

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.

November 2020
Edition 396

Inquiry slams former CEO, council

**Councillor accuses new CEO
of 'half-arsed' response to
report recommendations**

Michael Sinclair-Jones

FORMER CEO Stan Scott has been slammed for financial mismanagement, failures under local government law, conflict of interest and unethical conduct in 14 of 25 adverse findings against the Shire of Toodyay tabled in State Parliament last month.

A report on a 20-month State Government inquiry also says shire councillors failed to comply with local government regulations when they voted 9-0 in 2013 to sue two former civic leaders in a botched WA Supreme Court case that cost ratepayers \$550,000 in lost legal fees.

Councillors were also castigated for failing to properly manage the former CEO's behaviour and actions over a seven-year period examined by the inquiry.

The inquiry ordered no prosecutions or suspensions but made five recommendations which last month's council meeting described as too vague for a formal response – as required by State law – without further direction and clarification.

It followed a public submission by Nunile ratepayer Frank Panizza (*see Page 5*) who described nine of the inquiry's findings as an "absolute powder keg" for suggesting that the shire should not take action to recover debts if legal costs exceeded the amount owed.

"I can't overstate the parlous state that this puts our local government in," Mr Panizza said.

"I just don't think the authors even thought of that prospect, which in my view is absolutely damning of the report and its authors."

The report recommends a governance review, councillor training, new Shire CEO Suzie Haslehurst to deliver a "comprehensive" report to the Director General of the Local Government Department on what councillors gained from training, independent CEO performance reviews and a review of the CEO's authority to take legal action on behalf of the shire.

Cr Ben Bell said Ms Haslehurst's recommended response was "awful" and "half-arsed".

He refused to apologise when Shire Deputy President Beth Ruthven raised a point of order to object that his comment was "unnecessary".

Shire President Rosemary Madacsi did not rule on the point of order but urged all councillors to "note we have an obligation to the community to conduct ourselves appropriately".

"Why would anyone pay a fine if you know the legal bills are going to be higher than the fine?" Cr Bell said.

"We have had no clarification or direction from the department about how to deal with someone who doesn't pay.

"It's going to lead to an unsustainable council and administration with everyone saying 'I'm going to make sure the legal bills are higher than the penalty and I know you won't chase me'.

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Young families grab their togs to make historic splash in Toodyay's long-awaited new pool

There was plenty for young families to celebrate in the wading pool (above) on the first day of swimming last month at Toodyay's new Aquatic Centre near the town's high school. The pool complex and kiosk is part of Toodyay's new \$14 million sport and recreation centre which the Shire of Toodyay will officially open at a public ceremony starting at 10.30am on Saturday November 21. The event will feature visiting sports stars, VIP guest speakers, an official ribbon cutting ceremony and plaque unveiling, a Toodyay Locals Care sausage sizzle to raise funds for local charity and ice cream and coffee vans. More pictures on Page 9.

Years of chronic shire mismanagement exposed in damning State findings

MORE than half of the inquiry's 25 adverse findings show that former CEO Scott mismanaged shire finances and resources, failed to follow State regulations and breached the shire code of conduct with condescending and offensive behaviour.

The report also said previous councils – including under former shire president Brian Rayner who still sits on the council – had failed as an employer under local government law to conduct the relationship towards Mr Scott as that of an employee.

The report details Mr Scott's role in four botched court cases that cost ratepayers more than \$670,000 in legal fees, much of it to a firm that employed the former CEO's son.

It said the shire "failed to adopt a policy to give guidance and direction to the CEO on matters concerning litigation on behalf of the council".

The former council had failed to comply with local government regulations in February 2013 when it voted 8-0 – against

Mr Scott's written advice – to launch legal action over an "overpayment" of \$150,000 to former Toodyay CEO Graham Merrick.

Mr Scott wrote that there was "no reasonable prospect of success" and that the shire should "not commence legal action".

The council disregarded Mr Scott's advice and failed to record any written reasons – as required by law – "for a decision that is significantly different from the CEO's written recommendation", the report said.

Mr Scott then failed a policy requirement to obtain three quotes to pursue the matter and failed to keep the council informed about mounting legal costs that eventually totalled \$548,000 over four years.

He also "acted in an unethical manner by not disclosing to the council that his son is working with the legal firm that the shire has frequently engaged to provide legal services".

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**Toodyay Farmers Market
Sunday November 15**

**Pool Opening Ceremony
Saturday November 21**

**Morangup Car Boot Sale
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COUNTRY REALTY

The Toodyay Herald

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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.

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

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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, Barb Dadd and Frances Lawson.

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Ol' Blind Joe

Lucy in the sky

Stirling Hamilton

THAT DAMN provincial pedant editor of mine has blown a gasket again and exiled me to the dungeon to dwell again among the ghosts of councils past.

I've spent decades researching these crooked bookshelves of agendas, minutes, and rules to reveal hidden truths in the dusty pages of administrative malfeasance.

Well, lo and behold, the new *Report of the Inquiry into the Shire of Toodyay* has appeared on my reading desk.

While I will be accurate, I'll be feasting on the moral carcasses of some very naughty people.

I regret the report begins with the exit of former Toodyay shire CEO Graham Merrick (2004- 2010).

I would dearly love to perform a forensic autopsy on his performance – and in particular his planning department – but I will confine myself to this report.

It says that upon Mr Merrick's departure, the shire found it had "inadvertently" made an overpayment of \$150,000 to him.

The matter was settled for an undisclosed sum in February 2017 by which stage legal costs alone had escalated to \$547,923.27, with those monies being paid to Perth law firm Civic Legal and others.

The inquiry notes that of the \$1.9 million spent by subsequent former CEO Stan Scott on 13 legal firms, nearly 40 per cent went to Civic Legal which employed his son as Special Counsel and which "seemed more prevalent than the others".

While not illegal, it was an undocumented conflict of interest that was not put to council, unethical and "not behaviour that should be expected of a CEO".

Another legal debacle – and there were lots of them – was the peculiar incident in 2018 when former Toodyay shire president Allan Henshaw got a \$60 ticket when his car was briefly parked facing the wrong way in Stirling Terrace outside the town's pharmacy.

Mr Henshaw's daughter, who lives in England, wrote to the shire that she was the driver, and any correspondence should be sent to her UK address because she wanted to appeal the fine.

However, the shire issued her father with a final demand for payment and he elected to take the matter to court.

It ended up costing the shire \$5381 in legal expenses, which the inquiry said was "excessive" and an error that Mr Scott refused to admit when he was later questioned about it at a council meeting.

By then Mr Scott had already established a reputation as a litigious big spender.

It had its genesis in 2009, when Toodyay suffered a catastrophic bushfire that destroyed 38 houses.

The shire paid \$13,000 to contractor Charlie Wroth – who was a shire councillor at the time – to deliver gravel to help emergency recovery operations.

Mr Scott alleged five years later that the gravel was not delivered.

His complaint to the WA Corruption and Crime Commission was referred to State Police who found no proof the gravel had not been delivered and closed the file.

Undeterred, Mr Scott spent a total of \$82,470 pursuing the claim through the WA Supreme Court and Perth Magistrates Court before settling the case for \$5500.

Another legal disaster that cost the shire thousands of dollars concerned two dogs that it impounded for 13 months over an alleged attack on sheep.

A Northam magistrate described the case as "concerning and problematic" and said the shire had acted duplicitously because the dog owner had already paid two fines and settled the matter.

Mr Scott had to withdraw the case after spending \$36,000 on Perth lawyers.

He later told the inquiry the "absence of evidence is not evidence of absence" and claimed that "the matter was handled appropriately".

Lucy in the sky with diamonds.

Alice and I are walking through the looking glass to see what sense might be found in that statement.

Yet another costly screw-up was shire opposition to planning approval for two horses which cost it \$30,688 in legal expenses over five years of "inconsistent dealings" before the approval was granted.

Then we come to former Cr Di Granger who soundly defeated former shire president David Dow in the October 2017 council elections, resigned four months later amid allegations of bullying and formally complained to Perth local government officials about shire dysfunction.

She said the council's culture was "a working environment created by the CEO and other members of council highly demoralising at best or toxic at worst".

Now over the years I have witnessed this toxic culture first-hand and can attest to the dear lady's veracity and commiserate with her.

We elect councillors hoping they will represent us honestly to the best of their abilities.

The irony is they enter a former courthouse where the power behind the throne sits to one side but pulls the strings.

Councillors delegate all day-to-day authority to the CEO who runs the joint.

Bullies may stomp and yell, but their words will always ring hollow.

Like lambs to the slaughter, innocent councillors who embarked on a quest to serve their community ended up being berated and harangued by those who hold power.

The inquiry confirmed what we already knew, that "There are indications the relationship between the Council and CEO was not functioning as per the requirements of the LG Act which should be one of employer and employee".

It's not hard to see who has served power and who has served the people.

Suffice to say long may the once-threatened tall trees that fringe Anzac Memorial Park sway in the breeze.

Vale also to my friend, former Cr Chris Firms, who would have loved to have seen this day.

Chris could certainly be obdurate, but you could never say he was ignorant.

The midnight hour might beckon at council meetings but he still had six more points of order to raise while visibly annoyed administrators squirmed with eyes cast heavenward.

Finally, I'm glad to see *Herald* Treasurer Beth Ruthven is now serving on the council as Audit Committee Chair – I know from personal experience that her pernicious attention to detail cannot be disputed.

This augurs well for all Toodyay ratepayers and our community as a whole as we drag ourselves out of this shameful mess.

Every man is guilty of all the good he did not do – French philosopher Voltaire (1694-1778).

Office Hours are from 9.30am - 12.30pm on highlighted days

November-December 2020						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	Dec 1	2	3	4	5	6

Bakers Hill boys did fair share of hard yakka

Ieva Tomsons

BROTHERS John (77) and George (76) Chitty are two of only a handful of original Bakers Hill locals who grew up in the small railway siding settlement.

Their childhood, on a 220-acre (89ha) farm/vineyard in Chitty Road, is typical of boys of their era who grew up in the bush.

"They called us 'bushies' and it was a great life trapping rabbits, fishing for cobbler at Bald Hill and catching gilgies down the creek," said John.

The brothers were too young to remember the district's great rabbit plague in 1947 but they recall their father telling them about a massive 7-acre (2.8ha) warren on Coorinja Winery in Toodyay, and you get the sense they would love to have been there.

They learned to shoot when they were 11 or 12 years old and would head into the bush with their dog and four bullets to bag a roo.

"If we didn't come back with one, Dad would want the bullets back," said John.

"Our backyard was as far as you could ride your bike," laughs George.

"...and we came a few gutzers on our bikes – that's a fact," adds John.

Their family, like many others in the district, kept pigeons which were regularly consumed in dishes such as pigeon pie.

As teenagers, they rode their bikes five miles (8km) without lights into Bakers Hill to watch "the pictures" on Saturday nights.

"In those days it was easy to tell apart Toodyay, Northam and York boys," said John.

"The gene pool was small back then and they all had a certain look," quips John.

Bakers Hill was once the place to go to settle inter-town disputes, according to their father, but when the brothers were growing up this 'tradition' had fallen by the wayside.

In the late 1950s Bakers Hill and Wundowie



John (left) and George Chitty with one of the statues they made for Wundowie Men's Shed.

had 28 vineyards and the boys picked and processed currants and sultanas which were laid out to dry on large racks.

At 13 John was diagnosed with St Vitus Dance (Sydenham's Chorea) a debilitating disease which resulted in involuntary uncontrolled body movements.

"My nerves stopped growing and I would throw my cup of tea over my shoulder."

It took John two years to recover; he never returned to school and started working as a farmhand on a local farm.

At 16 he headed to the apple-picking sheds in Donnybrook where he worked for a year before returning home and learning to shear.

By this stage George had also had enough of school and was helping with seeding on a Greenhills property before joining the railways just before his 16th birthday.

George started at the bottom of the railway's pecking order as a 'call boy' in Northam which entailed riding around town notifying train drivers of their shifts at all hours of the day and night.

"You had to ride like hell to get to the other side of town," laughs George.

While George was slowly working his way up the railway hierarchy, John had taken up professional shearing which he stuck to for 42 years straight.

Unlike many farm boys who stick to shearing locally, John joined the big teams that shored continuously for 10 months a year in the north west, inland WA and Queensland.

"I shored my first 200 in narrow gear over east and finally got the respect from the Queenslanders when I went around them (beat them)."

At 24 he joined the legendary Synott and Dunbar operation which serviced the north west stations.

At the start of the season the teams would meet at Newspaper House in Perth where they boarded open-backed trucks known as 'ring-pounders' for the long and bumpy journey north.

"There were 20 on the back of the truck on two rows of seats, there was a canopy, but it was pretty rough going on the gravel."

John and George have both done their fair share of hard yakka.

