



The Century Clash

Battle for the 100th Corolin Cup

Editor: Naomi Sherrington

editor@thenorthamadvertiser.com.au

Manager: Theresa Lee - 0427 472 729

manager@thenorthamadvertiser.com.au

Sales: Jodie Longmire - 0414 086 904

jodie@thenorthamadvertiser.com.au

Graphic, Pagination and Artwork:

Jodie Longmire jodie@thenorthamadvertiser.com.au

Sports: jodie@thenorthamadvertiser.com.au

Proof Reader: Madi Byfield

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Please contact Jodie Longmire at email:

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Editorial

There's something rather unfair about August.

September tends to steal all the glory as the beginning of spring, but anyone who has spent time in the Wheatbelt knows better. Spring begins in August.

The signs are everywhere if you know where to look. The days begin stretching a little longer, the first wattles burst into bloom, birds become noticeably more vocal, and patches of canola start painting the landscape in brilliant shades of yellow.

Just ask my usually sweet rooster, Atlas, who seems convinced that biting me is an essential part of welcoming spring.

August is a month of quiet optimism. It reminds us that change rarely happens overnight. Instead, it arrives gradually – a little more birdsong each morning, a little more warmth in the afternoon sun, and the reassuring sense that another season is beginning.

It's also a month that has prompted me to reflect on another kind of growth – the kind that takes generations.

Over recent weeks I've had the privilege of writing about several remarkable milestones, from the centenary of the Corolin Cup to Main Roads Western Australia's 100th anniversary, and the launch of Margaret Sermon's beautiful book celebrating the historic homesteads of the Avon Valley.

Each story has shared a common thread. They are reminders that communities don't simply happen. They are built over decades by people who volunteer, lead, farm, teach, coach, create and care deeply about the places they call home. The landmarks, traditions and organisations we enjoy today exist because someone, often many years ago, decided they were worth building.

One story in particular has stayed with me. While writing about the late Tim O'Driscoll, who passed away on 3 June, I drew on *Family History and Legacy of the O'Driscoll and McClymans Families of Grass Valley*, written by Tom O'Driscoll. Tim was also my father's first cousin, making the opportunity to tell his story a particularly meaningful one. The book was an invaluable resource that helped bring not only Tim's story to life, but also the rich history of one of our district's long-standing families.

I'd also like to sincerely thank Tim's family for taking the time to speak with me during what was undoubtedly a very difficult period. Their generosity in sharing memories ensured his story could be told with the care and respect it deserved.

Perhaps that's another lesson August has to offer.

As nature quietly prepares for a new season, it also reminds us that everything we enjoy today has its roots in what came before. Whether it's a towering gum tree, a century-old sporting competition, a historic homestead or the legacy of local families, the future is built upon foundations laid by those before us.

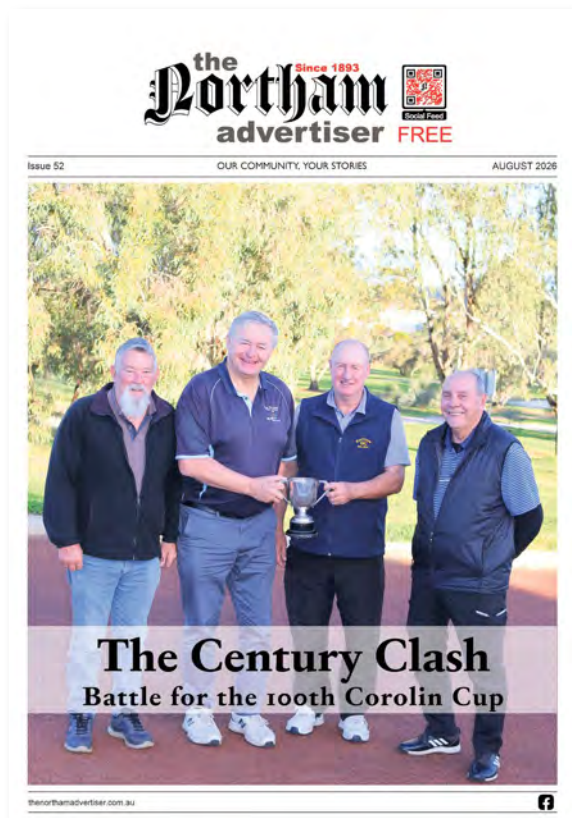
So as the days grow longer and spring begins to stir across the Wheatbelt, I hope we all take a moment to appreciate both where we're heading and those who helped us get here.

After all, the best seasons – and the strongest communities – are always built over time.



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Our Cover



Our cover this month celebrates the 100th Corolin Cup in Northam. The photo features four past winners of the cup, left to right Roger Podmore, Geoff Hall, Kevin Smith and Ron Van Welie.

Read more about the Corolin Cup and the 2026 winner on the back page of the paper.



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Aboriginal People should be aware that this publication contains images or names of people who have passed away.

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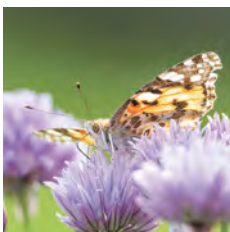
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Tim O'Driscoll

His Turn to Hold the Land: a life devoted to preserving a family legacy more than a century in the making.

by Naomi Sherrington

For Tim O'Driscoll, farming was never simply an occupation. It was a way of life woven through generations of family history in the Avon Valley.

Born on March 27, 1948, Tim was the son of Bernard and Nell O'Driscoll and grew up on the family's Horse Hill property. Long before he was born, the O'Driscoll name had become synonymous with farming in the district. His grandparents, Jeremiah and Emily O'Driscoll, overcame extraordinary hardship to establish and preserve the family enterprise, while his parents expanded the family's farming interests and laid the foundations for the generations that followed.

Tim would become one of those custodians.

His son Brenden perhaps summed him up best when he said, "Most people work to live. Dad lived to work."

That wasn't because he had to.

It was because he genuinely loved farming.

Lynda, his wife of 55 years, says Tim never complained about the long hours or hard work. The farm wasn't simply where he earned a living – it was where he wanted to be.

Growing up across the road from Horse Hill, Lynda already knew the Tim and the O'Driscoll family well. Tim's affection for Lynda was perhaps even evident then, because she recalls Tim, as a cheeky youngster, loved stirring up the other children on the school bus – but "never me."

Lynda recalls in adolescent years, she would carefully ensure she was outside when Tim drove to play football, with the pair eventually marrying and beginning a life together that would span more than five decades, and bring three sons into the world: Brenden, Damian, and Glen.

At just 26 years of age, Tim's life changed dramatically when his father died following a stroke. Suddenly, responsibility for the family farm rested on young shoulders.

The transition meant making sacrifices, including giving up football while still in his sporting prime. It was a decision he accepted without complaint because family and the farm came first.

Yet despite the demands of running the farm, Tim always made time for his family. Brenden recalls eagerly waiting in the backyard after school for his father to come home so they could kick the football or bowl a few overs. Even after a full day covered in grease and dust, Tim somehow found the energy.

Tim possessed a sharp business mind and had an instinctive understanding of both farming and the commercial decisions needed to ensure the enterprise remained successful.

More importantly, he believed the farm belonged to the family – not to any one individual.

Selling was never an option. More than building a successful business, Tim believed he was simply caring for the farm on behalf of those who came before him – and those who would follow. Keeping it in the O'Driscoll family mattered deeply to him, as did continuing a legacy that stretched back more than a century.

Away from work, Tim enjoyed life's quieter pleasures.

The family made a point of taking an annual holiday, usually hitching up the caravan and heading off to explore Western Australia. Cliff Head became a favourite destination, while one particularly memorable trip to Bremer Bay saw the family witness whales with their calves.

Although he enjoyed exploring the broader backyard, Tim never had the urge to travel outside of Australia. "He was quite happy just being at home," Lynda says.

That contentment reflected his reserved nature.

He never sought attention or recognition. Instead, he found satisfaction in honest work, family and the simple rhythm of country life.

Sport remained another lifelong passion.



Like generations of O'Driscolls before him, Tim excelled at football, cricket, tennis and golf. Even after his own playing days ended, weekends were often spent watching Railways Football Club, particularly when sons Damian and Glen took the field.

Friends and family remember Tim as a passionate armchair commentator. Whether watching football or cricket, he wasn't shy about offering his assessment of players' performances – despite them being safely out of earshot. He had little time for what he affectionately called "B graders", and his spirited sideline discussions at Railways Football Club became almost as legendary as the games themselves.

Fishing trips with close mates, his love of sheepdogs and horses, and his well-known sweet tooth became part of the man so many knew.

Life also presented its share of challenges.



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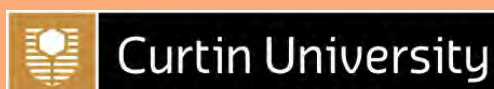
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[\[CLICK HERE\]](#)



Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) has approved this study (HREC number HRE2025-0613).



Photo: Tim and Lynda

Health challenges began in 1987, when kidney stones confined him to bed – something almost unheard of for a man who rarely stopped working. Six years later he lost three fingers in a farming accident that would have ended many careers. Instead, Tim adapted with characteristic determination, refusing to dwell on setbacks or feel sorry for himself.

As the family grew to include daughters-in-law and nine grandchildren, another side of Tim emerged. His grandchildren adored him, and he loved spending time with them, often kicking the football around in the backyard – or indulging in outrageously decadent sweet treats!



Photo: Tim receiving a sports award

Lynda describes him simply as “my rock.” She says he was an exceptionally intelligent man who could quickly grasp new ideas and technologies, embracing innovations such as air seeders while always respecting the farming knowledge passed down through earlier generations.

Above all, she remembers him as an honest man, and just an all-round good, decent person.

Aged 78, after living with dementia for several years, Tim passed away peacefully, surrounded by his family and with his eyes fixed on those of his beloved wife, Lynda.

Today, Tim’s legacy lives on not only in the paddocks



Photo: Tim at the Chaff Sheds

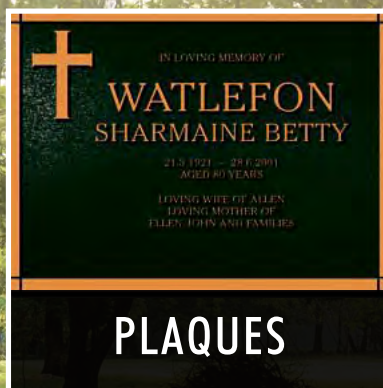
he cared for, but in the generations who continue to call them home.

He leaves behind a family grounded in the values he quietly lived every day – hard work, honesty, humility and an unwavering commitment to one another.

For more than half a century, Tim O’Driscoll devoted himself to preserving something far greater than a farming business. He was preserving a family legacy, ensuring that when his time as custodian came to an end, the land – and the values it represented – would be ready for the next generation.

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Avon Valley's historic homesteads preserved for future generations



Photo: Cover of the Avon Valley Homesteads. Image taken by Angie Roe Photography

by Naomi Sherrington

The stories behind some of the Avon Valley's oldest and most significant homesteads have been preserved for future generations in a new book by long-time Grass Valley local Margaret Sermon.

Avon Valley Homesteads, featuring photography by fellow Avon Valley local Angie Roe, was officially launched before a crowd of around 60 people at the Northam Country Club on Sunday, with more than 60 copies sold on the day.

The book is the culmination of two years of research,

followed by a year of writing, documenting many of the region's landmark colonial homesteads, particularly those built before 1900.

Margaret, whose first book was Pigs, Tanks and Goannas, said her lifelong love of local history inspired the project. Drawing on newspapers, historical records and extensive research, she uncovered not only the stories of pioneering families, but also those of the nurses, teachers, convicts and other people whose lives helped shape the Avon Valley.

Speaking at the launch, Central Wheatbelt MLA Lachlan Hunter thanked the many property owners who welcomed Margaret into their homes and entrusted her with telling their stories.

He said many of the homes held stories of hardship, heartache and resilience that could only be discovered through such conversations, making the book an invaluable record of the district's history.

Margaret said one of the most rewarding aspects of the project was documenting the homesteads as they stand today, creating a permanent record for future generations. Margaret agreed the project would not have been possible without the generosity of local families who opened their homes and shared their histories.

Among the many stories featured in the book are those of Warramine and of pioneering midwife Eleanor Oliver, who travelled 18 kilometres to York to assist local families. Margaret also explores how the district's landscape has changed over time, including the eradication of dingoes and the disappearance of possums from some areas.

The launch was compered by Margaret's daughter, Robyn Sermon, while Margaret's sister Judith was recognised for

her meticulous proofreading of the manuscript. Music and floral arrangements were provided by Caroline, adding to the warm atmosphere of the afternoon, with catering by Yvette's Cakes and Grazing.

Remaining copies of Avon Valley Homesteads are available from the York Society, Everlastings on Fitzgerald and Zax & Co Café.



Photo: Marg Sermon and Angie Roe. Image taken by Angie Roe Photography



Photo: Book launch at the Northam Country Club. Image taken by Angie Roe Photography

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Creativity without limits: Local artists prepare to inspire at The Art of Possibility Exhibition



by Naomi Sherrington

Two remarkable local artists are preparing to showcase not only their talents, but also the power of determination, passion and perseverance, when they present The Art of Possibility Exhibition at Northam Town Hall later this month.

For 18-year-old photographer Santiago Vargas Hernandez, the exhibition represents the fulfilment of a lifelong dream.

Santiago, who lives with the extremely rare Baraitser-Winter syndrome, has long dreamed of becoming a professional photographer. Before discovering photography, he wanted to be a zookeeper – a passion that continues to influence his work today.

Every Tuesday he heads to the zoo, camera in hand, patiently waiting for the perfect moment to capture the personalities of the animals he loves.

His favourite subjects include zebras, rhinoceroses and pandas, but perhaps his most treasured photograph is not of an exotic animal at all.

