

# Brown Hill Community Newsletter

Edition 23, February - April 2020

*A project of the Brown Hill Progress Association supported by the Brown Hill Community Partnership.  
We are proud to walk this land with the Wadawurrung people and all other First Nations people.*



*Learn to Swim teacher Emily presenting Abrar with her certificate at the Brown Hill Pool, Summer 2020. Photographer: Rachel Zuidland*

## Diary Dates

See [brownhill.vic.au](http://brownhill.vic.au) for details.

### FEBRUARY 2020

**Saturdays:** 8.00 am, Wallaby Track parkrun (p.3)

**Saturday 22:** Brown Hill Market, Brown Hill Hall (p.3)

**Saturday 22:** 9.00 am - 1.00 pm, safeTALK Workshop, Brown Hill Uniting Church (p.18)

**Sunday 23:** Toys at the Pool Day, Brown Hill Pool (p.5)

*... continued p.2*

## Abrar Learns to Swim in the Brown Hill Pool

On Australia Day 2019 Abrar Dham won the raffle at the Brown Hill Pool and thought to herself, "I love this place, all the good things are happening here!"

Only a few months before, Abrar, her husband and two daughters had moved to Mt Helen after living for eight years in Melbourne. They had received the City of Ballarat's 'New Residents Pack' in which was a voucher for a visit to the Brown Hill Pool. Although her husband can swim, Abrar and her daughters couldn't. Regardless, they jumped on the bus and travelled to visit the pool.

Growing up in Kuwait, Abrar didn't learn to swim. She says, "I didn't grow up in an environment like Australia, where most people go to the beach and have learnt to swim from a young age. When we were living in Melbourne we led a

busy lifestyle and I didn't ever feel comfortable doing swimming lessons. I felt self-conscious. I didn't want to get in the water and make a joke of myself."

After a few visits to the Brown Hill pool, Abrar and her family felt welcomed by the community. She says, "There is a real vibe at the Brown Hill pool, one that I had not felt at other pools. I felt very embraced by the people and, as a person wearing a headcover, comfortable being me."

Abrar and her husband were determined that their daughters would learn to swim, so they registered for the Brown Hill Pool's Learn to Swim lessons in January 2019. They caught the bus from Mt Helen every day for two weeks and the girls both received their Level A certificates.

During the two weeks at the pool,

Abrar got to know many people including Rachel Zuidland, a volunteer with the Brown Hill Progress Association, who coordinates the Learn to Swim program. Abrar says, "Rachel, being her friendly self, started chatting to me and asked if I could swim. I said, 'No.' She asked if I wanted to. I said, 'One day.' I think Rachel thought I hadn't learnt to swim because it was difficult to find the right swimwear, fully covering my head, legs and arms. So she did some research and gently suggested a few shops in Geelong and Melbourne where I could find something to wear in the water. She was encouraging without being pushy."

A year later, Abrar and her family returned to the Brown Hill pool for a swim. Abrar had her new

*...continued p.6*

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**Sunday 23:** 10.30 am - 1.00 pm,  
Junior Fun Day, Dunnstoun  
Community Reserve (p.19)

**Tuesday 25:** Caledonian Primary  
School Harvest Welcome  
Afternoon, all welcome. (p.14)

## MARCH

**Saturdays:** 8.00 am, Wallaby  
Track parkrun (p.3)

**Sunday 1:** 11.00 am - 3.00 pm,  
Autumn Harvest Festival, Ballarat  
Community Garden (p.17)

**Tuesday 3:** 7.00 pm, Brown Hill  
Progress Association meeting,  
Brown Hill Hall (rear room). All  
welcome.

**Saturday 7 - Monday 9:** Ballarat

Begonia Festival, a free event at  
the Ballarat Botanical Gardens.  
[ballaratbegoniafestival.com.au](http://ballaratbegoniafestival.com.au)

**Sunday 8:** Last Day for the Brown  
Hill Pool season (p.5)

**Monday 9:** Labour Day

**Friday 27:** Term One finishes

**Saturday 28:** Brown Hill Market,  
Brown Hill Hall (p.3)

## APRIL

**Saturdays:** 8.00 am, Wallaby  
Track parkrun (p.3)

**Sunday 5:** Daylight Savings ends

**Tuesday 7:** 7.00 pm, Brown Hill  
Progress Association meeting,  
Brown Hill Hall (rear room). All  
welcome.

**Friday 10:** Good Friday

**Tuesday 14:** Submissions for  
Edition 24 due (see below).

**For updates, visit: [brownhill.vic.au](http://brownhill.vic.au)**

## In this edition

What brave people we have in our  
local community! In this edition  
you can read about 33 year-old  
Abrar, who took a deep breath and  
did her first ever swimming  
lessons at the Brown Hill Pool (p.1)  
and the dedicated CFA staff and  
volunteers who travelled to East  
Gippsland to help fight the  
bushfires over Summer (p.7).