In 1965 when John was flat-out shearing, George had worked his way up to become a fireman on steam engines based in Narrogin.

"I'd shovel coal all night, throw bricks at the brickworks and dig stump holes for houses in my spare time," hoots George.

Their father died in 1967 from a leukemia-type illness which the brothers attribute to him using Rogor 40, a tree-killing chemical.

John was back in Bakers Hill shearing locally so he bought the family farm and continued to run the 76-acre (30ha) vineyard where he invented a swing-arm trellis harvester which he had built in Midland.

In 1978 George finally got to blow the train whistle when he completed the driver's exam which required three days of written tests.

"He had a natural ability to remember things," said John.

Passenger steam trains ended in 1972 and George recalls the lengths that "railway enthusiasts" would go to get good pictures whenever a tourist steam train would take to the rails.

"They'd turn up with cameras and sound equipment and grease the rails to make the engine slip and create sparks," said George.

When George retired in 2001 after 41 years on the railways he had worked his way up to become a locomotive inspector and continued to drive part time until he was 71.

John sold the farm in 2008 and from 2010 to 2019 headed north during the wet season to work as a volunteer for the Catholic Church in Kalumburu where he served as an acolyte, shot wild bulls and cooked for the workers.

He first started volunteering in his teens for the local bush fire brigade which he also captained and remains one of its longest-serving members.

The brothers now live on the same street in the town they grew up in and worked together to create the Wundowie Men's Shed figurines.

"The world has changed so much from when we grew up," said George.

Chronic mismanagement exposed



Former shire CEO Stan Scott (left) and former shire president Brian Rayner.

Continued from Page 1.

THE INQUIRY report said there was no evidence that Mr Scott had updated the council about legal costs "which would have been prudent particularly at the time that the legal costs exceeded the sum that could potentially be recovered from Mr Merrick".

"The CEO recommended that once proceedings started, the shire not withdraw from the matter due to the shire being liable for their own legal fees and Mr Merrick's legal fees."

"When the CEO was questioned about his son working for Civic Legal, he stated that he had spoken with the shire president about it and the CEO didn't consider it to be an issue.

"At no time was this conflict of interest matter documented or put to the council."

The report said Mr Scott's actions were not an offence under local government law "however it is unethical and not behaviour that should be expected of a CEO".

The report also detailed several instances where Mr Scott failed in his "significant responsibilities" as a financial manager, including that he:

- "Failed to ensure the resources of the local government were effectively and efficiently managed", and
- "Did not have adequate oversight of the day to day operations of the local government, and this failure by the CEO has caused or contributed to the potential unnecessary costs to the Shire of Toodyay."

Mr Scott was also found to have breached the shire code of conduct in an email to former Cr Di Granger which prompted her shock resignation only four months after she defeated former shire president David Dow in Toodyay's 2017 council elections.

Mr Scott was found to have breached a requirement to "avoid derogatory statements" by "failing to communicate in a professional manner which may (as a result) cause any reasonable person unwarranted offence or embarrassment".

The report said Mr Scott's tone in earlier emails to former Cr Granger was "condescending".

When the council went behind closed doors in January 2018 to consider her motion about "managing the performance of the CEO" Mr Scott "proceeded to verbally berate Ms Granger in a hostile manner which she felt was highly inappropriate and was embarrassed," the report said.

"At no point did the presiding member (former shire president Rayner) bring the CEO to order.

"There are indications the relationship between the council and the CEO was not functioning per the requirement of the LG Act, which should be one of employer and employee.

"There are sections of the community which were unhappy with the lack of transparency and accountability of the Shire of Toodyay.

Due to a lack of positive action by the council in relation to the CEO, the discontent within the community has culminated in the need for an inquiry."

Two other remaining councillors who joined Cr Rayner last year to vote in favour of a surprise backflip to retain Mr Scott for another 12 months after a decision not to renew his contract were former shire deputy president Chitty and Cr Greenway.

Mr Scott resigned in April this year after taking two months extended sick leave for an undisclosed illness just hours before the start of the council's February meeting.

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The Toodyay Herald

Breach of trust

LOCAL ratepayers have every right to be angry at the outcome of a damning official inquiry into the Shire of Toodyay.

It exposes seven years of gross incompetence, appalling civic leadership and the senseless loss of more than half a million dollars of ratepayers' money.

Herald readers will already know most of the facts behind the findings from regular newspaper reports over that period.

A culture of concealment and denial at the highest levels of local civic leadership – and unrestrained contempt for those who asked questions – has served now only to bring public disgrace on our community.

At the heart of this debacle was the abject failure of our elected representatives to understand their roles and responsibilities.

Toodyay shire councillors are required by law to take the following oath of office before they sit in the council chamber:

"I will undertake the duties of the office of councillor in the best interests of the people in the municipality of Toodyay and faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in me under the Local Government Act or any other Act to the best of my skill and judgment."

Local government law requires all councillors to "represent the interests of electors, ratepayers and residents" and "provide leadership and guidance to the community".

A report tabled in State Parliament last month clearly shows this did not happen.

In particular, it said Toodyay councillors failed in their duty to control a bungling CEO who repeatedly blew large amounts of public money on senseless legal cases while attacking his critics with derogatory emails and a "condescending tone".

Toodyay was already undergoing an official State Government inquiry when councillors voted 5-4 in a bitterly contested decision in May last year not to renew the flailing former CEO's three-year contract.

It was inexplicably reversed a month later when former shire president Brian Rayner, former deputy shire president Therese Chitty and Cr Paula Greenway – who all still sit on the council – voted 6-2 behind closed doors to support a secret backflip led by former Cr Judy Dow.

The inquiry result clearly shows that this was entirely the wrong decision – and now is the time for those responsible to be called to account for their actions.

They should resign.

Michael Sinclair-Jones
Editor

The Toodyay Herald invites you to have your say in our letters page. Please email us at 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.

Kindred Spirit

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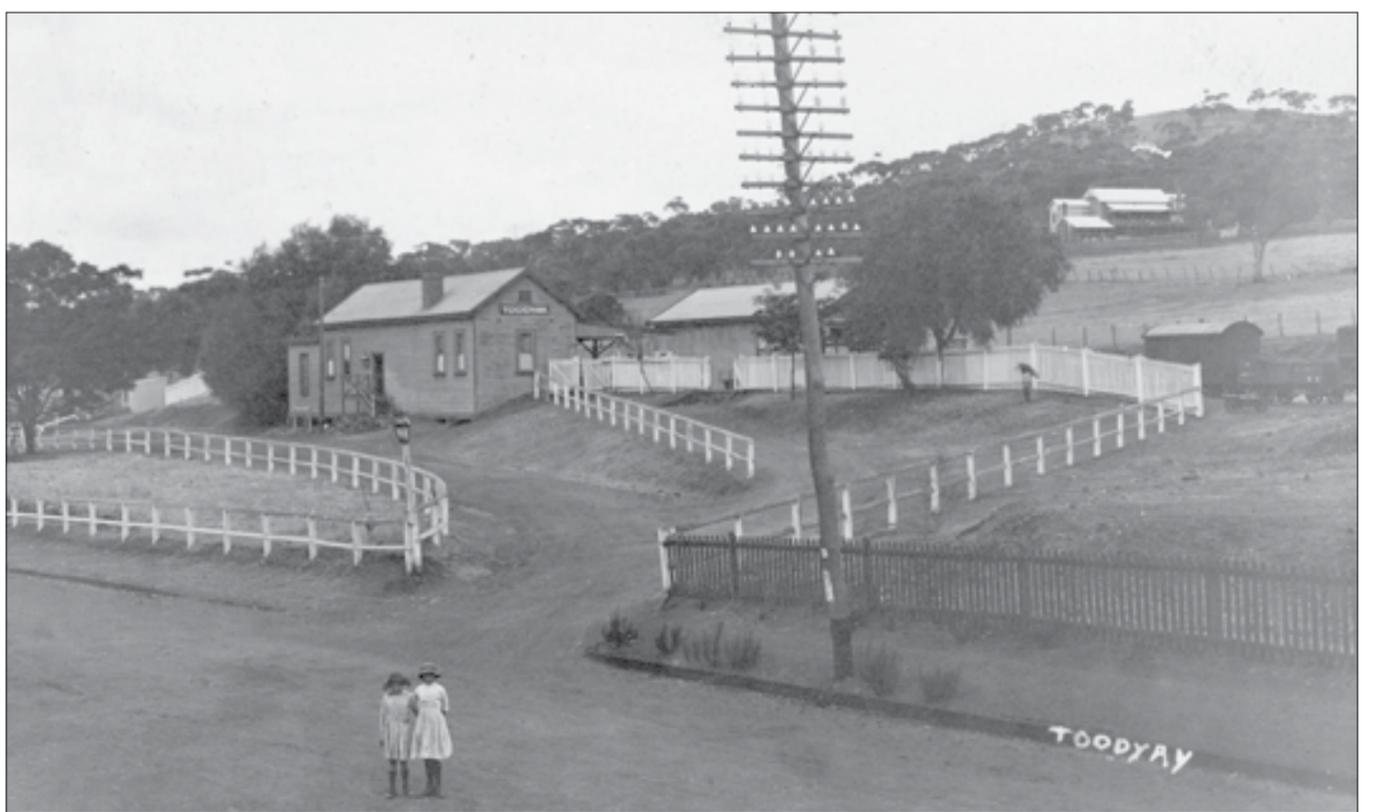
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The way we were – This photograph shows two girls of unknown identity near the old Toodyay Railway Station which was located where the Alma Beard Medical Centre now stands. The station was closed in 1966 after a new standard gauge line was built between Perth and the eastern States. The photograph is among a group of items relating to Olive Pretoria Lloyd (1900-1994) of North Toodyay and was recently offered to the Toodyay museum collection by Glenys Harrison of Bunbury. Olive Lloyd married Egbert Douglas Sinclair in 1918 at Toodyay's St Stephen's Anglican Church and may be one of the two girls pictured. Photo: Newcastle Gaol Museum, historical notes Beth Frayne.

LETTERS

Herald, TPA vindicated

I HAVE visited Toodyay for many years and taken an interest in Toodyay happenings and have often read *The Herald*.

Recently I read and heard several residents/ratepayers complain about the negativity of articles in *The Toodyay Herald* and the campaign by the Toodyay Progress Association (TPA) against the previous councillors and the previous CEO.

It was expressed that these actions were affecting the wellbeing of councillors and the CEO.

It was also claimed to having had a damaging effect on the attractiveness of Toodyay as a place to settle.

As a result of the investigations by the TPA, the Department of Local Government Sport and Culture acted, and an investigation was launched into the shire.

The investigation took some time and I believe council was told nothing would come of it.

Last month, the inquiry was tabled, in parliament.

The report findings showed there was just cause for concern in the lack of accountability and transparency in the administration, that decisions were made contrary to the Local Government Act and there was a lack in councillors understanding their role and that of council.

The report findings were extensive and included:

- More than half a million dollars spent on pursuing legal matters in court, much of which the report found questionable,
- Councillors failing in their role to oversee ratepayers' funds,
- The inappropriate treatment by the CEO of a councillor and,
- The awarding of contracts contrary to WA local government law.

In reading the report there appeared a culture in council to accept information provided by the previous CEO, and in several situations the council failed to question the validity of the information supplied or question financial payments.

I believe it was important for the community to know how and what decisions were being made by council and the effect these decisions had on the financial viability of the shire.

The TPA investigation revealed questionable practices and *The Herald* informed the community.

However, some in the community disapproved of *The Herald's* reporting.

It was claimed articles were untruthful, defamatory, and unjustifiably condemning and targeting of the then councillors and previous CEO.

Surprisingly, there were no legal challenges but the comments of unjust, untruthful, biased reporting by *The Herald*, relentlessly persisted.

There was also condemnation of the TPA's constant questioning of council.

It was disappointing that it took an inquiry

to reveal the inappropriate practices by the previous CEO and the inability of the previous council to uphold the principles of accountability and transparency as listed in the shire's Community Strategic Plan.

I have been told that on social media councillors, who are still on council and were a part of the investigation, are being asked to resign.

These councillors are in control of their moral conscience indicator – it is their choice.

Either way, the community will have their chance to decide at the next election if they remain and decide to re-stand.

The Toodyay community was extremely fortunate to have had the TPA and *The Herald* to expose what was happening in the council and the administration.

It was disappointing that sections of the community did not support them and that they were criticised for their perspective and persistence.

The inquiry vindicated the actions of both *The Herald* and the TPA.

I congratulate the TPA for its persistence and resistance to calls to stop their actions and I also congratulate *The Herald* in publishing an accurate account of the issues.

Hopefully, the present council and administration will work to bring about change in a culture that led to the inappropriate practices as reported in the inquiry.