Instead, it is a portrait of his beloved hen, Peri-Peri.

"I love taking photos because I want to capture memories," Santiago said.

That simple philosophy is evident throughout his collection, with each image reflecting patience, observation and genuine affection for his subjects.

Sharing the exhibition is Allanagh Bell, 24, whose extraordinary knitting project has become a labour of love spanning almost a year.

Diagnosed with Level 2 Autism, Allanagh has spent the past 11 months creating what organisers hope will become a record-breaking scarf.

Made from 58 balls of wool of varying lengths, the colourful creation is expected to be one of the exhibition's biggest talking points, with visitors invited to guess its final length for the chance to win a prize.

For Allanagh, knitting is far more than a hobby.

She recently returned to the craft after previously knitting scarves for families staying at Ronald McDonald House, hoping to bring comfort to children and parents during some of the most difficult times in their lives.

Her generosity continues through the exhibition, with donations of wool and monetary contributions being welcomed to help support future projects. Visitors are encouraged to bring balls of wool along on the day if they would like to contribute.

The exhibition promises to be a celebration of



creativity, inclusion and community, with Santiago's framed photographs available for purchase alongside Allanagh's incredible scarf attempt. Families can also enjoy games, colouring activities, a photo challenge and other entertainment throughout the day.

The Art of Possibility Exhibition will be held at Northam Town Hall on Sunday, August 30, from 10am to 4pm. Entry is free, with everyone encouraged to come along and support two inspiring local artists whose work proves that talent knows no boundaries.

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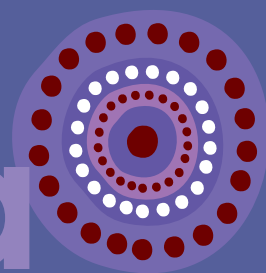


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Step back in time ... in a place bound to the present

by Mike Whittington

A lonely windswept hill broods above the distant town of Northam, silent but for scavenging kangaroos... empty but for derelict huts crumbling into dust. Yet this space once echoed with the accents of dozens of languages, shimmering in the summer sun with a range of ethnic dress, and drenching the senses with the smells of exotic culture.

All that will be re-created shortly in a day of cheerful remembrance.

Northam holds a unique position among Western Australian towns because of the Army Camp on nearby Yongah Hill. At the end of World War II, the camp gave up its military role in favour of something entirely new: for more than 30,000 post-war migrants, Northam Army Camp became their first Australian home, and an estimated 100,000 ethnic West Australians can trace their roots back to Northam.

Some of these descendants will gather on Saturday, 22 August for a storytelling event, aptly titled Memory, Place and Belonging. There will be guest speakers, including several published authors; historians and representatives from the Department of Defence. They will bring to life the experiences of displaced persons and migrants "who first arrived in Australia carrying the legacies of war, forced labour and displacement".

Through personal narratives, historical insights and discussion, the children of these survivors will share the stories that shaped their families – and shaped this significant heritage site.



Photo: Northam Army Camp facility

Historians, researchers and community voices will be complemented by interactive sessions, panel discussions and a heritage trail. Open to all, the event is free. There are ID requirements to enter Department of Defence property.

The event is organized by the Northam Army Camp Heritage Association, with a range of sponsors. NACHA is arguably the community's most prominent and successful cultural organization, continuing to attract a large, and long-standing number of locals and visitors to displays and events, benefiting our people, our businesses, and Northam's reputation as a tourist attraction.

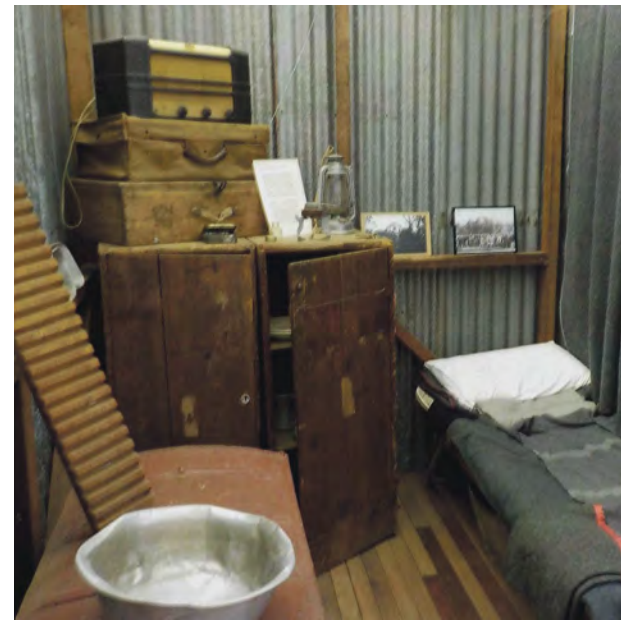


Photo: Typical accommodation for new arrivals at Northam's original migrant camp

For more than a quarter of a century, NACHA has celebrated this rich migrant history through official functions, as well as developing museum displays and public presentations reflecting the history, music, dance and food of its past and present ethnic residents. The cultural and financial benefits are incalculable.

This prominent standing was recently reinforced by the Shire when NACHA's long-serving president, Geneofa Budas, became one of only five locals officially inducted into Northam's inaugural Walk of Fame unveiled in the town's centre.

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Moon phase modelling and geology experiments, St Joseph's School, Northam.

Street Name Origins

GIBBINGS STREET

Unlike many of Northam's streets, the origins of Gibbings Street remain something of a mystery.

No official record has yet been located explaining who the street was named after. However, historical records suggest the name almost certainly honours one of Northam's early pioneering families.

William Gibbings arrived in Western Australia from Kent, England, in 1886 and settled in Northam with his family. He died in the town in 1892 and was buried in Northam Cemetery. His descendants became well known throughout the district, with family members involved in business and public life.

One of the best-known was Sydney Gibbings, who operated a Northam aerated water factory before selling the business in 1919. Another was Captain Cecil Theodore Gibbings, who spent his early years in Northam before serving with the Australian Imperial Force. He was killed in action at Pozières, France, in 1916.

While no documentary evidence has yet been found linking the family directly to the street's naming, the long association of the Gibbings family with Northam makes them the most likely source of the name.

Curtin seeking survey participants

Are you aged 40 or over and living in regional or remote WA? We're seeking participants for a short survey on cancer awareness, health behaviours, and early diagnosis. This research aims to better understand the barriers and attitudes that influence when people seek medical help, so that future health campaigns and services can be improved for regional communities.

The survey takes around 15-20 minutes to complete. For more information or if you are interested in taking part in the study, please click the link below.

https://curtin.aui.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_e55QyMD3KYAarMG

The study has been approved by Curtin University Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) HREC number HRE2025-0613.

Northam's volunteers and St John Academy recognised for outstanding achievements



Photo: Some of the award winners

Northam's St John volunteers and youth academy have been honoured with a series of awards and recognition.

Tash Clements, Steven Douglas, Anna Maden and Wundowie's Nelle Marwood were all recognised at St John WA's annual Wheatbelt North Volunteer Awards.

Held at the Muchea Recreation Centre on July 18, the awards acknowledge the exceptional contributions of St John WA volunteers across the region and the impact they make in their communities.

"No matter which sub centre or station our volunteers call home, they are part of one Wheatbelt North team, united by a shared purpose to care for others when needed most," St John WA's Acting District Operations Manager for Wheatbelt, Jessica Forsythe, said.

"One of the things I admire most about our Wheatbelt North volunteers is that they don't just respond to emergencies, they help build stronger communities."

The celebrations for Northam continued with the announcement of St John WA's state-wide annual awards.

The 2026 'Of the Year' Awards highlight the passion, dedication and commitment of St John's volunteers, sub centres and divisions.

The awards are an opportunity to recognise the thousands of volunteers who generously donate their time and life-saving skills to communities across WA.

Northam St John Academy was named 'Division of the Year', while Academy Division Lead Tash Clements, was named 'Country Volunteer of the Year'.

Byfields Farewells Long-Serving Managing Director Simon Northey After Nearly 40 Years of Service



After almost 40 years of dedicated service, Byfields is celebrating the retirement of Managing Director Simon Northey.

Simon joined the firm as an undergraduate and went on to build an outstanding career, becoming a trusted adviser to clients, a mentor to staff and a respected leader within the business. His tenure spans nearly two-thirds of the firm's history, making him an integral part of the Byfields story.

Reflecting on his career, Simon said the people are what he will miss most.

"I'm going to miss working with great clients, great staff and great directors. Being part of our clients' business journeys and supporting our people throughout their careers has been incredibly rewarding."

Over four decades, Simon witnessed significant changes in the profession, including the introduction of Capital Gains Tax, GST and the transformation brought about by technology. Through it all, he remained passionate about helping clients succeed and sharing his practical business wisdom.

"I feel very privileged to have been part of this wonderful firm," Simon said. "I sincerely thank everyone who has been part of my work journey and wish everyone every success in the future."

The Directors and staff of Byfields extend their heartfelt thanks to Simon for his leadership, commitment and contribution over nearly 40 years. His impact on the firm, its people and its clients will be felt for many years to come.

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- Arts Toodyay - Avon Valley Arts Trail
- RSL Toodyay - "21 Hearts" theatre production
- Toodyay Voluteer Fire & Rescue Services
- Toodyay Agricultural Society - Fireworks
- Avon Valley Showjumping & Pony Club Inc

- Toodyay Football Club
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- Bolgart Primary School
- Northam Army Camp Heritage Association Inc
- Vintage Sports Car Club of WA Inc
- Toodyay Soccer Club
- Toodyay Kindergym
- Shire of Northam - Bilya Festival
- Northam Country Club

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A century of keeping the Wheatbelt connected

by Naomi Sherrington

Main Roads Western Australia's Northam office has marked the organisation's centenary with the planting of a commemorative tree — a living symbol of both its long history in the region and the work still ahead.

Main Roads was established in 1926, at a time when Western Australia had only recently begun embracing the motorcar. The number of registered vehicles in the State grew from about 3,000 in 1921 to 31,000 by 1931, creating an urgent need for a coordinated authority to develop and manage the road network.

A century later, the organisation's eight regional offices are each planting a tree to commemorate the anniversary.

At the Northam ceremony, Wheatbelt Regional Director Mohammad Siddiqui said the organisation's essential purpose remained much the same: keeping Western Australians moving and connected.

That responsibility carries particular weight in the Wheatbelt, where roads are not simply a means of getting from one town to another. They are critical infrastructure for agriculture, freight, local businesses and access to education, health care and other essential services.

Mr Siddiqui said the region's road network must continue to be maintained and improved to meet increasing freight demands, including the movement of larger and heavier agricultural vehicles.

Among the future works discussed was a proposed bridge project near Goomalling, which would improve the movement of heavy vehicles and their connection to Great Northern Highway, subject to State Government funding.

The Wheatbelt network presents challenges which could scarcely have been imagined when Main Roads began. Climate change, environmental constraints, access to suitable road-building materials and the competing needs of agriculture and native vegetation now shape how projects are designed and delivered.

Environmental approvals can take as long as two years for some projects, Mr Siddiqui said, making early planning and cooperation between engineers, environmental specialists, local governments and communities increasingly important.

He pointed to occasions when road designs had been altered to protect significant native vegetation, including a mature wandoo tree, as an example of the change in approach over the agency's history.

Revegetation has also become an integral part of road construction. Trees and other native plants removed during works may be replaced, while revegetated corridors can help reconnect fragmented habitat alongside the road network.

The Great Eastern Highway — the Wheatbelt's principal road connection with Perth and the Goldfields — featured prominently in the region's reflections on the past century.

Overtaking lanes, intersection improvements and changes to road levels have progressively transformed the highway. Projects near locations including El Caballo and Coates Road are among the works that have sought to improve safety and accommodate the changing demands placed on the route.

Mr Siddiqui said one of the organisation's greatest sources of pride was its role in supporting local communities and keeping regional industries functioning.

That work increasingly includes rebuilding Main Roads' own regional workforce.

The Wheatbelt was the first region to transition back to in-house road maintenance in October 2022, after the State Government announced that maintenance and some minor capital works would return from contractors to Main Roads crews. The change brought 48 employees into the Northam and Narrogin offices.

Main Roads reported that the new Wheatbelt crews were closing an average of about 1,300 road defects each month during the early stages of the transition. The agency said the model was intended to create long-term regional employment, strengthen local supply chains and increase opportunities for Aboriginal workers and businesses.

Mr Siddiqui said directly employing maintenance crews had improved the quality and responsiveness of the work, with the benefits reflected in feedback from the community. With broadly the same maintenance funding, he said, the regional team had also been able to undertake more work.

The return of local crews represents a notable reversal of changes made during the 1990s, when Main Roads work teams were disbanded and much of the agency's construction and maintenance work was outsourced. Its workforce reportedly fell from about 3,000 employees to approximately 1,000 by the end of that decade.

While outsourcing delivered a different model of road management, it also resulted in the loss of experienced workers and valuable local knowledge.

Mr Siddiqui said attracting and retaining skilled people remained one of Main Roads' greatest regional challenges. Competition for workers, housing limitations and industry-wide skills shortages all affect the ability of regional offices to maintain their workforce.

Employing people who already live in the Wheatbelt brings benefits beyond filling vacancies. Local employees understand the roads, conditions and communities they serve, while their wages and families remain within the regional economy.

Regular communication with local governments and residents would remain critical, Mr Siddiqui said, particularly as Main Roads balances freight efficiency, road safety, environmental protection and the expectations of communities.

The commemorative tree planted in Northam represents that balance: acknowledging the roads and workers that shaped the Wheatbelt over the past century while recognising that future infrastructure must be planned with greater sensitivity to its environmental and community impacts.

Main Roads' history has included the sealing of remote highways, the building of major bridges and freeways, wartime airstrip construction and projects connecting some of the State's most isolated communities. In 1946, less than half of Western Australia's main and secondary road network was sealed; by the late 1940s, new graders, loaders and trucks were beginning to transform how road construction was undertaken.