Our children are brave too. What a  
big step for our local prep (p.20)  
and year seven (p.15) children,

be upsetting for some readers. If  
you need support, contact  
numbers are available here:  
[brownhill.vic.au/new-to-brown-hill/need-some-support/](http://brownhill.vic.au/new-to-brown-hill/need-some-support/)

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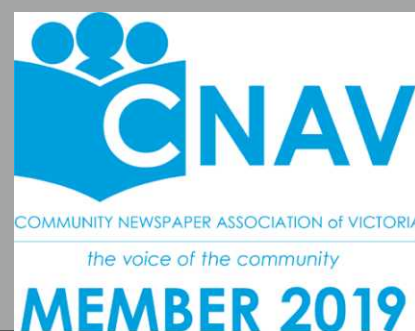
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**Brown Hill Progress Association**  
Meet in the Brown Hill Hall (rear  
room), first Tuesday every month,  
7.00 pm. All welcome.

[bhpa@brownhill.vic.au](mailto:bhpa@brownhill.vic.au)  
[brownhill.vic.au](http://brownhill.vic.au)

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## About our Newsletter

This publication is a community  
project of the Brown Hill Progress  
Association.

It is published bi-monthly in  
February, April, June, August,  
October and November.

### Editorial Advisory Committee:

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Sarah Greenwood-Smith.

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Contributions are welcome from  
the Brown Hill community.  
Articles are due by the first  
Monday of the month in which  
the edition is published to  
[newsletter@brownhill.vic.au](mailto:newsletter@brownhill.vic.au) or  
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at Caledonian Primary School,  
Thompson Street, Brown Hill  
during school term and school  
hours.

Edition 24 articles are due by  
**Tuesday 14 April 2020**. Please  
read the editorial policy regarding  
contributions before submitting  
an article:  
[brownhill.vic.au/newsletter](http://brownhill.vic.au/newsletter).

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contractors.

Occasionally, some content  
included in our newsletters may



starting at a new school.

Some people might feel brave for participating in their first parkrun (p.3) along Brown Hill's Yarrowee River Trail (Wallaby Track). I'm hoping to join the walkers this weekend for my first parkrun!

I hope you are inspired by the great stories in this edition of wonderful people from our community. What a fantastic place to live!

Thanks again to our sponsors:

**Silver:** Brown Hill Hotel and Brown Hill Market. **Bronze:** Ballarat Treeworks, Bakers Delight Bakery Hill, Dazzlin' Doggie Country Village, Jigsaw Puzzles Australia, RCC Commercial Cleaning and The AFL Store - Ballarat. We would also like to thank Juliana Addison for her support.

*Sarah Greenwood-Smith, Volunteer Editor, Brown Hill Community Newsletter and Directory Committee*  
[newsletter@brownhill.vic.au](mailto:newsletter@brownhill.vic.au)

### **Social Media help needed**

We need a volunteer or two to help manage the Brown Hill Community Newsletter and Festival Facebook pages, keeping them up-to-date with information for our community. Please contact us to find out more:  
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**Silver sponsor:**



*Participants warming up for the Wallaby Track parkrun, across the wooden bridge from the playground and Brown Hill Hotel car park. Image supplied.*

## **parkrun comes to Brown Hill**

Although it is only seven events old, the Wallaby Track parkrun along the Yarrowee River Trail, is starting to feel like it's part of the Saturday morning ritual in Brown Hill. It has been hugely successful with an average attendance of over 140 people each week. Given the beautiful location and the scenic track, it's no wonder so many people are coming along each week for the 5 km run or walk.

After launching on Saturday 28 December, 557 different runners or walkers have already participated in the event, covering 5,030 km! The biggest event was a special New Years Day run where

219 people came along at 8.00 am on 1 January 2020 for a run or walk.

It has been great to see the Brown Hill community embrace the event with lots of locals coming along to walk, run or volunteer for the first time and then becoming regular runners or helpers. As parkrun relies on volunteers each week to make the event happen, the support from everyone coming along to help out or just participate has been amazing.

The word is also out in the parkrun Australia community about this wonderful track and

*...continued p.4*

## **BROWN HILL MARKET**

Saturday 22 February, 9.00 am - 1.00 pm

Saturday 28 March, 9.00 am - 1.00 pm

Saturday 25 April, 9.00 am - 1.00 pm

**Brown Hill Hall, 375 Humffray Street North, Brown Hill**

**[ballaratmarkets.com.au](http://ballaratmarkets.com.au)**

...continued from p.3

there have been many parkrun tourists attending the event each week. Some of those tourists have run over 80 different parkrun events in Victoria and their feedback has been that the Wallaby Track is definitely in the top few prettiest events in the State!

The monthly Brown Hill Market has also added to the event giving runners somewhere to go and grab breakfast, a drink or do a bit of shopping after their run or walk. It has been great to see many parkrunners heading across and spending some time at the Market.

The event team would like to thank the Brown Hill community for their support in making this such a successful event and for providing such a welcoming environment. The Wallaby Track parkrun is organised entirely by volunteers and a huge thank you is extended to all those who have helped out.

If you would like to join in as a runner, a walker or a volunteer, come along any Saturday morning at 8.00 am and meet across the bridge from the playground at the Brown Hill Recreation Reserve. For more details you can head to: [parkrun.com.au/wallabytrack](http://parkrun.com.au/wallabytrack)

Aaron and Laurinda Coulter



Sisters, Maria and Matilda, with Learn to Swim teacher, Emily. Photographer: Rachel Zuidland.



## Summer at the pool

### Learn to Swim

Over 100 children participated in the Brown Hill Pool's Learn to Swim program, generously funded by the Brown Hill Uniting Church and run by Brown Hill Progress Association (BHPA) volunteer Rachel Zuidland. Thanks to John and Kevin for being Milo Masters!