Nevia Medica
Perth

First-class fundraisers

THE CAR Boot Sale as a fundraiser for the Toodyay Music Fest was first class, well run and well supported.

The St Stephen's Anglican Church car boot sale was also fabulous in spite of the many other attractions being held on the same day, including the opening of the new pool to the public.

The event was very well organised and patronised, with a huge variety of goods for sale at bargain prices.

It would be great if we could have two car boot sales each year – one in autumn and the other in spring.

Patricia de Soto-Phillips
Toodyay

Cheaper in Northam

IT WAS a staggering and abrupt reminder last month when I wanted to purchase 500g of polony locally at just how those of us on a limited income are getting to the point of wondering whether we can afford or even justify buying locally.

A 500g log of polony at the Toodyay IGA store cost \$6.99.

A couple of weeks earlier I had a medical appointment in Northam and, like most of us, took the advantage while there of shopping at Aldi, Woolies or Coles.

I went to Aldi where the normal price for a 1kg log of polony was \$3.49.

The same quantity of polony in Toodyay

would have cost \$13.98.

My 50km return trip to Northam for a fuel cost of, say, \$5 means I still saved \$5.50 on the Aldi purchase.

I am so grateful that we have the convenience of an IGA store in Toodyay but it has become increasingly expensive to buy locally.

The \$200 to \$250 I would spend in Toodyay would have cost me no more than \$105 to \$120 in Northam.

I understand that the Toodyay store has overhead costs but you can see the effect the price of a 500g log of polony can have on the 'buy local and keep a local in business' philosophy.

When you seek a more attractive price elsewhere, you might also look for savings on other items, thus effectively hurting Toodyay businesses.

Tony Lush,
Toodyay

Buy a one-way ticket to China

IN REGARD to last month's *Herald* column Ol' Blind Joe written by Stirling Hamilton.

May I suggest he gets hold of Clive Hamilton's book *Silent Invasion*.

When he has finished reading it, he should buy a one-way ticket to China – to be among friends.

Most people in Australia prefer to live in a democracy and not under Chinese Communist Party dictatorship.

Ibeth Hojo-Hansen
Coondle

Thumbs up to display

IT IS a long time since I have written a few words for the Letters page, but I thought it important to send special messages to the local community and further afield about the importance of Breast Cancer Month.

It was wonderful to walk down Stirling Terrace and look at the display that Toodyay Op Shop had produced to promote breast cancer awareness.

As far as I know, they were the only ones who were involved, but I apologise to those who also may have participated.

How many people came and recognised this display? There were so many and of course Facebook went 'off the radar' so to speak.

Friends who had succumbed to this disease wanted to share that they were overwhelmed with the response by the local op shop wanting to be involved.

To the volunteers who gave up their time to share their concerns and compassion, and the ladies who brought so much joy to the visitors who enjoyed the display and bought their friends to enjoy it, you gave hope to some of those who were in a part of their life they did not wish to be and wanted to share that they loved what Toodyay was doing.

If we can save one person from breast cancer we can say "we have achieved".

Di Roberts
Toodyay
More letters Page 9.

Half a million dollars down the drain

Larry Graham*

Former Toodyay Progress Association Chair (2017-19)

IN FEBRUARY 2013, Toodyay shire Crs Kevin Hogg, Paula Greenway, Andrew McCann, David Dow, Bethan Lloyd, Chris Firms, Sally Craddock and Rosemary Madacsi chose to ignore former shire CEO Stan Scott's recommendation; to overlook the advice of the WA Corruption and Crime Commission and voted to embark on a legal case.

In November 2013, Crs Dow, Lloyd, Greenway, McCann, Chitty, Brian Rayner, Firms, Craddock and Madacsi had another chance to stop the case progressing and they did not. The case not only failed, it cleared the accused person and cost ratepayers nearly \$600,000.

After two years of investigating this, a State Governmental inquiry made a key finding that the minutes were not recorded properly. A total of \$600,000 down the drain and that is the biggest issue?

Surely how this happened is a far bigger question?

Surely, why a shire spent more than half a million dollars chasing a maximum of \$150,000 needs an answer. But no answers are provided to those who had to pay that cost; and that is you.

Had anyone other than a government written such a factually incorrect, legally incoherent and ethically unsound report, no-one would ever have taken it seriously. It is soft on detail, dodges questions of lawful responsibility, manufactures a scapegoat and diagnoses the wrong cures and it is so inept that it calls into question the competence of the regulating department. This report is so poor that our council decided it needs to know more before it can even deal with the recommendations.

Councils are governing bodies; they are not rubber stamps there to do what their CEO tells them. This report makes it clear that "All authority and oversight of the local government body sits with the council ...". The report also reveals that this lawful authority and oversight was not properly used.

All the failings identified resulted from a culture of sidestepping and shortcutting laws, responsibilities, procedures, policy, good practice and ethical standards. And this is where the inquiry's credibility collapses because its requirement to examine "the culture within the Shire of Toodyay" just did not happen and that weakens anything good in its report.

To become the culture of an organisation, bad behaviour has to be learned and then allowed to grow; and that is what happened in the Shire of Toodyay. I suggest it is still a major issue and nothing recommended by this report addresses it. Nor is councillors' unpreparedness to use their lawful authority to oversight the CEO and administration addressed.

The council should have, but did not, fact check the report before its last meeting; had they done so it is most likely that they would have rejected its recommendations. What needs to happen is a strong and experienced mentor be brought in to guide our very inexperienced council and new CEO through the difficult task of changing the culture of our divided and financially challenged shire and moving it towards becoming a more community-friendly and financially sustainable operation. But nothing as meaningful as that is recommended

No prosecutions are recommended, council is not directed to do anything meaningful, but there is one quite astonishing recommendation for a governance review. Surely, reviewing governance is what the inquiry was supposed to be doing for the last two years? Why didn't it do it? Dare I also mention that reviewing governance and compliance is what the local government department is supposed to do all the time. Why don't they do it?

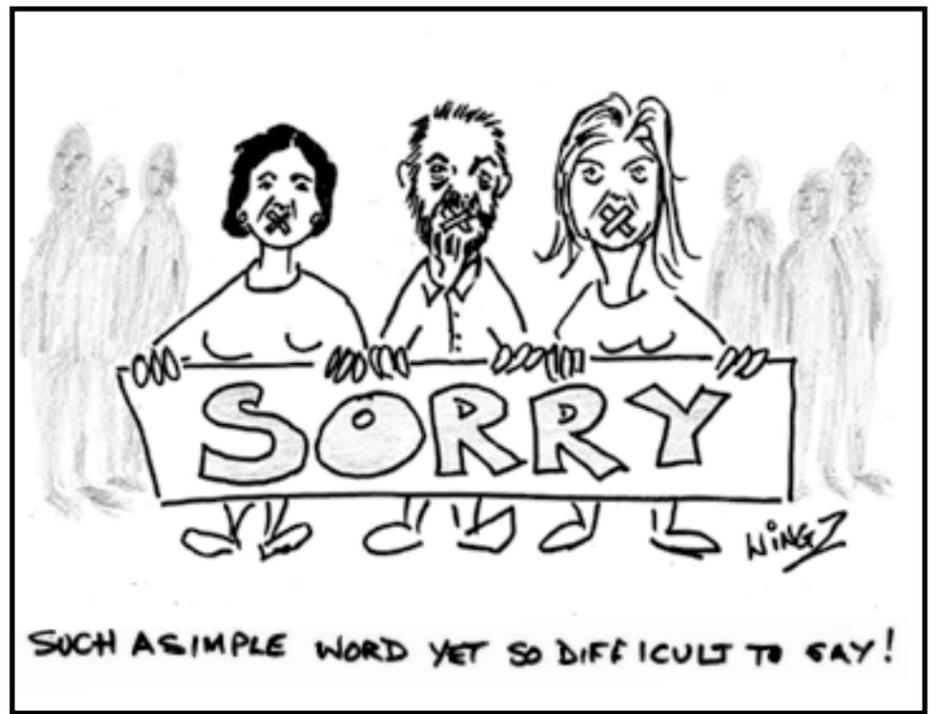
More training is recommended (but is not compulsory) for all councillors; but what comes next is unbelievable; to assess what, if any, benefit there may be from this training, the new CEO is to report to the department the "... knowledge and understanding gained ..." and also to "... outline the steps taken by the shire to implement such knowledge and understanding."

The CEO, who is still on six months'

probation, will be required to report on those who may or may not hire her full time. This is no reflection on the CEO, but it really is a weird recommendation that hopelessly compromises the CEO, raises a stack of governance, probity and ethical issues and our council should never agree to it.

We need to change the culture, competence and compliance of the shire, but if these recommendations are adopted none of that will happen and we will get more of the same; which can only ever produce more of the same.

**Mr Graham is a former State MP for the Pilbara (1989-2005), Parliamentary Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee member (1994-2001) and has lived in Toodyay for 16 years.*



'Absolute powder keg' for legal action in inquiry findings

Frank Panizza*

Former Shire Audit Committee Chair

THE LONG-AWAITED report into the Shire of Toodyay going back to 2011 has finally been laid bare.

I and many others had hoped that the report would uncover the problems that have besieged our local government for many years and to set out a blueprint for the way forward.

Disappointingly it doesn't do that, and I fear that the same old culture of factions, in-fighting, subterfuge and political point scoring will continue.

The report doesn't stick any heads on stakes but uncovers multiple examples of poor adherence to policy by the (former) CEO and officers, inconsistencies in decision making, poor oversight and just plain poor judgement.

Glaring errors

THE REPORT itself contains some glaring errors as well.

Any cursory glance of the report will uncover the error that (shire-owned) Mrs O'Reilly's cottage was sold – it hasn't been sold and is currently leased (to Toodyay's Heartlands Veterinary Hospital in Stirling Terrace).

The authors of the report also don't appear to understand that shire policy is written by the council – the council is not bound by shire policy because the council can change it at any time.

The Shire CEO under delegated authority – or any officer that the CEO sub-delegates to – is bound by shire policy.

If any matter comes before the CEO (or officer with delegated authority) that does not comply with shire policy, the officer is duty bound to refer the matter to the council which is the decision maker and that hasn't always happened.

Grave fears

MADAM President and Councillors, I have grave fears for the months and years ahead.

Inquiry report findings 1 to 8 and 19

This is the full text of Mr Panizza's public submission to last month's Toodyay Shire Council meeting.

concerning legal action are an absolute powder keg.

These findings leave council in an invidious position.

The report appears to suggest that any legal action should not be instigated if it does not have a good chance of success and if the costs of taking legal action is likely to materially exceed the sum of the claim.

If this does not worry you, it should.

How can the shire ever recover debts of tens of thousands of dollars, if not more?

From personal experience, to get a matter before the WA Supreme Court is likely to cost in excess of \$350,000.

How can fines or unpaid rates ever be recovered if the community understands that the shire will not pursue the matter?

To add further to your headaches, the shire's financial position appears to be deteriorating.

The shire's October financial statements show:

- \$215,000 in receivables-general are 90 days plus,
- \$34,791 in rates receivable listed as "legal action",
- \$469,413 rates listed as "payment arrangements" (not instalments) – late,
- \$99,790 rates listed as Sale of Land Act \$6.64 which will rely on legal action and,
- \$698,386 listed as "overdue".

As a rough estimate, \$1.5 million in the October financial statements is carried as an asset that is due to be received and recognised as such.

Almost all of this amount has the prospect of at least some legal (recovery) costs.

I can't overstate the parlous state that this puts our local government in.

Knowing what has flowed from the inquiry in respect to legal expenses, if I was to audit the financials – and I'm not an auditor – I would insist that at least some of that \$1.5

million, if not the whole sum, be written off as bad or doubtful debt.

I would be staggered if this was the intent of the inquiry's findings.

I just don't think the authors even thought of that prospect, which in my view is absolutely damning of the report and its authors.

The way forward

IMMEDIATELY engage with the WA Local Government Department as a matter of urgency to resolve the issue of the legal action findings and seek clear directives on what the department wants as a standard and develop policy to direct the CEO unambiguously.

A policy that states the CEO must come back to the council if the costs exceed, say \$5000, is not sufficient since the Henshaw (parking ticket) matter was below this amount.

Clear directives of what is expected and what due diligence is required are essential for any policy to be developed for this matter.

A simple idea could be to not extend credit past 60 days overdue, which I understand is already in our policy but not being enforced, or to simply remind creditors that if their debt remains unpaid this may affect their future credit rating in the future.

Sufficient safeguards should be incorporated into the policy to ensure that a debt is proven and not subject to dispute over all or some of the amount owed.

I extend an offer to the council or councillors individually to discuss any of my concerns in this matter.

Madam President, as you know, I've had about 15 years' experience as a bean counter (accountant) and we are not known for emotion or scare tactics.

But one thing that comes out of this report that puts the writing on the wall is the shire's ability to recover debt given the poor reflection in this report on the council's management of legal expenses.