Its next century will bring very different challenges — but for the Wheatbelt, its core task remains unchanged: keeping people, produce and communities connected.

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IN THE garden this month

by Naomi Sherrington

If July quietly hints that spring is on its way, August positively shouts it.

The wattles are glowing, birds are busy nesting, orchids begin emerging in our bushland, and almost everywhere you look there's fresh growth pushing through. It may still be cold, but the garden knows spring is just around the corner.

It's one of my favourite months to simply wander around and see what's changed since yesterday.

Garden To-Do List

- Finish planting natives – August is your last great opportunity to establish many native shrubs and trees before the weather begins warming.
- Feed hungry non-native plants – Roses, citrus and deciduous fruit trees will appreciate a pre-spring feed. (Remember: many WA natives don't!)
- Prune roses and summer-flowering shrubs – Finish winter pruning before spring growth really gets underway.
- Keep weeding – Every weed you remove now is one less producing thousands of seeds later.
- Divide clumping perennials – Many herbaceous plants can be divided now to create free new plants.
- Watch for pests returning – Aphids and caterpillars begin becoming active as temperatures rise.



What's in Bloom

- Wattles (the stars of the show!)
- Grevilleas
- Banksias
- Hakeas
- Geraldton wax (early varieties)
- Native orchids beginning to emerge
- Blossom on many fruit trees

Ripe for Picking

- Citrus
- Broccoli
- Cauliflower
- Kale
- Silverbeet
- Spinach
- Late peas

What to Plant Now

Vegetables

- Beetroot
- Carrots
- Lettuce
- Potatoes
- Spring onions
- Herbs

Native plants

- Grevillea
- Banksia
- Hakea
- Eucalyptus
- Acacia
- Melaleuca

If you're planning to plant trees this year, don't leave it too much longer. Giving them as much of spring as possible to establish will pay dividends come summer.

Season Snapshot

August always feels full of promise.

Everywhere you look there are buds swelling, birds pairing up, and tiny hints that another growing season is beginning.

It's impossible not to feel optimistic.

Your Garden's Hardest Workers (And How to Help Them)

by Naomi Sherrington

When we think about wildlife in the garden, birds usually steal the spotlight.

But some of the hardest workers are much smaller.

Without pollinators, many of our flowers wouldn't set seed, many fruit trees wouldn't produce crops, and much of the incredible diversity we enjoy simply wouldn't exist.

More Than Just Honey Bees

Honey bees get most of the attention, but Australia has more than 1,700 species of native bees, many of which are remarkably efficient pollinators.

Unlike European honey bees, most native bees are solitary and completely harmless.

You may never even notice them.

Butterflies, Hoverflies and Beetles

Pollination isn't just the job of bees.

Butterflies, moths, hoverflies, beetles and even some birds all play important roles in moving pollen from flower to flower.

The more diverse your garden, the more of these helpful visitors you're likely to attract.

Plant for Every Season

One of the best ways to support pollinators is to ensure something is flowering throughout the year.

In the Avon Valley, that might mean combining:

- Winter-flowering grevilleas
- Wattles
- Banksias
- Spring wildflowers
- Summer flowering gums
- Autumn-flowering shrubs

The goal is to create a continuous buffet.



Leave Things a Little Messy

This may be my favourite gardening advice of all.

Don't be too tidy.

Leave:

- hollow stems
- small piles of sticks
- patches of bare ground
- leaf litter

Many native bees nest in the ground or inside hollow stems.

A perfectly manicured garden often provides very little habitat.

Skip the Sprays When You Can

Before reaching for an insecticide, ask yourself whether the insects are really causing a problem.

Many "pests" become food for birds.

Ladybirds control aphids.

Parasitic wasps control caterpillars.

Nature is often remarkably good at balancing itself if we give it the chance.

Final Thought

One of the things I love most about gardening is that it teaches patience.

Plant enough flowers, and eventually the bees will find them.

Provide shelter, and the birds will come.

Leave a little untidiness, and before long you'll discover your garden is far more alive than you ever imagined.

Sometimes the best thing we can do as gardeners is simply step back and let nature get on with the job.

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The Iconic Centre of Northam - The Avon River Pool



Photo: An aerial view of a section of the unaltered 'The Forest Islands' section of the Avon River overlooking the town centre.
Image supplied by: Avon Valley Environmental Society Inc.

by Peter Weatherly of the Avon Valley Environmental Society inc

The Avon River Pool in the centre of Northam is our greatest natural asset. It is also unique inasmuch as it sits in the centre of town and stretches from the weir upstream to Burlong Park – a distance of some 5km – and has natural fringing riparian (meaning influenced by the river) vegetation on both banks all the way. This vegetation also extends for about 5km downstream. It is a permanent pool and holds water all the year round – at least between the Gairdner Street and Peel Terrace bridges and as far as the now decrepit Poole Street bridge.

It wasn't always this way. It was once seasonally dry with no water except for the occasional muddy pool. The very attractive body of permanent water you see today was created once the weir was built. Proposed in 1895, constructed in 1907-8, with extensive

modifications in 1926 after major floods, it is now a biodiverse, healthy, aquatic vista supporting a huge number of different species of birds and serving as a summer refuge for aquatic life during our long, dry summers. For many years the pool was used for swimming, boating, sailing and even fishing.

It's a bird watcher's paradise. 120 species have been seen on the river from Beverley to Toodyay. This is a remarkable number given that the whole of Australia has less than 1,000 species, 45% of which are endemic (only found in) to Australia. The Environmental Society, together with Birds Australia, has produced a pamphlet picturing these 120 species available for free to the public.

The river itself is four times as salty as it was at settlement – largely due to the clearing of the eastern part of the catchment leading to the secondary salinity

that is steadily eating some of the best farming land in the valley floors. Given that the Avon River and its tributaries drain acid soils, the river itself is surprisingly and constantly alkaline.

A major and important feature are the islands, colloquially named 'The Forest Islands', which were spared from being cleared during the River Training Scheme which cleared the centre of the river to allow quicker drainage. It was an initiative to alleviate the occasional flooding seen in Northam. The islands in Northam now represent the only portion of the river still in its original topographical state. The training scheme was a biological disaster, but it did ease the flooding. The islands are now a major feature that gives our native creatures a refuge in which to breed – being protected from predators by the surrounding water. They are dynamic and creep slowly downstream as their leading edge is eroded and the soil deposited at the trailing edge. The Training Scheme also activated the bottom of the river causing the silt to gradually fill the natural pools. This is happening with the town pool and it will need dredging again in due course if we wish to keep our town pool.

The water itself is full of life with thriving macroinvertebrates, oblong (snake-necked) turtles, four native fishes, seasonal vegetation and reasonably healthy fringing vegetation, all of which illustrates the toughness of our native plants given the changes that have happened in the last hundred years.

The Dorntj Korlinny (Walking Together) track consists of 20 km of walking tracks along the Avon River in Northam, creating a healthy and enjoyable experience for both Northam residents and visitors. It was originally an initiative of the Rotary Club of Northam and this was taken up by the Avon Valley Environmental Society (AVES) who have since continued to improve and extend the track over several decades. The Rotary Club continues their support and takes an interest in it and are a major supporter, enabling AVES to continue the ongoing maintenance of this important asset.

AVES are fortunate in having a dedicated and capable team of volunteers performing all the work. Please contact the Society if you would like to be involved on 0428 221 453.

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Creativity and Connection Flourish at Creative Company



Photo: Creative Company

by Lindsay Newland

In a world where life can easily get in the way of making time for ourselves, one small group in Northam is proving that creativity doesn't have to be about producing masterpieces, it can simply be about enjoying the process and connecting with others.

Every Wednesday morning, a growing group of local creatives gathers at the Avon Valley Arts Society for Creative Company, a relaxed weekly session where participants bring along their own projects or sketchbooks and spend a couple of hours in the company of like-minded people.

Unlike a traditional art class, there are no lessons to follow and no expectations about what participants should make. Some people paint, others draw, journal, knit or continue projects they've been working on at home. Those looking to try something different are welcome to explore the wide range of materials available, including watercolours, markers, coloured

pencils and drawing supplies, allowing participants to experiment with different mediums before deciding which materials they enjoy using.

What began as an opportunity to create alongside others has naturally grown into a welcoming and supportive community. Creative Company has become much more than an art group. It is a place where people can reconnect with their creativity, share ideas with like-minded people, or simply enjoy working quietly alongside others. Participants describe it as a place for "good conversations", a "safe space" and somewhere they can share ideas and encourage one another. There is no pressure to join the conversation, people can chat, listen or simply create. Many appreciate knowing they can work quietly on their own projects if they don't feel like talking, while still enjoying the companionship of the group. For some, it provides a reason to leave the house, while for others it offers something equally valuable: a dedicated time each week to nurture their own creativity.

Creative Company welcomes people of all experience levels and attracts a wide range of ages and abilities. Whether someone has been creating art for years, is returning to a forgotten hobby or is simply looking for a friendly place to explore their creativity, everyone is welcome.

Sessions meet every Wednesday from 10 am to 12 pm at the Avon Valley Arts Society. For those unable to attend during the day, Creative Company After Hours offers the same relaxed creative environment on Thursday evenings from 6 pm to 8 pm. Cost is \$10, or \$5 for concession card holders, with morning or evening tea provided. Participants are welcome to bring along their own creative project or sketchbook, or simply come along and make use of the art materials available while enjoying a friendly and supportive creative community. Sometimes the best conversations happen while your hands are busy.

Coming up at AVAS

Sketchbook Club

Teens, Wednesdays, after school - 5pm

Youth, Thursdays, after school - 4pm

Sketchbook Club is a chance to engage in creative practice, informal collaboration, and peer support. All materials supplied

Cost: gold coin donation

After School Art Classes

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Animal Portraiture with Lindsay - creative art classes exploring animals through a variety of fun and engaging projects.

Cost: Casual classes \$25, or \$20 per session when booking for the remainder of the term.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

AUG 03
LONELINESS AWARENESS WEEK

This Loneliness Awareness Week, we're turning our carpark into a space for connection, conversation and community. Northam Library Carpark, 11am-1pm, FREE sausage sizzle.

AUG 03
INTRO TO LEAD LIGHTING

Hands-on Introduction to Lead Lighting workshop, held over five-weeks, classes will run on Monday evenings from July 27 to August 24 (inclusive), starting at 6:30pm for 2-2.5 hours at AVAS. Bookings at trybooking.com/DNKXU

AUG 04
AFTER ART SCHOOL - TERM 3 - AVAS

Join us for 'Animal Portraits' - Term 3 of After School Art Classes with local artist Lindsay Newland. Young Artists (Ages 5-9): 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM, Teen Artists (Ages 10+): 4:45 PM - 5:45 PM. Casual spots \$25 per class at the AVAS Building.

AUG 05
CREATIVE COMPANY

Led by local artist Jessica Edwards Parker, this is a welcoming space to make art and connect with other creatives. Casual weekly drop-in session for adults. AVAS Building, 10am-12pm, \$10 per session.

AUG 07
NORTHAM BILYA FESTIVAL 2026

Join us for Northam's biggest street party as we kick off the weekend with a touch of Hollywood glamour! FREE Carnival rides & sideshow alley, market stalls, food trucks, street parade & fireworks. 4pm-9pm

AUG 08
AVON DESCENT 2026

The Avon Descent is one of the world's greatest white-water events, a unique 124km challenge that pits man and machine against the elements. Northam Start line- 8am, Bernard Park.

AUG 12
WHEATBELT CAREERS EXPO

Whatever your next step looks like, the Wheatbelt Careers Expo is the perfect opportunity to explore what's possible. 10am-2pm, Northam Rec Centre- FREE

AUG 15
JUPITER & MERCURY- STARGAZING

In the early morning of 15 August, stargazers are treated to a close approach of the planets Jupiter and Mercury in the pre-dawn sky. Mount Ommaney at 6am.

AUG 18
NORTHAM CHAMBER SUNDOWNER

The Northam Chamber of Commerce invites members and non members to the Northam Country Club for a sundowner sponsored by nbn Co. Hear about the latest in VR Training for staff onboarding and upskilling. Tickets available on Northam Chamber socials. 5.30pm-7.30pm.

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Paraquat Restrictions Leave Wheatbelt Farmers Facing Difficult Transition

by Naomi Sherrington

A federal decision to keep the controversial herbicide paraquat available for use – while imposing sweeping new restrictions – has left Australian farmers walking a fine line between protecting crop production and addressing ongoing concerns about human health.

Following a review spanning almost three decades, the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA) announced paraquat and the related herbicide diquat will remain registered for use in Australia, but under substantially tighter controls. The regulator concluded the available scientific evidence does not establish that approved use of paraquat causes Parkinson's disease, although it acknowledged the need for stronger protections against its well-established acute toxicity.

For broadacre growers across Western Australia's Wheatbelt, the decision avoids an immediate ban on one of agriculture's most relied-upon weed control tools. However, many say the new restrictions will make managing herbicide-resistant weeds considerably more challenging.

Among the changes are a reduction in maximum application rates – from 1,150 grams per hectare to 231 grams per hectare for most applications – the phase-out of backpack spraying, mandatory enclosed mixing and loading systems, stricter personal protective equipment requirements and the removal of several approved uses. Existing product labels will be phased out over a two-year transition period.

Why paraquat matters

Paraquat has become an integral part of Australia's no-till farming systems, particularly across grain-growing regions such as the Wheatbelt.

Unlike traditional cultivation, no-till farming leaves crop stubble on the surface, helping reduce soil erosion, improve moisture retention and protect soil structure. The trade-off is that farmers rely heavily on herbicides to control weeds before sowing.

Paraquat also plays a crucial role in controlling weeds that have developed resistance to glyphosate, making it one of the few remaining effective options in many farming systems. Researchers say removing it entirely without practical alternatives could force some growers back to cultivation, potentially increasing erosion and reducing soil moisture conservation.