Nine-year-old Melissa said, "I enjoyed doing swimming lessons at the Brown Hill pool this summer. My swimming teacher was nice and I learnt that freestyle

is fun. I loved having a Milo and a biscuit after my lessons. Thank you to John and the other helpers for having this ready every day for me. It was fun seeing kids I know too." Melissa's sister, eleven-year-old Bethany said, "I enjoyed learning how to swim since swimming is an important skill that could save your life. I love how after you did your lessons there was a free Milo and biscuits. You could also go back into the pool to swim. It was a really fun experience. I recommend you book in your kids for next year."

### Australia Day Pool Party

As has happened for the last 11 years, the BHPA again ran an Australia Day Party at the pool. The weather was cool but that didn't deter the 150 or so brave souls who joined in!



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The BHPA volunteers cooked up sausages and bread, organised games for the kids including 'find the spoon'. There was also 'world championship bombing' to try to keep the kids warm. Out of the water the fabulous Leanne made some beautiful painted pictures, not only on faces, but arms, legs, chests and backs too! There were winners all round with several lucky gate and raffle prizes drawn, in addition to a 'guess how many chicken's feet lollies were in a jar' competition.

The donations, raffle money and casual gate takings for the day totalled over \$200 and will be donated to the Fire Relief Appeal to aid our fellow Aussies battling the threats and destruction of the ravaging fires in many parts of Australia.

## Thank you

A very big thank you to the people and businesses who helped and supported the BHPA in keeping the pool open and running for these community events. These include the Brown Hill Uniting Church, Bakery Hill Bakers Delight, Supercheap Auto, The AFL Shop and our local crafty ladies, Danielle and Ange. Thanks also to the City of Ballarat for their ongoing financial and hands-on assistance that allows BHPA to

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There is less than a month to go for summer at the pool with the last day of operation on the Labour Day weekend, Sunday 8 March. So come down and enjoy a day in the water, be it at leisure or full of activity.

Flo has Aquatic Zumba pumping on Tuesday and Thursday

evenings from 6.00 pm to 7.00 pm with a great range of ages enjoying this low-impact activity. Our biggest evening so far has seen 60 mostly ladies (only 3 or 4 blokes) of all ages and fitness levels raising quite a splash in the water all with a grin from ear to ear. Thank you Flo!

*Brendan Stevens, Secretary, Brown Hill Progress Association*



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[www.brownhillhotel.com.au](http://www.brownhillhotel.com.au)

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burkini, which covers her whole body except for her face, hands and feet. Having been away on holidays, the family thought they had missed registering for the Learn to Swim program. However, Rachel had other plans! Abrar says, “Rachel came up and said, 'Just so you know, I've got your girls in for two weeks of lessons and, in the second week, I've got you in for lessons too.'”

I got so emotional. For years people had been trying to make me have swimming lessons and I had felt more and more resistant every time. But this was different. Rachel wanted me to swim for me. For my self-esteem. So that I could swim with the girls without my husband having to be there all the time. There were no more excuses. It was time to learn to swim.”

At the age of 33 Abrar had her first swimming lesson this January with Emily at the Brown Hill pool. She says, “I didn't like the feeling of putting my face in the water, my ears getting filled up and thinking I was at risk of drowning. The headcovering made it even trickier. I've seen the movie 'Jaws', so my imagination goes a bit wild. I worry about what is under the water.”

Every day for a week with Rachel close by, Emily taught Abrar to feel more confident in the water. They started with getting in the water, then Abrar putting her face in the water. Over the week Abrar gained confidence. She says, “I trusted Emily. Sometimes, I thought, 'Are you serious?' But I trusted her, I knew she would catch me if I was going to drown.”

On the last day, Emily got Abrar to make her way to the deep end of

the pool by using 'monkey grip' along the wall. Then, with her goggles on and holding Emily's hand, she touched the bottom of the deep end (2.4 metres) with her feet. Abrar says, “I thought, 'Are you sure?' But then I decided to wing it. To give it a try. I kept my eyes open and had a look around. I stayed for a few seconds. I think Emily got worried because she squeezed my hand, so I jumped back up through the water to the top. I got very emotional after that. I started crying. Emily started crying. Rachel started crying!”

Abrar and her family continue to be a part of the Brown Hill pool community. She is now confident to go down the water slide and says she “just loves” going to Aquatic Zumba. Abrar can now meet friends at the pool and says, “I am no longer ashamed that I can't get in the water – because I can! Since they have seen what mum can do my girls are more confident in their swimming. My eldest didn't have any trust in the water, relying on her floatie. Then she saw me in the water and now she no longer needs it.”

The exercise of swimming has been good for Abrar's health and helps her to sleep. It is empowering for her self-esteem. Now that school holidays are over, she and her husband are trying to go to the pool once a week.

Abrar says, “We love the Brown Hill pool community.”

Well done Abrar, what an inspiring story! You are super brave and we look forward to swimming with you at our great pool.

*Sarah Greenwood-Smith, Brown Hill Progress Association*

## Living Corridors Action Plan

The City of Ballarat is working on a Living Corridors Action Plan.