**Mr Panizza is a Nunile farmer, qualified accountant, former Toodyay Shire councillor and shire audit committee chair 2006-2013.*

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Train nearly hits track trespasser

Police Beat

With Acting Sgt Kevan French
Toodyay Police Station



A FREIGHT train narrowly missed hitting a 4WD vehicle in the Toodyay townsite last month when the driver tried to cross the rail line illegally and got bogged.

The locomotive engine driver said he missed the stranded white Toyota Landcruiser (pictured right) by less than a foot (30.5cm).

The engine driver immediately made an emergency call to police to say that a man with a torch had tried to wave him down at about 10.30pm on Sunday October 4.

However, the fully laden goods train was travelling too fast to stop.

Police arrived at the scene soon after and found a Coondle man in his mid-30s who appeared to be affected by alcohol.

The man was identified as the vehicle owner and had the ignition keys with him but said someone else had been driving.

His vehicle had travelled west from the visitor information bay onto the railway reserve before getting bogged in soft ground on a sloping angle while trying to cross the rails illegally behind the Toodyay Community Centre in Stirling Terrace.

The driver had tried to take a short cut, the vehicle owner said.

There was no sign of anyone else at the scene.

The busy east-west rail link was closed for four hours while local police tried to free the bogged vehicle with a tow rope.

When that proved unsuccessful, a Northam towing company was called to clear the line at about midnight.

Part of the railway ballast had been dug out by the bogged vehicle's wheels and an engineer from Perth had to be called to inspect the track before the line was declared



The east-west rail link was closed for four hours after a train nearly hit this bogged vehicle.

safe to be re-opened at about 2.30am.

The vehicle owner was not breath tested due to lack of proof that he was the driver.

Arc Infrastructure, which operates the railway line and manages the rail reserve access track, declined to press charges for trespass.

No police charges were laid but the Landcruiser owner had to pay \$400 for the Northam tow truck call-out.

Toodyay police wish to remind local residents that railway access tracks are not open to the public and offenders can be charged with trespass – or face other costs.

Double trouble

TWO MOTORISTS were each immediately disqualified from driving for two months after blowing in excess of 0.08 when stopped by Toodyay police last month.

A blood alcohol content of 0.08 per cent is equivalent to drinking about four or five pints of full-strength beer in two hours.

The first driver – a man in his mid-20s –

was stopped for a random breath test at about 10.20pm in Telegraph Road and charged with drink driving after his car was seen parked outside a local hotel.

A week later he was again stopped on Telegraph Road and charged with driving while under suspension.

This time his car was automatically seized by police and impounded at a Northam towing yard.

The cost to retrieve it was about \$1000 plus fines for the two offences.

The man did not test positive when breathalysed for the second offence.

The second drink driver last month was a woman in her 40s who Toodyay police stopped for speeding in Northam at 6.35pm.

She was charged with driving at 28km/h more than the townsite speed limit of 50km/h and driving with a blood alcohol content of more than 0.08 per cent.

The woman said she had been drinking at home before being stopped by police.

As the weather warms up, we'll be doing more random breath tests on local roads.

The message is "don't drink and drive".

Pot plants pinched

A SPOT of illicit gardening has landed a Coondle man in court to face a charge of cultivating an illegal drug in his backyard.

Toodyay police visited the man's house with a Misuse of Drugs Act search warrant last month after receiving a tip-off about his illegal fledgling crop.

They found eight small cannabis plants (pictured left) growing in three pots.

It is a criminal offence in Western Australia to possess, use, manufacture, cultivate or supply an illicit drug.

The man aged in his 60s said he had been growing the drug for his own use.

Toodyay residents are reminded that they can report any information they may have about illegal activity to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or call Toodyay Police Station on 9574 9555.

All information will be treated confidentially.



Illegal plants found after a tip off.

Design principles can deter crime

SaferToodyay
Wayne Clarke

IN 2010 SaferToodyay Inc. formed a working group to develop Toodyay's first Community Safety and Crime Prevention Plan (CSCPP) in consultation with relevant individuals, community organisations and government.

The working group ensured strategies were consistent with the needs of the community, and with government plans and priorities.

The CSCPP had two priority areas – 'core' and 'strategic' with the 'core' addressing the symptoms of crime and the 'strategic' focusing on the causes.

One strategic priority looked at building a safer physical environment.

This could be achieved by Designing Out Crime (DOC) or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

Developed in America around 1960 CPTED and is now universally used to eliminate criminal opportunities in and around properties.

There are many aspects to DOC and in 2006 the WA Planning Commission set DOC planning guidelines that adapt environmental design principles for crime prevention.

These can be found on the WAPC website, where the guidelines note:

"The planning and design of places, spaces and buildings can assist in reducing crime by the application of improvements to lighting, fencing, landscaping and surveillance of the area from buildings and land use.

"People's behaviour, particularly in terms of the possibility of offending, as well as an individual's perception about their safety, can be influenced by the design of that environment. Good design can reduce opportunities for offending and improve feelings of safety.

"A mix of uses, different building designs and the creation of vibrant and inviting town centres are all effective tools in the fight against crime."

It can be argued that CPTED creates a higher level of fear of crime.

Building walls around subdivisions enhances that fear and it can be argued that crime is a social problem not a technical one.

Some simpler approaches, particularly where it's not feasible or cost effective to modify an existing home, could be the planting of prickly plants outside windows or areas where burglars could gain entry.

The Neighbourhood Watch principle of 'neighbours looking after neighbours' is another effective approach.

Immediately reporting suspicious activity in your street or neighbourhood to police or Crimestoppers will also add significantly to your ultimate protection.

Whether you subscribe to DOC or more simple approaches is entirely up to you, but for a SaferToodyay you need to think about adopting one or the other.

To report suspicious activity ring Crimestoppers on 1800 333 000 or visit crimestopperswa.com.au or call the police on 131 444.

Report graffiti by phoning 1800 442 255 or go to goodbye.graffiti.wa.gov.au/.

For further information contact safertoodyay.org.au/.

Scamwatch reports hike in bogus emails

Computer Safety
Phil Hart

SCAMWATCH has reported a rise in the number of scam emails arriving in people's inboxes in recent months.

Scammers have also been changing their tactics in the face of ever more robust computer security mechanisms.

Your best defence is still to be careful about everything that appears in your inbox.

Here is a look at some of the common nasties that are now appearing.

Documents as attachments now include links to booby-trapped web sites.

This is not just in Word documents but also includes PDF documents.

Some emails have links that go to fake web sites as well as booby-trapped web sites.

Conspiracy theorists are now trawling through publicly available email addresses, digging out people's occupations and sending out alarmist emails.

The same thing is happening with fake news.

Fraudsters are breaking into people's email accounts and sending bogus requests for money to finance departments, accountants and treasurers.

Such emails appear to come from friends, colleagues and business partners.

Some emails are aimed at making you doubt your own memory by using phrases like "as previously discussed" and "in response to your earlier email" as a lead-in to a scam or phishing attempt.

October and November are favourite months for phishers claiming to be from the Australian Taxation Office.

As well as having a security app installed on your device, there are a number of additional things that you can do to protect yourself.

Check that the sender's email address is correctly spelled; ato.gov.au is legitimate but ato.gov.ar is not.

If there is a reply-to address, check that it also is correctly spelled.

Check the contents of the message. Were you expecting it and is it about the same sort of things that you usually get from the sender?

Check that any links in the email match the text of the link before you follow it.

If the link text is janes.com.au but the link goes to wordpress.com, then it is bogus.

Check for spelling mistakes and bad grammar and avoid opening any attachments unless you are sure that they are legitimate.

If in doubt, call the supposed sender of the email.

Happy surfing.

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EMERGENCY SERVICES

More firies urgently needed

Bejoording Volunteer Bushfire Brigade

From the desk of The Badger

BEJOORDING brigade remains in urgent need of new volunteer firefighters as we enter what is expected to be an exceptionally high-risk local fire season.

As advertised in last month's *Herald*, our current shortage of local volunteer firefighters means we may not be able to attend emergency call-outs if there is nobody available to respond.

It may take an extra 20 minutes or more for volunteers to arrive from neighbouring brigades – if they are not already busy responding to call-outs elsewhere – and we all know how fast bushfires can spread, particularly in hot, dry, gusty conditions which are common in summer.

Last month's shire warning in *The Herald* about the lack of soil moisture after a dry winter, forecasts of hot dry weather and generally adverse conditions makes us all very aware of the potential for a busy fire season.

Some of our volunteers are fly-in fly-out (FIFO) workers who can respond to daytime call-outs when others are at work, but these members are available only part-time due to job commitments for extended periods at remote worksites elsewhere.

This makes it hard to produce local rosters to provide 24/7 firefighting protection.

Our recruitment drive has not been very productive so far, but we were at least able to find a couple of prospective volunteer

members for other brigades.

As our *Herald* advertisement said last month, "we need you to help us help you – this is a local issue and the solution is up to you."

"Please give some of your time to help keep us all safer."

We were lucky last month to have only three call-outs, two of which were stand-downs and the third, a local burn-off that got out of control but not serious.

Apart from our normal meeting and training session, most activity has centred around improvements to communications in the truck and the start of works to install improved fire shed washing facilities.

Our next regular meeting is on Friday November 20 at 6pm sharp at the shed.

The Bejoording Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade urges you to be vigilant and careful using any tools or vehicles that may cause a fire during the Prohibited Burning Period which started on November 1.

All outdoor fires of any description are now banned.

Please remember to have a clear contingency strategy in place to respond to any local bushfire emergencies.

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 brigade captain Brian Rigby on 0417 984 324 or The Badger on 0414 250 484.

Please leave a message if we're not there.



From left: DFES Commissioner Darren Klemm, Toodyay Shire President Rosemary Madacsi, Morangup brigade captain and SES local Manager Jeff Venn and Minister for Emergency Services Francis Logan unveil Morangup Co-location Emergency Facility.

Many hands build new facility

Morangup Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

Jeff Venn, Captain

ON OCTOBER 11 we had the official opening of the extensions and upgrade of the old fire station to the new Morangup Co-location Emergency Facility.

This building now serves as the base for the Morangup Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade and Toodyay State Emergency Service (SES).

We would like to thank the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) for the funding, the Toodyay Shire and especially Community Emergency Services Manager Rob Koch for organising the build.

The brigade has been going since about 1980, originally in a one-bay shed.

In about 1994 many volunteers built a four-bay station and in 2014 some DFES funding was received and once again the station was upgraded with huge support from many suppliers including Boral and Midland Brick. Mick Lee did brick work, Valdis Taukulis

general building, and Kim Maddrell coordinated with help of many volunteers such as Mark Briggs.

We would like to thank them all for their contribution.

In 2020 the station was upgraded this time by DFES and the Toodyay Shire then went to work organising the build. Thank you to all involved.

We also thank the Minister for Emergency Services Francis Logan, DFES Commissioner Darren Klemm, Toodyay Shire President Rosemary Madacsi and Toodyay Shire CEO Suzie Haslehurst for officially opening the new facility.

Morangup brigade captain and Toodyay SES local manager Jeff Venn and brigade deputy Kim Maddrell took the guests on a guided history tour which showed the various stages of the building's progress.

A huge thank you to all the volunteers from the Morangup Bush Fire Brigade and the Toodyay SES for their continuing help and attendance on the day.



From left: Wade Robson, Tegan Martin and Corrie Murcott. Photo: Lou Kidd.

When the pager goes off – we'll be ready to roll

Julimar Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade

Karen Dore

BRIGADE members recently gathered en masse on a sunny Sunday to smile for the annual crew photos.

Afterwards firefighters gave both fire trucks a detailed once-over.

The brigade's auxiliary members gave the fire shed a thorough pre-season clean and restocked the fridge, freezer, pantry and ration packs.

The morning's hard work was rewarded with a tasty outdoor barbecue lunch, a fantastic example of the high quality catering which the brigade supplies to the fireground when called upon.

So, the Julimar brigade is prepared for the 2020-2021 fire season which commenced at the beginning of last month.

With equipment at the ready and the volunteer roster finalised we are ready to serve you, our community, when the pager goes off.

The question is – are you ready?

Do you know when to leave?

Where you will go?

Which way will you head?

If you don't know the answers to any of these questions, consider taking Department of Fire Emergency Service's quick questionnaire at [dfes.wa.gov.au /firechat/ Pages/default.htm](https://dfes.wa.gov.au/firechat/Pages/default.htm).

These six questions will steer you towards the best Bush Fire Plan template for you and your family, including helping you decide whether you want to leave early or stay and defend in the event of a bushfire.

Signing off until next month.

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EMERGENCY SERVICES

All outdoor fires now banned

Rob Koch
Community Emergency Services
Manager



Local Community Emergency Services Manager Rob Koch.