The Parkinson's debate

While paraquat has long been recognised as one of the world's most acutely toxic herbicides, the more contentious question has centred on whether long-term exposure contributes to Parkinson's disease.

Numerous epidemiological studies have reported an association between occupational exposure to paraquat and higher rates of Parkinson's disease. Laboratory research has also demonstrated that paraquat can damage dopamine-producing nerve cells – the same cells progressively lost in people with Parkinson's.

However, demonstrating association is not the same as proving causation.

After reviewing hundreds of scientific studies and public submissions, the APVMA concluded that the weight of evidence does not demonstrate that exposure to paraquat under approved Australian use conditions increases the risk of developing Parkinson's disease.

That conclusion has been strongly disputed by Parkinson's Australia, neurologists and public health advocates, who argue the evidence is now sufficiently compelling to justify banning the chemical under the precautionary principle adopted in many other countries. More than 70 nations, including all European Union member states, no longer permit paraquat use.

A new challenge for growers

While farming organisations welcomed the decision to retain paraquat, many agronomists believe the lower permitted application rates may reduce its effectiveness against difficult weeds.

South Australian agronomist Scott Hutchings told the ABC the reduced rates would be particularly challenging for industries such as lucerne production, while Adelaide University weed scientist Dr Chris Preston said commercially viable alternatives remain several years away. Some replacement products are under development, but growers could face a significant gap before new chemistry reaches the market.

Researchers have also highlighted another issue: Australia's dependence on imported paraquat.

Despite domestic use being banned in China, Australia sources most of its paraquat from Chinese manufacturers. Experts say the concentration of global production raises questions about long-term supply security and whether Australian agriculture should begin reducing its reliance on imported herbicides by investing in alternative weed management strategies.

Native wildlife also exposed

The paraquat debate extends beyond its possible effects on agricultural workers.

Recent Western Australian research has found endangered Carnaby's black cockatoos are being exposed to a broad mixture of agricultural chemicals while feeding in grain-growing districts.

Murdoch University researcher Dr Zoe Kissane used tracking data to identify agricultural feeding sites before testing grain and seed collected from those locations. Twenty-six pesticides were detected, with one or more chemicals present in 80 per cent of the 90 samples tested.

Some residues exceeded applicable maximum residue limits, including several neonicotinoid insecticides and fungicides. Paraquat and glyphosate were also reported among the herbicides detected in grain-crop samples, although the research has not established that paraquat caused illness in the birds.

The findings are particularly concerning because Carnaby's cockatoos increasingly feed on canola and cereal crops in areas where much of their original native habitat has been cleared.

Researchers are investigating whether repeated pesticide exposure may contribute to Carnaby's Hindlimb Paralysis Syndrome, or CHiPS, a condition that can leave affected birds unable to use their legs and may result in death through starvation, injury or respiratory failure.

Earlier investigations concentrated on organophosphate insecticides used on canola. The newer research suggests the risk may be broader, with cockatoos potentially exposed to combinations of herbicides, insecticides and fungicides across the agricultural landscape.

Paraquat can also affect wildlife indirectly. As a non-selective herbicide, it kills green plant tissue and may damage native vegetation through spray drift or off-target application. The removal of groundcover and seed-producing plants can reduce food and shelter for insects, reptiles, small mammals and birds, while runoff and contaminated sediment may carry chemical residues into wetlands and farm dams.

These effects are difficult to separate from the wider loss and fragmentation of Wheatbelt habitat. As native feeding areas disappear, Carnaby's cockatoos are being pushed towards agricultural crops – and potentially towards greater chemical exposure.

The APVMA's final decision imposed lower application rates and other controls partly because some previously approved paraquat uses presented unacceptable



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environmental risks. For Wheatbelt communities, the question is therefore not only whether paraquat can be used safely by farmers, but whether the wider agricultural system is adequately protecting the native species that share the landscape.

Balancing risk and necessity

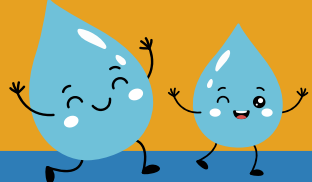
For many Wheatbelt growers, the debate is not as simple as choosing between farming and health.

Most recognise paraquat's toxicity and already handle it under strict safety protocols. At the same time, they argue there are currently few practical alternatives capable of controlling herbicide-resistant weeds while maintaining conservation farming practices.

For Parkinson's advocates, however, the decision remains deeply disappointing, with many arguing Australia should adopt the precautionary approach taken by more than 70 other countries. Conservationists are also watching closely, as researchers continue investigating the cumulative effects of agricultural pesticides on endangered species such as Carnaby's black cockatoos and the broader Wheatbelt ecosystem.

The APVMA's decision is therefore unlikely to end the debate. Instead, it marks the beginning of a new chapter in which Australian agriculture must balance productive farming with growing expectations around worker safety, biodiversity conservation and environmental stewardship.

THEME: WONDERS OF WATER



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2026 NORTHAM FARMERS SHOW

12TH SEPTEMBER
ONE DAY SHOW
9AM - 9PM



The Volunteer Committee of the Northam Agricultural Society are excited to announce the 2026 Northam Farmers Show will be taking place on the 13th September 2026, this year we are holding a 1 day show on the Saturday.

Packed full of entertainment, food, fun, live bands, fireworks, animals, local talent, Highland Dancing, horses and more! We love bringing this show to our community and with the support of our wonderful sponsors and fundraising from our volunteers we cant wait to show you what we have planned!

Keep an eye on our social media, website, radio and of course The Northam Advertiser for our full schedule and updates - with heaps of new classes for you to try we can't wait to see our community showcase their talents in the pavilion.

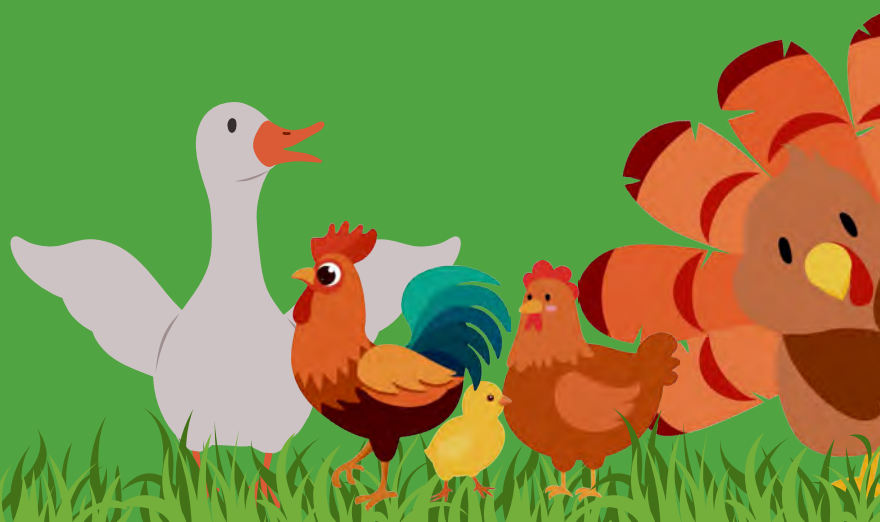
northamagsoc.secretary@gmail.com

www.northamshow.com.au



POULTRY SECTION 17

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ANDREW RYALL 0438 984 831



Entries Close: 4.00pm 4th September 2026
NO LATE ENTRIES - Entry Fee - Single \$2.00 Pairs: \$2.00
Penning: Friday 4.30pm – 7.00pm Saturday 7.00am – 9.00am
Judging: 9.15am Saturday (Open Shed Judging)
Judges: Dave Finlay & James Hughes

Pairs

Class 1: AV Pair Soft Feather Heavy Large
Class 2: AV Pair Soft Feather Light Large
Class 3: AV Pair Hard Feathered Large Breed
Class 4: AV Pair Hard Feathered Bantam
Class 5: AV Pair Soft Feather Heavy Bantam
Class 6: AV Pair Soft Feather Light Bantam
Class 7: AV Pair Turkey/Guinea Fowl
Class 8: AV Pair Of Geese
Class 9: AOV Pair Waterfowl

Large Hard Feather (Game)

Class 10: AC Australian Game Male
Class 11: AC Australian Game Female
Class 12: AC Indian or Jubilee Game Male
Class 13: AC Indian or Jubilee Game Female
Class 14: AC Malay Game Male
Class 15: AC Malay Game Female
Class 16: Black/Red OEG Male
Class 17: Black/Red OEG Female
Class 18: Brown Red OEG Male
Class 19: Brown Red OEG Female
Class 20: AOC OEG Male
Class 21: AOC OEG Female
Class 22: AOV Hard Feathered Male
Class 23: AOV Hard Feathered Female

Large Soft Feathered Heavy Breed

Class 24: AC Australorp Male
Class 25: AC Australorp Female
Class 26: AC Australian Langshan Male
Class 27: AC Australian Langshan Female
Class 28: AC Orpington Male
Class 29: AC Orpington Female
Class 30: AC Plymouth Rock Male
Class 31: AC Plymouth Rock Female
Class 32: AC Rhode Island Male
Class 33: AC Rhode Island Female
Class 34: AC Sussex Male
Class 35: AC Sussex Female
Class 36: Silver Laced Wyandotte Male
Class 37: Silver Laced Wyandotte Female
Class 38: AOC Wyandotte Male
Class 39: AOC Wyandotte Female
Class 40: AOV Heavy Breed Male
Class 41: AOV Heavy Breed Female

Large Soft Feathered Light Breed

Class 42: AC Ancona Male
Class 43: AC Ancona Female
Class 44: White Leghorn Male
Class 45: White Leghorn Female
Class 46: AOC Leghorn Male
Class 47: AOC Leghorn Female
Class 48: AC Araucana Male
Class 49: AC Araucana Female
Class 50: White Silkie Male
Class 51: White Silkie Female
Class 52: Black Silkie Male
Class 53: Black Silkie Female
Class 54: AOC Silkie Male
Class 55: AOC Silkie Female
Class 56: AC Minorca Male
Class 57: AC Minorca Female
Class 58: AOV Large Light Breed Male
Class 59: AOV Large Light Breed Female

Bantam Hard Feather

Class 60: OEG Black/Red Male
Class 61: OEG Blue/Red Male
Class 62: OEG Black/Red Partridge Male
Class 63: OEG Black/Red Partridge Female
Class 64: OEG Black OR Blue Tail Wheaten Female
Class 65: OEG Duckwing Male
Class 66: OEG Duckwing Female
Class 67: OEG Grey Male
Class 68: OEG Grey Female
Class 69: AOC OEG Male
Class 70: AOC OEG Female
Class 71: AC Australian Game Male
Class 72: AC Australian Game Female
Class 73: Australian Pit Game Male
Class 74: Australian Pit Game Female
Class 75: AC Indian or Jubilee Game Male
Class 76: AC Indian or Jubilee Game Female
Class 77: Black/Red Partridge Modern Game Male
Class 78: Black/Red Partridge Modern Game Female
Class 79: Duckwing Modern Game Male
Class 80: Duckwing Modern Game Female
Class 81: Ginger Modern Game Male
Class 82: Ginger Modern Game Female
Class 83: AOC Modern Game Male
Class 84: AOC Modern Game Female
Class 85: AOV Hard Feathered Bantam Male
Class 86: AOV Hard Feathered Bantam Female

Bantam Soft Feather Heavy Breed

Class 87: AC Langshan Male
Class 88: AC Langshan Female
Class 89: AC Australorp Male
Class 90: AC Australorp Female
Class 91: AC Orpington Male
Class 92: AC Orpington Female
Class 93: Black Pekin Male
Class 94: Black Pekin Female
Class 95: Blue Pekin Male
Class 96: Blue Pekin Female
Class 97: Buff Pekin Male
Class 98: Buff Pekin Female
Class 99: AOC Pekin Male
Class 100: AOC Pekin Female
Class 101: AC Plymouth Rock Male
Class 102: AC Plymouth Rock Female
Class 103: AC Rhode Island Male
Class 104: AC Rhode Island Female
Class 105: AC Sussex Male
Class 106: AC Sussex Female
Class 107: Partridge Wyandotte Male
Class 108: Partridge Wyandotte Female
Class 109: White Wyandotte Male
Class 110: White Wyandotte Female
Class 111: AOC Wyandotte Male
Class 112: AOC Wyandotte Female
Class 113: AOV Heavy Breed Male
Class 114: AOV Heavy Breed Female

Bantam Soft Feather Light Breed

Class 115: AC Ancona Male
Class 116: AC Ancona Female
Class 117: Black/Blue Belgium d'Uccle Male
Class 118: Black/Blue Belgium d'Uccle Female
Class 119: Millefleur Belgium d'Uccle Male
Class 120: Millefleur Belgium d'Uccle Female
Class 121: AOC d'Uccle Male

Class 122: AOC d'Uccle Female
Class 123: AC d'Anvers Male
Class 124: AC d'Anvers Female
Class 125: AC Japanese Male
Class 126: AC Japanese Female
Class 127: White Leghorn Male
Class 128: White Leghorn Female
Class 129: AOC Leghorn Male
Class 130: AOC Leghorn Female
Class 131: AC Rosecomb Male
Class 132: AC Rosecomb Female
Class 133: AOV Bantam Light Breed Male
Class 134: AOV Bantam Light Breed Female

Waterfowl And Turkey Large Heavy

Class 135: Muscovy Male
Class 136: Muscovy Female
Class 137: Pekin Male
Class 138: Pekin Female
Class 139: Silver Appleyard Male
Class 140: Silver Appleyard Female
Class 141: AOV Large Heavy Male
Class 142: AOV Large Heavy Female

Large Light

Class 143: AC Indian Runner Male
Class 144: AC Indian Runner Female
Class 145: AC Campbell Male
Class 146: AC Campbell Female
Class 147: Orpington Male
Class 148: Orpington Female
Class 149: AV Large Light Male
Class 150: AV Large Light Female

Bantam

Class 151: AC Call Male
Class 152: AC Call Female
Class 153: AV Bantam Duck Male
Class 154: AV Bantam Duck Female

Geese

Class 155: AC Chinese Male
Class 156: AC Chinese Female
Class 157: AOV Goose Male
Class 158: AOV Goose Female
Class 159: AC Turkey Male
Class 160: AC Turkey Female
Class 161: AV Guinea Fowl Male
Class 162: AV Guinea Fowl Female

Juniors

Class 163: AOV Large Hard Feathered Male
Class 164: AOV Large Hard Feathered Female
Class 165: AV Large Heavy Soft Feather Male
Class 166: AV Large Heavy Soft Feather Female
Class 167: AV Large Light Soft Feather Male
Class 168: AV Large Light Soft Feather Female
Class 169: Bantam AV Hard Feathered Male
Class 170: Bantam AV Hard Feathered Female
Class 171: Bantam AV Heavy Soft Feather Male
Class 172: Bantam AV Heavy Soft Feather Female
Class 173: Bantam AV Light Soft Feather Male
Class 174: Bantam AV Light Soft Feather Female
Class 175: AV Waterfowl Male
Class 176: AV Waterfowl Female

Backyard Poultry

Class 177: Isa Brown or Hyline Female
Class 178: Any Cross Breed Male
Class 179: Any Cross Breed Female

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GUESS WHAT!

Where am I?

Buildings of Northam



Who am I?

Prominent Identities



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Last month's answers:
Where am I? Byfield House
Winner: Stuart Briegel

Who am I? Rhonda Oliver
Winner: No winner

Where Am I? – Byfield House



Last month's Where Am I? took us to one of Northam's admired landmarks – Byfield House, standing on the corner of Gordon and Chidlow Streets for more than 120 years.

Completed in 1904, the grand home was built for prominent businessman James Byfield, whose name became associated with building, milling and civic leadership in the growing town. At a time when Northam was prospering from the Goldfields boom, Byfield House reflected both the confidence and ambition of the era.

Its most striking feature is undoubtedly the distinctive corner tower. Local tradition suggests James Byfield borrowed the idea after seeing a similar home during a visit to America, creating a residence unlike any other in the district.

Byfield House has witnessed more than family life. During the Second World War it served as Military Police headquarters, while in later years it narrowly escaped being lost through neglect before a painstaking restoration returned it to its former glory. Many locals will remember its years as a gallery, restaurant and popular wedding venue.

Today the beautifully restored home remains a private residence, its elegant tower still watching over Gordon Street.

WORD SEARCH

V	L	D	B	C	W	H	S	U	B	I	E	T	C	U	R	R	E	N	T
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AVON DESCENT

Spectators	Kayak
Volunteer	Boat
Challenge	Canoe
Marathon	Avon
Waterway	Race
Finish	Start
Rapids	Water
River	Paddle
Bridge	Wheatbelt
Competitor	Festival
Community	Powerboat
Adventure	Downstream
Northam	
Current	
Descent	

CROSSWORD

Across

1

One-humped camel (9)

6

Africa's highest peak (11)

11

Language spoken in Brazil (10)

12

Opposed to (4)

13

Study of shapes and angles (8)

18

Highest point reached (6)

19

Burrowing Australian marsupial (6)

24

Fear of confined spaces (14)

25

Tasmania's capital (6)

26

Chain of islands (11)

28

Ancient stone circle in England (10)

29

Small stream or trickle (4)

Down

2

Study of fungi (8)

3

Blending in with surroundings (10)

4

Slow-moving tree dweller, or laziness (5)

5

Insect specialist (12)

7

Organ that filters blood (5)

8

Ancient Greek marketplace (5)

9

Lessen the severity of (8)

10

Young swan (6)

14

Large flightless Australian bird (3)

15

Deep red gemstone (4)

16

Shakespearean tragedy set in Venice (7)

17

Study of earthquakes (10)

20

Volcanic glass rock (8)

21

Instrument measuring air pressure (9)

22

Number after one (3)

23

Ancient writing material (7)

27

Large flightless South American bird (4)

SUDOKU

	7						4	5
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9				5		3		1

York Yarns August

We are keen gardeners and although we don't know all the Latin names for things and don't have a particularly planned and neat and tidy space, we do our very best. What I don't understand is why, when we get the very welcome showers we have had in the last few weeks, that the ratio of growth, plants to weeds, is so dramatically out of line; I mean flat dandelions the size of a medium flying saucer and tall thistles that would challenge Jack's beanstalk! And what my gran used to call chickweed growing not just amongst the plants but through them, intertwined and virtually impossible to remove without damaging the plant. Fair go, gardening in the York clay is hard enough mother nature, perhaps just give us a break now and then.

As usual, I digress, massively! Onto more readily understandable matters, i.e. what the amazing town of York has lined up in the coming weeks, and there is a lot for everyone to get excited about and involved in.

A very popular addition to York's calendar is the introduction of Thursday Bingo at the Castle Hotel. This great initiative by the 'Staying in Place' team takes place every week from 1-4pm (eyes down at 2pm) and it has been enthusiastically embraced by the local aficionados and followers of the 'legs 11, two little ducks, two fat ladies' and similar politically incorrect callings! (Not sure if these are still used or have been cleaned up, better get along to listen.) There are prizes, lots of general merriment and afternoon tea so well worth a Thursday afternoon trip into town!

The last weekend in August is so jam packed with events that you will need to be fit as a fiddle to keep up and catch everything on offer! Saturday 29th sees the Hill Climb event that was a big hit last year and promises to be bigger and better this year, get up early to get a good spot to see all the action. Then on Sunday 30th the whole day is Wheels in the Wheatbelt the annual motor show put on by York Motoring Events Inc..

Then you need to also find time to stop and listen to the York Ukelele Group who will be playing in the Bistro Porch of the Castle Hotel 9am-12:30pm on Sunday for the annual worldwide 'Play on the Porch Day' They invite any acoustic musicians to join them, and the theme is, have fun and meet new people, sounds like a good plan to me! After you have had all that fun you might think about joining the group on a regular basis.

Then for something completely different the August Antiques and Collectables Fair is held over the same



weekend, 29th-30th in the iconic York Town Hall. 9:30am-4pm daily. Come and get a bargain to add to your already huge collection or why not start a collection of almost anything that takes your fancy! Teapots, cup & saucers, silver, dolls, kitchen utensils the only thing needed is your imagination! (And your wallet.)

The York branch of the WA Wildflower Association have recently been the recipients of some funding which has been put to good use to help preserve and improve this amazing asset we have here in York in the shape of the Bushland Garden in Grey Street. I have it on good authority that it has enabled the purchase of a tractor plus a shed to keep it in, an extension to the building and several other important assets. It has also required a massive input by a dedicated team of volunteers; this was celebrated with a lovely thank you ceremony at the end of July. Where would any regional town be without volunteers? (Nowhere!)

The River Conservation folk have also been incredibly busy and continue with all their never-ending work to preserve our river foreshore and adjoining areas as well as consistently working at their premises and grounds on Glebe Street. If you haven't seen what they have achieved over the last 12 months pay the area a visit, you will be amazed.

On August 1st there will be a presentation at the RCS by Simon Cherriman, award winning environmental scientist/ecologist, of his latest book, 'Hollowed Out' a

story of tree hollows, habitat loss and how nesting boxes can help wildlife in the southwestern Australia. Simon is a highly engaging and knowledgeable public speaker, don't miss this fascinating talk.

A bit further ahead, but you need to plan, is the amazing Medieval Fayre on Sunday 27th September. This features battles, old world crafts, archery, market stalls, music and raptors and much more! Entry is \$15 and under 15yrs it is free. It is a fantastic day out and even better if you dress up and get in the spirit of the event.

Speaking of dressing up, on Saturday 26th the Medieval Banquet is being held in the Town hall. This is an amazing spectacle with almost everyone in costume. An evening of fun with lots of entertainment and a fabulous feast. Tickets are \$100 and will sell fast so better get in early. Tickets at Humanitix. This event is BYO.

Plans are well underway for the upgrade of the old hardware site and McCartney Street next to IGA. Plans include better parking facilities, change of traffic flow and parking in McCartney Street and then a user-friendly area onto Avon Terrace with gardens, seating, a spot for small events and children's activities. Can't wait to see this great project finally get underway.

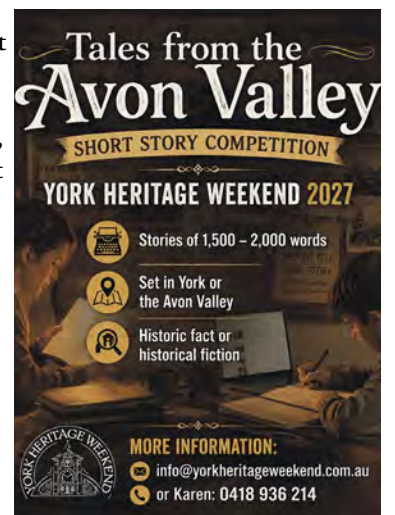
Don't forget entries for the 'Tales from the Avon Valley' competition open soon, get scribbling!

Just a final word about the ABS Census being held on 11th August this year. Before you throw your hands up and go on about government, privacy, none of their business etc and before you consider entering Jedi for religion let me just say this. Regional towns rely heavily on government funding (as well as rates) and this depends a lot on what our accurate population figures are, this goes a long way to determining what funding we get. So, please think seriously about making sure you have a form, you fill it in correctly and get it back to the ABS on the

due date. If you don't do your bit to make this work for your town and your Shire, don't complain about the roads or the footpaths etc as the extra work may have been what would have been done with those extra dollars!

Have a great month and hope to see you in York soon!

The York Scribe



“ a room without books
is like a body without
a soul ”
Cicero

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Free Support to Build Home Care Careers in the Wheatbelt

If you are thinking about a career in home care and aged care, there is now access to free, independent support through the Regional, Rural and Remote Home Care Workforce Support Program, delivered by Skills Hubs. The program is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and runs through to 2028.

Skills Hubs is not a training organisation or a care provider. It works as an independent support, connecting people in Wheatbelt communities with the Aged Care Industry, with a particular focus on home care. The program supports people at every stage of their journey into home care work.

This includes:

1. Attracting people into the sector, including school leavers, career changers and those returning to work
2. Helping candidates access the right training, including fee free options through Jobs and Skills WA

3. Supporting people once they are working, so they stay in the sector long term
4. Practical, one on one help along the way, from resume writing and cover letters to mock interviews, job applications and getting set up on self-employment platforms

All of this is offered at no cost to individuals or to local organisations.

Skills Hubs currently works across seven regions in Western Australia, including Wheatbelt North and Wheatbelt South, alongside Albany, Esperance, Kimberley, Manjimup and the Mid-West. The approach is community first, meaning the program works alongside existing local training providers and employers rather than competing with them.

For more information, contact Skills Hubs on 1800 319 762, email workforce@skillshubs.com.au, or visit skillshubs.com.au.



What you need to know about any risks of bird flu in Australia

Bird flu (avian influenza) can affect birds and some other animals. It is rare for humans to get bird flu, and it does not usually spread easily from person to person.

In Australia, the risk to people is currently low. However, it is important to avoid contact with sick or dead birds and to follow public health and biosecurity advice. You can safely eat chicken and eggs if they have been handled and cooked correctly.

We unpack what bird flu is and how it can be prevented.

What causes bird flu?

Bird flu is caused by certain strains of influenza A viruses, which are different to the ones that cause human flu.

Can humans get bird flu?

It is rare for humans to get bird flu. Bird flu does not usually spread easily from person to person.

Only one case of bird flu has been detected in humans in Australia. This was in early 2024. The person got the infection overseas and fully recovered.

While the risk of infection is considered low, bird flu

viruses can mutate (change) quickly during outbreaks and this mutation may allow the infection to spread to humans more easily. So, it's important to follow protection guidelines, such as staying away from sick or dead birds.

How is bird flu spread?

Bird flu spreads mainly among birds, but it can also infect other animals. It's rare for humans to get infected with bird flu, and it doesn't easily pass from human to human.

But if you did get bird flu, you'd get it by:

- touching an infected animal, its bodily fluids or environment
- breathing in contaminated dust or air
- coming into contact with contaminated equipment, clothing, shoes or vehicles

What are the symptoms of bird flu?

Symptoms of bird flu may include:

- fever over 38°C, chills or shakes
- respiratory issues, such as sore throat and cough

- fatigue
- headache, neck stiffness, muscle or joint aches
- nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea
- red, sore eyes (conjunctivitis)

Some people with bird flu have no symptoms.

In humans, bird flu can make you quite sick and in some cases it can be serious.

If you think you have bird flu or have come into contact with someone with bird flu, speak with your doctor.

You should also speak with your doctor if you get any of these symptoms within 10 days of contact with sick or dead birds.

You should stay away from others if you can, until your doctor gives you advice on what to do.

If you need more health advice on what to do, call the healthdirect helpline on 1800 022 222. Registered nurses are available to take your call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Article taken from <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/blog/what-you-need-to-know-about-any-risks-of-bird-flu-in-australia>

Big Tobacco tax cut would hand multinational tobacco companies a \$2.3 billion windfall

A 50 percent cut to tobacco customs duties would hand multinational tobacco companies an estimated windfall worth around \$2.3 billion annually, according to the Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA).

Adjunct Professor Terry Slevin, the association's CEO, says the new estimates reinforce the need for governments to remain strong against intense tobacco industry lobbying – an issue that was put in the spotlight last week during Senate inquiry hearings into illegal tobacco.

“At a time when 66 Australians die every day from tobacco-related disease, the tobacco industry appeared before the senate inquiry hearing arguing for cheaper cigarettes and a tax cut,” Adj Prof Slevin said.

“The conversation happened behind closed doors, and without being included on the hearing agenda. This is typical of the stealth tactics the tobacco industry uses when lobbying to protect its profits at the expense of public health.

“It's important for governments to recognise that arguments for a tax cut are part of an orchestrated campaign being driven by the tobacco industry and associated organisations with a focus on self-interest and profits, not concern for public health and safety.

“With so many urgent pressures on our health system and budget, a reduction in tobacco excise would represent a

perverse and unacceptable giveaway to an industry whose products are responsible for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Australians, as well as billions of dollars in healthcare costs and lost productivity.

“The only real winner from a tobacco tax cut would be the tobacco industry itself. We estimate British American Tobacco would receive an estimated windfall of more than \$1 billion, Imperial Brands more than \$600 million, and Philip Morris more than \$500 million annually. So it is no surprise the tobacco industry lobbying campaign around tax cuts has intensified.

“Cutting tobacco tax would not stop the illicit tobacco trade. Even under the tobacco industry's proposed tax cut, the price difference between legal and illicit tobacco would remain large enough to continue driving organised criminal activity and illegal supply.

“Regardless of whether they are illicit or legal, cigarettes kill. We need governments to focus on enforcement, including tighter regulation of the supply chain and tobacco retailers.”

Adj Prof Slevin says he hopes the Senate inquiry will lead to a government commitment to stamping out tobacco industry interference and reducing the impact of smoking across the country.

“Australia also has clear obligations under the WHO

Framework Convention on Tobacco Control to protect public health policy from tobacco industry influence.

“One positive outcome of this Senate inquiry could be greater transparency around tobacco industry lobbying and influence activities, including the role of retailers and associated interests. Australians deserve to know the extent of these influence campaigns.

“Rather than handing billions of dollars back to multinational tobacco companies, Australia should be strengthening public health protections, reducing smoking rates, protecting future generations and considering stronger reforms such as stopping tobacco industry political donations.”

Associate Professor Raglan Maddox, Program Lead of the Tobacco Free Program at the Australian National University, says the debate highlighted the importance of protecting future generations from industry harm.

“Young people are increasingly seeing through tobacco industry narratives and calling for a nicotine-free future grounded in culture, truth-telling and community leadership,” he said.

“At a time when communities are working hard to reduce smoking and vaping harms, the answer is not cheaper cigarettes. The focus should remain on protecting future generations, and preventing addiction before it starts.”

Article taken from phaa.net.au/Web/News/Media-releases-2026/Big-Tobacco-tax-cut



Shire of Northam News

August 2026



Update from Chris Antonio, Shire of Northam President

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved with the recent celebrations and events during NAIDOC week, it was wonderful to see such a great turnout.

The 5-yearly Census is coming up on 11 August. This nationwide count, conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, is important for the Shire as it provides essential data that affects our funding, which in turn affects infrastructure and services that we are able to provide. Make sure you participate, and that your voice is heard. There are also job opportunities for locals if they want to be involved.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) has issued an update regarding H5 Avian Influenza (Bird Flu). Primary takeaways from the update include a reminder to assist with surveillance for H5 bird flu. Find the latest information from DPIRD WA via their website.

If you see multiple sick or dead birds, marine mammals or poultry:

- Avoid contact
- Record the location
- Take photos if safe
- Report it: 1800 675 888.

If you want to keep up to date with what I've been up to, follow @shire_of_northam_president on Instagram.



2027 Walk of Fame Nominations Open

We welcomed 5 very important people into the Shire of Northam Walk of Fame at the inaugural induction event in May this year, and we're thrilled to announce that nominations are now open for 2027.

Do you know someone who has made a lasting difference in the Shire of Northam's story? Tell us all about them in a nomination by visiting www.northam.wa.gov.au/nominations.

Social Sports Term 3

Looking to get moving, meet some locals, and try your hand at something new? The Shire of Northam is excited to announce our upcoming Social Sport line-up at the Northam Recreation Centre!

When: 5:30pm to 6:30pm
Where: Northam Recreation Centre

Lock these dates into your calendar:

- 30 July – Floorball
- 13 August – Badminton
- 27 August – Walking Netball
- 10 September – Volleyball
- 24 September – Soccer

Are you part of a local club or sports association? We would love to have you involved! If you are interested in attending to help run skills sessions or offer some coaching tips, please reach out.

Get in touch: Contact the Northam Recreation Centre on (08) 9622 5153.

Community Survey Results

Scams are becoming more sophisticated, but knowing what to look for can help keep you and your loved ones safe. Join the Seniors Recreation Council of WA Inc and the Shire of Northam, in a Scam Awareness Session designed especially for seniors.

You'll learn:

- How to recognise common scams
- Warning signs to watch out for
- What to do if you think you've been targeted
- Where to get help and support

Whether it's suspicious phone calls, text messages, emails or online scams, a little knowledge can go a long way in protecting yourself.

When: 14 August 2026 | 10:30am
Where: Northam Recreation Centre

A free bus service is available for people living out of town, with stops in:

- Wundowie
- El Caballo
- Bakers Hill
- Clackline

To register for the bus service, call 6608 0231 or email erin.craig@northam.wa.gov.au.

To register for the session, call (08) 6118 2717 or email info@srcwa.asn.au to register your interest.



What We Need to Know About Nutrition

We all know that there is a mountain of information available about nutrition, diets and food. It would be impossible to cover all the necessary information in one article so instead we'll talk about finding what works for each of us as individuals. The problem these days is deciphering which information is accurate and perhaps more importantly which information applies to us in our lives. It's vital to our health and wellbeing that we get the right information and apply it consistently. To do otherwise is selling ourselves short.

The thing to remember about health and wellbeing is that it is a holistic system, meaning that all aspects of our health have flow on effects to other important areas of wellbeing. This is especially true for diet which controls so many aspects of our health. Eating the correct amount of the right food directly improves our energy levels, concentration, physical appearance, mood, immune system and sleep. It also makes it easier to stay at a healthy weight and live longer without the adverse effects of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, a higher risk for numerous diseases and a weakened immune system. Most of us have been hearing about things like this since we were kids, remember the food pyramid and other public health campaigns?

While farmers and other physical workers who are often on the move may have higher energy requirements from their food than office workers (that do very little physical activity) it is still clear that some foods cause us harm, regardless of how tasty they are or how much energy they give us. Unfortunately, these foods often happen to be among the cheapest, the tastiest and to some people, the most addictive. While food science is constantly changing there are some things that have always been a good idea; that is to eat a lot of healthy fish, meats and vegetables (especially leafy greens which

blokes have trouble with sometimes, preferring meat with a side of meat) and avoiding highly processed food that comes with all sorts of additives and often excess salt and sugar.

The trouble however is that except for these staples, every time we look at a magazine, internet article or read a book on nutrition a large part of the public and scientific opinion seems to have changed almost overnight. Whether it's low fat and high carb or suddenly no sugar, low carb and high fat or any other combination we all know there will be someone credible disputing it in no time. It also certainly doesn't make things any simpler that everyone has their own individual requirements based on genetics but also on their daily activity.

The answer is that instead of dealing with nutrition as a group, individuals will have to discover what works for them personally so that they can take responsibility for their own wellbeing. Ways to do that include asking advice from a GP, dietitian or nutritionist, getting blood tests regularly to determine what nutrients are lacking. As well as regularly getting health checks to see if what we're currently doing is working for us and of course trial and error with the fundamental principle of moderation in all things at its heart.

The Regional Men's Health Initiative

P: (08) 6314 1436

E: menshealth@4blokes.com.au



How Oral Health Affects Your Body

Most people are taught that oral health is just about teeth and the prevention of cavities, and having fresh breath. We should also consider that the mouth is the beginning of our digestive tract which is home to a complex community of microorganisms, an important part of our immune defence as well as the place through which we eat, taste, breathe, speak and express ourselves.

Ayurveda has understood this for thousands of years, modern research is now beginning to understand this connection between the health of our mouth and that of the wider body.

Periodontal disease is a chronic inflammatory condition affecting gums and the structure of our teeth. It has been associated with several systematic health conditions, chronic inflammation, cardiovascular conditions, diabetes, respiratory tract conditions and adverse pregnancy outcomes.

Ayurvedic oral care includes:

- Cleaning teeth and gums
- Scraping the tongue - removing the build-up of plaque.
- Rinsing the mouth
- And a process called Gandoosh which involves holding a mixture of black sesame seed oil, turmeric, black pepper and black salt in the mouth for around 7 minutes. This is anti-inflammatory, and anti-septic. It's done when required.

Your tongue is an organ of taste and a visible reflection of your internal organ health. Taste is one of the first stages of digestion. Before food reaches the stomach, its aroma, appearance and flavour begin preparing the digestive system. Saliva moistens the food and initiates digestion, while the tongue identifies the six tastes. A coated tongue, unpleasant taste, insufficient or excessive saliva, and persistent bad breath would prompt an Ayurvedic practitioner to look more closely at digestion, hydration, diet and the possible build-up of ama (toxic accumulation) in various areas of your body.

Jane Leeming -practitioner

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Climate change: Who cares wins

by Sarah Melville-Maguire, Senior Manager RSM Australia

Climate change is already shaping decisions made at the farm gate. Hotter summers, more variable rainfall, and rising input costs are the new status quo.

At the same time, farmers who prioritise sustainability and climate change action are increasingly finding that what's good for the land is also good for the bottom line.

A recent Australian study published in Agricultural Systems, covering more than 230,000 hectares of farmland, found that farms with stronger natural capital often achieved better economic outcomes. Farms with healthier soils, better vegetation cover, and more diverse ecosystems tend to show higher productivity, improved gross margins, and greater financial resilience.

Sustainability is increasingly part of the business case for long-term farm performance, not separate from it.

What actually works on farm?

Across Australia, primary producers are already applying sustainability in practical, operational ways that also support profitability. The most effective approaches tend to be simple, embedded in day-to-day management, and focused on reducing risk rather than adding complexity.

Common examples include:

- maintaining ground cover
- rotational grazing
- increasing pasture diversity
- improving water efficiency
- using precision inputs to reduce fertiliser and feed waste.

These are not “new” ideas, but they are increasingly being viewed through a different lens: as practical tools for improving productivity, reducing emissions intensity and protecting margins.

A strong example of this thinking in practice is WA's FEED365 project, which explored year-round forage systems for livestock producers. The project demonstrated how combining perennial pastures and forage systems can reduce seasonal feed gaps, improve carrying capacity, and reduce reliance on supplementary feeding - a major cost pressure during dry conditions.

What makes this important is not just the agronomy, but the outcome: more stable feed supply and more

predictable business performance in variable seasons.

The latest research reinforces what many farmers already know from experience: healthy landscapes support healthy businesses. As climate conditions continue to change, the farms best equipped for the future may be those that treat sustainability as part of everyday decision-making.

Where is this heading?

The future of agriculture will see sustainability embedded as a core farm business strategy, alongside productivity, risk management and profitability.

This shift is being driven by several forces:

- more variable and extreme climate conditions
- rising input costs across energy, feed, and fertiliser
- increased expectations from banks, insurers, and export markets
- growing emphasis on climate resilience and ESG performance

Ultimately, sustainable farming is a practical response to these forces. It is about building systems that are more flexible, more efficient, and better able to absorb shocks.

Farms that invest in soil health, pasture diversity, efficient resource use, and system resilience are often better positioned to maintain productivity through difficult seasons.

In this context, sustainability is less about adding new layers of complexity, and more about embedding better decision-making into everyday farm operations.

How RSM can help

RSM Australia works with agribusinesses across Western Australia to help identify opportunities to improve efficiency, manage climate-related risks, and respond to changing ESG expectations.

For More Information

To learn more about establishing your baseline emissions and identifying practical opportunities to improve productivity, efficiency and long-term resilience, contact RSM Australia.



Chalice Appoints Paul De Ponte as Gonneville Project Director



Chalice Mining Limited (“Chalice” or “the Company”, ASX: CHN) is pleased to announce the appointment of highly regarded mining executive Mr Paul De Ponte as Project Director, further strengthening the Company's senior leadership team as it advances the world-class Gonneville Critical Minerals Project towards development.

Mr De Ponte will join the Company on 20 July 2026 and be responsible for leading delivery of the Gonneville Project through the ongoing Feasibility Study, final engineering, project execution planning and operational readiness ahead of a planned Final Investment Decision (FID) in H1 2028.

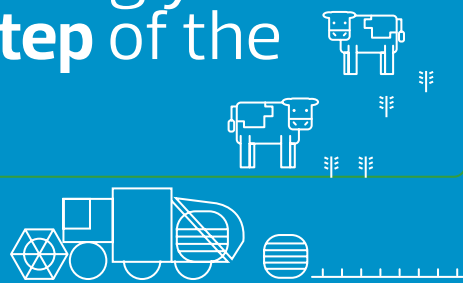
Mr De Ponte has more than 25 years' experience leading major mining, mineral processing and infrastructure projects and operations in Australia and South Africa. He has a proven track record in building high-performing teams and delivering major capital projects ahead of schedule and under budget.

Chalice Managing Director & CEO, Alex Dorsch, said: “Paul joins Chalice at exactly the right time as we continue to mature Gonneville into one of Australia's next major critical minerals developments. His experience delivering large, technically complex capital projects into operations will be invaluable as we complete the Feasibility Study, advance permitting and prepare the project for development.

“Paul has an outstanding reputation and track record for execution and leadership and I am delighted to welcome him to Chalice.”



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CEO UPDATE by Theresa Lee

July was another busy month for the Northam Chamber of Commerce, including the Northam Women in Business networking event at the iconic Jennacubbine Tavern. A heartfelt thank you to owners Steve and Brenda for providing a wonderful three-course meal and warm country hospitality. Guests also enjoyed an inspiring panel discussion featuring Hannah Norrish, Judi Turner and Jay Page, who shared their inspiring journeys from traditional employment into business ownership.

Later in the month, Chamber members gathered at Eclipse Brewery for our Business After Hours event. Guests were treated to a behind-the-scenes tour of the impressive brewhouse and heard from Co-Director Bryn Allan about the vision behind this exciting new venture. It was also fantastic to hear from the regional businesses contributing to its success, including Roam Distillery, Mortlock Malt, Loam Studios and Margaret River Hops. Eclipse Brewery is a shining example of what can be achieved when regional businesses collaborate to create something truly unique.

I also had the pleasure of attending Dowerin Downtown alongside NCC President Trent Frost,

with thanks to the Shire of Northam for the invitation. Events like this provide an important opportunity to remind metropolitan decision-makers of the enormous contribution Wheatbelt agriculture and regional industry make to Western Australia. We wish the Dowerin community every success as they prepare to host the iconic Field Days later this month.

We're also delighted that our Tourism WA-funded Approved Manager Course sold out, highlighting the strong demand for affordable training opportunities across the tourism and hospitality sectors. Thanks to this overwhelming response, we'll be delivering another subsidised session in the coming months, helping businesses across the Avon Valley continue to upskill their teams with locally provided in-person training.

Looking ahead, August brings one of the region's busiest and most exciting periods as visitors arrive for the Avon Descent. We encourage you to be involved in the Shire of Northam's spectacular Hollywood-themed Bilya Festival on 7 August, officially kicking off the festivities, and we wish all Avon Descent organisers, competitors and support crews a safe and successful weekend.

We're proud to support the return of the Northam Career Expo on 12 August and encourage businesses,

job seekers and students to attend and make valuable connections. Thank you to Brenda De Atta and her team at the Jobs & Skills Centre for bringing this important event back to our community.

Finally, we're excited to announce that the launch of our inaugural Northam Business & Community Directory is just around the corner. Thank you to the many businesses and the Shire of Northam whose support has made this first edition possible. We look forward to delivering a valuable resource that connects our community, businesses and visitors with the services they need locally.



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Fireplace Maintenance

Fireplaces bring warmth and character to a home, but they also require careful maintenance.

A recent event serves as a reminder of how hidden faults can create serious risks.

To help protect your property, here are some tips:

- Regular fireplace checks - Have your fireplace, flue and chimney inspected by a qualified contractor at least once a year, especially before winter.
- Monitor for changes - If you notice new noises, unusual smells, smoke escaping where it shouldn't, or the fireplace behaving differently, stop using it immediately.
- Arrange a contractor promptly - Any change in performance should be assessed by a licensed fireplace or chimney specialist. Early intervention prevents costly and dangerous issues.

Fireplaces are a fantastic feature and an excellent source of warmth, they simply need regular attention to ensure they remain safe.

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Aussies slash \$500k off home costs with flatpacks

Aussies are turning to flatpack homes in a bid to slash more than \$500,000 off the cost of getting into the property market, as soaring house prices force buyers to think smaller.

New research shows more than half would consider living in a prefab or pod-style home to get a foot on the property ladder.

According to PropTrack, the national median home price hit \$903,000 in June, rising to \$1,005,000 across the capital cities.

By comparison, Elsewhere Pods' smallest tiny home option, the 4m Micro home, starts at \$50,000, while larger pod-style homes suited to family living start at \$208,584.50.

Even after adding the cost of land, the savings can still be enormous.

The latest HIA residential land report shows the median residential lot across the capital cities now costs \$437,855, while the average allotment across regional centres sells for \$295,160.

That means buyers could potentially save well over \$500,000 by choosing a flatpack or prefab home over a traditional property at the national median price.

Money.com.au's nationally representative survey of more than 1000 Australians found 54 per cent would consider buying or living in a pod-style or prefab home, including flatpack DIY models sold through retailers such as Bunnings.

Gen X was the generation most open to the idea, with 60 per cent willing to embrace flatpack housing as a pathway to homeownership.

Millennials followed at 56 per cent, while Gen Z and Baby Boomers were both at 49 per cent.

The findings come as tiny home supplier Elsewhere Pods reports a huge surge in interest following the launch of its national partnership with Bunnings, with the company fielding phone inquiries every 48 seconds in April.

Money.com.au property expert Nick Burgess said many Australians were now looking beyond the traditional freestanding house because the financial burden had become too great.

"Many Australians in their 30s, 40s and 50s are realising that owning a smaller, more affordable home may be a better financial outcome than stretching themselves to buy or build a traditional house," he said.

"These are Australians in their peak home-buying and family-raising years, and many are increasingly open to prefab or pod-style homes as a practical middle ground.

"It's either because it's more affordable than brick and mortar or because they don't want to take on a huge mortgage over 30 years like some of their peers."

The research found flatpack housing had the strongest appeal among lower-income households, with 63 per cent of those earning \$50,000 to \$99,999 saying they would consider it.

That was the highest of any income bracket and well above the 45 per cent recorded among households earning \$150,000 to \$199,999.

Even so, Australians still have clear concerns about compact prefab living.

Limited space was the biggest barrier, nominated by 46 per cent of respondents, while 41 per cent said they had concerns about build quality and durability.

Around 28 per cent worried about lifestyle and comfort, and 27 per cent were concerned about council approvals or zoning restrictions.

Another 20 per cent questioned resale value, while only 4 per cent said social stigma was holding them back.

Elsewhere Pods founder Matt Decarne said the level of demand had exceeded the company's own expectations and led to the hiring of more sales staff.

"One of the biggest driving forces is Australia's dire need for affordable housing," he said.

"Australians are searching for smarter, faster and more affordable housing solutions – from backyard studios and granny flats to eco-tourism accommodation and full-time residences."

"What we're seeing at the moment is a pretty dramatic overrepresentation in Western Australia and that's partly due to the fact that there are not that many builders over there ... and it's a similar story for Tasmania where it's really difficult to get building materials over there."

The company's flagship product is its 8m tiny home which sells for around \$115,000 delivered and installed.

"We find that this is just a really nice sweet spot between having enough space and functionality that you could potentially live in it."

Looking ahead, Mr Decarne said the company was in talks with Bunnings to roll out bigger showrooms to allow customers to feel and see the entire range of flatpack homes.

"We have a long term vision to roll out our full suite of granny flats and tiny homes within Bunnings but we're just working with them on ensuring that we tick all the regulatory and compliance boxes."

Bunnings Director of Merchandise, Cam Rist said evolving the company's range of products, while remaining responsive to the needs of our customers, was at the core of the retailer's DNA.

Article taken from realestate.com.au/news/aussies-slash-500k-off-home-costs-with-flatpacks/

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New study questions Plug-in hybrid benefits

by Dom Tripolone

Australians are rushing to get their hands on this new car tech, but it might not be the environmental saviour it is claimed to be.

Plug-in hybrids, or PHEVs as they are also called, are claimed to be a bridge between conventional petrol and hybrid vehicles and battery-powered electric vehicles.

They combine a small petrol engine with a decent-sized battery and an electric motor, which provides some fully electric driving capabilities without the range anxiety of EVs and much lower overall claimed fuel use and CO₂ emissions.

Australians have bought more than 54,000 of them in the first six months of this year, which is 111 per cent more than in the same period for 2025.

The problem is they need to be used in a very specific way to achieve their claims

Polestar Australia boss Scott Maynard previously labelled the technology the “worst of both worlds”.

“You’ve got all of the complexity of jamming an electrical drivetrain into an engine bay that’s already got a petrol or a diesel engine in it. You’re still burning fuel. You’ve still got to dispose of the whole thing. It’s not a green solution.

“It’s not a clean solution at all, but it’s a marketable one,” he said.

New research commissioned by the Swiss government has laid bare the issues.

A new study funded by the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) and conducted by Empa - the Swiss Federal Laboratories for Materials Science and Technology - showed why fuel use is always higher than claimed.

The study pointed to people needing to be very disciplined with charging the car to gain the full advantage, otherwise they pollute significantly more than they claim.

Study author Miriam Elser said if the vehicle is not charged regularly then they are just driving a much heavier petrol-powered car.

“Due to the additional weight of the battery and electric motor, consumption can even be higher than with a comparable conventional gasoline engine,” she said.

The smaller petrol engine is also underpowered compared to most other purely petrol-powered cars, which means it needs to work even harder to shift that weight. This is a perfect storm for skyrocketing fuel use.

Empa’s laboratory tests examined 12 current plug-in hybrid vehicles across a range of temperatures and driving profiles.

“This enabled us to distinguish for the first time between the influence of cold weather, heating, and driving style on the electric share and combustion engine operation,” said Elser.

The results were clear: under real-world conditions the efficiency advantage of plug-in hybrids is largely lost.

The study revealed low temperatures, the heating and dynamic driving significantly reduce the electric range. The internal-combustion engine kicks in earlier and more frequently, and fuel consumption as well as CO₂ and pollutant emissions increase, in some cases significantly.

Elser called for a better balance between battery and engine size and overall vehicle weight.

This flies in the face of the huge range of plug-in hybrids coming out of China, which are usually large SUVs with batteries measuring 40kWh or more. There is also a growing number of plug-in hybrid utes, which are big, heavy and are required to tow and carry a load that would greatly reduce their efficiency.

The study does state if used properly they can greatly reduce emissions compared to purely petrol-powered vehicles.

Article taken from carsguide.com.au

New data shows a fall in Ute sales

by Max Stevens

While sales of small and mid-size SUVs soared to new heights, demand for most utes has stalled as regular Australians – not fleets – embrace new types of vehicle power sources.

The ute is considered by many to be quintessentially Australian, but the latest June sales data shows sales have been relatively stagnant for the past six years – while SUV sales have soared.

June is typically the biggest month for vehicle sales in Australia, as buyers and sellers rush to close deals before the end of the financial year.

Ute sales in June have fluctuated over the past six years, but have ultimately averaged around 24,150 units.

Meanwhile, small and medium SUV combined sales this past June (70,185 units) are more than double that of June 2021 (31,303 units).

However, individual ute models have still managed to top the overall sales chart for the past decade, with the Toyota HiLux reigning above all from 2016 to 2022, and the Ford Ranger taking out first from 2023 to 2025.

The steady rise in SUV popularity over the past decades more closely mirrors the decline of small and medium vehicle sales over the past decade.

The dominant ute models in Australia have faced significant competition in recent years, as Chinese car makers enter the ute segment.

Tougher times are yet ahead for diesel utes sold in Australia, as the Federal Government’s New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES) will see ever-increasing fines handed to car brands for each new vehicle imported that emits CO₂ above certain thresholds.

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Focus on Farming

by Chris Antonio

The cropping season remains well on track – with sporadic, yet decent rainfall events. Concerns continue regarding fuel price and supply, given the on-again, on-again conflict in the middle east. Canola prices have shown recent spikes, in part, due to the crisis in the middle east.

With a lower supply of merino wool from Australia, wool prices have done fairly well over the past 12 months. The question producers are asking is – are these prices sustainable, or a blip? Wool prices, in part, tend to follow synthetic prices. Again, as synthetics may follow world oil prices, there may be some opportunity for prices to remain steady.

The latest USDA report on supply and demand of wheat and corn showed a trend of tightening supplies, which should translate into strong prices over the next couple of months. This is offset by reported strong production in the Black Sea area. However, any supply chain constrictions coming from the Ukraine / Russian conflict may assist with some pricing opportunities over the coming months.

For those businesses still producing prime lambs, there has been some recent high prices being experienced. Prices are not as high as the Australian East Coast but remain strong. Prices are normally influenced by new lambs coming onto the market during late August and September, but with tighter supplies, this may not have as much of an impact as prior years. The other peak time is generally in January – due to a number of producers taking leave, and Australia Day advertising.

Farmers unable to access mental health care amid mounting pressure, new data shows

Just one in seven farmers can easily access mental health support, new data presented at this morning's NFF-Suicide Prevention Australia (SPA) Parliamentary Breakfast reveals — even as psychological distress and exposure to natural disasters climb sharply across the sector.

The figures, drawn from the University of Canberra's Regional Wellbeing Survey and presented by Professor Jacki Schirmer at Parliament House, paint a stark picture of a sector under mounting pressure with nowhere near enough support to meet it.

A system that isn't there when farmers need it

Only 14.7 per cent of regional farmers reported good access to mental health services in 2025, compared with 36.6 per cent of Australians overall — less than half the rate of the general population, despite farmers facing significantly higher risk. Access to even basic health services, such as GPs, is also lower for farmers (42.5 per cent) than for the broader population (63.5 per cent).

Researchers warn that when farmers do reach out, help is too often not there, and that mental health issues escalate as a result of delays in support, with available services frequently not tailored to the unique needs of farming communities.

A decade of rising distress

The data shows a marked rise in psychological distress among Australian farmers over the past decade. Before 2020, an average of 25 per cent of farmers reported moderate-to-high psychological distress. Between 2020 and 2025, that average rose to 35 per cent. Over the same period, the proportion of farmers reporting unhealthily

low wellbeing — a key indicator of mental health risk — climbed from a 15 per cent average (2015-2020) to 24 per cent (2024-2025), an increase of two-thirds.

Compounding disasters are driving the decline

Sixty per cent of Australian farmers have been impacted by two or more major natural hazard events — including drought, flood, bushfire, storm and heatwave — in the past five years. The data shows a clear and consistent relationship between hazard exposure and wellbeing: low wellbeing rises from 14.6 per cent among farmers impacted by one natural hazard to 33.5 per cent among those impacted by four or five.

Cost pressures adding to the strain

These pressures are compounded by sustained cost increases across the sector. Between 2021 and 2025, 71.5 per cent of farms were impacted by rising input prices such as fertiliser, spray and seed, and 64.1 per cent by rising transport costs — and this is before accounting for the impact of the 2026 fuel and fertiliser crisis, suggesting the true current burden on farm businesses is likely even higher.

“What is needed is a national approach, owned by the whole sector, backed by the evidence, and funded to deliver at the scale the problem demands. That is why we are asking the Federal Government to commit \$50 million over five years. Not as a gesture, but as an investment, said Mike Guerin, CEO, National Farmers' Federation.

“Agriculture feeds this nation. The people who do that work deserve a system that looks after them in return.”

Article taken from nff.org.au/

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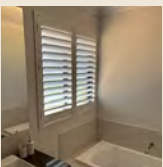
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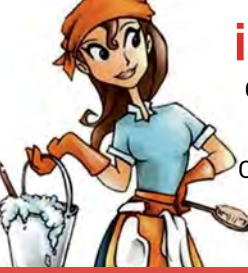
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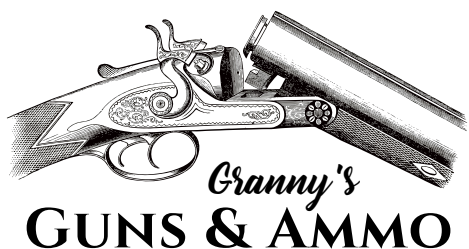
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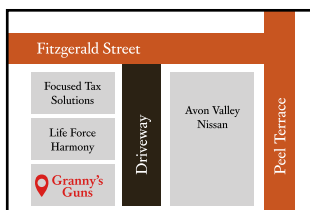
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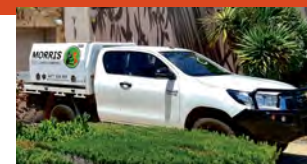
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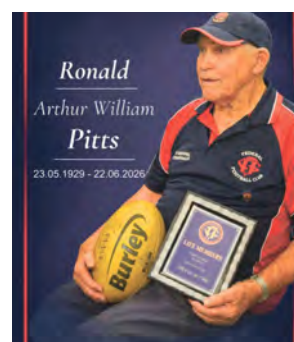
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Avon trio selected to represent WA Country

The Avon Football and Netball Association will be strongly represented on the interstate stage, with three players selected in the 2026 WA State Country Men's Team to face South Australia Country.

Thomas Lee and Ben Rushforth, both from Quairading, will be joined by Kellerberrin-Tammin's Traye Bennell in the 23-player Western Australian squad.

The three Avon players will travel to South Australia for the annual interstate clash, to be played at Barossa Park on Saturday, July 25.

Their selections follow strong performances at the Nutrien Ag Solutions Senior Men's Country Championships, where players from leagues across regional Western Australia competed for an opportunity to earn State honours.

Lee again stamped himself as one of country football's leading players during the championships, kicking 7.3

across the carnival and producing a series of strong performances for Avon.

He and Rushforth have both previously earned WA Country selection, with Quairading Football and Netball Club congratulating the pair on another opportunity to represent their State.

Rushforth has established himself as one of the Avon competition's most reliable performers, with his work through the midfield again attracting the attention of State selectors.

Bennell's inclusion provides another significant boost for the Avon association and recognition for the football being played at Kellerberrin-Tammin.

Known for his pace and skill, Bennell adds further Avon representation to a squad containing some of the best footballers from leagues throughout the Wheatbelt, Great Southern, South West, Goldfields, Mid-West and Pilbara.

Having three players selected from the one regional association is a considerable achievement and demonstrates the depth and standard of football within the Avon competition.

Country Football WA's annual interstate fixture gives regional players the opportunity to test themselves against South Australia's leading country footballers while showcasing the talent found beyond the metropolitan leagues.

For Lee, Rushforth and Bennell, selection is an opportunity to represent not only Western Australia, but also their clubs, communities and the wider Avon region.

Their inclusion will give local football supporters added reason to follow the interstate contest, with Quairading and Kellerberrin-Tammin both represented in the black and gold.

Junior Golf News

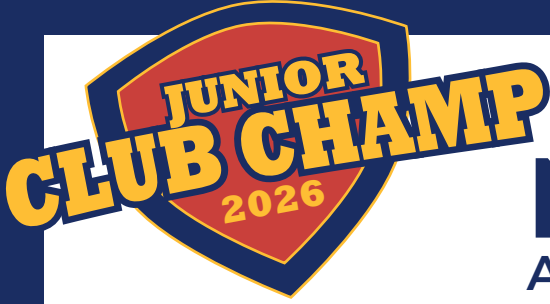


Junior Golf lessons were conducted again this year during the month of June. We had 20 participants. Thank you to the W.A. Golf Foundation, Shire of Northam and Brayden McCubbing for sponsorship and coaching.

During the school holidays, some of our juniors participated in golfing events around the district. Xavier Sibling won the very sought after Wyworrie Cup at Mukinbudin Golf Club. Then the next day won the inaugural junior competition at the Narrogin Open event. Nate O'Driscoll was runner-up at Narrogin.

In term three, our junior golfers will be learning rules, etiquette and playing the game. It is exciting to see them develop their skills and enjoy the wonderful game of golf.

Junior enquiries : Wendy Richards 0408222889.



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LACHLAN HUNTER MP

MEMBER FOR CENTRAL WHEATBELT



Wishing everyone a safe and successful Avon Descent



Authorised by L. Hunter, 185 Fitzgerald St, Northam WA 6401

Avon Valley Showjumping and Pony Club Riders Shine at Eastern Zone Horse Trials



by Tanzi Carpenter

Three riders from Avon Valley Show Jumping and Pony Club represented the club with outstanding performances at the Eastern Zone Pony Club One Day Event (ODE), hosted by Kellerberrin Riding & Pony Club on 18–19 July. Competing for Avon Valley were Tayah and Tahlia in the Pony Club 80cm class, while Emily contested the Pony Club 65cm class.

Eventing, also known as Horse Trials or a One Day Event (ODE), is often run over two days and combines three very different disciplines. Saturday features the dressage and showjumping phases, while Sunday is dedicated to cross-country. Dressage showcases the partnership between horse and rider as they perform a series of precise, predetermined movements in the arena. Showjumping then tests accuracy and technique as combinations negotiate a course of coloured fences against the clock. The final phase, cross-country, is widely regarded as the most exciting, with horses and riders galloping across open paddocks and natural terrain, jumping solid obstacles such as logs, water complexes and ditches. It is a true test of courage, fitness and trust between horse and rider.

The weekend began with true Wheatbelt winter

conditions as families arrived on Friday to set up camp in heavy rain and strong winds before retreating to the warmth of their horse floats for the night. Thankfully, Saturday dawned with improved weather, although the blustery conditions certainly kept the horses on their toes.

Tayah and Gucci had an energetic start to their weekend, with an excited dressage test leaving them in sixth place after the first phase. A lovely showjumping round was spoiled only by a rail at the final fence, moving them into fifth heading into cross-country. The pair then produced a confident, clear cross-country round, finishing just two seconds over the optimum time to secure an impressive second place overall.

Tahlia enjoyed one of her best dressage tests to date with her horse, despite a small rider error in forgetting the final movement, leaving the combination in fourth place after dressage. Two rails in the showjumping saw them slip to sixth, but they bounced back with an outstanding double-clear cross-country round to finish on the podium in third place overall.

Emily also enjoyed a strong start, sitting in second place after dressage in the Pony Club 65cm class. A refusal and a rail in the showjumping dropped the combination to sixth, but a beautifully ridden clear cross-country round with just 0.4 time penalties saw them climb back into third place overall. Avon Valley Show Jumping and Pony Club congratulates all three riders on their determination, sportsmanship and excellent results. Competing through challenging winter conditions and producing such consistent performances is a credit to the riders, their horses and the support of their families.

The club now wishes Tayah, Tahlia and Emily the very best of luck as they head to the Gidgegannup Horse Trials this coming weekend, 25–26 July. We look forward to following their progress and hope they enjoy another successful weekend of competition.



2026 Football Ladder

1 Northam Railways



2 Cunderdin



3 Quairading



4 Kellerberrin Tammin



5 York



6 Federal



7 Beverley



Ladder as at Monday 27 July, 9am



Photo: Winners of the Comfort Quilts for Cancer Charity Day

Northam Golf News

On Saturday 29 May, our first wet and windy golf day for the season, 23 players competed for the Fair Dinkum Builds Avon Valley trophy. Again it was our junior golfers leading the charge after a consistent last few weeks, with some good scores. It was George Linklater who came out on top to claim the 1st win of his short golf career, winning on a count back from Zac Parker both with 39 points, 3rd was Nate O'Driscoll.

A huge thanks to Jarrod and Alison for your ongoing support of the golf club. A special presentation was made to Nate O'Driscoll who won this month's Northam Advertisers Young Sports Star of the Month award.

Thanks to Beyond Cabinets & Renovations for Saturday 6th June's sponsorship. It was great to see Shane and his family up having a hit on Saturday afternoon as well. We hope to see you all back soon.

In great conditions for golf it was another win for our young champion golfer Nate O'Driscoll who won on a c/b

from Toby Lance (his best score for the season) both with a +3 score. Nate's consistent form and huge improvement has seen his h/c go from 36 at the start of the season to 19 next week. Chadd Hunt had a good day with a +2 as well.

On Saturday 13th June a great field of 29 players turned out in beautiful conditions to play for the Speciale Smash Repairs trophy. Big thanks to Michael & Tammy for putting on a few nibbles after golf as well. The young guns keep on improving, after losing last week on a c/b Toby Lance came out and smashed the field with a great score of 48 points to win the 1st comp of his career and in the process lose 4.5 points off his h/c. George Linklater continues on his great form to be R/up with 45 points (losing 4.5 off his h/c).

On Saturday 20th we played for the prestigious Springfield Cup Congratulations to young Xavier Sibley (with a combined weekend score of 78 points) on taking out this years first Gold Leaf event of the year the Springfield Cup, our youngest ever winner. Huge

thanks to Purslowe Tinetti Funerals for your continued sponsorship of our event. R/u for the 3rd time was Robbie Davis 1 stroke back on 77 points. Saturday's winner was Terry Bell with Michael Spadaccini R/up. Sunday's winner was Brian Gogan with Peter Richards R/up. A big thanks to Domino's Pizza Northam for looking after us on Sunday night with a few delicious pizzas.

A great field of golfers took to the course on Saturday 27th of June and braved a little bit of rain to play in the Comfort Quilts Against Cancer Charity day, with lots of novelties on offer and two beautiful hand crafted quilts as well. Competition was very close. Many thanks to all the players that travelled to play on the day. Thanks to Ed and Shari Leeson from Leeson Haulage for sponsoring the days as well as Midfield Meats, Linley Valley Pork, Quin's Gourmet Butchers and MBL Suppliers.

Winners of the day were Dan Negus and Terry Bell with Jim Finn and Chris Smith R/up.



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A Century of Competition: Corolin Cup Reaches a Remarkable 100 Years



Photo: 2026 Corolin Cup winner: left to right, Winner Jason Behenna, Runner Up Xavier Sibley and sponsor Alistair Smith

by Naomi Sherrington

For 100 years, the Corolin Cup has represented far more than a golf trophy. It has been a measure of consistency, sportsmanship and local pride, connecting generations of Northam golfers through one of the town's oldest continuous sporting traditions.

As the Northam Golf Club prepares to celebrate the Cup's centenary this month, the milestone offers an opportunity not only to honour its champions, but also the volunteers, members and families who have kept the competition alive through wars, economic downturns, changing fashions and a century of community life.

The Corolin Cup was first contested in 1926, making it the club's oldest major championship. Unlike the Kennedy Cup, which is an open event attracting golfers from further afield, the Corolin Cup has always been the club's premier closed championship, reserved for Northam Golf Club members. That distinction has

helped make victory especially meaningful, with winners earning the respect of fellow members who know the course—and each other's games—better than anyone.

The trophy itself was donated by S.R. Dempster and named after "Caroline Farm" (often historically rendered as "Corolin"), the Dempster family property near Mokine. It reflects a time when pioneering Wheatbelt families helped establish

many of the district's sporting institutions, recognising that clubs were just as important to building thriving communities as schools, churches and businesses.

For much of the past century, golf clubs like Northam's have been social hubs as much as sporting venues. Weekends brought together farmers, tradespeople, business owners, professionals and retirees, with friendly rivalries forged over 18 holes before continuing in the clubhouse. The Corolin Cup became the event every member wanted to win—not simply because of the trophy itself, but because it signified being the best golfer in the club that year.

That prestige has endured. While sponsorship has evolved—Glenroy Chaff has supported the event since 2020—the essence of the competition remains unchanged: members testing themselves over championship golf in pursuit of one of Northam's most coveted sporting honours.



Photo: Past winners of the Corolin Cup who gathered at the 100 year reunion

Reaching a centenary is an achievement few sporting competitions can claim. It means the Corolin Cup has survived enormous social change—from the Great Depression and World War II to advances in golf equipment, course design and the changing demographics of regional Australia. Throughout it all, the competition has continued to bring members together.

The Northam Golf Club is marking the occasion by inviting as many former winners and past competitors as possible to return for the celebrations on Saturday, July 25, creating a rare reunion spanning decades of club history. The club has even been searching for several past champions to ensure as many of the Cup's custodians as possible can share in the milestone.

For current members, the centenary is a reminder that every name engraved on the trophy forms part of a much larger story. Today's competitors are not simply playing for a title—they are adding another chapter to a tradition that has been handed down through five generations.

In an era when many regional sporting clubs face challenges attracting volunteers and maintaining membership, the Corolin Cup's 100th anniversary also highlights the enduring value of community sport. Competitions like this create friendships, preserve local history and strengthen the social fabric that makes country towns unique.

One hundred years after it was first played, the Corolin Cup remains exactly what its founders intended: a championship worthy of the best golfer in the club, and a symbol of the community that has supported it for a century.

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