The Ballarat Strategy (2015) identified the need to undertake further work to define Living Corridors and to ensure that natural values throughout Ballarat are managed well. The development of an action plan to improve biodiversity and habitat links across the east of Ballarat has emerged as a key community priority.

Late in 2019, the City of Ballarat held a community information gathering session at the Town Hall. It was very well attended, with people representing a wide range of community groups.

The City of Ballarat is working with the Community Working Group to develop a vision, goals and actions for the Living Corridors Action Plan with the aim of producing a draft for broader community consultation in early 2020.

Of particular interest is a vision by community groups to link the Yarrowee River corridor to Buninyong in the south and Creswick Forest in the north, with natural spaces for native plants, birds and animals to access adjoining areas.

For more information about the project and to provide information and feedback via the interactive map, please visit: [mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au/livingcorridors](https://mysay.ballarat.vic.gov.au/livingcorridors)

*George Alexopoulos, Brown Hill Resident*



# Brown Hill volunteers fight fires in Gippsland

*We asked father and son CFA volunteers and Brown Hill residents, Andy and Jordan Day, to write about their experience with the fires in East Gippsland over summer.*

The strike team formed up at Ballan Fire Station, departing as a convoy to Gippsland. Comprised of staff and volunteers, crew members came from Ballarat, Wendouree, Sebastopol, Ballan, Bacchus Marsh, Trentham, Lucas and CFA District 15.

Base Camp at Swan Reach became home for the next four nights. The tent city of over 200 had doubled by the end of the deployment.

Upon receiving a briefing and maps of the region, crews spent several hours on Saturday becoming familiar with the area.

On Sunday, the strike team was deployed to the town of Nowa Nowa to become familiar with the local critical infrastructure, water points and fall back locations. We also visited the nearby hamlet of Wairewa and spoke with the local Fire Brigade members about the township protection plans.

With Monday predicted to be a 'spike day', we planned our defence of the town of Nowa Nowa with valuable assistance from local Forest Fire Management



*Road to Wairewa during the fires. Photographer: Andy Day*

Victoria (FFMV) staff.

At 8.00 am, Monday's briefing set the tone of the day. Active fires, high temperatures, strong winds with a late wind direction change, were conditions that would all contribute to a potentially catastrophic day.

Returning once again to Nowa Nowa, crews commenced a door knock of the entire township to identify remaining townsfolk and provide them with the latest predictions. Intelligence indicated the township would be hit by the fire-front late in the evening, then potentially again a couple of hours later from a separate direction.

Remaining townsfolk were doorknocked regularly over the day to keep them updated about the predicted fire approach. By midday, with only a few residents left in town, patrols began in earnest around the town to identify possible spot-overs from the main fire. As smoke around the town became thicker those residents who had not left early began to arrive at the local recreation reserve to take refuge.

As the evening wore on, the smoke on the horizon began to take on a distinct shape indicating the approach of the fire-front. Late in the evening the power went out, plunging the town into

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*Wairewa after the fires. Image: Andy Day*

*...continued from p.7*

darkness. A red glow spread across the horizon reflecting off the smoke, creating light of its own.

An urgent call came through from Wairewa as the fire-front bore down upon them. The strike team was immediately split with tankers and FFMV units responding to Wairewa leaving the pumpers to protect Nowa Nowa.

Some hours or so later the phone signal went down, cutting off communications with the outside

world. Sadly 11 properties were destroyed when Wairewa was hit directly by the fire-front. Residents sought refuge in the community hall, surrounded by tankers protecting them from the firestorm all around.

Tanker crews returned to base camp after over 24 hours on the fire line. Back at Nowa Nowa pumper crews were located at points of critical infrastructure in preparation, unaware the fire had changed direction.

Just after midnight, the Ballarat Fire Brigade pumper was

dispatched to Wairewa in an attempt to save the historical trestle bridge, only to find the road into the town unsafe to pass due to fire activity. Luckily, crews found out later that most of the bridge survived.

At around 2.30 am, the pumper crews began the return to base camp. The town of Nowa Nowa was able to breathe a sigh of relief, as for now they had escaped unharmed. The half hour return trip became an hour and a half when a large tree was found to have fallen across the only road back to Lakes Entrance. Exhausted crews spent what little energy they had left clearing the tree from the road. Arrival at base camp was close to 4.00 am. A quick cold shower (due to the early hour, water heaters had been turned off) and we all tumbled into bed.

When the sun rose there was no point in attempting sleep, mid-30 degrees temperatures, in sunlight, in a tent equals no sleep. Due to the hour of the crew's return they were stood down until mid-



*Swan Reach Base Camp during the Gippsland fires. Photographer: Andy Day*



afternoon. The tanker crews were stood down for the day.

When the pumper crews returned to duty they travelled to Wairewa to assist as best they could. Blackened paddocks, skeleton trees and devastated houses greeted them. Little was able to be done. However, one of the pumpers had a satellite phone and was able to provide accurate information of losses to the division command. Hot spots in the structure of the trestle bridge were extinguished. Miraculously, three quarters of the bridge had survived direct fire exposure.

Upon return to base camp the entire strike team participated in a group debrief. This gave everyone the chance to catch up with what each section of the divided team experienced overnight. Without the courage displayed by the tanker crews there surely would have been lives lost in Wairewa. Crews went their separate ways after the debrief, some seeing in the New Year at the local hotel, others alone in their tent sleeping through. The return trip to Ballarat on 1 January 2020 was uneventful.

