

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Back in the saddle

Students' brush with the best

ANZAC centenary a landmark

Share your story

Christmas closures

Kicking up our heels

Water-watchers get to work

Pools open for the summer

Naturally better

Rates due



Hello, Dolly: New Loddon Shire Mayor Cr Gavan Holt on his Wedderburn farm with four-year-old Clydesdale Dolly.

Back in the saddle

Wedderburn ward councillor Gavan Holt has taken the reins as Mayor of Loddon Shire for the fifth time, succeeding Cr Geoff Curnow.

Elected by his fellow councillors in late October, Cr Holt was formally installed as Mayor for 2013/2014 at a statutory meeting in Wedderburn last month.

Cr Holt is a fifth-generation resident of the district who left for the "Big Smoke" as a 15-year-old and returned in his thirties. His family has a long history of local government involvement – his father and great-uncle were both long-serving councillors at the former Shire of Korong and he followed in their footsteps with his election to Loddon Shire Council in 2003.

Cr Holt was re-elected in 2005, 2008 and again last year. He served as Mayor from 2005 to 2007 and again from 2009 to 2011. In 2011, he was inducted as Mayor Emeritus by the Municipal Association of Victoria.

He also continues his duties as a Justice of the Peace.

After graduating from the University of Melbourne, Cr Holt has worked as an economics and accounting teacher, been a long-serving publican and is now a businessman with interests in farming, investments and hotels.

Cr Holt returns to the mayoral role intent on continuing the model of good governance developed in Loddon Shire since its formation in 1995.

"I've had a clear picture from the outset of what my job as councillor was – to take whatever steps possible to arrest our population decline, because once our communities fall below a critical mass they become unviable and enter terminal decline," he said.

"This is difficult because this decline is the trend across rural Australia.

continued on page 2

Students' brush with the best

Art and music have hit new heights in Council's youth activities this year, with the Shire's first street art tour of Melbourne, a Battle of the Bands final in Wedderburn, the Kool Skools CD launch in Pyramid Hill and more.

It's all thanks to the funding Council receives from the state government's FreeZA program, which allocated \$73,500 to Loddon for the three years to the end of 2015.

FReeZA activities give young people the chance to plan, organise and stage local music and arts events in a fully supervised drug, alcohol and smoke-free environment.

In Loddon, the 13-event program this year has been managed by five youth committees across the Shire – at Wedderburn, East Loddon, Pyramid Hill, Boort and Inglewood-Bridgewater – in conjunction with Council recreation officer Tony Bellenger.

"Typically, there are 10-15 young people on these committees and they are run out of the schools," Tony said.

"Past events have included movie nights, discos and socials, pool parties, the annual Kool Skools experience, art projects, talent quests, careers days, Battle of the Bands, skills training and youth mentoring."

A notable "first" this year was a highly successful trip to Melbourne in September, which saw 25 local students enjoy a city camp run by Melbourne Street Art Tours, the only business of its kind in Australia run by street artists.

The students, all aged from 13 to 17 years, spent three days in town accompanied by Tony and local teachers.

They tackled stencil artwork, junk sculpture, spray painting and a collaborative paste-up scene on a city wall, as well as seeing professional examples of these art forms on both the streets of Melbourne and at the National Gallery of Victoria.



Melbourne street artist Seth guides the Loddon group through Melbourne's decorated laneways.

Some of those students seized the chance to show their work at the subsequent Kool Skools event in Pyramid Hill, when they mounted an exhibition to run in conjunction with the college fete.

The family-friendly day also featured the launch of a CD, Try This on for Size, produced in Melbourne earlier this year by students from Boort, Wedderburn and Pyramid Hill secondary colleges.

Kool Skools is a recording and multimedia project for secondary students, which invites bands and solo performers to record an album of original music in Melbourne or Sydney, complete with their own photography, graphics and written material.

Other young musicians from across north-west Victoria gathered in Wedderburn in October for the Northern Country Regional Final of this year's Push Start Battle of the Bands.

Held at the Wedderburn town hall, the event showcased the talents of performers from Buloke, Hepburn, Macedon Ranges and Mt Alexander Shires and the cities of Ballarat and Bendigo.

For any enquiries about Council's youth programs, phone Tony Bellenger on 5494 1200.

Back in the saddle

from page 1

"The causes include farm reconfiguration, seepage to provincial cities – both in terms of people moving away and people going out for shopping and services – and changing demographics, with not enough young people to fill schools.

"So, what can Loddon do? Three things, I'd suggest: strong advocacy on behalf of our communities, a good Planning Scheme and boosting the attractiveness of our towns.

"The aim is to create lifestyle communities.

"So, how are we going in terms of our advocacy? Brilliantly, I'd say.