ALL OUTDOOR fires are now banned under a shire-wide prohibited burning period that took effect from November 1.

This means no burning off of vegetation or other waste material, and no outdoor camping or cooking fires.

Gas-fired barbecues are allowed but not wood-fuelled hotplates mounted on drums or in other containers.

November 1 also marked the start of annual firebreak inspections by shire rangers.

Landowners were given until November 1 to comply with firebreak notices issued to all local ratepayers by the Shire of Toodyay in August and advertised in *The Toodyay Herald*.

Firebreaks are required by law to comply with minimum standards for width and height to enable safe access for emergency fire trucks and crews – they are not intended to stop fires.

Buildings are required to be free from overhanging branches and any surrounding dense vegetation according to fuel-load limits specified in the firebreak notice.

The shire may grant some properties in steep terrain a firebreak ‘variation’ where clearing a firebreak may be physically impractical.

However, buildings on these properties are still required to be cleared of overhanging branches and comply with surrounding fuel-load limits.

Landowners can apply to the shire for a firebreak notice variation which will remain current until the property is sold or otherwise varied by the shire.

If you have already been granted a firebreak variation for your property, you don’t need to re-apply for it each year.

New owners who want to obtain a variation must lodge a fresh application to the shire.

Rangers are now conducting random checks throughout the shire to ensure compliance.

They have a legal right under State law to enter properties without the owner’s consent.

Owners of non-compliant properties face a \$250 infringement notice for a first offence.

Continued non-compliance after a first infringement notice can result in the shire

a welder during a total fire ban caused a fire which led to an infringement notice.

Notices about total fire bans are given on ABC regional radio and online at emergency.wa.gov.au.

The shire may also declare ‘Harvest Vehicle Movement’ and ‘Hot Works Ban’ on high-risk days.

These bans are based on temperature, dryness of the air and wind speed.

No harvesting or vehicle movement across paddocks is permitted, and hot works such as welding, angle grinding or any kind of outdoor mechanical cutting that could cause sparks are banned.

Residents can get free shire SMS notices of harvest and hot works bans by texting ‘bans’ to 0408 017 439.

The onus is on landowners to check for any bans before conducting any activities which may be prohibited.

Our ability to fight fires depends entirely on volunteers.

Bejoording is one of the key areas in the shire where more volunteers are needed (*see story Page 7*).

Fire-fighting rosters covering normal business hours are typically the hardest to fill.

Fly-in fly-out workers are often available to fill these slots but may also be away for extended periods at remote worksites.

Anyone interested – regardless of availability – is encouraged to contact their local volunteer bush fire brigade or the shire.

The numbers are:

- Bejoording – 0417 984 324 or 0414 250 484,
- Coondle-Nunile – 0427 290 562,
- Julimar – 0419 102 870,
- Morangup – 0417 714 798,
- Toodyay Central – 0439 998 808, or
- Shire of Toodyay – 9574 9300.

Finally, now is the time to review your bushfire survival plan and ensure that everyone living at or visiting your property fully understands the plan.

Remember – listen to ABC local radio or check emergency.wa.gov.au emergency warnings.

Whatever your plan, acting early is important for your safety this fire season.



Murray McGregor.

Firefighting drive earns a gong

A NORTHAM volunteer fire fighter instrumental in establishing a new bushfire brigade and recruiting 21 firefighters in just eight months has been recognised at this year’s WA Firefighting Awards.

Northam Central Bush Fire Brigade Captain Murray McGregor recently received the Murray Lang Bush Fire Service Award in recognition of his pivotal role in the volunteer brigade’s tremendous growth since its formation in October 2019.

Bringing his 20-year experience as Captain of Irishtown Bush Fire Brigade, Murray McGregor expanded the newly formed Northam Central Bushfire Brigade from three to 24 members and ensured the new brigade was visible to the community by conducting training exercises which contributed to recruitment efforts.

Mr McGregor also identified a leadership team and stepped up their training, enabling the brigade to support emergency call-outs.

Under Mr McGregor’s leadership, the brigade has become one of the most capable and well-resourced in the region.

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More money for local roads

THE FEDERAL Government has approved funding of \$398,000 to the Shire of Toodyay and \$541,406 to the Shire of Northam as part of a \$1.5 billion program to improve local roads and community infrastructure.

- The Toodyay money will be spent on:
- Widening, reconstructing and sealing 1.8km of Hall Road – \$235,000;
 - Resealing several sections of Toodyay Bindi-Bindi Road – \$115,000 and,
 - Resurfacing existing footpath on Clinton Street and minor footpath extensions on Clinton, Hamersley and Duke Streets – \$48,695.

Successfully funded projects in the Shire of Northam totalling \$541,406 include:

- Resealing and reconstructing Werribee Road,
- Lyon Street, resealing/reconstruction and kerb, and
- Wellington Street, reconstructing asphalt and kerb.

Further information about the local Roads and community infrastructure is available online at investment.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure_investment/local-roads-community-infrastructure-program/.

Historic dive christens Toodyay's long-awaited new pool



LEFT: Local historian Milton Baxter was the first swimmer to dive into Toodyay's new public pool last month. ABOVE: The deep end was a bit chilly at 9am but the pool is expected to be heated by July next year.

Council defers response to inquiry report

Continued from Page 1.

"THE INQUIRY report doesn't address half of the concerns, and when the community sees this response it reads like 'tick and flick' and shows no forward path on how this council can be better," Cr Bell said.

New Cr Mick McKeown said Point 3 of the inquiry's recommendations "asks the CEO to do the impossible" by delivering a "comprehensive report that demonstrates the

knowledge and understanding I gained from the training".

"I don't know how the CEO can possibly do that," he said.

Ms Haslehurst's recommended response to WA Local Government Minister David Templeman was moved by Cr Susan Pearce and seconded by Cr Phil Hart.

It was defeated 6-1 with only Cr Hart in favour and Crs Therese Chitty and Paula

Greenway absent on approved leave.

Cr Bell seconded Deputy President Ruthven's alternative motion that the council defer its response to enable further discussion at a workshop before holding a special council meeting to vote on the outcome.

The motion was carried 7-0 and requires the council to finalise its response to the inquiry report by Tuesday November 17 when a 35-day statutory deadline expires.

LETTERS

Continued from Page 4.

OJ' Blind Joe just can't see

ALONG with probably the majority of regular *Herald* readers, I can't be bothered reading the Marxist propaganda of OJ' Blind Joe (OBJ) each month; his by-line is appropriate and his other faculties are also questionable.

However, Alan Henshaw's letter last month in response to OBJ's previous pro-China diatribe prompted me to have a glance at the column.

Then a local farmer whose business is being severely damaged by the Chinese barley tariff told me of his grave concerns that a well-respected Wheatbelt newspaper should express support, and even adulation for the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

A glance was all it took to convince me *The Herald* should check Mr Hamilton's contributions for veracity before publishing his outlandish statements and incoherent misinformation.

Mr Hamilton's latest preposterous claim is that Australia, as a result of fear and loathing of China drummed up by the Australian Policy Institute, "has ordered \$470 billion worth of submarines and F-35 warplanes and wants to acquire a new long-range missile capability to confront China ...".

That outrageous lie is dangerous and must be withdrawn.

The truth is that Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison recently announced a commitment to spend \$270 billion over the next 10 years on defence capabilities; not \$470 billion on planes and submarines as stated by OBJ.

It is a fact that former PM Kevin Rudd's Australian Labor Party (ALP) defence minister John Faulkner announced on 25 November

2009 that the ALP government had ordered the first batch of fourteen F-35s at a cost of \$3.2 billion.

He also announced that the purchase of a further 58 would be considered in 2012.

Australia has now ordered the 72 aircraft at a unit cost of about \$A108 million.

The Morrison Government has ordered no more.

It is a fact that in 2007 Mr Rudd's defence minister, Joel Fitzgibbon, directed his department to produce a white paper which was tabled in 2009.

Key elements were based on the assumption that "China will become increasingly dominant in Australia's region and that Australia cannot rely on the US for protection" and, that the Royal Australian Navy is planned to undergo significant expansion and replace the current six Collins-class submarines with 12 new submarines.

Australia ordered these 12 submarines several years ago.

It has been admitted at a recent budget estimates committee that the costs of these 12 submarines, now not due in service until the mid-2030s, has blown out from a unit cost of \$50 billion to \$80 billion.

The Morrison Government has not ordered any more.

Maybe Mr Hamilton may now like to inform us what long-range missiles we will be buying for \$470 billion because it is certainly not being spent on submarines and warplanes.

Next to Mr Hamilton's whitewash and defence of the CCP's 'Vocational Education and Training Centres' which, operating outside of the legal system, incarcerates Muslims, Christians and people of any other religion.

Researchers have used satellite imagery, witness accounts, media reports and official construction tender documents to classify the

detention facilities into four tiers depending on the existence of security features such as high perimeter walls, watchtowers and internal fencing.

It found at least 61 detention sites had seen new construction and expansion work in the year to July 2020.

As the Western World's condemnation of the incarceration of hundreds of thousands if not millions of Xinjiang Uyghurs mounted, the CCP allowed ABC and BBC journalists to visit

a couple of the 'schools'.

Security fencing in previous images had been removed and 'barracks' sanitised.

Strangely enough, everyone interviewed by the journalists sang from the same hymn-sheet: "I have deeply understood my mistakes and vow to be a better citizen when I go home."

To any normal person, Mr Hamilton, that does look a little like unlawful detention and brain-washing.

Geoff Appleby
Toodyay



TENDERS ARE INVITED

Tender No.: TEN03 / 2020

The Shire of Toodyay invites tender submissions to undertake cleaning services of Shire of Toodyay Facilities for a three year period commencing February 2021.

Deadline: Wednesday, 2 December 2020 at 2:00pm (AWST)

Tender documents and contract requirements are available from the Shire of Toodyay Tenderlink website - www.tenderlink.com/toodyay

For tender enquiries: records@toodyay.wa.gov.au

Tenders can only be lodged using the E-Tendering portal:

www.tenderlink.com/toodyay

Submissions will NOT be accepted in any other form.

Tenderers will be required to attend a compulsory site visit on:

Thursday, 12 November 2020.

All electronic submissions must be clearly named with the Tender No. and lodged by the specified closing date and time.

Suzie Haslehurst
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Registered Repairer MRB6464

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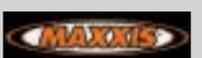
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Bam Bam riders bring gifts

Toodyay Locals Care (TLC) provided food and drinks for the inaugural Bam Bam charity motorcycle ride when 130 bikes arrived at the town's IGA carpark. Every 'Bam Bam against bullies and abuse' rider brought a gift for children in need, and nearly \$300 was raised to help pay for a new kitchen ceiling and insulation at TLC's new Fiennes Street premises. TLC thanks everyone who helped.

Shire's many failings were 'much as we expected'

Toodyay Progress Association
Brian Foley, Chairman

WELL, it has finally happened, the Report into the Inquiry of the Toodyay Shire has been formally released by the Department of Local Government.

A copy can be found on the shire website or for those unable to access it online, the shire can provide a hard copy on request.

It is much as we expected. The former Shire CEO Stan Scott wears much of the blame, but the councillors of the day are noted to have had many failings in administering their responsibilities.

The inquiry came about after 18 months of the Toodyay Progress Association (TPA) trying to get our council to follow the law and regulations.

While we are grateful the inquiry occurred and the result is significantly underwhelming, the claims made by the TPA have been validated by the outcome.

The TPA was lambasted by councillors, shire administration and various community members, but since the report was published

these voices have been very quiet and rightly so.

Most of the information that underpins the inquiry report was provided in a detailed 354-page submission made by the TPA and I wish to publicly thank former chair Larry Graham and secretary Geoff Appleby for their tireless work during this period.

Larry has written a seven-page Comments on the Report which reviews the 25 findings and if anyone would like a copy each councillor has one or contact me by email at brianrobynfoley@gmail.com.

The major item in the report was the \$500,000 lawsuit and findings were:

Finding 01: The minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 19 February 2013 did not comply with regulation 11(da) of the Local Government (Administration) Regulations 1996, as they did not provide written reasons for a decision that is significantly different from the Chief Executive Officer's written recommendation in relation to the Merrick matter.

Finding 02: The CEO has failed to keep Council abreast of costs of litigation of the Merrick matter thus not enabling Council to make informed decisions regarding the matter.

The recommendations in the report are that all councillors undergo training, which they already do as part of the regulations, and that the CEO reports on this to the department.

The previous councillors undertook this training and that did not ensure that they adhered to the law, procedures or policy, so how will it now change?

We await our council advising the ratepayers how this will be done.

At the October Ordinary Council meeting it was agreed to ask the Department of Local Government to address council to assist them in reviewing the recommendations of the report. This should help and improve the way forward for council.