Whilst this was the first deployment for District 15 it was not the last. With seven rotations



*Glen Park Fire Truck on the fire ground. Image supplied.*

to Gippsland, multiple rotations to Tallangatta and local fires there is still much to do. Thanks to staff and volunteers of the Country Fire Authority and staff from Forest Fire Management Victoria.

*Andy and Jordan Day, Ballarat CFA members and Brown Hill residents*

## Glen Park Fire Brigade

The devastating bushfires all over Australia have been front page news in the recent months and, even with some lifesaving rains falling over some of the fire grounds, the fight is far from over. My mind goes back to 21 January 1997, 23 years ago, when the Glen Park tanker was overrun by fire and totally destroyed. Luckily the

five crew members survived unharmed due to their diligent training. The Brigade, situated at the top of Longs Hill Road opposite the Glen Park Primary School, has been very busy over summer. In between our normal callouts crews took our tanker on strike teams to Lexton on two occasions with very active fires proving difficult to extinguish and a strike team to Glenlofty with very steep terrain. The next two members went to Kemps in New South Wales to support our colleagues up there. Then both the tanker and our ultra-light went on strike teams to the Bairnsdale and Omeo fires. Our ultra-light is still in Omeo being manned by American firefighters. The constant heat and smoke made for very tiring work and all these fires were in steep terrain, making it even more arduous. I would like to take this opportunity to thank our members, their families and the community for supporting us through this tough time. Please remain vigilant as there is a lot of summer yet to come. For information on volunteering please visit [cfa.vic.gov.au](http://cfa.vic.gov.au) or contact Glen Park Fire Brigade on 5334 5524 or visit us on Facebook.

*Lieutenant Brian Webber, Glen Park CFA*



*Glen Park Fire Brigade vehicle on the fire ground. Image supplied.*



FireAware mascot, Penny Platypus

## Be FireAware

### *Are you bushfire resilient?*

The term 'resilience' is often bandied about quite a bit but do we truly understand what it means to ourselves and our community when it comes to facing a bushfire event?

I thought the following was most relevant for all of us living in Brown Hill to take a few minutes to assess our own potential resilience. The following top tips for bushfire resilience are taken from an article from CSIRO, ECOS, December 2015, by Bianca Nogrady.

"When we think of resilience we tend to think of our ability to adapt to stressful situations and survive them. In ecological terms, resilience represents something similar; the ability of an ecosystem to resist damage and recover quickly from it. When it comes to a bushfire, resilience is even more complex because it encompasses

not just structures but also individuals, communities and the environment in which they all exist.

We are only as resilient as the weakest link in that chain; a house built to the most stringent bushfire standards but with flammable shrubbery and trees growing right next to it is as vulnerable as an older, less bushfire-proof house that has a large cleared area around it. Similarly, a well-prepared house is effectively useless if the person living in it does not have a carefully thought-through plan for what to do when a bushfire threatens...

### *Preparing yourself*

... But the other half of the equation is our own bushfire plan; planning how we will act when a bushfire sweeps through. 'Simply deciding to leave before the main front arrives is not a detailed enough plan,' says Justin Leonard (a CSIRO fire expert). 'You also need to think about at what point it is no longer safe to make this journey and how the bushfire will affect your house and how best you can work with the house to survive.'

Then you say, what are all the ways that bushfire arrival could ignite or damage my house and if that occurred, how would the

house respond to those processes?' he says.

'For example, retreating to the bathroom may not help you if the house is burning down around you. A more viable plan might be to retreat to an exit with the best prospects of reaching a cleared area on your property and then as the house reaches its final stage of being tenable inside, you leave the house before it overcomes you. Hopefully, by that time the fire has passed and you're leaving on to burnt ground.'

What are the best and worst range of outcomes that can play out and how many back-up plans do you have?' Leonard asks.

'When you stand back and look at that whole picture, the knowledge that's in the head of the person — being able to make the best decisions at every point in time as something unfolds — is more important than all the things they've done about improving their prospects.'

### *Top tips for bushfire resilience:*

1. How well you plan to behave in a bushfire is even more important than how well you prepare your house for a bushfire.
2. Think of yourself and your house as being at the centre of an onion; each layer around you needs to be bushfire-ready.

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3. Look at the area in which you live and work out how this will affect the potential severity of a bushfire; are you at the top of a steep slope? Is it densely forested?

4. Have a clearly defensible space around your house; avoid shrubbery around the edges of the house and trees overhanging the house, remembering that retaining certain trees on your block can act as an effective wind and radiant heat break.

5. Have a detailed plan about when to leave but have an equally detailed plan about how you will cope if you can't leave; how will you actively shelter in your house, how will you get out if your house burns down and where will you escape to?

6. Bushfire severity is an open-ended scale; while we can't say how bad it can get, we can decide the point at which it is no longer safe to stay. This threshold should be uniquely considered for each location and personal circumstance.

7. Always have back-up plans, because the original plan may not be possible; if the wooden deck



Check out the 'Be Bushfire Ready' page on the Brown Hill Online Community Hub.

outside your front door is burning, can you go out the back door?

8. There is no guarantee that fire fighters will be able to get to you or your property, so you have to work on the assumption that they can't.

9. If you're in a bushfire-prone area resilience is a constant process. Never sit back and think you're totally safe; always look for the things you can do to reduce your risk. These steps are often synergistic with improved lifestyle, like installing a (bushfire resistant) water tank.

10. Houses and things can be replaced. People can't."

To access the full article visit:  
<https://blogs.csiro.au/ecos/bushfire-resilience-preparing-yourself-and-your-property/>

The Brown Hill Community Hub, website has a new page – **Are you Bushfire Ready?** It is the responsibility of all residents to prepare for the bushfire season to help lower the risk of a fire event affecting them, their family, their property, their neighbours and the wider Brown Hill community. This page has been developed as a guide to ensure you have done the necessary research to understand your own risk and how best to prepare. Please have a look and encourage others to have a look as well: [brownhill.vic.au/brown-hill-are-you-bushfire-ready/](http://brownhill.vic.au/brown-hill-are-you-bushfire-ready/)

Brown Hill Community FireAware Network web pages:  
[pleanetwork.com.au/fireaware-network-be-prepared/](http://pleanetwork.com.au/fireaware-network-be-prepared/)

Hazen Cleary  
Coordinator, Brown Hill Community FireAware Network

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*A wildlife enclosure created with magnetic pieces. Image supplied.*

## Brown Hill Kindergarten

Brown Hill Kindergarten has got off to a busy start. This year we have welcomed many new and returning families. The children have been settling comfortably into their new environment. They have been busy exploring both the environment and experiences on offer. We have been working on learning and developing the routines and expectations of kindergarten.



*A magnificent tower at Brown Hill Kindergarten. Image supplied.*

The children have been very busy getting to know each other, as well as staff.

This year we welcomed Kellie and Jess to the Brown Hill team. Kellie has taken on the role of Educational Leader, Nominated Supervisor and team teacher.

Kellie and Jess join Debbie and Val in the red room teaching two preschool groups. In the Blue room Jacinta and Shelley will be working with the prekinder (three year old groups). Donna will join Jacinta and Shelley with the blue group preschool group.

We look forward to a great year.

Jacinta Johnson,  
Teacher, Brown Hill  
Kindergarten (a Eureka  
Community  
Kindergarten  
Association [ECKA]  
Kindergarten), 5332  
7973  
brown.hill.kin@kindergar  
ten.vic.gov.au  
1 Reid Court, Brown  
Hill

## Caledonian Primary School

### *From the Principal's Desk*

Teachers make the difference. Every day the staff at Caledonian Primary School have such incredible enthusiasm for their work and I continue to be astonished at the level of care they have for every child at our school.

We look forward this year to a number of new events. This term our Harvest Afternoon on Tuesday 25 February will provide opportunities for parents to be welcomed to Caledonian Primary School, tour classrooms, meet with teachers, view some early student work and get a little dinner before taking the kids home. We would like to extend the invitation to the broader Brown Hill community too - come and have a look at our great school.

In addition, this term our Cross Country trials will be held for the first time as a House event with a new shield to be awarded.

Athletics is also coming up very soon and our Music, Arts and Chinese specialist areas are up and

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running. We are excited this year to get our Choir and Arts clubs started and have a number of facilities upgrades in the pipeline.

The year has started with a fresh group of little faces with bags that are nearly as big as they are! Our prep students are wonderful and very settled in their new environment. As a former prep teacher, I can say that you know it's going to be a great year when the kids come in on the first day and can successfully sit on the floor and look in the right direction! The preps have started with the structured phonemic approach and have been working on the first sounds, S, A and T and will soon move onto P, I and N. One little person has informed me, very seriously, that he already knows "calculations."

We are currently taking enrolments for 2021 and this year we are offering personal tours for any prospective parents, which provides the opportunity to meet and discuss the learning needs of their child. We are committed to ensuring every student has an opportunity to shine at Caledonian Primary School and are continuing to develop initiatives to cater to broad interests. Please contact the school to arrange a time, I would suggest around 9.00 am, after kinder drop off. Although I do prefer it when we can show future students around our school!

*Ben Moody*  
Principal, Caledonian Primary School  
5332 6955

**Volunteers wanted** for Caledonian Primary School Breakfast Club. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8.10 am - 8.45 am. Working With Children Check required. Call Geoff on 5332 6955.



*Mr Ben Moody with some Caledonian Primary School students. Photographer: Adam McNicol*

## Welcome Mr Moody

A new school year has begun at Caledonian Primary School and with it brings a brand new Principal. Mr Ben Moody filled the role of Acting Principal for term four last year and the school community is thrilled to see him returned as the ongoing Principal.

Teaching and the importance of education was instilled in Ben from a young age. He explains, "My mum is a Principal as well, so I grew up in a home with a working mum and a stay home dad. Her work meant we moved around a bit growing up. I studied at Ballarat Uni and did a Masters in Educational Leadership at Melbourne Uni. I started my teaching career at Daylesford primary and since then have worked in six schools in varying roles with my most recent as Principal position at Avoca Primary School."

Ben also has a wide range of classroom and specialist teaching experience. "I have mostly taught prep and years five and six," he

says, "but over time I have taught all year levels either as a specialist or classroom teacher. The only subject I haven't taught is Physical Education (PE). Unfortunately, I have very poor sports capabilities. However, I was four-square champion at Bruthen Primary School in 1988 and Avoca Primary School in 2018, I lost the title early last year to some grade four kids." The challenge is now on the Caledonian kids!

Outside the school gates, Ben lives in Ballarat with his wife, who is also a teacher, and their two daughters. He likes to surf, play video games and skate. "I go skating with my youngest daughter. I can still do a kickflip, ollie and 180 shove-it which gets me street cred with older students. I was always really bad at sports so I have ended up pursuing activities where you compete with yourself, always trying to be just a little bit better than last time. Surfing is a fantastic hobby and I love it in winter when there are few people around. For a few hours you are in the water and at the mercy of the waves. You can't think about other things so in a way it's a

meditation."

On school holidays Ben likes to re-charge his batteries by relaxing with his family. "Every year we go to Noosa on a family holiday. We usually stay with friends up there and we drive up which our kids don't really love but it's a great way for us all to connect by being stuck in the car listening to 90s bands that most people haven't heard of. We go in September to escape the last bit of winter."

Ben explains that the best thing about being a Principal is seeing kids laugh. "There is nothing that can lift the spirit like a group of kids laughing," he says. "School should be a place of learning and joy and that's the best thing about being a Principal. The next best parts are when the kids are proud of a piece of their writing, when they are reading something new or have just worked out how to do some tricky maths task. They jump out of their seats to show me. I think it may annoy teachers sometimes because it happens every time I go into classrooms, and I go into classrooms a lot!"

Ben has been a Principal or class teacher for nine years and has learned a few things in that time. When asked what his greatest lesson has been as a Principal, Ben noted that firstly, "There is no such thing as a bad kid. The other thing would be that the Principal is the least important job in the school. It's the work teachers and education support staff do that really matters. They are the ones who make a real difference and know the kids the best. I have incredible respect for teachers and believe they are some of the most committed people in the workforce. The days of overtime



they don't get paid for, the weekends marking and correcting students' work, the camps and excursions. The staff at Caledonian Primary School are particularly wonderful. Their dedication to the students is extraordinary and every decision they make puts the children's best interest before their own."

Ben is looking forward to leading the next few years at Caledonian Primary School. "The school is entering a time of renewal. The teaching approaches are excellent, the programs on offer will ensure the children get some wonderful opportunities and the School Council is working on some major facilities updates," he explains. "The next few years are going to be really exciting as initiatives and

community events take shape and our teaching and learning continues to be enhanced as we work together to make our school a wonderful place for every child. I look forward to working with a fantastic team, getting to know everyone and making sure every child gets a chance to shine!"

The school welcomes visitors to assembly every second Friday at 2.45 pm and would love you to come along and meet Mr Moody. Tours of the school can also be arranged by calling the office.

Welcome to the Brown Hill community Mr Moody. We look forward to a school filled with joy and laughter!

Melissa Watts, School Council  
President, Caledonian Primary School



# Woodmans Hill Secondary College

## *From the Principal's desk*

The first week of the 2020 school year saw the inaugural Year 12 Study Retreat take place. Campaspe Downs Adventure Camp in Kyneton was the venue and the focus was on realising and unleashing our students' potential over the course of the next 12 months. The camp gave our students the opportunity to come together and share their hopes and dreams for the future and to formulate a clear plan for success, armed with the study techniques that were developed over the course of the two days. Our Head of Senior Years, Tegan Crosby (along with Rebecca Dawes, Jaswinder Kaur and Steve Sirrals), did a power of work bringing the group together and there was a genuine warmth and sense of togetherness present that will prove incredibly important as our senior students face a year of challenge. Year 12 have started so strongly and set a great example to our younger students, embodying our college values of respect, determination and the striving for personal excellence.

At the time of writing we have sent our first group of Year 7s off to their camp at Port Fairy. The Year 7 camp is seen very much as a 'rites-of-passage' for our students and it provides an opportunity for students to cement friendships, make new friends and gain a deeper understanding of what it is to be a Woodmans Hill student. With record numbers in our Year 7



*Year 12 Woodman's Hill students at camp in Kyneton. Image supplied.*

cohort, there are more opportunities to make connections for our newest students and the early signs indicate that we have a year group who are quick to learn and adopt our expectations and will meet our high standards. School camps provide a unique opportunity for staff and students to get to know each other and to step outside their comfort zone.

When speaking with our class of 2019 at their graduation last year, one of the fondest memories they had of their time with us was their Year 7 camp. At Woodmans Hill we recognise that the opportunity to learn is not limited to the classroom and that- if we truly want our students to grow and develop- we need to create a variety of contexts that challenge them and push them onwards to achieve their goals. Respectful Relationships is a big focus in our teaching and learning program this year because we recognise the power that a strong sense of social justice can have in a young person's life.

The feedback we regularly receive

from our community is that our students act as ambassadors for our college and the behaviour they show when representing Woodmans Hill is exemplary. We intend to build on this in order to ensure that all our students are reflective, compassionate and empathetic. Respect should never be seen as an antiquated value in the modern world and research indicates that the most successful adults are those that can collaborate, communicate and connect with others. As a college we have a strong emphasis on student growth and academic achievement. This is our core business. However, we know that we must have an equal focus on growing good people who care for each other and who can make a real difference in their community.

This is the Woodmans Hill way.

*Stephan Fields, Principal  
Woodmans Hill Secondary College  
Fussell Street, Ballarat East  
5336 7264  
woodmans.hill.sc@edumail.vic.gov.au  
woodmanshill.net.au*

# Brown Hill Lions and Lioness Clubs

Brown Hill Lions and Lionesses have been very busy over the Christmas period with activities in our local area. Carols in the Park was again a very successful event. Thank you to all the community groups that participated. We hope you all had a successful evening and we look forward to your participation next year.

Our recent Australia Day Breakfast again proved a success. Thank you to the involved local organisations and community groups for your support.

President Darryl Button attended Caledonian Primary School in December to present a Scholarship for further education to the successful candidate nominated by the school. We look forward to continued involvement with Caledonian Primary School.

Brown Hill Market BBQ's are proving a great success as we are

getting to know our local Community. The cooperation between all the local groups seems to be very positive and its good for all of us to work closely together.

*Barry Davis, Secretary Brown Hill  
Lions Club  
0418 580 971*

## Brown Hill Seniors Club

On 2 December the Brown Hill Seniors celebrated their 49th birthday. Invited guests attending included Co-ordinator Social Connections, Faye Pywell, Member for Wendouree, Juliana Addison and Councillor Samantha McIntosh as well as representatives from other seniors clubs. Seventy-six people enjoyed the afternoon, with entertainment by duo 'Home Brew'. Many raffles were drawn as well as everyone receiving a door prize.

A special award of Life Membership was given to worthy recipient Betty McGarry, ninety years of age. Then Life Members



*Dianne and Betty. Image supplied.*

Gabriella Manfreda and Betty McGarry jointly cut the birthday cake.

Monday 3 February saw the club's first meeting for 2020.

On Wednesday 11 March we will have a local bus trip with the lift bus. We will visit Ballarat Bird World, Eureka Museum, picnic lunch at the Eureka gardens and the Golden City Paddle Steamer at the Lake. The cost is \$25.00 per person for members and \$30.00 per person for non-members.

*Dianne Eden  
President, Brown Hill Seniors' Club  
5331 1769*



*Brown Hill Lions Club cook up at storm on Australia Day. Image supplied.*

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# Ballarat Wholefoods Collective

*The Ballarat Wholefoods Collective spreads its wings*

The Ballarat Wholefoods Collective (BWC) is going from strength to strength by increasing its accessibility and venturing into the community. We know we provide a great shopping alternative; we want to share it.

\* We will be open during the fabulous Barkly Square Night Market on **Friday 21 February** for people to drop in and check us out.

\* On **Sunday 1 March** we will be at the Ballarat Community Garden's Harvest Festival from 11.00 am - 3.00 pm to talk with folk about BWC.

\* From **Saturday 21 March** we will open on the third Saturday of every month (9.00 am - 11.00 am) for those who find the current opening hours hard to manage.

Our produce ranges from quality dairy foods, fresh seasonal fruit and vegetables, frozen berries, all your usual non-perishable flours grains and dried fruit, bulk environmental cleaning products body care products. Our producers are passionate about making a positive environmental impact and providing high quality produce. Explore how you can reduce your environmental impact and purchase sustainable food in a way that reduces plastic in our environment.

We hope to see you soon.

*Sally McAlpin  
Ballarat Wholefoods Collective*



## Brown Hill History Update

Throughout 2004 and 2005, a long-time Brown Hill resident, Margaret McKenna, devoted a considerable amount of time and effort researching various aspects of the history of Brown Hill. The outcome has been the publication of seven manuscripts. Margaret has very kindly provided the Progress Association with copies of the manuscripts which have been scanned and are now available on the Brown Hill

Community Hub (History page) for those interested in learning more about the history of Brown Hill. The Progress Association on behalf of the Brown Hill community would like to thank Margaret for her most generous gift in sharing the memories of Brown Hill with the wider community.

*Hazen Cleary, Brown Hill Progress Association*

## Advertise

For advertising and sponsorship opportunities:  
[brownhill.vic.au/newsletter](http://brownhill.vic.au/newsletter)  
[newsletter@brownhill.vic.au](mailto:newsletter@brownhill.vic.au)



## Brown Hill Uniting Church

### Thought for the month

"God opposes the proud but gives great grace to the humble." James 4: 6b

### Prayers for members of the community

Each Sunday we pray for those members of our congregation who are unwell or facing difficulties. If you would like a prayer for a member of your family or for yourself, please drop a note into the letterbox at 16 Thompson Street before 9.15 am on a Sunday. More details in Edition 20, p.12.

### Morning worship

We have morning worship from 10.00 am each Sunday with Holy Communion on the fourth Sunday of the month (this is a change). On the fifth Sunday we visit other churches. There is a list of worship dates for this year on the church door.

### Midweek Communion

Each Wednesday at 1.30 pm in the church hall followed by afternoon tea. All welcome.

### Easter Services

We shall be celebrating Easter on Sunday 12 April at 10.00 am. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday services will be celebrated at other Uniting Churches and advertised in the Ballarat Courier.

### Craft group

This has started again for 2020, meeting from 1.30 pm until 3.30 pm in the church hall on the first and third Thursdays of each month. BYO craft or just drop in for a chat. A donation from the group has been made to the Brown Hill Kindergarten for craft materials.

### Op. