 6.

The Wheatbelt Health Network says Covid-19 can be spread unknowingly by people without symptoms to others who then become contagious without symptoms and can again unknowingly pass to virus onto others who become ill.

"That's why it's important to maintain social distancing of 1.5 metres and continue to wash hands regularly – it's a silent risk," a Wheatbelt Health spokesman said.

"That's also why it's important for everyone with a smartphone to download the government's COVIDsafe app so the virus can be traced through potential contacts and people at risk tested and, if necessary, isolated to prevent further spread.

"Six million people have done it so far.

"Healthy people with strong personal immune systems will defeat the virus after two weeks unless it develops into a cough or a fever," the spokesperson said.

"Anyone who feels unwell should stay home and self-isolate to stop any potential spread and call a doctor for advice."

The spokesperson said one good outcome from social distancing restrictions was a "phenomenal" drop in the number of people seeking medical treatment for common colds and influenza.

"A lot more people this year also had flu vaccinations, which helped to reduce the number of reported cases at clinics and hospitals," the spokesperson said.

However, the virus has caused a 20 per cent increase in the number of Toodyay people seeking clinical help to deal with emotional distress, including anxiety about financial concerns and personal relationships.

Local clinical psychologist Richard Taylor said people experiencing anxiety or distress could call Toodyay's Alma Beard Medical Centre for a doctor's referral to his bulk-billing practice to get tele-help support at home via a smartphone, tablet or computer, or visit his clinic.

"This makes it much easier for people living in rural areas to get help, he said.

"A lot of my work is now done this way."

See Police Beat, Page 6.

## 100-year-old trees uprooted at heritage site



Heavy earthmoving equipment uproots a 100-year-old tree at Toodyay's heritage-listed Catholic Precinct which has been subdivided and rezoned for commercial development. Parishioners fear historic former convent and school buildings will be next to go. More on Page 8.

Police virus update  
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# COUNTRY REALTY

# The Toodyay Herald

*The Toodyay Herald* is a free monthly newspaper published and owned by a not-for-profit incorporated association - The Toodyay Herald Inc. Contributions via email or on flash drive are preferred. There is no charge for articles that appear in the paper.

Deadlines for the next edition are listed below with the paper on the streets in the first week of each month except in January when there is no edition.

All advertising should be emailed to [advertising@toodyayherald.com.au](mailto:advertising@toodyayherald.com.au). Editorial contributions and photographs should be emailed to [news@toodyayherald.com.au](mailto:news@toodyayherald.com.au).

Photographs for publication should be at least 500kb in file size to ensure quality reproduction in the newspaper.

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## DISTRIBUTION

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## THANK YOU

Many thanks to the volunteers who helped produce this edition of *The Toodyay Herald*: Joseph Fernandez (Legal), Peter Ruthven, Richard Grant, Allan Gregory, Colleen Sheehan and Barb Dadd.

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### RATES - NO GST IS APPLICABLE

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**Page Nomination Loading:** Front page - 100%,  
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**Advertorial:** Must be accompanied by purchase of quarter page advertisement (text 200-300 words) \$55.00.

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Noon Thursday June 18	Noon Tuesday June 23	Wednesday July 1

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Articles and stories: [news@toodyayherald.com.au](mailto:news@toodyayherald.com.au)

# Ol' Blind Joe

## Risky business

THE CIRCUS orangutan danced and dazzled the crowd, pirouetted and screeched "Ain't Capitalism Grand ... Larceny".

He doffed his hat and pulled out a cheque for five trillion dollars stolen from the grandkids, handed it to fellow clowns Wall Street Wally and Fossil Fuel Frankenstein, and threw some fake coins into the crowd.

Then he got his nappy in a knot, spat the dummy and threatened to ban *Twitter* for fact checking his latest online lie.

According to *The Washington Post* newspaper, US President Donald Trump has clocked up more than 18,000 verifiable lies since his November 2016 election, but *Twitter* – the President's favourite social media platform – well, how dare they?

His 1980s predecessor Ronald Reagan and British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher were the public faces of a concerted political and intellectual assault on the idea that taxes and investment were paths to prosperity for all.

Their response was 'no more regulations or taxes for corporations, just rape and pillage the poor and the environment guys'.

Now, even me old mate Blind Freddie saw this coming – the call to get the economy going again by slashing red and green tape and axing all that other social guff.

But these sad and dangerous times have exposed capitalism's glaring failures and inherent contradictions.

The West now has the worst unemployment since the Great Depression but the best stock valuations in 18 years.

Collectively, America's billionaires have reaped a \$434 billion windfall over the past two months while 40 million US workers have lost their jobs at levels not seen since the 1930s Great Depression.

The coronavirus crisis has exposed a political system that creates grotesque wealth for some and extreme devastation for many, controlled by those who profit from environmental destruction and treat public safety infrastructure with contempt.

What good is this system if it can't produce enough hand sanitiser, toilet paper or face masks to combat a deadly plague?

The system is rigged folks, and governments have either betrayed us or are displaying gross incompetence.

Welcome to unregulated capitalism, where the beast wears a suit and operates with no rules.

"The overall tax rate on Australia's richest 400 households in 2018 was only 23 per cent in the dollar – those earning the most paid less than a quarter of it in tax, compared with tax rates of 70 per cent in 1950 and 47 per cent in 1980.

Increased freedom for capital allows wealth to shop the globe to hide from taxation and has led to a huge expansion of the size and power of the finance sector.

Only 15 per cent of the money invested by big banks today goes into actual production – the rest is for speculation and fleecing ordinary citizens.

We live in a world where there is enough of everything needed for us all to live well and within our planet's ecological limits.

Nobel Prize-winning physicist and social

commentator Albert Einstein said in 1970: "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

Some say that after taking extraordinary measures to manage the Covid-19 public health emergency, we need only to decide the right time to return to 'normal'.

The failure of the world's biggest economies to prevent, protect against and help contain an illness that was known for months shows how concerns over loss of big business wealth took priority over saving everyday people's lives.

And it is this capitalist approach to administering government that perpetuates the same harms that will ensure a continuous crisis for the communities most devastated by the current pandemic.

Consider US trillionaire Jeff Bezos, reputedly the world's richest person making \$33 million an hour, who said he couldn't think of much else on which to spend his vast wealth other than space travel, while back on planet Earth the extent of misery due to poverty is staggering.

This broken, bleeding capitalist heart of America seems likely to keep pushing around all the kids in the playground until one day they're all gonna get together and say "goodnight bully".

Meanwhile, the disciplines of creativity and thought are being axed by Australian Liberals who have thrown the arts and universities overboard into sinking lifeboats.

Arts and public education have been an ideological battlefield for conservatives after former Labor Prime Minister Gough Whitlam rejuvenated them in the '70s.

Now they are backed into the corner of the ring and Liberal Prime Minister Scott Morrison has them by the short and curlies.

"When I despair, I remember that all through history the way of truth and love have always won. There have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they can seem invincible, but in the end, they always fall. Think of it – always." – Indian Independence leader Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948).



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Office Hours are from 9am-1pm on highlighted days						
June - July 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	July 1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

# Hemp bag home with bush poles

Ieva Tomsons

RETIRED West Toodyay builder Les Harders (85) was born in 1935 in the upstairs maternity ward of the old Newcastle Hospital in Henry Street Toodyay.

He was the sixth of 12 children who lived 11km out of town with parents Ruby and Harry in a four-room iron-roofed farmhouse made from bush poles and hemp superphosphate bags.

"The boys had a dirt floor and the girls' room had a floor made from old wooden pickets."

There were nine boys and three girls and for their weekly bath the copper was boiled and they washed in a galvanised iron bath which was brought inside during winter.

"The girls went first," said Les "... they were cleaner".

Les's father came to Toodyay in 1925 and mostly worked as a builder\* in town during the week leaving Ruby (nee Strahan) and the kids to clear the block, trap rabbits for extra money, tend the vegie patch and orchard and feed and water the cattle they ran on their 160-acre (65ha) farm.

"We carted water in 20-litre drums from the well where we kept the milk and butter cool. It was pretty hard going," said Les who didn't wear shoes until he was 14 years old.

"To keep us all under control, Mum would give us the strap or stick but we were never hungry and ate about seven or eight loaves of (homemade) bread a day".

He first started rabbiting when he was six accompanying his mother on a horse-drawn sulky into the bush where they camped

overnight setting traps for the rabbits which would fetch one shilling and sixpence (15 cents) a pair.

"Dad didn't go to war because he was manpowered out to work on a gold mine in Jumperding (now Jimperding) and we would take food to Dad in a calico bag.

"We walked all through the hills and at night we would set alight blackboys to find our way home."

When the Avon River was in full flood the kids didn't go to school. Bus driver Keeble Lee wouldn't even drive across when there was a foot (30cm) of water under the West Toodyay Bridge so they had to walk three miles (5km) twice a day to meet the bus.

Les started primary school when he was seven and left high school at 14 to start working with his father in the building trade.

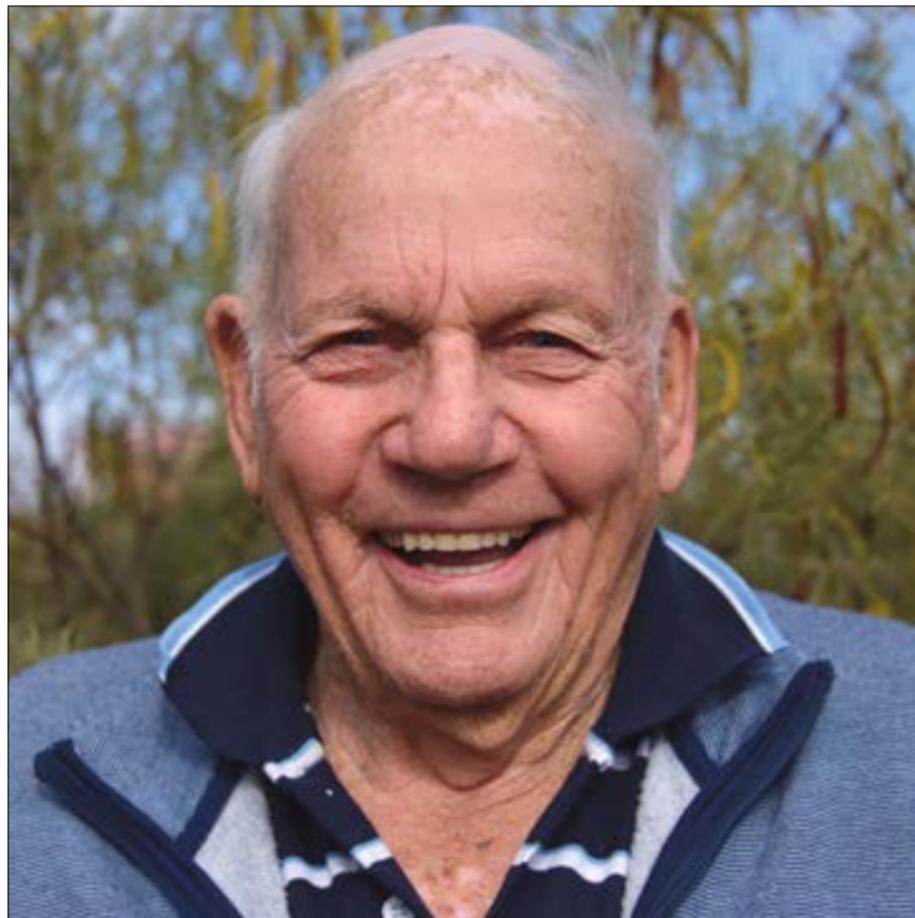
"I learned every trade; brickie, plasterer, plumber but he was a pretty hard boss and paid only three shillings (30 cents) a day."

He would still go out rabbiting with his mother and brothers but by the time he was 17 they were spotlighting rabbits from the running boards of a 1928 Rugby sedan.

"Mum would sit in the back seat and put the rabbits we handed her into wheat bags. On one night in 1952 we caught 500 by hand on Deepdale Hill. We stored them in the dicky seat of a Dodge 1938 until we took them to sell to Bill Young," laughs Les.

His family were devout Seventh Day Adventists and at 19 he attended Carmel Adventist College in Perth for a year to round off his secondary education.

From 1953 to 1956 Les served in the Citizen Military Forces (Army Reserves),



Champion rabbitier Les Harders has prospered from a life of hard work.



The four-room Harders' family home built with bush poles and hemp superphosphate bags.

but as an Adventist he is a pacifist and went to Northam court to obtain exemption from any combatant roles.

"I joined the medical corps and when the others were weapons training, I was in the kitchen with cook."

After the army reserves, he was asked to do Carmel college's maintenance and worked there from 1957 to 1960.

It was during this time he met his first wife who had come from South Australia to study at the only secondary level Adventist boarding college in WA.

They married in 1958 and had five children but went their separate ways after 25 years of marriage.

Ten years later Les married Cindy who he got to know through the church. They have since travelled extensively working on Adventist building projects in third world countries.

In 1998 Les joined a team of 20 men in Kathmandu Nepal to convert an old Chinese shoe factory into a heart surgery hospital.

"You could see Mt Everest from the plane, and it took more than two hours to land (due to the altitude).

"It was a massive job wiring the operating theatre for 24 lights, worth over a million dollars, which had been donated by a Sydney hospital."

The following year Cindy jumped on board to finish off the heart hospital conversion by

painting the walls.

The next job they worked on was an ablation block in Zambia in 2002. It was an urgent job as a young student at the local Adventist school had fallen into the raw sewage while using the long drop toilet and had nearly drowned.

In 2007 they travelled to Botswana to build a day care centre for orphans and an additional room for a primary school. This time Les was erecting the steel trusses for the roof and Cindy was laying bricks.

A year later they were back in Botswana building another day care centre, using prefabricated panels made in Perth, for children orphaned by the AIDS epidemic.

Toodyay locals Helen Evans and Marlene Andrijich joined Cindy and Les on their last trip to Botswana in 2010 where they also distributed blankets and beanies to children in the Kalahari Desert.

In between volunteering on overseas projects, Les continued to build and renovate many houses in Toodyay, Goomalling and Kallanie and was set on beating his father's record of working for 70 years.

"I retired in 2014 when I was 78 so I beat him by eight years."

\*Harry Harders built the former Herald office (now Tony Maddox Real Estate) and the old fire station in Stirling Terrace in the 1930s.

## Covid-19 rates reprieve ahead of fresh election, inquiry, new CEO

Michael Sinclair-Jones

LOCAL property owners will not have to pay higher rates next month as the Toodyay Shire Council makes emergency cuts to its 2020-21 budget and braces for a series of major changes in coming months.

The shire has axed four staff positions – including Manager of Community Development – to save a total of \$600,000 a year from next month.

It coincides with the expected arrival of new Shire CEO Suzie Haslehurst a day before a scheduled June 23 ordinary council meeting, news that the result of a long-running WA Government inquiry into the shire is a step closer to being tabled in State Parliament and another shire election due next month.

New Shire President Rosemary Madacsi called the election (see shire notice Page 13) last month to fill a vacancy on the nine-member council to replace former shire president Bill Manning who resigned in April to move to Tasmania.

Shire rates in the dollar will stay at last year's levels, and any increases in State land valuations will not be added to rates bills.

Shire fees and charges – including for

rubbish collection – will not increase, overdue rates will not be charged interest and property owners will not pay extra for paying their rates in quarterly instalments.

Owners who pay in full by the due date will get a three per cent discount instead of going into a draw for sponsored prizes.

Acting Shire CEO Chiley Luangala confirmed last month that the new budget would include all measures adopted at a Covid-19 special council meeting in April.

She said councillors had met eight times since December to discuss shire finances and a further budget meeting was planned before a 4pm agenda briefing scheduled for Tuesday June 16.

Savings of about \$600,000 had been made by last month by making four staff positions redundant.

Savings included employee direct and on-costs, vehicle-related costs, fringe benefits tax and "associated reductions in services".

Meanwhile, the WA Local Government Department says State lawyers have finished examining a report by three Perth investigators into shire operations and affairs over the past seven years.

Continued on Page 5.

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# The Toodyay Herald

## It ain't over yet

TOODYAY is back open for business.

After a three-month lockdown, visitors with money are flocking back to town, cafes are again busy and school students have returned to local classrooms.

Toodyay Bakery in Stirling Terrace reports that it sold 1000 coffees on the recent long weekend as crowds of visitors thronged busy pavements and filled Charcoal Lane carpark.

And therein lies the problem.

Police and health officials are warning that easing restrictions doesn't mean a return to everyday life as before.

The deadly Covid-19 coronavirus continues to devastate major travel destinations across much of the world, which is why our borders remain shut and recent arrivals from overseas are required by law to self-isolate for 14 days.

Most Toodyay regulars appear to be following social distancing rules to stay 1.5m apart and avoid close contact.

But it was clear on Toodyay's recent busy WA Day public holiday that many visitors weren't bothering.

Some brushed past bystanders on the pavement to get past queues while others leant across local residents inside shops to pass messages to their friends.

Crowds in the packed Charcoal Lane carpark congregated around friends' vehicles, some leaning with heads close together under raised bonnets to inspect engines.

Is it paranoia to regard this as unsafe behaviour?

Not so, say Wheatbelt Health Network officials and local police.

State premiers have warned that easing restrictions will cause infections to increase.

Life must resume – albeit differently to before – because there is no Magic Pudding to provide endless welfare support while business and industry stay shut.

That means living in a new Covid-19 world where shaking hands, hugging friends and crowding into packed football stadiums could be a death sentence.

Like every other plague in human history, this one probably won't last forever.

But until a vaccine is found to prevent millions more people dying from this global scourge, we must learn to adapt or face potentially fatal consequences.

It ain't over yet.

Michael Sinclair-Jones  
Editor

## Richard Taylor Clinical Psychologist

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The way we were – This photograph of an unknown person standing on Toodyay Railway Bridge on 18 July 1917 during a flood was sent as a postcard to Toodyay shearer Lionel Lloyd while he was serving overseas in World War I. Lionel was born in Toodyay and at age 41 he enlisted for the Great War. He also served in the Boer War in South Africa (1899-1902), tried unsuccessfully to enlist again for World War II and died in 1950. Photo: Newcastle Gaol Museum; additional information provided by Beth Frayne, Toodyay Historical Society.

## LETTERS

### Avon 'Silicon' Valley?

IN SHIRE archives – perhaps regularly read and considered, or perhaps not – is a report (a long-term planning report if I remember correctly) commissioned by the shire and carried out by American consultants.

And if I remember rightly, the aim of the work and resulting document was to report on what made up Toodyay in terms of population, demographics, the status of local business at that time and recommendations for future planning.

What impressed me in that report was reference to the imminent arrival of the NBN high-speed internet service and how this could make Toodyay a very attractive place to establish a new IT business hub.

Well, here we are in mid-2020, the NBN is up and running and we are seeing quite dramatic workplace changes with many professionals and others now working from home due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

For those hoping to see Toodyay at last reach its long talked about potential by being able to attract a new demographic of young professional families able to work from home, I'm hoping that the long-forgotten and perhaps costly planning report is being dusted off and reconsidered.

Just imagine – Toodyay could be sold, touted and promoted as WA's very own Silicon Valley where the bright young tech savvy entrepreneurs – and their families – can not only develop the myriad of new digital tools we now take for granted but also benefit by living under clear, unpolluted skies while leaving congested city roads behind and giving themselves and their children a taste of wide open spaces.

Even though Toodyay is pretty bloody good in most respects, it could be so much more.

Our shire administration and councillors are the ones to bring about the changes needed in an ageing population to help secure our community's future.

We need to recognise the potential to develop new business opportunities in our community and help create new jobs to sustain the local economy while at the same time retaining our uniqueness.

A big ask I know, but I have faith.

Barb Dadd  
Toodyay

### Heritage under threat

THE SUBDIVISION and other developments in the Toodyay Catholic Precinct are in the news at the moment and are matters of huge community interest and controversy – see Page 8.

A display of the subdivision plan and the proposal for demolition of the covered walkway at the rear of the Church will be available for public inspection and discussion in the grounds of the St John the Baptist Catholic Church on Saturday June 13 from 9am to noon.

The display will be held outdoors to comply with current Covid-19 restrictions.

If you have any interest in the future of the precinct, this will be a chance to catch up with what is going and provide your input.

Mick McKeown  
St John the Baptist Parish Pastoral  
Council

### Suburban boy goes bush

HI I'M Dave Miller and to quote the '70s classic Dave Warner song *Suburban Boy*, I was a typical suburban boy.

Growing up in the suburbs around Fremantle I never imagined that I would end up living in the Avon Valley.

Heidi, my partner, had lived in Morangup for more than 15 years.

Her first home was 13 acres (5ha) in Grandis Road and she purchased our current property in Morangup Road in 2012.

We first lived in an apartment in South Perth, but Heidi really wanted to get back to the farm.

She was well aware that I had lived in the 'burbs' all of my life and was not going to force the issue. She wanted me to come to my own conclusion.

The first visit to the farm and I was hooked – and fell in love at first sight.

It's 38 acres (15ha), no sheep station of course, with beautiful views, a comfortable house in need of a facelift, a couple of paddocks and lots of untouched bush.

We moved in February 2016 and then the massive job of making the land productive again began – and has not stopped.

For a number of years I had been fascinated with permaculture and the clever techniques employed to work with nature to produce your own food and live a more sustainable life.

In 2018 I completed a Permaculture Design Certificate course and I have been able to put what I have learnt to good use.

We have had successes and failures along our journey, and I hope to share some of these with you soon.

The Shire of Toodyay is perfectly positioned to take advantage of the post-Covid-19 world.

Spending so much time at home during the pandemic has made people look towards a simpler life.

The uptake in growing your own food and gardening in general has been huge.

I had never, until recently, been to nurseries where all the veggie seeds and seedlings were completely sold out.

There are a large range of lifestyle properties in Toodyay which is not that far from the city.

We all know 'flatlanders' living in the city and suburbs, so why not invite them to take a trip out to Toodyay.

Who knows, they just might find their piece of the good life.

Dave Miller  
Morangup

### Hang on to the magic

WHEN I arrived in WA in March this year, I came having been brought up on a diet of *National Geographic* films of Australia, the deserts, millions of camels, animals, insects that will sting and kill you, and people living underground to avoid the searing heat.

So, with some trepidation I came to Toodyay, 'miles out into the bush'.

What a pleasant surprise awaited me.

Firstly, no camels but it was, and don't be offended, like stepping back into a 1950s Great Britain. I mean that as a compliment.

In those days, people were hardworking, polite, courteous to each other, helped each other and were neighbourly. You could leave your door unlocked, safe in the knowledge that your property would not be touched.

People would acknowledge each other passing by, either on foot or driving (for those who had cars then), and there was no litter and the parks were spotless with no graffiti. Does any of this ring a bell?

As an outsider looking in, so to speak, this is Toodyay today.

Any of you who have been following the UK news, will see a country which is tearing itself apart – the unlimited hypocrisy, the biased press and the political correctness gone mad has ruined a great country. And it will be hard to get it back.

Hang onto what you've got, people. From what I see Toodyay is a magic place to live.

And to the politicians I say, whoever you are, promote Toodyay. It has so much going for it.

Sell the town to the rest of WA and to the world.

At weekends I watch tourists come here. It must be a welcome relief for them if they have come from the city. Build on that.

Allegedly I could be flying home to the UK in July sometime. I will be sad to leave.

Thank you to all those I've met. The friendship shown to this trapped Pom is very much appreciated.

Stewart Harrison  
Market Harborough, Leicestershire

### Cat carnage

ONCE again we read (*The Sunday Times* April 17) of the destruction of our unique and wonderful wildlife. Not just by feral cats but also domesticated cats that are allowed to roam free both day and night.

We have personally buried numerous wild birds including a young duck that had been so badly savaged by a cat, which I had shooed off on our driveway, that we had to put this poor creature down humanely.

Our property has become a graveyard, a sad and tragic reminder of the damage that cats can cause.

We implore cat owners to keep their animals contained by keeping them in cat runs or inside or, better still, not have them.

Mel Dodd  
Toodyay

The Toodyay Herald invites you to have your say in our letters page. Please email us at [news@toodyayherald.com.au](mailto:news@toodyayherald.com.au) with your full name, address and phone number. Letters that are short, sharp and to the point about topical local issues are preferred. The Herald reserves the right to edit letters for length, grammar and punctuation.

# The wheels on the bus go round and round, round and round ...

Larry Graham\*

WHEN WE moved to Toodyay, we heard of a group in town plotting to overthrow the Shire President while the council was planning to replace its CEO. Now 16 years on, millions of ratepayers' dollars and umpteen officerholders later, we have a group in town plotting to overthrow the Shire President and the sitting council is replacing its CEO.

For decades the culture of the Shire of Toodyay has been nasty personality-based aggression and the effects of this tribally driven dysfunction are worsened by the high turnover of councillors/presidents and executive staff.

The absence of any constructive civic leadership allowed this aggression to flow out and divide the wider community. But people want to move on from the ingrained tribal division that has caused major failures in the system and killed off responsible civic management. But the more folks vote for change; the more things stay the same.

When external bodies focus on its policies, processes and procedures, the Shire of Toodyay is found to be a long way short of best practice. Poor performance and non-compliance assessments have been made by the Toodyay Progress Association, WA Government, council auditors and the State Auditor General but little has changed. And that is because of the serious deficiency in responsible oversight from the elected councillors who also seem to either have blind faith that CEOs are either infallible or that replacing them will fix all, and neither of these propositions is correct.

In their defence, our very inexperienced council is confronted by those who incorrectly claim "administrative" privilege and dispute council's power to question, direct and oversee the affairs of the shire. Our councillors should be aware that Section 2.7 of the Local Government Act makes their responsibilities clear; it says:

- "(1) The Council –
- Governs the local government's affairs; and
  - is responsible for the performance of the local government functions."

However, regardless of which of the warring tribes has the numbers at any particular time, entrenched governance failures remain uncorrected because our council has no effective mechanisms for carrying out its responsibilities.

Some of the more recent demonstrations of our council's dysfunctionality are:

- The increased frequency of special meetings.

The agenda for a special meeting called to receive a report from the CEO tells us there were no policy, legal, statutory, risk, social, environmental or economic implications. Now, unless it was intended to serve some petty political purpose, would someone please explain why a matter with no implications required a special meeting of council?

It was reported that at that meeting the President and Deputy declared an interest but still voted; with a casting vote from

the President deciding the matter. If this is correct, while it is technically legal, it is not what one expects from presiding officers. Normally those in public office recuse themselves when confronted with allegations against them. Simply put, it is not acceptable for public officers to be the judge and jury of their own cases.

- Instead of using its existing Local Emergency Management Committee our council dealt with the Covid-19 emergency by inventing a committee and then giving it no power, no authority and no money.

There is much being said about councillor attendance, or lack thereof, at one special meeting that was called to set an election date. Section 4.9 of the Local Government Act allows the Shire President to set such a date, so no meeting of council was ever required, meaning the attendance issue should never have arisen.

- The Shire of Toodyay's institutional obsession with secrecy is borne out by the 14 May meeting agenda selectively quoting Local Government Act provisions as the reason for the meeting being closed to the public. The clause quoted says a Council "...may close to members of the public the meeting, or part of the meeting..." if it deals with some specific matters. That a council "may" close any or all of a meeting, does not mean it is compulsory to do so. It is remarkable that the crucial part of the Act that makes public access the default position for council meetings was not included in the agenda; despite that, councillors still should have known that open meetings are required by law.

- After giving the incumbent CEO a contract for twelve months; our council then paid out that contract and appointed an acting CEO. The cost of that debacle is estimated to be over a quarter of a million dollars.

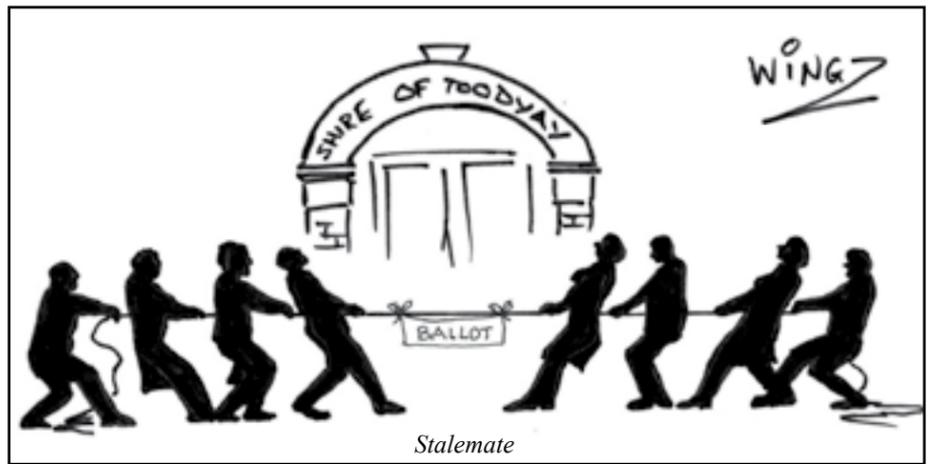
One explanation for our elected ones blindly continuing the secretive and divisive habits of the last 30 or so years may be that they have never seen a competently functioning council. If we ever get one, the folks in this shire will be amazed at just how well a town can function when it has good civic leadership.

But that is unlikely to happen while we have these ongoing tribal divisions between councillors; these things are never fixed by the normal processes and they mean that our financially strapped council is unable to meaningfully address the serious shortcomings in our civic affairs.

Some well-meaning folks are suggesting that the upcoming by-election will fix things; but it won't. The most probable outcome of any election is another inexperienced person being elected and tipping the balance in favour of one of the two warring tribes, thereby guaranteeing the other side will continue the tribal war.

The wheels on the bus go round and round; round and round ...

\*Mr Graham is a former State MP and lives in Toodyay.



Stalemate

## North Street saga continues

A RECORDING error at last month's Toodyay Shire Council meeting resulted in the reversal of a 4-3 decision to turn a muddy track in West Toodyay into a gravel road.

Viewers who left before the end of the 4½-hour live-streamed meeting missed seeing the decision reversed after Cr Ben Bell challenged it on a point of order.

He said an absolute majority vote of at least five members of the normally nine-member council was needed for the motion to pass because it called for the shire to spend extra money not included in 2019-20 shire budget.

Shire President Rosemary Madacsi earlier declared a proximity interest and left the chamber because she owns a property adjoining an impassable 110m section of North Street that is currently closed to traffic.

Shire Deputy President Beth Ruthven chaired the debate among the remaining seven councillors (one seat vacant) which resulted in what was initially recorded as a 4-3 decision to open and upgrade the road.

However, the motion was later declared lost because the decision to spend unbudgeted money lacked an absolute majority.

Cr Bell said the council was trying to cut

costs and did not need to spend an extra \$95,000 on a road that was already closed.

Cr Susan Pearce, whose motion to re-open North Street was seconded by Cr Brian Rayner, said successive councils had debated the issue for 20 years and a decision was needed.

Cr Ruthven later served a notice of motion for this month's council meeting at 4pm on Tuesday June 23 that North Street's temporary closed status between Fitzgerald Terrace and Collett Way be removed and that \$95,000 be considered in the shire's 2020-21 budget to surface it with gravel.



Closed section of North Street.

## Fresh election, inquiry result closer

Continued from Page 3.

THE STATE Solicitor's Office returned the report to the department after deciding whether to extract any evidence that could be used for a prosecution before the report is sent to the shire for comment and then tabled in State Parliament by WA Local Government Minister David Templeman.

### Online hunt for new sport precinct name

THE HUNT is on to name Toodyay's new \$14 million sport and recreation precinct which is due to open by the end of this year.

Toodyay shire councillors agreed last month to publish an online survey to enable local residents to offer naming suggestions.

The survey is at [www.toodyay.wa.gov.au](http://www.toodyay.wa.gov.au) and includes an option for Aboriginal names with translations.

The winning name is planned to be decided at the council's July meeting.

The inquiry covers present and former shire councillors and staff, including former shire CEO Stan Scott whose 12-month 'interim' contract was cut short in April after the council rejected his bid last year to keep his job for another three to four years.

New Shire CEO Suzie Haslehurst has signed a four-year contract and is due to start later this month.

An eight-day nomination period for next month's council election to fill a vacancy created by former president Bill Manning's resignation in April will open on Wednesday June 17 and close at 4pm on Wednesday June 24.

The WA Electoral Commission will conduct a postal ballot of all Toodyay voters with a bulk mail out of candidates' statements and voting forms starting Thursday July 2.

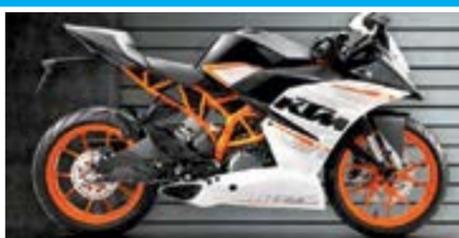
The electoral roll closes on Thursday June 25.

Property owners who live outside the shire should check if they are still on the electoral roll under voting rules which require their details to be updated every 12 months.

Registered Repairer MRB6464

# TOODYAY AUTO CENTRE *Your local Guys*

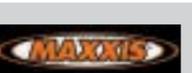
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# Bush block weekend flouts emergency law

## Police Beat

With Sgt Dave Flaherty  
Toodyay Police Station



POLICE are urging people to avoid complacency over Covid-19 infection after having to disperse two illegal local gatherings of more than 20 people last month despite strict public health laws in force at the time.

Officers responding to anonymous tip-offs also visited two local cafes where people were not following previous social distancing laws to remain 1.5m apart or occupy no more than 4sq/m per person.

It can cause very serious health issues and it needs to be taken seriously.

From June 6, the State limit on public gatherings will increase from 20 to 100, and distancing requirements lowered to 2sq/m per person at all venues, including cafes.

Maintaining a distance of 1.5m from others, including in queues, remains.

Police have been granted special powers under State emergency laws to issue on-the-spot fines of \$1000 for individuals and \$5000 for businesses that ignore laws to halt the deadly pandemic spreading in WA.

Covid-19 has infected nearly six million people globally and killed more than 360,000 worldwide – including more than 100 in Australia and nine in WA.

Large numbers of new cases continue to be reported overseas and the daily global death toll remains in the thousands.

Our policy is 'compliance with compassion' as such we have not issued any fines, though we will if we have to.

It is disappointing that a small number of people ignored the law last month because it endangers the safety of everyone else, including their own friends and families.



Toodyay Fire and Rescue Service volunteers help ambulance extract seriously injured occupants.

People can be infected with Covid-19 but not show any signs of an illness that has been shown to spread quickly and easily through entire communities.

That's why we are urging everyone to remain careful to help keep our community safe.

We also urge everyone with a smartphone to download the Australian Government's COVID Safe app to help trace and test anyone who may have unknowingly been in close contact with someone who is later found to be infected.

Local officers were called last month to a big shed on a 50-acre bush block where the owner was hosting an illegal gathering of nearly 30 people – mostly from Perth – for a weekend

of trail and quad bike riding.

Another anonymous tip enabled police to disperse an organised gathering of more than 20 people in Duidgee Park.

Those restrictions have now been eased under the State Government's 'Phase 3' response to the corona virus emergency.

However, people are still being urged to practise good hygiene and wash hands or use sanitiser regularly to prevent infection.

We've also been busy with daily checks on local people who are self-isolating after overseas travel as well manning a Wheatbelt roadblock at Wubin, which was abolished late last month.

When time permits we are doing extra foot patrols in the town's main business district and in local shops and cafes to remind people about social distancing laws.

COVID-19 has increased our workload by about 20 per cent because our normal business hasn't gone away.

All staff are working hard undertaking extra hours and extra duties.

In the main, most people in Toodyay are doing the right thing and this is what makes Toodyay a great place to live.

Some take the restrictions to the 'nth' degree and others can be quite blasé – our job is to help people find the happy medium.

The message is "stay safe".

### Resist urge to swerve

THERE have been a number of serious traffic crashes in Toodyay so far this year, all of which could have been avoided.

Three people have been killed and another four seriously hurt with life-threatening

injuries that required emergency action.

Julimar Road was the scene of one particularly bad crash when a 17-year-old driver in a Ford Falcon swerved on a wet road to avoid hitting a kangaroo about 20km from the Toodyay townsite.

He lost control of the vehicle as it skidded off the road onto the gravel shoulder and slammed sideways into a tree, seriously injuring his 16-year-old brother in the passenger seat.

The younger occupant was unconscious when police and ambulance volunteers arrived and had to be cut from the wrecked vehicle by Toodyay Fire and Rescue Service Volunteers (left) using the powerful 'Jaws of Life' hydraulic equipment.

Ambulance officers kept the boy breathing and paramedics in a rescue helicopter placed him in an induced coma before flying him to Royal Perth Hospital.

The boy was kept in a coma for 36 hours while being treated for bleeding on the brain and skull and facial fractures.

The driver remained conscious and was driven by ambulance to RPH, where he was admitted to the State Trauma Unit with head injuries.

Both survived and are recovering.

Most vehicles are built to withstand head-on crashes – not side impacts – and interior protective airbags are designed to work for frontal impacts.

If you have to stop suddenly to avoid an impact, do your best to brake as hard as you can in a straight line – don't swerve and lose control.

It's better to lose a radiator than lose your life or risk serious injury wrapped around a tree.

Motorists should be particularly careful this month with the onset of wet weather and hotels re-opening after Covid-19 restrictions.

Police will be intensifying road traffic patrols to help keep local roads safe.

### Anxious wait

TWO Toodyay police officers had an anxious wait for Covid-19 test results after a 38-year-old man they found living illegally in an empty Toodyay house claimed to be infected with the coronavirus.

The homeless Perth man had a cough and told the two arresting officers that he was infected.

The officers became exposed as a result of doing their duty which resulted in an anxious wait for them and their families until test results on the arrested man proved negative.

The man had been living in the unoccupied house for a couple of days and was discovered after a neighbour reported someone on the premises while the owners were away.

He was charged with burglary, stealing a laptop computer and clothing, and unlawful possession of food.

We'd like to remind people that if they see or hear anything suspicious to please let us know so that we can assess the situation and take action if needed.

## Parcel pick-up scam fishes for information

SaferToodyay  
Desraé Clarke

AUSTRALIAN Post Office services are again aware of scammers sending fraudulent emails to customers.

Australia Post states it will never send you an unsolicited email asking for your password, credit card details or account information.

The scam email advises the recipient to click on a link to give personal information to collect a parcel.

If you receive one of these messages do not respond – delete it immediately.

If you are expecting a parcel, and are unsure of the legitimacy of the message, contact the

business website of your purchase; do not use the contact details on the suspicious email.

If you have given personal information you can contact IDCARE Australia's free national identity and support service on 1300 432 273.

If you have given any financial information, contact your financial institution immediately for advice.

To report suspicious activity call Crimestoppers 1800 333 000 or visit [crimestopperswa.com.au](http://crimestopperswa.com.au).

For police assistance call 131 444. To report graffiti, ring 1800 442 255 or visit [goodbyegrffiti.wa.gov.au/](http://goodbyegrffiti.wa.gov.au/).

For further information contact [safertoodyay.org.au/](http://safertoodyay.org.au/).


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## Think before sending – or risk writ

Computer Safety  
Phil Hart

YOU MIGHT think that messages sent by SMS or email cannot be regarded in law as defamation.

You would be thinking wrong and a recent case in Perth showed otherwise.

The WA Supreme Court recently awarded \$8000 to somebody who was the sole recipient of defamatory text messages.

More details of that case can be found at [bit.ly/2X3TADx](http://bit.ly/2X3TADx).

The case is not unique.

A case in New York shows that this is becoming a worldwide phenomenon; reference [bit.ly/2TbZBwJ](http://bit.ly/2TbZBwJ).

Defamation covers both libel and slander. Libel can be thought of something that exists in a permanent form, such as in print or on a server, which is why an SMS message can be treated as libel.

Slander is something ephemeral, such as speaking without being recorded.

It can be all too easy to write an angry message and hit the send button without thinking about it.

To quote Socrates (circa 470-399BC): "Is it true, is it kind, or is it necessary?"

Every state and territory has its own legislation about defamation.

Defamation law is currently being overhauled in the light of new technology as social media has burgeoned since the current laws were passed in 2005.

If you think you have been defamed, Legal Aid WA provides useful information at [bit.ly/2LMJou9](http://bit.ly/2LMJou9).

It also provides a definition of defamation.

Suing for defamation can be very expensive and there is no guarantee that you will win. Sending a defamatory message can result in a lot of worry and time wasted.

Think before you send and think before you sue.

Happy surfing.

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EMERGENCY SERVICES

# Fewer calls for ambos during Covid-19 crisis

**St John Ambulance Toodyay Sub-Centre**  
Carolynne Haigh

WE ARE an essential service, although it would appear we have not been such an essential requirement for you over the past couple of months.

The number of ambulance call outs has dropped from averaging just under three calls a day to averaging three calls every couple of days in April and, in May, averaging just one call a day.

It's great for the community. It means the majority of us are staying safe and well, and great for the co-ordinators who are getting the luxury of sleeping through on most nights.

Then there are the volunteers who are chomping at the bit to keep their skills and confidence up, and we are hopeful that we can commence our monthly training sessions in the near future.

It has been a good time to get things done in the background, recently upgrading our ambulance fleet with newer models which by all reports are very nice and comfy.

Five of our Emergency Medical Assistant officers have also just completed their training to become Emergency Medical Technicians.

Congratulations go to each of them and a big thank you for giving your time and showing your dedication to the sub-centre.

The community transport service is still operating although relatively quiet, but as restrictions are slowly being eased, the demand for the car is increasing again.

This vehicle is available to anyone needing transport to and/or from medical appointments for very reasonable prices.

If you wish to book or make enquiries, please contact Sandra on 0418 918 192.

We are also looking forward to being able to commence first aid training again in the very near future.

For those of you who unfortunately missed out on completing your course, we will advise you of new dates as soon as we have some confirmed.

Continue to keep safe and well Toodyay, but remember, if you do need an ambulance please call 000 and we will, as always, be there to help.

## Too many careless burns add unnecessary pressure

**Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Coondle-Nunile**  
Max J Heath

WELL what a few weeks it has been since the restrictions have been lifted.

All brigades have been busy with people doing burns beyond their capabilities.

I wish people would consider that firefighters are volunteers and have jobs or businesses to run and more care be taken.

We do realise that accidents happen, but a little more thought would be very worthwhile.

All callouts have been attended with the teams taking as much care as possible and exercising responsible social distancing wherever possible.

This of course has not worked when a team is required to travel in the unit and backing one another up at fires.

On the weekend of the approaching weather front, many people decided to burn

off and this in the end caused all brigades to have excess turnouts.

Coondle-Nunile had more than 10 callouts in our area as a result of people trying to burn when they definitely shouldn't have.

In cases like this it is up to the person concerned to contact DFES or your local shire to check if conditions allow burning.

Some people missed the message that all burns were cancelled but this is no excuse with hazardous conditions approaching.

Other than having a rant about problems, it is good to be able to go to the new station and catch up with the team.

Meetings are still out due to social distancing, but it is good to be able to say hello and ask if members are okay and to find out what they have been up to during lockdown.

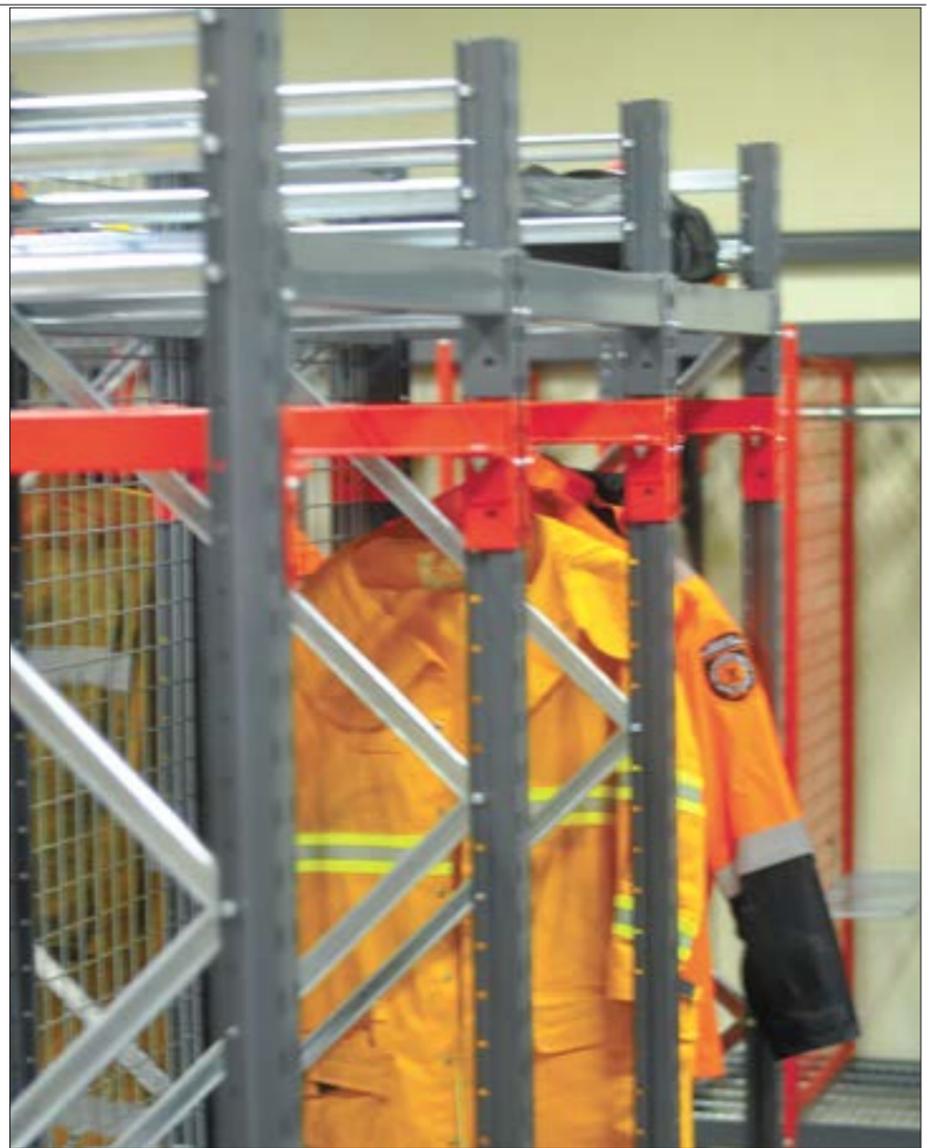
Luckily most have still been working, although not on regular business or work.

Believe it or not, now is the time to start planning for next year's fire season.

After the fires during the recent season a lot of people were caught without fire escape plans.

Now is the time to think about one. If you are concerned, all brigades would have someone to give you some advice.

Have you checked your chimney? Especially in old-type fireplaces, as they can light up quite easily.



New lockers for Morangup Fire Station. Photo: Peter Harms.

## Members assemble maze of flat-pack lockers

**Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Morangup**  
Sue Maddrell

IT HAS been a slow start to the cooler months with little rain.

The bush is dry, and any burning easily gets away if not watched; the call outs in May are a testimony to that.

Luckily all fires were brought under control in a reasonable amount of time.

Most paddocks finally turned green in May which helped us all believe winter and wet weather are just around the corner.

With social distancing over the past few months there has been no real interaction between members.

As far as AGMs go it will be the status quo. I've been advised that everyone who holds a position in our brigade is happy to stay in that position for the next 12 months.

We are slowly getting closer to moving back into our fire station with the Toodyay

SES and all their gear.

As far as I am aware, we are waiting for an occupancy permit.

Once that is made available our fire station will be transformed into the Morangup Co-located Emergency Facility.

A couple of Fridays ago a group of fire brigade and SES members met with Toodyay Community Emergency Services Manager Rob Koch, and SES District Officer Matt Reimer to construct flat packs of office desks, filing cabinets etc. and a maze in the locker room of Rackman's Firespan Storage System lockers.

It all looks great and for those fire brigade and SES members who couldn't make it on the day, don't worry because there is still more to unpack and assemble.

If you are interested in joining the Morangup Bush Fire Brigade or the Toodyay SES you can contact Jeff Venn our brigade captain and Toodyay SES Unit Manager on 0438 490 331.



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## Some never learn, others too impatient

**Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade Bejoording**  
From the desk of The Badger

WHAT a period we've just emerged from.

How strange it has seemed with our shed off-limits, training at a stand-still but seemingly a couple of months of regular action stations.

Since our March meeting, as we entered the off-season as it is jokingly called, we had nine callouts and only three stand-downs.

Our members are to be congratulated for never failing to field a crew, even with Covid-19 restrictions having all sorts of impacts on their lives.

We had our first brigade meeting on May 15 and it seems that the callout rate has increased since that day.

Feedback from our members attending events is that many of them should never have happened.

Poor planning, poor management by some landowners and poor analysis of weather conditions for lighting burn-offs.

Some will never learn or are just too impatient to get rid of that pile that's been hanging around, or the paddock that needs burning.

Fortunately, there were no disasters or

serious property damage, but it can be disheartening for members when they respond to events that were totally avoidable.

Anyway, on the positive front, we had a good meeting with nine of our active members attending, the others were legitimately away at work.

Planning for a training schedule is under way and it feels good to be back to normal.

The Bejoording Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade asks you to be vigilant and careful using any tools or vehicles with the potential

to cause an unnecessary fire.

Remember to always plan and prepare for fire and have a clear contingency strategy in place should things get out of control.

Fires can be a catastrophic risk to people, animals and property, so take care.

Advice is free but getting it wrong can be expensive.

If you have any questions remember you can contact captain Brian Rigby on 0417 984 324, or The Badger on 0414 250 484.

Please leave a message if we're not there.

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A heavy excavator uproots a giant tree which was part of Toodyay's historic Catholic Precinct near the town entry.

## Majestic trees destroyed to build new road

**Friends of the Toodyay Catholic Precinct**  
Mick McKeown

THE TOODYAY Catholic Precinct is one of three historic precincts in the town of Toodyay. The other two are the Gaol Group and the Stirling Terrace Main Street Precinct.

These three places are described in shire policy as having "special qualities which are highly valued by the community and it is important to retain and enhance these qualities as the town develops through time".

The subdivision works in the Toodyay Catholic Precinct have just commenced with the clearing of several majestic old trees at the rear of the area. The trees have been cleared to allow for a new road to access some of the new blocks being created as part of the subdivision.

The Archdiocese of Perth submitted an application for the subdivision to the WA Planning Commission (WAPC) on 13 September 2017 and final approval was granted on 15 June 2018.

Sometime between these two dates, the subdivision application was sent to the Shire of Toodyay for a report into how the application took into account the provisions of Toodyay's local planning scheme. A report was provided by the Shire of Toodyay and sent to the WAPC.

Unfortunately, the report was made by staff of the shire under what is known as "delegated authority" which meant that the people of Toodyay, including the councillors, did not know that a subdivision had been proposed and there was no opportunity for public comment.

The practical results of that subdivision approval are now being seen and felt in Toodyay.

On 5 December 2018, the Catholic Precinct was placed in the State Register of Heritage Places as an important historical landmark with a striking architectural presence on the main street of Toodyay. This register provides the highest level of heritage protection available.

Now the future of the precinct is further at risk because the shire has received a development application for the demolition of one of the buildings in the precinct. This would mean that the destruction that has begun with the felling of the trees may continue with the destruction of one of the buildings.

The building in the firing line is the covered walkway from the rear of the church to the

convent (see shire notice below). The walkway is a 20-metre-long brick passageway that links the convent to the church next to the Garden of Peace, which also faces demolition.

When the church was opened in 1963, the *Beverley Times* newspaper reported that a chapel inside the Church was "connected to the Convent by a covered way" and was for the exclusive use of the Sisters of Mercy. The walkway provided safe and secure access by the Sisters to their chapel at all times and in all weathers.

The State Heritage listing states that in 1963, the walkway was considered innovative and



John Clarke (left) and Mick McKeown in the Garden of Peace with the covered brick walkway behind – both face demolition.

unique. Nearly 60 years have passed since the walkway was built and the passage of time has not decreased its rarity or uniqueness, rather its importance has been enhanced by its long association with the work of the Sisters of Mercy in Toodyay.

The Archdiocese of Perth has lodged an application to demolish this walkway. Now is the time for the people of Toodyay to stand up for the future of the historic buildings of which we are so proud.

The demolition of the walkway and adjacent Garden of Peace should be opposed, so please do this by responding to the advertisement regarding the demolition on this page.

Widespread community opposition will reinforce the importance that we in Toodyay attach to our history.

The Toodyay Shire Council voted last month in favour of Cr Paula Greenway's motion that the shire staff must notify council regularly of any changes that affect the Catholic group of buildings.

A widespread community response in this case will also send a signal that this good beginning must be followed by increasing the protection of the precinct by removing the delegated authority and guaranteeing that the elected Council of Toodyay is the appropriate body to determine its future.

## Poorly put motions, loud voices mar meeting

**Toodyay Progress Association**  
Brian Foley, Chairman

THE SHIRE is now in a holding pattern waiting on the new CEO, Suzie Haslehurst, to start her tenure this month.

We envisage that it will not be an easy start as she will come into the budget discussions with the finances of the shire in poor condition and in need of a lot of work from the councillors and the administration.

The May Ordinary Council Meeting (OCM) was a long drawn out affair. Some councillors were accused of grandstanding, voices were raised and motions poorly worded or motions asking for the removal of conditions that did not exist.

Agenda item 9.1.1 North Street was a disaster from the start. The development of this part of the street has been going on for many years

and it was hoped that at this meeting it would be resolved once and for all.

A mistake by administration meant that the voting that was stated as, simple, should have been an absolute majority vote.

This error was queried by Cr Ben Bell during discussions on another item of the agenda and after discussions and an adjournment, it was discovered that an error had been made.

This cost about two hours of councillor time and was an embarrassment to all.

It shows that there is a severe lack of knowledge of the Local Government Act at present.

We acknowledge that the Act is 470 pages long plus references to other Acts, and with the new CEO having never had this role, Toodyay Progress Association hopes there is a crash course to bring all up to speed.

With the majority of councillors only being in the role for a few months, a new President and some councillors who seem to make each OCM difficult, along with an acting CEO then an unproven CEO, the Toodyay Shire is in for a few rough months.

The only way to run a shire is to comply with

## Six groups get volunteer funds

SIX VOLUNTEER groups in The Toodyay Herald distribution area were allocated Federal funds during National Volunteer Week, May 18-24.

The awarded grants were between \$1000 and \$5000.

Butterly Cottages Association Inc. received \$3990, Clackline-Muresk Bush Fire Brigade \$1000, Coondle-Nunile Bush Fire Brigade \$3000, Morangup Bush Fire Brigade \$3000, Northam Bush Fire Brigade \$5000, Toodyay Community Resource Centre Inc. \$3570 and Toodyay Volunteer Fire and Rescue \$2000.

Nationally, volunteering makes an estimated annual economic and social contribution of \$290 billion.

## Local radio fills the airways

**2J2 Air Community Radio**

MONDAYS: 11am *The Green Hour*; 1pm *Swooners and Crooners* and 2pm *Jazz*.

Tuesdays: 8pm *Hooked on Classics*.

Wednesdays: 11am *The Green Hour* (repeat); 8pm *Wide World of Folk* and 9pm *Blues*.

Thursdays: Noon *Wide World of Folk* (repeat).

Fridays: 11am *The Green Hour* (repeat); 7pm *Ready 4 Country*; 8pm *Ready 4 Retro*, and, 9pm *Ready 2 Rock*.

Saturdays: Noon *Country* (old) and 1pm *Country* (new).

Sundays: 9am *Hooked on Classics* (repeat); noon *Ready 4 Country* (repeat); 8pm *Swooners and Crooners* (repeat) and 9pm *Jazz*.

Daily 10am and 3pm *What's on in Toodyay* community information

the Local Government Act 1995 Version 07-p0-01 and Shire Policies, with council instructing the CEO and the CEO then instructing the administration along these guidelines. In the past this has not always been the case.

We lodged a Freedom of Information (FOI) enquiry with reference to the pool/recreation centre but we have been denied any of the information that was requested.

The aim of the FOI was to see if this construction will be brought in on budget.

With information not forthcoming, we then asked if the 60-day extension given to the contractors has caused any variance to the costs. The answer given is no; it is still on budget.

We cannot see how an extension of 60 days to a building contract does not increase the costs of the construction.

It is now up to council to come up with a way to pay for the running costs and pay back monies that were borrowed without raising rates.

As always, we point out that we are a not-for-profit, volunteer advocacy group that has not and will not run, support or endorse elected candidates for the council of the Shire of Toodyay.

## Council prunes \$600,000 from budget to help stop rate rise

**President's Pen**

Rosemary Madácsi



GOOD NEWS, with the financial year ending and the coronavirus receding, we are making progress.

The budget is approaching completion following eight days of deliberations and many hours of work to prune expenditure.

Services have been reviewed and savings of approximately \$600,000 have been found.

The outcome from the early and thorough review was the Shire was able to address the Federal and State Government Covid-19 recommendations completely when the State Emergency was declared on 15 March 2020.

Council resolved in April not to increase any rate in the dollar for the 2020/21 financial year and not increase fees and charges.

Charges for overdue rates, administrative

fees for payment by instalments and payment arrangements have been removed.

Meanwhile, construction of the Shire's new Sport and Recreation Precinct is nearing completion and is within budget.

Tenders for management of the facility are currently being advertised and it is time to provide the Shire with ideas to name this long-awaited community facility.

Elsewhere, Toodyay fire mitigation works have significantly benefited from a \$1.09 million State Government grant.

We are meeting our challenges but are not out of the woods yet.

Council must continue to address expenditure and revenue besides rates.

Now we need the community to provide ideas and initiatives that contribute to the way forward – ideas to streamline processes, reduce costs, generate income, innovate business, make living easier or address other matters that hold Toodyay back.

All ideas big and small for the Shire or the community are welcome.

Please address these to Toodyay's Covid-19 Working Group via the Shire office.

### APPLICATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

#### PROPOSED DEMOLITION OF THE WALKWAY BETWEEN ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH AND MERCY HOUSE LOT 44-46 STIRLING TERRACE, TOODYAY

The Shire of Toodyay has received an application for development approval for the proposed demolition of the walkway between St John the Baptist Church and Mercy House which is within the Catholic Church precinct at Lot 44-46 Stirling Terrace in Toodyay.

Your views on the proposed demolition are encouraged and welcomed. The proposal is available for inspection at the Shire of Toodyay Administration Centre, Old Court House, 15 Fiennes Street, Toodyay, during office hours. The proposal is also available for viewing in the Shire's website at [www.toodyay.wa.gov.au](http://www.toodyay.wa.gov.au)

Submissions on the proposed development may be addressed in writing and lodged with the Acting Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Toodyay, PO Box 96 Toodyay 6566, by 4.00pm **Wednesday, 1 July 2020**

Further information on the above proposal is available by contacting the Shire's Development Services on 9574 9340.

Chileya Luangala  
**ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**



# Waste dumps and tailings in Julimar?

Doug Blandford\*

I READ with interest the article in the May edition of *The Toodyay Herald* regarding the results from exploration drilling in the Julimar area west of Toodyay.

There is no doubt that the initial results confirming the presence of nickel, copper and the platinum group elements (PGEs) including palladium, is significant in terms of both supply and demand at a global scale.

There are many issues in having a highly attractive ore body in close proximity to Perth and port facilities.

Such proximity suggests massive cost savings for the miner.

Any mining operation associated with the extraction, processing, and refining of a nickel sulphide ore body, and particularly one containing the platinum group elements will have a suite of potential environmental impacts.

Such a mine will require waste dumps and tailing storage facilities and the infrastructure associated with a mine of this type.

This means a crushing plant and a concentrator/drying plant.

The concentrated ore then needs to be processed to extract the minerals and the type of ore body suggests that this would involve two stages, a pyrometallurgy stage and a hydrometallurgy stage.

These are smelting and flotation plants.

They are big and they are complex.

The presence of such infrastructure in the hills environment of the ore body, would change the local area to an industrial complex.

The project is very much in its infancy at this stage, but the ore still has to be treated to produce a saleable product.

If the processing does not take place on site, then it has to be transported to a facility that can accommodate the required infrastructure.

A lot really hinges on the processing and refining systems technology available, and appropriate for specific mineral extraction.

The presence of palladium and associated minerals adds a further complex system to the extraction process.



Nickel laterite processing plant at Ravensthorpe. Photo: abc.net.au.

At the time of writing this letter, the spot price of palladium was about \$92,000 a kilogram.

There will be some interesting trade-offs between on-site processing and refining and sending a concentrate elsewhere for refining.

Any form of on-site pyrometallurgy must be examined very closely in terms of stack emissions and plume dispersion over the proximal Swan Coastal Plain and the eastern and northern suburbs of Perth.

What we would call the 'zone of influence'.

Experience from plume dispersion modelling from the Gidji Roaster, which was decommissioned in mid-2015, showed that even from this site, which was 15km north of Kalgoorlie on the Goldfields Highway, a contaminant plume (the roaster stack was 180m tall) moved down to the coast and out to sea, only to be returned to the coastal plain with the south-westerlies later in the day.

The next stage of this project will involve further exploration drilling and 'infill' drilling to tighten up on ore body dynamics.

If exploration moves into the Julimar State Forest, the State regulators must require strict environmental management conditions as part of the approval to drill within the boundaries of the forest.

As a minimum, a botanist and zoologist should accompany all exploration activities to ensure that the habitat of the now well-established Chuditch, or Western Quoll (*Dasyurus geoffroii*) is not disturbed and that exploration activities are not carried out within 50m of rare flora.

This will indicate how seriously the regulators, at both the State and Federal levels, will be in addressing environmental protection and management of the potential impacts resulting from project implementation.

And air pollution of the Perth environment on the coastal plain and the western Darling Plateau is just one of them.

\*Toodyay resident Doug Blandford is a retired Environmental Earth Scientist.

# Local RSL sub-branch awarded accolade

Toodyay RSL Sub-Branch  
Heather Brennan

LAST week RSLWA released the recipients of its annual state awards.

We were pleasantly surprised to learn that our sub-branch has been awarded the Colonel Collett Cup.

The award is given to country sub-branches with more than 25 members and recognises all-round performance in governance, membership, welfare, commemorations, community activities and media participation.

The Colonel Collett Cup is presented in memory of the late Colonel H B Collett for competition between country sub-branches.

It is a great honour receiving this accolade and the RSL Toodyay Sub-Branch committee expresses their sincere thanks to our members and the local community, as this award would not have been possible without your tremendous support.

We would also like to share with you another milestone for our sub-branch which is the achievement towards our new home in Clinton Street Toodyay.

Project leader Bob Woods' recent update is published below.

"Driving past 'our shed' in Clinton Street, it would be easy to think that nothing had changed recently.

"We've had a sign on the fence but not much to indicate the actual progress made.

"Starting back in 2017, RSL Toodyay entered into a lease arrangement with the shire for their former Parks and Gardens Depot.

"To prepare for the required conversion we had to strip out all the previous fittings, making way for a totally new interior.

"As what was then classed as a 'new' building to serve both as our permanent home and contain areas that could be rented to other groups, it was necessary to comply with all the current building codes and regulations.

Working with our architects and consultants, the detailed design is now finalised and during May 2020 we gained the Certificate of Design Compliance for the project.

"While it will be a few months (at least) before we are able to commence physical construction, our committee and membership continue to work towards completion behind the scenes."

Note to members: at this stage our social barbecue has been postponed. Not cancelled, just postponed.

Stay safe and well.



Toodyay RSL's new headquarters in Clinton Street across from Anzac Memorial Park.

Advertorial

## Results-oriented focus sells local properties

GREG Giddings, a well-known, trusted, successful and very experienced real estate industry local, with extensive Toodyay knowledge, will sell your property backed by a strong team serving the Avon Valley and Perth – GMAC Realty.

Rapidly growing, currently with 15 representatives, GMAC Realty is run by Perth-based principal Graeme MacEwan who has more than 35 years of successful real estate experience.

Greg's strategy: "To achieve success for my clients, I focus intensely on all the processes buyers go through to conclude in a happy sale for all concerned.

"I see the reason for my success is putting in place all the absolutely critical steps to attract buyers and sell to them through a series of proven and skilled presentations and methods.

"I'm very happy to provide references

from the large numbers of sellers and buyers I've worked with previously.

An absolute results-orientated focus on top-quality presentation and contact is kept 100 per cent from when a prospective buyer is first browsing on the internet and continues right through to when they visit to check out your property and buy.

"As experienced and trustworthy negotiators we will do everything possible to make sure you get every cent available from your sale, at the right time, without the stress, strain or any fuss."

Without obligation on your part, arrange for an informal personal and private discussion on how this will work for you, to see how all your bases are covered by Greg's unique, bespoke and strategic winning action plan.

"I sincerely welcome a chat anytime and genuinely care about achieving your real

estate needs and wants," he said.

GMAC Realty reckons their fees are low and they're never knowingly undersold on the costs of selling.

Only a small affordable amount is needed upfront, the rest is only paid when you get your money from your sale at settlement.

"It's unquestionably been a difficult market for real estate sales for a while now, so getting the best possible team on your case is an absolute must," says Greg.

All enquiries are welcomed by Greg from his clients old and new.

"I genuinely strive and believe I provide stress-free peace of mind real estate solutions."

Get Greg on your side, make a note of 0407 124 175 and call as soon as you are ready to sell.

# Selling in Toodyay?

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**GMAC**  
REALTY

## Boost for local roads

THE SHIRE of Toodyay will receive \$398,695 of Federal Government funds for local road and community projects.

The grant aims to support local jobs and businesses and boost local economies struggling under the effects of Covid-19.

The Financial Assistance Grant Program is based on the successful Roads to Recovery program and will enable local councils to deliver priority projects with a focus on upgrades and maintenance to local roads and community infrastructure.

Local road projects to be delivered under the program include but are not limited to constructing or improving bridges and tunnels, street lighting, and heavy vehicle facilities such as rest areas.

A broad range of community infrastructure projects will be eligible including new or upgraded bicycle and walking paths, community facilities, and picnic shelters and barbeque facilities at parks.

# Revived pub plans ‘paddock to pint’

**Bolgart News**  
Pam McGill

AFTER half a year of planning and organising, the Bolgart Hotel is now owned by a syndicate of mostly Bolgart locals.

Settlement took place in early May and 16. Individual families, including local business people, residents and farmers formed a unit trust making them proud owners with plans to not only restore the hotel but much more.

Spokesperson for the syndicate, Bolgart fourth-generation farmer Edward Ludemann said: “This is an exciting time for the Bolgart community and its economy.

“We have a great collection of people in our syndicate who have not only raised the capital to buy the hotel and restore it to its former glory – being an iconic 1916 built State Hotel (one of only a few in WA) – but to make it better than ever with new ideas and innovations.

“Many in our ownership group are not only loyal locals but also have skills in areas such as media, marketing, regional development, advertising and promotion, commercial property and also craft beer and cider making.

“We are planning on not only carrying out the necessary repairs to restore the building, but also tapping into Avon Arc tourism/visitor opportunities. And in conjunction with our publicans, will incorporate ‘paddock to plate’ and ‘paddock to pint’ innovations, including a microbrewery/cidery,” Mr Ludemann said.

The new hotel publicans/licenses are Craig Wilkins and Wendy Stevenson, experienced and creative restaurant and food venue operators.

Mr Wilkins is also a qualified chef and originally grew up in a little town just up the road, Bindi-Bindi, making him a local as well since the pub is virtually on the Toodyay-Bindi Bindi Road.

“Bolgart welcomes Craig and Wendy to our community and also thanks Dick and Deb Campbell for all their efforts over the past 15 years of their ownership and look forward to them continuing as Bolgart residents,” Mr Ludemann said.

Mr Wilkins said “Wendy and I are overjoyed to be part of the Bolgart community and



*New Bolgart Hotel publican Craig Wilkins behind the bar.*

our aim is to not only be a great country pub but to be an iconic country pub, with points of difference in chef-inspired foods to compliment traditional ‘pub grub’, paddock-to-plate concepts, entertainment, bush concerts and more, while also being very family friendly and with appeal to Perth and regional tourists.

“We’re also very excited about collaboration with Funk Cider founders, Dustin and Martin Michael (who are also my relatives), to not only supply their fantastic range of preservative-free, unpasteurised ciders but also establish a micro craft beer brewery using, where possible, local farmer-supplied grains and malt to not only pursue ‘paddock-to-pint’ concepts but boost our

local economy and put Bolgart on the map,” Mr Wilkins said

Dustin and Martin’s family farm is near Bolgart and Funk Cider is in the Swan Valley.

The Bolgart Hotel was designed and planned by the same architect who was in charge of Perth building landmarks, the Guildford Post Office and Parliament House.

It has 10 well-appointed and comfortable rooms for great country-style accommodation.

The Bolgart Hotel is trading every day and can be contacted on 9627 5154.

Golf is back in full swing and all players are adhering to the new rules.

Ladies are enjoying their golf on Thursdays and men play on Saturdays.

## Stories return to Bejoording fire pit nights

**Bejoording Community Group News**

From the desk of The Badger

AT LAST we are back in action.

The return of the Wednesday gathering at our shed was welcomed by all and fortunately with lots of farm action like seeding, and a number of members in the FIFO fraternity, we look like we can maintain the requisite number of attendees until all restrictions are lifted without having to limit attendance.

Standing around that open pit fire seemed to enliven everyone. There were lots of stories to tell about life in self-isolation, and lots of news to catch up on.

The return of footy guarantees some extra get-togethers, and our social calendar will resume where it should have been at this point in time.

Events cancelled over the past couple of months will be written off and returned to next year.

Our AGM will need to be rescheduled but it’s likely to be brief with all office bearers content to continue through with no contests. A date will be advised.

We are pleased to say that no member of this community has fallen victim to Covid-19 and we intend to keep it that way.

Your monthly reminder – we meet every Wednesday evening (except in January) at the Bejoording Community Centre which shares premises with the local volunteer bush fire brigade in Bejoording Road.

Come along from 6pm, and leave when it suits you.

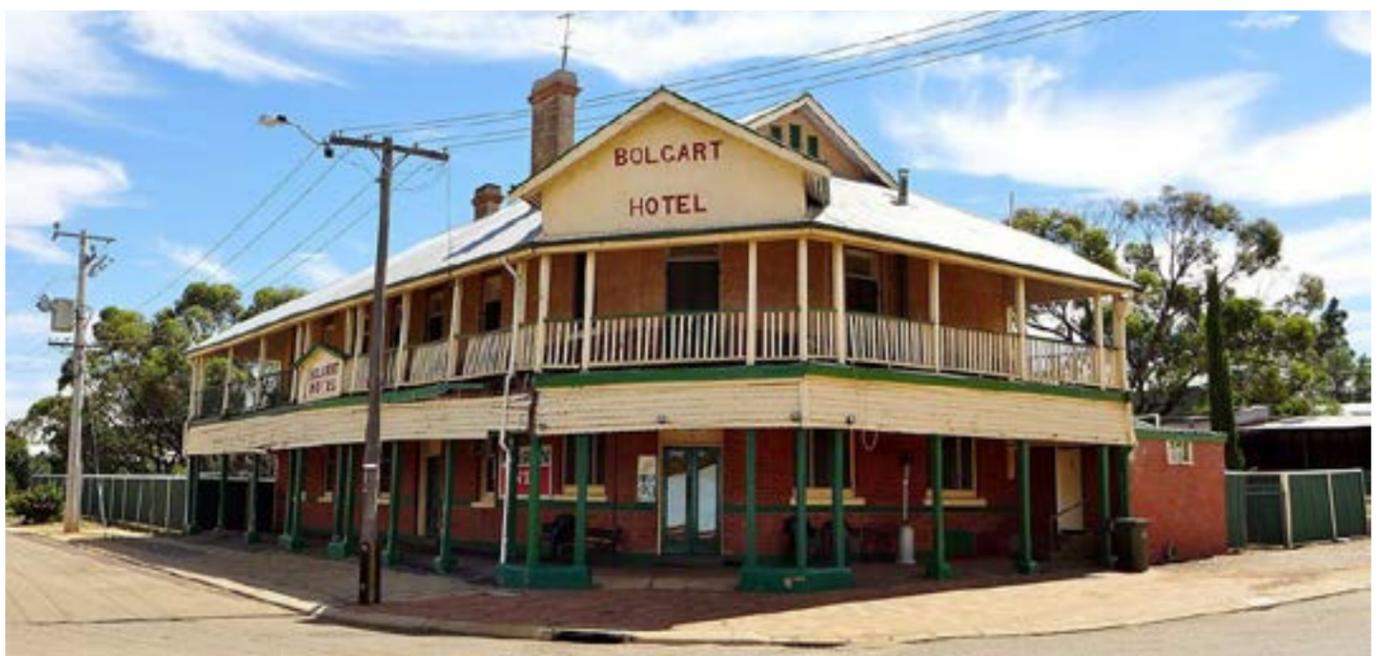
It’s strictly ‘come as you are’ casual, kids are welcome, and there are fun events every month.

If you aren’t yet a member, we’d love to get to know you.

If you want to know more, you can contact President Barry Grey on 0428 742 149, or call The Badger on 0414 250 484.

Hope to see you soon.

## Now community owned, the Old Bolgart Pub is open for business!



## OLD BOLGART HOTEL

RESTAURANT & PUB GRUB • PADDOCK TO PLATE • PADDOCK TO PINT CRAFT BEER & CIDER • COUNTRY STYLE ACCOMMODATION

08 9627 5154



Local farmhand loading an airseeder after welcome late Autumn rains. Photo: Frank Panizza.

## Cool heads needed to weather hot barley debate

**Toodyay Agricultural Alliance**  
Frank Panizza

LATE autumn rains have been a saviour, allowing local farmers to finish seeding programs and give some hope to livestock owners that they will see green feed soon.

Useful falls have been received by most farmers, although soil moisture levels are still low, so follow-up rains are necessary.

The hot topic of conversation within farming circles and the wider community is the barley tariff of 80 per cent placed by China on imports of Australian barley.

I don't intend to add to the discourse, apart from relaying the concerns that have arisen since the imposition of tariffs by the Chinese Government.

Both the Australian Government and the Chinese Government have gone to extraordinary lengths to distance the action on Australian barley to any diplomatic differences between the two trading partners.

After warnings of 'economic consequences' by Chinese officials following Prime Minister Morrison's calls for an independent enquiry into the Covid-19 pandemic, the barley tariff announcement followed only a matter of weeks later.

These actions may be completely unrelated, however barley producers remain unconvinced.

The 80 per cent tariff has been placed on imports of Australian barley because the Chinese Government contends that the product was 'dumped' at an artificially low value, thus injuring the local industry.

The Chinese officials cited drought relief of 800 million dollars paid to Australian farmers over the past two years as 'subsidies' thus allowing for the product to be 'dumped' in China at an artificially low value.

Australian farmers can't understand this argument as feed grains rose sharply in Australia due to grain shortages due to the drought.

Furthermore, consistent strong buying of Australian barley by China over the past five years has increased barley values due to Chinese demand and not lowered it.

The immediate effect of the tariff imposition has been a reduction in barley sowing and an increase in oat and canola sowing Australia-wide.

The tariff imposition will have a direct impact on farmers in Toodyay.

Barley values have fallen since the announcement and also after the enquiry was first mooted by China in late 2018.

The tariff imposition will also have an

effect on consumers of Australian barley in China.

An 80 per cent tariff will effectively end imports of Australian barley completely.

Bearing in mind that Australia produces almost half of the world's malting (brewing) barley, Chinese beer producers will still need malt.

This action has raised suspicions about the Chinese which is concerning and not in the best interest of anyone, including our Chinese customers.

China and Australia need each other.

Demand for Australian products in China remains strong and Australian farmers stand ready to provide them with a reliable supply of clean and safe food.

Hopefully cool heads prevail. It's in everyone's best interest.



Local barley crop emerging from late autumn rains to an uncertain future. Photo: Frank Panizza.

## Local Ag Society cancels this year's Show

**Toodyay Agricultural Society**  
Alison Wroth, President

TO OUR valued members, sponsors and supporters of the Toodyay Agricultural Society and the community of Toodyay.

First of all, I would like to thank everyone who has personally shown support to myself and other committee members in the months leading up to our May meeting.

It just proves what a fantastic community we live in with locals who love events and care about the volunteer groups that organise them.

It is with deep regret that the management committee of the Toodyay Agricultural Society has made the responsible but heart-wrenching decision to cancel this year's 167th Toodyay Agricultural Show.

Many options were discussed beforehand on different ways to organise our historic and cherished event in this current climate.

We also believe it would have been very insensitive to ask regular prize donors for support or to advertise in the Show Schedule when the Covid-19 pandemic was having such an impact on local businesses and lives in our community and beyond.

We are not the only agricultural society to make this decision.

Other Show societies have cancelled throughout the nation and are hoping that without income, but continuing costs, they will be able to organise an event for next year.

We are concerned for our sideshow operators, entertainers and stallholders, who rely on income from the Show season for their livelihood.

It is not the first time that the Toodyay Agricultural Show has been cancelled.

It was first cancelled during WWI in 1914 and then paused in WWII for the years 1943-45.

I do want to assure our dedicated membership that any payments made for membership to support our society will be rolled forward to 2021.

You will get a complimentary 12 months' membership to take the place of what you didn't benefit from this year.

Sponsorship payments that have been received will be rolled forward as well and we will be in touch with all sponsors to discuss promotion after their kind support.

We will return reinvigorated, enthusiastic and full of ideas for our next Show which will be at the same time in October 2021.

We will forge ahead now and due to ongoing costs and the cancellation, we will endeavour to do some fundraising for the society, so don't be surprised if you see us around the community during the coming year.

Stay safe as this pandemic continues to hang over our heads.

Keep smiling and together we can celebrate a jam-packed Show next year with an incredible fireworks display to wind up the return of our annual Toodyay Agricultural Show.

## Locos ready to let off steam

**Toodyay Miniature Railway**  
Vern Witney

PEOPLE are asking: "When are we going to start running the little trains again?"

By the time you are reading this report there is a slim chance we might have started.

We last ran trains in October last year, so it is high time a start was made for 2020.

The hold-up at this stage – if we haven't started – is the fact the government hasn't opened the play equipment at the park.

In the days when steam locomotives moved most things around the country, the coal shovel was an important tool for transporting coal into the firebox.

It could also be used as a safety device, to protect your face with the blade in the event

of a glass gauge breaking.

Another secondary function was as a wash basin.

The shovel would be placed on the lip plate, which is just above the firebox and filled with water to have a warm wash.

From time to time it has even been used as a form of toilet.

Have you ever thought of how and where the driver and fireman can answer the call of nature?

It's either inside the empty tender, or if that is full of coal, your only choice is the coal shovel.

At high speed, a strong sense of balance is called for.

The coal shovel is a most-useful instrument and not just for the reason you thought.

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## Men's Shed re-opens

**Toodyay Men's Shed**  
Jeff Roberts

IN ACCORDANCE with the recent lifting of Covid-19 restrictions our shed resumed limited activities on May 21.

Toodyay Men's Shed will now open from 8.30am until 11.30am, or noon, on Mondays and Thursdays.

Members have been provided with the Covid-19 Safety Plan and the committee is seeking both their understanding and compliance with the directives.

# Probians get back into it

**Toodyay Probus Club**  
Norm Green

LAST month I was missing in action or rather 'inaction'.

There was no report for *The Herald* because, frankly, there was no meeting or guest speaker or outing to talk about.

Although there have been no formal Probus meetings in Toodyay for awhile, due to the restrictions to prevent us being infected with the dreaded virus, our members have been busy.

A request from the *Toodyay Probus Newsletter* publisher (yours truly) for members' stories and photographs of activities during their 'isolation' produced many responses.

Activities reported were mainly of the garden variety with photos of beautiful plants.

There were also a few photos of some husbands and one of a beautiful quilt.

One of our ladies tried her hand at making a face mask out of a plastic drink bottle and forwarded a photo of it in use.

When she asked if anyone wanted her to make one for them, for some reason or other, nobody was interested.

Another lady member decided to take the opportunity while not rushing around socialising, to de-clutter.

In the process she came across some wool that she could use to knit something she had planned but didn't get around to.

Well, the wool intended to be chucked out went straight back into the boxes - couldn't throw all that wool away.

She says she will de-clutter one day when she's bored enough.

Now that some restrictions have been lifted, our committee has decided to have an executive meeting and try and work out a way forward within the framework of social restrictions.

Stay busy and safe.

For further information contact president Joan on 0417 171 606.



The Old Warders' Quarters in Fiennes Street where William Sykes letters from his wife Myra were found hidden in a crevice in 1931. The building, located next to what is now the Masonic Lodge, was demolished in 1933. Photo: Stuart Gore, courtesy of Newcastle Gaol Museum.

# Fremantle jail link to local convict depot

**Toodyay Historical Society**  
Robyn Taylor

FOR HISTORIANS who work from home, the 'new normal' isn't much different from the 'usual normal', as long as there is the internet and a home-based research library.

The only drawback has been the inability to access archives and collections in Perth to continue the research that began before the lockdown.

Fortunately, connections can be made between my research on Fremantle Prison, a public works prison that was central to the Convict Establishment, and Toodyay where one of a number of rural convict hiring depots was set up in 1851.

In February 1852 the depot was moved upstream to what is now the site of our town of Toodyay.

My job is to research the history of the basement rooms under the north-west corner of the prison's main cell block.

This history will assist the interpretation of those rooms and be part of the visitors' experience when touring the prison.

The rooms were originally used as a commissariat for the prison, a place for the collection, storage and distribution of goods such as food, clothing, tools, materials for the prison workshops, and a repository for the convicts' personal belongings.

The lists of these items make for poignant

reading and range in value from buttons, needles and thread to silk handkerchiefs.

The commissariat was linked to the much larger commissariat in Cliff Street, now the Shipwrecks Museum, that stored the supplies sent out from England with each transport ship.

The Convict Establishment had to be self-sufficient as the colony was in no position to even accommodate the newcomers let alone feed and equip them to undertake public works.

A major objective of the system was to provide much-needed labour to the agricultural regions resulting in the building of convict hiring depots such as the one at Toodyay.

Ticket-of-leave men, those nearing the expiry of their terms, were sent to work for local farmers and assist with road and bridge works.

They were accompanied by Pensioner Guards and their families.

Each depot had its own commissariat that received goods from Fremantle supplemented by local produce.

Kits containing the basic necessities, such as shirts and trousers, belts and boots, bedding and shaving gear were provided to each man.

Not surprisingly, some found these highly prized items useful for bartering for tobacco and alcohol.

The recording of these details provides the fine grain of history that is often lost in the telling of the larger story.

They are details that are being rediscovered by hundreds of families currently researching

the histories of their convict ancestors as well as students of history.

Toodyay's convict past has been well researched by eminent historians such as Alexandra Hasluck who first brought the remarkable story about convict William Sykes and the *Toodyay Letters* to public notice in her book *Unwilling Emigrants* (1959), and Rica Erikson who wrote our district's official history *Old Toodyay and Newcastle* (1974).

She also wrote *The Brand of His Coat* (1983) a collection of biographies including one on John Acton Wroth, ancestor of Toodyay's Wroth family, who arrived on the Mermaid in 1851.

Wroth was a well-educated and likeable young man who did well in Toodyay.

His store won a commissariat contract to provision the convict road parties.

Another invaluable publication during the lock-down is Alison Cromb's *The History of the Toodyay Convict Depot* (2010).

Due to the ongoing pandemic our calendar of events remains on hold.

Drummond House will be opening this month in accordance with safety measures.

Contacts: secretary.2j.ths@gmail.com, Robyn Taylor, rdtaylor@iinet.net.au, phone 9574 2578 or Beth Frayne, toobide4@iinet.net.au, phone 9574 5971.

Write to PO Box 32 Toodyay WA 6566 or visit toodyayhistoricalsociety.org.au/

Membership is \$15 per annum.



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