"One part of our income is rates, but the majority is external grant funding – and that's money that keeps coming because we do what we say we'll do and we deliver the project.

"As a result, we are very highly regarded at government level.

"As for planning, I believe that with the recent Rural Zones Review, we have things close to where they should be – and we are making a real effort to make our towns better places to live."

Cr Holt said a key task for the coming year was the implementation of the Rural Zones Review.

"By now, we have pretty much completed our negotiations with the relevant authorities, but there is still a way to go," he said.

"I would be very disappointed if the changes weren't gazetted by the end of my term as Mayor.

"In the coming year, among other things, we are going to need to complete the Bridgewater Public Caravan Park and progress the Inglewood Town Hall Hub and the Wedderburn Streetscape projects.

"We also need an agreed management plan with the state for our caravan parks, given all are on Crown land. The Boort and Bridgewater parks are very important to those communities.

"My key message is that, as Council, we want to continue the good governance of Loddon, which is one of the most highly regarded local government models in Australia."



Twelve Victorian nurses from the hospital ship HMAT Kanowna, on 6 July 1916.

Photo courtesy of the Australian War Memorial

ANZAC centenary a landmark

The centenary of Anzac Day in 2015 will be a landmark event in Australia's history and communities around the country are already planning how to shape their local commemorations.

A great deal of attention is already coming to bear on the actual day of 25 April, but remembrances are set to run far longer, with people across the globe marking key events in that momentous conflict from next year through to 2018. These will start next August, recognising the entry of the British into the war on 4 August 1914.

In Loddon Shire, Council has formed a committee to plan local commemorations under the chairmanship of Mayor Cr Geoff Curnow. The committee is made up of Council CEO John McLinden and representatives from district RSL clubs, Legacy and historical societies. Its aims are to share information about centenary activities and events planned by the various clubs and societies in Loddon Shire and to identify ways in which Council can be of help.

Preliminary planning is under way, with the centrepiece expected to be a commemorative service on the Serpentine oval on 24 April 2015. Subject to funding, statues of home-grown Victoria Cross winners Albert Jacka and Albert Borella are also being considered, as Jacka grew up in Wedderburn and Borella was born at Borung.

Early support has come from the Australian Government, with Member for Murray Dr Sharman Stone offering \$20,000 for grants within the Shire. The committee says, however, that government money won't cover all its needs, so some community fundraising is being discussed.

Jacka will also be remembered in Melbourne next year, when the City of Port Phillip holds its annual memorial service at his grave on 19 January at 2pm, followed by afternoon tea at St Kilda Town Hall. Jacka served as Mayor of St Kilda before his death at the age of 39 in 1932.

Mr McLinden said Council had definitely begun its preparations for the centenary, but it was still early days. "We are just starting to ramp up the momentum again now," Mr McLinden said.

"We're doing preliminary costings on some ideas, helping community members in their thinking about their own events and looking to work up some budget proposals.

"A number of ideas have been canvassed so far, but Council would welcome input from other members of the community if they have an interest in being involved.

"The centenary will be a pivotal event in our national story and we want to play our part."

The next meeting of the committee will be held on 10 February 2014 at Serpentine.



This statue of a general soldier in Wedderburn's Jacka Park has long been the focus of the town's war remembrance activities.

Share your story

As Victoria gears up to mark the Anzac centenary (2014 to 2018), the state government has called on the public to "share Victoria's stories" to help honour the contribution of local World War I service men and women.

A new website, www.anzaccentenary.vic.gov.au has been established which includes historical information and photographs, resources to research family and community history, and links to other important websites.

A key feature is an online portal where people can register local commemorative events and share their own connections to World War I.

Christmas closures

The Council offices in Wedderburn and Serpentine will close at noon on Monday 23 December and reopen at 8.15am the following day for the morning only.

The first day of business for the new year will be on Thursday 2 January 2014.

The Loddon Visitor Information Centre will be closed on Christmas Day, but is otherwise open every day from 9am to 5pm.

Come into the Loddon Visitor Information Centre for guidance on how to explore the region with family and friends this summer.

While there, have a look around the old school, visit the Eucalyptus Discovery Centre, stroll into the miner's hut, pick up a free Loddon Valley DVD or enter the monthly draw to win products from the region.

For further information or to receive a Loddon Valley information pack, contact the Centre on 5494 3489, email loddonvisitorinformation@loddon.vic.gov.au or walk in at 24 Wilson St, Wedderburn.

Council's Community Care Department will be closed from noon on Monday 23 December and will reopen at 8.15am on Thursday 2 January 2014. Limited personal care will be provided and clients will be contacted regarding their services for this period.

The pre-schools will close at the end of the school year and reopen for 2014 at the end of the holidays.

Rubbish collection times have been pushed forward a day for both the Christmas and New Year weeks: the usual Wednesday runs will be done on the Thursday, the Thursday pick-ups move to Friday and Friday to Saturday.

All landfill sites and transfer stations will be closed on the following days: Christmas Day, Boxing Day, New Year's Day and Australia Day.

Kicking up our heels

Loddon Shire has shown its festive side over the past couple of months, with colourful town celebrations taking place at both ends of the municipality.

Inglewood's inaugural Blue Eucy Heritage Festival in late September lured plenty of visitors to the town, with tours of the old distillery, model train rides, a rock climbing wall and performances from the Goldfields Choir and charity group More Than Opera.

Part of this year's Naturally Loddon program, the festival also featured displays of old machinery, steam engines, woodchop events and heritage demonstrations covering gold mining, farming, wood cutting, bee keeping and eucalyptus distilling.

Also on hand was an exhibition of paintings, photography, poetry and pottery interpreting the blue eucy from mallee bush to oil.

Sheep races, skydiving, a sheaf toss and working dogs were popular attractions at **Bridgewater's Wool, Wheat and Wine Festival** on 20 October.

The event also featured sheep shearing, toy sheep tossing, kids' foot races, arts and crafts, wine tasting, cupcake decorating, camel rides, market stalls and more.

The aim of the festival, which ran under the auspices of the Bridgewater on Loddon Development Committee, was to showcase the primary industries that make up the backbone of the region.



The sheep races were a popular attraction at Bridgewater's Wool, Wheat and Wine Festival.

Bort's Luncheon by the Lake took place on 3 November, during Melbourne Cup weekend.

Patrons sat down to a four-course lunch, showcasing local wines and produce, while listening to a jazz band on the foreshore of Little Lake Bort.

Inglewood Alive: Look At Us Now, on 1 December, built on its success of last year, when music, dancing, flags and fun filled Brooke St, the town hall and the old Royal Hotel building.

Attractions included a magic show, craft and produce stalls, buskers, food and wine tasting, classic cars and motorbikes, bands, a jumping castle, wood-chopping and dance demonstrations.

The event was organised by a community working group involving local businesses, Loddon Shire, the Lions Club, CFA, Inglewood Primary School and the Inglewood Development and Tourism Committee.

Water-watchers get to work

Where your waste water goes has become a matter of special interest to Council in the latter half of this year, with a major program now under way to lift standards in this area.

Using funding from the Victorian Government's Department of Environment and Primary Industries, Council has instituted a 12-month program running through to the middle of next year, concentrating on our towns and the Loddon River catchment.

The work is being undertaken by specialist project officer Cameron Earl, who said Council's program had two principal aims in mind.

"The intentions are to inform Council's Domestic Wastewater Management Plan and to try to reduce any possible risks with waste water, particularly in towns and other high-risk areas such as creek and river catchments," Cameron said.

"Issues with waste water are becoming more of a concern in general across Victoria and there are three other projects along the same lines in place at the moment – in Moorabool, Macedon and Benalla.

"In Loddon, we want to make sure people are containing their waste water on their own properties and not causing a problem to themselves or their neighbours.

"There are quite a few small communities in Victoria known to have problems managing their waste water, as there's not a lot of money for system maintenance in the country and, in some cases, infrastructure is getting old.

"We hope this program will help people understand the legal and moral expectations that exist for managing the disposal of their waste water."

Cameron said there were quite significant numbers of properties to be checked around the Shire.

"There are, for example, about 200 properties between the Newbridge and Serpentine townships using on-site waste water disposal systems," he said.

"If we find a property is directing its grey water on to a neighbour's land or into the stormwater, we're following up with a formal letter, but, basically, we're just checking people are having their tanks pumped out and are not living with effluent in their yards.

"That's probably the best strategy when it comes to managing the longevity of the system.

"There are lots of backyard operations going on, of course, and if it's a complete disaster we need to do something about it.

"However, if it's a home-made system and it works, we're probably going to leave it be.

"This program is not overly regulatory, it's not burdensome to the community and we're finding most people are aware of how much waste water is going into their systems.

"Our advice to home owners is to have their tanks pumped out regularly – say, every three to five years – and to be careful with grey water. If a system holds grey water for 24 hours, it's then classified as 'black water' – the same as the effluent that flows into the septic.

"Also, if you're not using water-saving equipment such as dual-flush toilets and low-flow shower nozzles, consider that, and keep down the amount of fat from the kitchen you put into the system.

"If people would like us to look at their systems, call us and we'll come.

"At this stage, we've divided the Shire into sections and sent letters out to the first areas inviting people to contact us, but the next lot of letters will say we want you to make an appointment."

For more information, or to request a visit, please phone Council's Environmental Health Unit on 5494 1200.



Project officer Cameron Earl and environmental health student Dylan McLean inspect a property for waste water compliance.

Pools open for the summer

The five swimming pools managed by Council are now open for the summer and won't close until 10 March 2014.

VicSwim is offering swimming lessons at four of Council's pools this summer, with enrolments open to four-year-olds and up – adult learners, too, are welcome to join in.

Instructors will be at Wedderburn, Mitiamo, Pyramid Hill and Inglewood from 13-17 January and 20-24 January.

To register, go to www.vicswim.com.au or, for further details, please phone Gareth on 5443 6151.

Pool times are given below, but, in all cases, evening sessions may be extended to 9pm, depending on weather conditions, availability of staff and attendance numbers. Pool hours are at the discretion of management.

Entry fees for 2013/2014 are:

	Season ticket	Casual	Non-swimmer
Family:	\$100	\$7	
Adult:	\$60	\$3	\$1
Child:	\$40	\$2	\$1



Qualified swimming instructors will lead classes at four of Council's pools this summer.

	WEDDERBURN Ph: 5494 3053	INGLEWOOD Ph: 5438 3215	BOORT Ph: 5455 2336	PYRAMID HILL Ph: 5455 7068	MITIAMO Ph: 0427 365 207
School terms (Mon-Fri)	3.30pm - 7pm	3.30pm - 7pm	3.30pm - 7pm	3.30pm - 7pm	4.30pm - 8pm
School holidays (Mon-Fri)	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm
Weekends and public holidays	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm	2pm - 7pm

Naturally better

Naturally Loddon is an annual celebration of the Shire's outdoor attractions, with events including photographic exhibitions, field trips, wildflower shows, bird watching, canoeing, the Terrick Terrick National Park open weekend, Tarnagulla's family day and bus tours to Loddon Plains and the Boort wetlands.

New inclusions this time included a revived Blue Eucy Heritage Festival at Inglewood, a bike tour around Wedderburn, the Bridgewater Wool, Wheat and Wine Festival and the annual meeting of the Prospectors and Miners Association of Victoria.

Formerly five weeks in length, this fifth festival offered 20 separate events and spanned eight weeks to the end of October.

The program is organised by Council's Tourism Department in league with its festival partners.

Tourism Manager Robyn Vella said attendances this year had been pleasing.

"Attendance figures have been similar to last year, but what has been particularly noticeable has been the lift in support from elsewhere in Victoria," Robyn said.

"It's great to see we are attracting visitors from other regions."

Rates due

Ratepayers in Loddon Shire are reminded that those who decide to pay in full have a deadline of 17 February 2014.

People who are paying by instalments have until 28 February 2014 to lodge the third instalment of the current year's charges.

A courtesy letter will be forwarded to all ratepayers in mid-January who are paying in full. This will be an opportunity for ratepayers with multiple assessments to check the letters against rate notices to ensure none have been missed.

A significant change to rates notices this year has been the addition of the Victorian Fire Services Property Levy.

Previously, Victoria's fire services were funded by contributions from the state government, metropolitan councils and a levy collected by insurance companies.

Now, however, the levy has been removed from insurance premiums and is being collected by councils through their rates notices.

Rates can be paid online by logging on to www.loddon.vic.gov.au and following the prompts. Payments can be made with Mastercard or Visa.

If not claimed return to



PO Box 21
Wedderburn VIC 3518

Loddon Bulletin

PRINT
POST

PP: 381712/02450

POSTAGE
PAID
AUSTRALIA

SHIRE OFFICES:

Wedderburn

41 High St, Wedderburn 3518
Monday to Friday 8.15am to 5pm
Tel: (03) 5494 1200
Fax: (03) 5494 3003

Serpentine

37 Peppercorn Way, Serpentine 3516
Monday to Friday 8.15am to 5pm
Tel: (03) 5437 7999
Fax: (03) 5437 8407

E: loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au
Web: www.loddon.vic.gov.au

Your Councillors



Mayor

Cr Gavan Holt

Wedderburn Ward
0408 943 008

gholt@loddon.vic.gov.au



Cr Neil Beattie

Boort Ward

0427 552 468

nbeattie@loddon.vic.gov.au



Cr Geoff Curnow

Tarnagulla Ward

0429 383 553

gcurnow@loddon.vic.gov.au



Cr Colleen Condliffe

Inglewood Ward

0428 778 025

ccondliffe@loddon.vic.gov.au



Cr Cheryl McKinnon

Terrick Ward

0409 557 888

cmckinnon@loddon.vic.gov.au