The one thing we have seen over the months is that council is aware that they must have a very good reason to vote against a policy, and generally councillors in a response, comment to all that voting in a particular way will be going against a policy, so that is an improvement that is noticeable.

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.

Inquiry report puts end to uncertainty



President's Pen
Rosemary Madácsi

Although the outcome was not flattering, it was finally known.

Recriminations serve little purpose, however, it would be remiss of me not to acknowledge the distress the failings of our local government has brought to our community over the years.

It is also necessary to recognise the service of those community members, councillors and staff who over the years endeavoured to instil the good governance and fiscal management our community is entitled to receive.

I am grateful to all those who recognised the inadequacies and 'did something'; it was not an easy choice and for many it was at considerable personal cost, but this spirit is also the strength of our community.

Council has a moral obligation to

acknowledge the report findings and to take heed, to enact needed change and rebuild trust.

The Office of Auditor General will now undertake shire audits from the 2020/2021 financial year which may unfortunately increase costs.

As mentioned in my last article, October opened with a celebration of the completion of the Old Gaol restoration works, enriched by the attendance of WA Governor Kim Beazley and his enthusiasm for local history and his personal connection to a Toodyay convict ancestor.

Mid-month two important additions to our volunteer fire and emergency services were opened by the Minister for Emergency Services Francis Logan and Darren Klemm, Commissioner of Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES).

Credit for the smooth outcome of these recent works must be given to the shire's Community Emergency Services Manager Robert Koch who project-managed both builds and was a strong advocate for the volunteers' needs.

The newly completed Coondle-Nunile Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade base at the Coondle silos is an excellent, innovative improvement from the traditional fire shed design and a big change from the original home of 27 years the brigade occupied on Coondle West Road.

It was hard for many to leave and required a great deal of patience during the transition. I hope their new home will serve them well – congratulations to all.

The Morangup Co-location Centre extensions were also opened. This is a testimony to the will and outstanding work and ingenuity of volunteers in transitioning from their one-bay shed of the early 1980s.

Through a succession of mostly self-funded builds, the one-bay shed morphed into four bays around 1994, was enlarged again in 2014 and finally with DFES funding in 2020, to a seven-bay fire and State Emergency Services base.

Congratulations Morangup – you epitomise community spirit.

The importance of these upgrades to our volunteers is significant and our volunteers' value to our community cannot be overstated; they are simply fantastic and we are truly fortunate.

Recent changes saw the completion of the new CCTV network with 41 cameras and shire rangers now issuing warnings before a fine.

Nearly three years ago, Swan Gravel/Trico Resources on Toodyay Road near Morangup applied to Mundaring Shire Council to increase gravel extraction from 40,000 to 950,000 tonnes a year with increased vehicle movements from 20 to 132 per day.

Toodyay's submission in 2018 requested stringent conditions be applied to the operation, so it was gratifying to hear the application was rejected, although it most likely will be appealed.

Just a reminder that soil moisture levels are low for this time of the year which means there is more fuel available, so please be mindful of activities which could cause a fire.

Make time to try the new pool – it's a fantastic asset for the whole community.

President's Pen

Cr Rosemary Madácsi

THE ENERGY in our community continues, the pool is open and the release of the Toodyay Inquiry Report on October 13 has brought some necessary clear air to accompany the nice weather.

The release of the long-awaited Toodyay Inquiry Report into the Shire of Toodyay brought relief and an end to uncertainty.



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IN MOORE WITH LOVE

The response to **Shane Love's Moore Community Grants** was overwhelming, with applications coming from all corners of Moore and for a great variety of causes. Locally the Toodyay Tennis Club and Toodyay Bowling Club will benefit from funds. Unfortunately I could not fund all projects but the quality of the applications was a sure sign of the fantastic work that supports and enriches the lives of Moore residents. 2020 has been an extraordinary year and I am pleased to be able to recognize the hardworking volunteer and not-for-profit organizations that make such a difference in our community.

A report detailing the findings of the Inquiry into the **Shire of Toodyay** was tabled in Parliament on 13 October. The report detailed 25 findings and five recommendations. I hope the community can now move forward with optimism. I look forward to the opening of the **Toodyay Recreation Centre** on 21 November, the culmination of many years of planning and work. Certainly the opening is very timely given the hot weather of late.

The Nationals WA descended on Albany for their annual state conference on 16 and 17 October where they reaffirmed their determination to restore the integrity of **Royalties for Regions**. Labor have ravaged the transformational regional development program at the expense of the whole State. The latest budget shows \$2.7 billion has been ripped from the \$4.2 billion Royalties for Regions program. WA should not miss the opportunity recovering from the current crisis can present – we need to hit *restart and refresh* in the regions.



Shane Love MLA
Member for Moore

THE NATIONALS

Toodyay gets tick of approval in public schools' review

Toodyay District High School
David Ball, Principal

TOODYAY District High School recently underwent a Public School Review.

All WA public schools are reviewed by the Department of Education's Public School Accountability Directorate.

The review gives assurance to the local community, the Minister for Education and Training and the Director-General about the performance of public schools in delivering high-quality education to its students.

The school was asked to show examples of achievement across the six domains of Relationships and Partnerships, Learning Environment, Leadership, Use of Resources, Teacher Quality and Student Achievement and Progress.

The review acknowledges our achievements in each of these domains.

The principal provides the review team with a self-assessment of the school's performance based on evidence from the school.

Information to be validated by the review team is considered before and during the school visit.

This forms the basis for the school review report and determines when the next review will occur.

The report is provided to the principal, the chair of the school council and the regional executive director.

The following aspects of Toodyay DHS school self-assessment process were commended.

The Electronic School Assessment Tool (ESAT) submission provided an understanding of the school's context, strategic and operational foundations and planned directions.

Preparation for the public school review was aligned to procedures being established for school self-assessment and improvement processes at the school.

A range of evidence regarding school practices and performance was selected for

analysis, and a significant proportion of staff provided input relating to evidence in the ESAT submission.

During the validation visit, a cross-section of school staff, students, parents and community members elaborated on the evidence and planning intentions described in the ESAT.

There is alignment between performance evidence, judgements and plans for improvement.

The school is very proud of its achievements and looks forward to continuing its school improvement journey to support the community of students at Toodyay District High School.



The new bike path is a big hit with local students.

Kindy kids hone their skills on new bike path

Toodyay District High School Parents & Citizens Association
Kelly-Anne Murray, President

KINDERGARTEN and pre-primary students kicked off term four with an expanded and safer path on which to hone their bike and scooter riding skills.

Completion of the bike path was made possible through a partnership between the school, the P&C and Regional Concrete and Landscape.

Seeing the smiles of students enjoying their new path reaffirms this worthwhile investment.

Future projects include resurfacing of the basketball court in the primary school, installation of lockers for secondary students, shade sails and a further upgrade to library facilities.

To help fund these and other worthwhile improvements, the P&C is launching Farming for Toodyay District High School (TDHS) – a collaborative effort to raise funds for the school through two initiatives.

'A tonne for TDHS' invites farmers to donate a tonne of grain to the P&C during harvest.

Farmers can donate grain to the P&C account no. 40549586 by contacting the CBH Grower Service Centre on 1800 199 083 or they can donate grain entitlements or the proceeds of a grain sale using LoadNet.

Windscreen stickers will be available soon to remind growers to donate to the school P&C.

The second initiative, A Share Crop for the TDHS, seeks to create a genuine share cropping arrangement.

The P&C with contributions from community organisations, farmers and local businesses will raise funds to contribute to

the costs of a share crop in 2021 and reinvest profits for future years.

If you can help in any way, we want to hear from you.

Toodyay District High School Parents & Citizens Association is also registered for the Containers for Change refund scheme (ID 10284860).

Eligible containers can be dropped in the collection bag/bin in the school's Kiss n Drop carpark at any time.

If you are dropping off at the Duke Street car park refund point on Tuesdays (or any other refund point) you can quote the scheme ID 10284860 to donate your refund to the P&C.

Together we can be part of the change and benefit students.

Please contact Kelly-Anne Murray at pandctoodaydhs@gmail.com or ring 0406 585 716 for further information.



The old path was in a dilapidated state.



General roles and responsibilities for verge maintenance

The Shire of Toodyay has prepared the following draft Policy and public comments are invited:

Verge Maintenance Policy

The purpose of the Policy is to define the general roles and responsibilities of verge maintenance within the Shire of Toodyay.

A copy of the draft Policy is available for inspection at the Shire's Administration Centre, 15 Fiennes Street and on the Shire's website at <https://www.toodyay.wa.gov.au/Home> under Open for Comment section.

Comments on the draft Policy may be submitted to the Shire in writing on or before Tuesday 1 December 2020.

Suzie Haslehurst
Chief Executive Officer

Tune in to local news

2J2AIR Community Radio Program guide

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.

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Morangup Matters
Jo Hart

MORANGUP Progress Association (MPA), like many other organisations, is cautiously restarting events since Covid-19 restrictions have been eased.

Coming up on Sunday November 29 we have the Morangup Christmas Markets Car Park Sale at Morangup Hall; sellers 8am, \$10 per bay and buyers 8.30am. Entry is \$2 per person and \$5 for families.

Come along and find that Christmas gift for the person who already has everything.

There will be a sausage sizzle and cold and hot drinks will be available.

Contact us via our Facebook page for more information, facebook.com/morangupmpa/.

The exciting news for Morangup last month was the official opening of the superb co-location centre for the Toodyay State Emergency Services (SES) and Morangup Bush Fire Brigade by the Emergency Services Minister.

Fabulous efforts by local volunteers over

many years have meant that Morangup now has incredible facilities for SES, bush fire brigade and the St John Ambulance Sub-Centre, all located adjacent to the community hall.

By the time this is printed we will be truly into fire season.

If you haven't already done so, it is time to wake up the EmergencyWA website and other warning systems that you may not have used much over winter.

We all hope for a fire-free summer for the community and our vullies.

The association is hoping to get our book exchange up and running outside the community hall in the next couple of months.

Our next regular Cuppa and a Chat is on Sunday November 11.

Check out our Facebook page (as above) where we regularly share items of local interest.

If you are a Morangup resident, please consider joining the MPA. Annual membership is \$10 per family.



Last year's event provided local groups with the opportunity to raise funds.

Footy, fish, fast cars unite locals

Bejoording Community Group News
From the desk of The Badger

OCTOBER was a pretty full month in terms of social events.

Footy and footy finals were in full swing and a big thankyou to those members who threw open their sheds and man caves to host the numerous televised games.

Crowds varied from half a dozen to maybe 30 or more but the atmosphere was terrific each time.

Earlier in the month we had our annual seafood feast at the shed.

Apart from two large golden snapper cooked whole on the barbecue there were mussels, prawns, calamari and a terrific seafood chowder.

There's no doubt that good food always brings the Bejoording locals together and our monthly feast nights are always popular.

Towards the end of the month there was another annual popular event, the gathering at the shed to spend all day watching the events including the main race at Bathurst in NSW.

There's no doubt that we have a committed group of rev-heads out here.

November may be a quieter month but we have the Melbourne Cup to get us started, so more on that next month.

I've said it before, but I'll say it again.

The Bejoording Community Group is a terrific bunch of people determined to get the most out of life and friendships and is always willing to help out if someone has a problem.

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.



From left: Steve O'Neill, Edward Ludemann, Lester Snooke, Todd Meston and Peter Mete.

Dazzling tutu caps off routine

Bolgart News
Pam McGill

LAST month Molly Snooke (10) represented Toodyay Ballet School at the Starlight Festival of Dance in Morley where she competed in five solo events and one troupe (coached and choreographed by Lani and Bonnie McGeady).

Molly was awarded first place for her classical ballet routine for which she wore an exquisite, gold bespoke tutu made by Barbara Deans which dazzled spectacularly under the stage lights.

She also received first place for her traditional Norwegian-national-style dance choreographed by principal artist and dancer for the Australian Ballet Company and Toodyay Ballet School patron Kevin Jackson.

Molly placed second for her acrobatic and lyrical performances and was awarded an honourable mention for her solo jazz routine.

She now undertakes rehearsals for the Toodyay Ballet School end-of-year concert which will be held on Sunday November 29 at Swan Park Theatre in Midvale.

Old school ties

A GATHERING of approximately 16 ladies of all ages who attended Toodyay schools recently met at the Bolgart Hotel for lunch.

There was lots of laughter and stories and everyone enjoyed the lovely lunch.

Ladies golf ends on high note

LADIES held their closing day on October 1 playing a very interesting game of Russian Pairs.

There was lots of laughter and after nine holes of golf a lovely luncheon was served with the winners of the day announced.

The winning pair was Jenni Knowles and Pam Meston, with runners-up Merle Manuel and Serena Syred.

Five ladies travelled to Pinjarra for the Ladies Amateur Open on October 10 and 11, and congratulations to Serena Syred on winning the C Division Gross event over the two days.

All the girls had a very enjoyable weekend.

Around the greens

LADIES held their opening day on October 8 with 10 ladies playing for the Club Trophy which was won by Dale McGill, Nolene Kaszanski and Deb Campbell.

Bolgart hosted Calingiri Men's Open Day on October 11 where 14 teams participated from Wanneroo, Wongan Hills, Ballidu, North Beach and Bolgart.

The winners from Bolgart were Steve O'Neill, Lester Snooke, Todd Meston and Peter Mete.

October 17 was Mixed Opening Day the KA and D Edmonds Trophy (Adrian and Dianne).

Ten pairs played and the winners were Edward Ludemann and Steve O'Neill with Lester Snooke and Dianne Edmonds runners-up.

Trophies from 2019/20 were presented as this couldn't take place during the pandemic.

Dale McGill is the 2019/20 Ladies Champion, with Jenni Knowles as runner-up.

The Leila Hogg Memorial Pairs winners were Dale McGill and Pam Meston, runners up Barbara Mottershaw and Pam McGill.

The Ladies Championship Club Triples was taken out by Jenni Knowles, Deb Campbell, and Merle Manuel. Runners-up Dale McGill, Lyn Sarchich and Lynda Veltman.

Men's Championship Pairs sponsored by Geoff Ludemann was won by Lester Snooke and Doug McGill. Runners-up Todd Meston and Geoff Ludemann.

Mixed Club Pairs sponsored by Phil and Terri Watson; winners, Peter Mete and Glenn McGill, runners-up Lester Snooke and Merle Manuel.



Molly Snooke in her sparkling tutu.

Bakery boy's visit recalls history

Susanne Ludemann

ON OCTOBER 14 former Bolgart resident George Rickson and his family visited the local hall and library.

Mr Rickson, a sprightly 96 year old, spent part of his childhood in Bolgart where his parents owned the bakery from 1920 to 1930.

Mr Rickson's father, who had trained as a baker in the UK, had come to WA early in the century with his parents.

The couple ended up in Toodyay where he was asked to come to Bolgart and "sort out the bakery".

It was an essential service for the town and north to Calingiri after the railway's extension.

The family sold the business in 1930.

It was great to have a few locals including Adrian and Dianne Edmonds, Pam Meston and Nancy Holmes share memories with Mr Rickson and his family.

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WA, NOVEMBER 25, 20

Grain price spike fuels cautious optimism

Toodyay Agricultural Alliance
Frank Panizza

THE 2020 grain harvest has just recently started with growers cautiously optimistic that crops will yield as good as they look.

Growing season rainfall has been well-below average in most parts of the shire.

Officially the ranking is a decile 1, or simply that on average, this year is in the driest 10 per cent of all years recorded since 1877.

Despite this most farmers believe their crops look better than expected, considering the very dry winter.

This is likely due to a combination of modern agricultural practices and the fact that rainfall was spread fairly evenly across the winter growing season and that there was no evidence of waterlogging of soils in winter.

Adding to the positive mood is the recent spike in grain prices, particularly wheat and canola.

Actual yields and grain quality will become evident as harvest progresses.

Some concern remains regarding grain quality which may have been affected by the sharp cut off of rain in late September.

Kelly-Anne Murray who farms with her husband Tyrone, has initiated a program with the Toodyay District High School P&C to raise funds for the school via an initiative called A tonne for TDHS.



A ripe canola crop ready for harvest on local farm. Photo: Frank Panizza.

“A tonne for the TDHS invites farmers to nominate a tonne of grain to the TDHS P&C’s CBH account during harvest.

“It’s a no-fuss way for farmers in our district to support students at TDHS,” Mrs Murray said.

“Simply call the Grower Service Centre on 1800 199 083 to arrange a transfer of grain to the P&C account no. 40549586, or growers can donate grain entitlement or the proceeds of a grain sale using the ‘donate’ facility under the ‘nomination’ tab in LoadNet.”

Mrs Murray said that windscreens stickers would be available before harvest to assist growers to recall the CBH number and remind them to donate to the school P&C.

In another initiative, the TDHS P&C is investigating the creation of a genuine share-cropping arrangement with a local farmer.

The P&C will raise funds to contribute to the costs of a share crop in 2021 and then reinvest profits for future years.

Mrs Murray hopes that the share-farmed crop would not only raise funds for the school facilities and resources but that the program would raise awareness of agriculture for the students.

“It would be especially rewarding if some of the students chose agriculture as their career in the future,” she said.

Further information may be obtained on pandctoodaydhs@gmail.com or ring Kelly-Anne on 0406 585 716.

A safety reminder that the harvest season will bring an increase in the movement of grain trucks and oversized agricultural equipment.

Awareness and courtesy should be shown by all road users during this busy time..

Quiz night proves a Show winner

Toodyay Agricultural Society
Alison Wroth

THE NIGHT to mark the day that the Show would have been held turned out to be a wonderful quiz night full of laughter, great games, crafty ideas and the odd question thrown in by quiz master Geoff Appleby just to ensure that the evening was an actual quiz night and not just one of pure fun.

Congratulations to everyone who won, either the winning table on the night or the wooden spoon, we know you had a great time and after many requests to do so we will consider holding a quiz night every year if the committee can arrange it.

A lot of dedication and hard work went into the organisation of the evening by the administration officer and committee. As we have never organised an event like it before, especially keeping to a Covid plan, I must thank them all for the support they gave the idea initially.

Extraordinary efforts went into the planning and just like organising the Show, we took our jobs when handed them and everything ran to plan, just like it does for the Show.

To our major sponsors Makit Toodyay Hardware and Farm, Toodyay and Districts Bendigo Community Bank, Toodyay Op Shop, Deepdale Farm, Shire of Toodyay and the local businesses and individuals who made donations to our raffles and silent auction, we give our heartfelt thanks.

You made the evening worthwhile and contributed so much to our fundraising efforts. So I hope that by the promotion we gave you on the evening, everybody did benefit from our event.

The outcome was a wonderful evening for those from the community who attended and among all the silent auction winners, raffle winners and actual winners of the quiz night the smiles on the faces showed us on the committee that we had achieved our goal to provide an event this year that included participation and enjoyment on every level.

The fundraising on the side that we gained through the support of sponsors and those who attended, will benefit and contribute to the ideas we have for the blockbuster 167th Toodyay Agricultural Show next year.

Just like other Show societies throughout Australia that had to cancel or postpone their event this year due to the pandemic, we are looking forward to returning to the Show already – I hope you are as well.

Keep an eye out for our new recycled shopping bags that are out on the streets now.

If you are interested in one of these classy bags for a Christmas present at \$10 each or if you are a member and you want to promote the Show, contact me on 0437 099 960 to purchase the bags.

They would make great gifts under any Christmas tree.



Visitors to the monthly Toodyay Farmers Market are spoiled for choice.

Lots to see and do at popular local markets

Toodyay Farmers Market
Sue Wakka

WELL, what a wonderful day it was for last month’s markets and we hope you enjoyed yourselves.

There was great music, great food and plenty of fresh goodies to be had as well as a wide choice of gift items.

Thanks for supporting all of our great local groups.

The rescued marsupials were a big hit, so we hope you popped in and learnt a little or supported the Marsupial Mamas and Pappas’ cause.

The RSL was available to have a chat –



The Shire’s new Community Development Officer Daniel Hobley with a little visitor from the Marsupial Mamas and Pappas stall. Photo: Jo Hart.

they run a Containers for Change program, so get behind them if you can.

Toodyay Locals Care supplied us all with delicious cake, helping their cause along, as did the Avon Valley Shotokan Club with their yummy tummy-warming treats.

Again, lots of fantastic stallholders. So we hope you managed to catch up with your favourites and checked out a few of the new ones.

There was a great choice for all from homewares, health, cleaning, gardening and gift lines galore.

If you missed it, watch out for this month’s market.

We are pleased to say we enjoy great support from the Toodyay Shire councillors and staff who are always available at every market for any questions and a friendly chat; so look them up next time.

Don’t forget our wonderful book-swap stall where that elusive book may just be waiting for you – always a favourite for many.

If you would like to get involved with this great market, the AGM is on Friday November 27 and we always need people.

The next market day is Sunday November 15. See you there.



Colourful displays of local produce.



Crs Phil Hart and Susan Pearce attended last month’s markets to chat to community members. Photo: Jo Hart.

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Heritage home grows over time

Toodyay Historical Society
Robyn Taylor

OUR OCTOBER excursion was a visit to the historic Buckland Estate in Irishtown.

Owner Russell Percival took us on a tour of this beautifully restored heritage-listed home which also operates as a function centre for weddings and retreats.

Buckland is one of the Avon region's earliest farming properties.

In 1836 Avon Location W consisting of 7986 acres was assigned to Charles Pratt, and in order to secure the property he sent his two employees, the Lockyer brothers, to undertake location duties.

They built a cottage, cleared land and established fruit trees and a vegetable garden.

After Pratt received the title to his land grant in 1841 his daughter Ann and husband James Maclean Dempster moved in.

Farm buildings were erected using local stone and as the Dempster family grew, the cottage was enlarged.

In 1876 the new two-storey Buckland House that we see today was finally completed and celebrated with a large gathering of family and friends.

The house is built in the Victorian Georgian style which complements its rural setting.

The simple and pleasing symmetry of this particular style, with a shady front verandah along the length of the building was popular throughout Australia during the 19th century

Over the years a number of owners have worked on restoring Buckland House, each adding to its amenities to create a place that is today quite frankly stunning.

Russell, the owner, related the experience of one guest from Tokyo who was astonished at the night sky.

He had never seen such stars before and was elated with his exciting discovery.

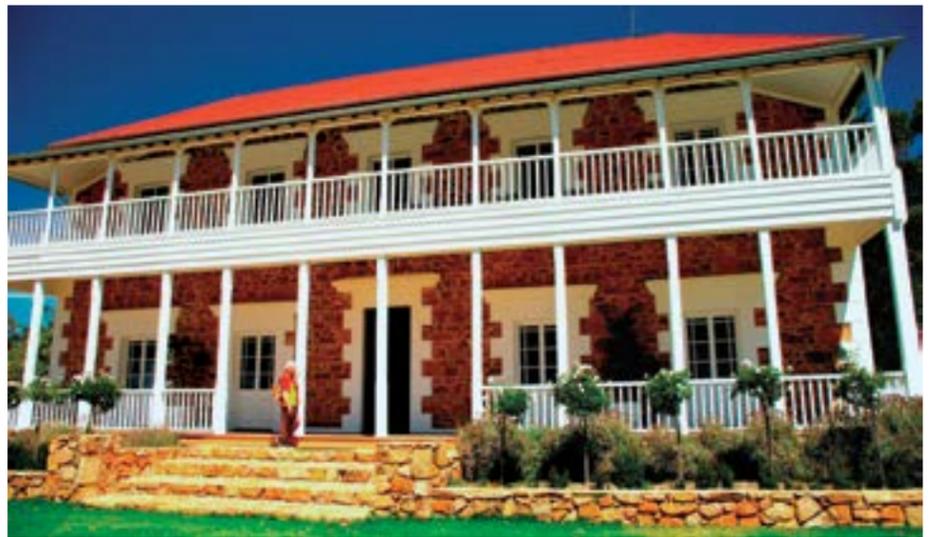
This is the beauty of living in the bush far from city lights.

From time to time we need to go outside at night to refresh our souls and renew our sense of wonder.

Our next general meeting is on Wednesday November 18 from 7pm in St Stephen's Anglican Church Hall.

The big event this month is our 40th anniversary. We will be celebrating with a dinner at the Freemasons on Wednesday November 25 with guest speaker Dr Robert Mattin who was our inaugural president in 1980.

On Saturday November 28 there will be an informal end-of-year 40th anniversary sundowner at Donegan's Cottage, starting at 6pm.



Club member Beth Frayne outside Buckland House. Photo: Lee Francis.

For the occasion, Jenny, Beth and Lee will be working on updating our 2007 Commemorative Booklet which covered the first 27 years of our society.

Donegan's Cottage remains closed to the public. Drummond House is now open between 10am and noon.

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

Write to PO 32 Toodyay WA 6566. Website: toodyayhistoricalsociety.org.au/. Annual membership is \$15.

Bishop urged squire to build church for farmers, workers

St Philip's Anglican Church Cemetery, Culham
Robyn Taylor

THIS delightfully situated rural church and cemetery can be found about 10.5km north of Toodyay on the Bindi Bindi-Toodyay Road just past Bindoon-Dewars Pool Road.

Originally known as the Toodyay Valley Church, the church and cemetery are located on land donated to the Anglican Church by Samuel Pole Phillips, a well-connected gentleman farmer who was known locally as Squire Phillips.

The story behind the building of this isolated church is interesting for the connections alluded to.

Phillips owned Culham, one of the earliest farming properties established in the Toodyay Valley and in 1847 he married Sophia Roe, the eldest daughter of Surveyor General John Septimus Roe who surveyed the future city of Perth in 1829.

Samuel Pole Phillips' sister Millicent was the wife of Bishop Augustus Short of Adelaide and in 1847 WA came under the new jurisdiction of the Diocese of Adelaide.

With official business to attend to in the colony, there were many visits between the two families and encouragement from the bishop for the squire to build a church for his workers and local farmers.

Short also encouraged Charles Harper, a lay preacher, to be ordained as Toodyay's first Anglican minister.

By 1849 materials for the stone and brick church had been assembled, including galvanised iron for the roof that had been imported from England, but with the Phillips' extended trips to England and Adelaide the building of the church was a drawn-out affair.

Although incomplete, St Philip's Church was opened for Divine Service on 15 May 1853.

The first burial took place in December 1860 following the tragic death of the Phillips' two-year-old son Newton Augustus Phillips.

Over the following years of fundraising, improvements were made but the church and a portion of the cemetery had to wait until 15 September 1895 before consecration was performed by Bishop C O L Riley.

The West Australian reported: "Processional hymns were sung in the graveyard and a special service was used."

"After declaring the cemetery duly set apart for ever for burial according to the rites of the Anglican Church, the bishop and chaplain, followed by the congregation, proceeded to the church singing the Old Hundredth hymn. Fully 200 people were present."

The churchyard and cemetery were fully consecrated in 1926 by the Archbishop of Perth Dr Charles Riley.

Over the next century, apparently due to concerns about diminishing space for future burials it was decided to limit burials to the descendants of the original parishioners.

One such descendant was Dawn Atwell (1927-2008) who ran Poll Hereford cattle on

her farming property Woodendale at Nunile (formerly Nunyle).

Though short and slight in stature her ability to toss bags of chaff and fertiliser onto a ute and her skills with working dogs and cattle were legendary.

Dawn's life-long passion for the natural environment was commemorated in 2011 with the establishment of the Dawn Atwell Reserve.

In 2015, a memorial garden was added to the cemetery.

Designed by local stonemason Stirling Hamilton, the garden is available to anyone wanting their ashes interred at Culham.

The church continues to provide special services as part of the Anglican Toodyay-Goomalling Parish making it one of the oldest active churches in the state.

A popular service is the annual Carols by Candlelight, made special by the fact the church has no electricity.

The service is held in the late afternoon, so there is time to wander through the cemetery.



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Sat & Sun 9:00am - 3:00pm	Sat & Sun 8.00am - 6.00pm

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Drummond Street, Toodyay WA 6566

Dual awards reflect years of active support

RSL Toodyay Sub-Branch
Heather Brennan

YOU MAY recall earlier this year I reported that our sub-branch had won the Colonel Collett Cup.

Due to Covid-19, the award presentation was postponed until September 26 at the RSLWA State Congress.

We were presented with both the Colonel Collett Cup and the 100 Years' National Certificate which our sub-branch celebrated in 2019.

These awards would not have been possible without such active membership participation and the support of the wider Toodyay community.

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

The award encompasses country sub-branches with more than 25 members and assesses all-round performance in governance, membership, welfare, commemorations, community activities and media.

We appreciate the tremendous support for our sub-branch at the recent Toodyay Farmers Market on October 18.

It was wonderful catching up with our friendly Toodyay community and so many of our members, and it was extremely enjoyable to see some members that we haven't seen for a while.

Our new collectable Remembrance Day stubby holders were very well received and our Containers for Change (CFC) business size cards were made available.

RSL Toodyay is excited to be participating in the CFC scheme.

If you would like to donate your refund for eligible containers, our scheme ID is C10299385.

All funds raised will go towards our Clinton Street property which will be our first permanent home in more than 100 years.

If you would like one of our CFC business size cards for easy convenience when dropping off containers you can collect one from us at any of our stalls.

We thank you in advance for any help you may give us with this fundraising.



Peter Brennan (president) and Heather Brennan (secretary) accept the Colonel Collett Cup and 100 Year's National Certificate.

The Poppy Day Appeal will be held on Friday and Saturday November 6 and 7 outside the IGA and we would love to see you.

Remembrance Day Service on Wednesday November 11 will be held at Anzac Memorial Park. Please arrive at 1030 for a 1040 start; all are welcome to attend.

Members are reminded that our Christmas Party is on Sunday December 6 at Toodyay Memorial Hall commencing at 1200.

Please be mindful that payment is due before Friday November 13 and there will be no door sales; your invitation has payment details.

The Christmas Party and Remembrance

Day are two opportunities to renew your affiliate memberships which are due on Friday January 1.

Members please note our next Ordinary General Meeting will be held next year on Saturday February 13 at Memorial Hall commencing 1300.

Please look after each other and stay safe.

Advertorial

Beck's in her element running new centre

A BIG welcome to Beck Foulkes-Taylor to the role of venue manager with Clublinks, overseeing the fantastic new Toodyay Recreation Centre.

Beck has been involved in the sports and recreation industry in the local region for more than 15 years.

Her experience ranges from many years as a swim instructor to senior gymnastics coach and most recently as duty manager of a local aquatic centre.

Wheatbelt born and bred, Beck has also worked in her family-owned wildflower farm in Bindoon.

She is clearly a woman with many talents.

With a passion for swimming, Beck spends most of her days either in a pool or surrounded by one, but her introduction to water was unorthodox.

Living on a sheep station in the Murchison when she was a young girl, she learnt to swim by telling her older sister she didn't need floaties and promptly jumped in.

She sank straight to the bottom. Nevertheless, Beck has loved the water ever since.

Open water events are her main calling, having swum Lake Argyle four times in a duo, completed the Busselton Swim four times since 2016, and the Port to Pub in 2018.

She trained for all of these events in a 25m pool.

Beck and her husband have two young girls (16 and 9 years old) who, like her, are avid swimmers and sports fans.

While Beck's passion is swimming, she is a budding amateur photographer and enjoys her downtime



Beck Foulkes-Taylor at the Toodyay pool.

reading a good book.

The opportunity to manage such a fantastic new facility as Toodyay Recreation Centre was too good to refuse, merging her love for sport with her vast experience in management.

Beck looks forward to working with the community to make this new centre a hub for the local residents and a great draw card for the beautiful town of Toodyay.

So, say "hi" to Beck when you next visit the centre or see her in the local area.

Award nominations open for defence forces veterans

LOCAL organisations which employ and support members of the veteran community, or veterans making a significant contribution to their workplace, can nominate for the 2021 Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Awards.

The awards are an opportunity to acknowledge and celebrate veterans, and the organisations which employ former Australian Defence Force members and their families.

For further information and to nominate visit the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program website.

Nominations close on Friday November 20.

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Tender No.: TEN 06 / 2020

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Deadline: Monday, 14 December 2020 at 2:00pm (AWST)

Tender documents and contract requirements are available from the Shire of Toodyay Tenderlink website - www.tenderlink.com/toodyay

For tender enquiries: Robert Koch on (08) 9574 9300 or by email: records@toodyay.wa.gov.au

Tenders can only be lodged using the E-Tendering portal: www.tenderlink.com/toodyay

Submissions will NOT be accepted in any other form.

Tenderers will be **required** to attend a compulsory site visit on: **Tuesday 10 November 2020.**

All electronic submissions must be clearly named with the Tender No. and lodged by the specified closing date and time.

Suzie Haslehurst
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Indigenous events to celebrate Australia's true history

Noongar Kaartdijin Aboriginal Corporation (NKAC)

AFTER a delay to the usual celebration in July, this year's NAIDOC Week will be from November 8-15.

NAIDOC Week celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In Toodyay during NAIDOC the Noongar Kaartdijin Aboriginal Corporation (NKAC) will have three large static information banners on display at the Toodyay Community Resource Centre courtyard from Saturday November 7 through to Wednesday November 11.

We encourage you to get down to the centre and take a look and learn about Noongar culture in this area.

If the weather is good, perhaps also head out to Redbank Pool in Lloyd Reserve (just two kilometres out of town on Toodyay Road) to view the interpretative artwork in the bird hide showing how Noongar lived in the area.

NAIDOC originally stood for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee.

This committee was once responsible for organising national activities during NAIDOC Week and its acronym has since become the name of the week itself.

Each year, there is a different NAIDOC theme and this year the theme is – Always Was, Always Will Be – recognising that first nations people have occupied and cared for this continent for more than 65,000 years.

NAIDOC 2020 invites all Australians to embrace and acknowledge the true history of this country – a history which dates back thousands of generations.

NKAC Chairperson Robert Miles, a Yued Noongar leader, said: "NAIDOC is a week to reflect on indigenous culture and for all Australians to take an opportunity to celebrate our traditional and contemporary ways and expressions through our stories, language, art, music, dance, foods, land management, history and survival.

"Permission is not required to fly the Aboriginal flag and we would love to see a few Aboriginal flags flying during NAIDOC week," Mr Miles said.

You can contact the NKAC via secretary Helen Shanks on email: hjshanks@bigpond.com/.



From left: President Maxine Walker, Maria Pepe, Pauline Crocker and Gina Butler.

Lock up and leave hall via front or kitchen doors

Country Women's Association Elizabeth Mansom

MANY thanks to all those who helped us raise money towards our hall renovations by purchasing raffle tickets and scones (what else at a CWA event?), cakes and Pauline's toffee apples.

Colin Kendall was the lucky winner of the wood raffle.

It has been a difficult year for organisations such as CWA to raise money and we are very appreciative of Toodyay's generosity.

The front of our hall is now repaired and safe and we are grateful to Josh Cook for attending to it so quickly and efficiently.

During the time the front doors were closed off, the side doors were found open on a number of occasions.

It appears people using the hall are leaving them open.

These doors are exit doors only and can only be secured from the inside.

We ask hall users to help us keep our hall secure by making sure the side doors are closed from the inside and leaving (and locking) the hall via the kitchen or front doors.

We have written about the State Conference in previous issues and there is yet another change to report.

We thought we were going to have to master webcasts and other alien concepts but the latest change will see us attend a one-day face-to-face conference in December.

Numbers will be limited and only those items on the agenda which, by law, we must attend to will be addressed.

Everything else has been postponed until the 2021 State Conference which we hope will be in the usual format.

Everyone is looking forward to the second Wednesday in December when we are going to have a day devoted to all things Japanese.

Japan has been the country of study this year and our International Officer, Margot, has delivered some very interesting talks on this country at our monthly meetings.

International Day will see us dressed as Japanese, eating Japanese and partaking in Japanese activities.

Christmas will be here in a flash and we are very much looking forward to our Christmas lunch at the Freemasons on Wednesday December 9.

We have invited our sister city branch Bayswater, although we're not sure which is the main attraction – us and lunch, or the Christmas Shop.

Another event we always take part in during December is the awards at the high school.

CWA provides the prize for the Year 8 home economics award and apart from the

monetary element, the lucky winner also gets a CWA cookbook.

Perhaps mum will appreciate that more than the recipient, at least until they are a bit older.

We must register our thanks to husbands and sons for small repair jobs around our hall, such as restoring running toilets and fixing locks.

You know who you are and so do we, and we speak of you very kindly.

CWA meets in the hall in Stirling Terrace every fourth Thursday of the month at 1pm.

There is plenty of parking in Charcoal Lane with disabled access at the side of the hall.

To book the hall please contact Meg Mills on 9574 2245.

Noongar Waangkiny
Noongar words and yarning

Sharmaine Miles Ballardong Elder

Mirda means red in Noongar

Noongar Waangkiny Elder Sharmaine Miles

Yellow circle – representing the sun, the protector and giver of life and,
Red – representing the red earth.

Words for the month

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| moorn – black | yoont – yellow |
| mirda – red | dordong – green |
| djendal – white | wooyan – blue |
| djedart – brown | |

KAYA (hello).

This month I would like to highlight some Noongar words for colours.

The meanings of the three colours in the Aboriginal flag are:

Black – representing the Aboriginal people of Australia;

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The new research area for visitors.

Herald column pays off

Volunteers of Toodyay Museums Barry Keens

IT PAYS off to contribute to *The Toodyay Herald*, as last month's article has produced a potential volunteer and more valuable donations.

We have been very busy over the school holidays and the Kids Fun Packs, made by Michelle, which we give away when they have answered one of the museum quizzes, have proven popular.

There has been an increase in tour coach visits, with more to come, as well as school groups.

We have rearranged the 'office' (old charge room) and added a desk and chair with reference material for visitors who want to do some research.

The highlight of the month was the visit by WA Governor Kim Beasley to the museum for morning tea provided by the volunteers.

Don't forget that admittance to the Toodyay Museums is free to residents of the Shire of Toodyay, so come and say hello.

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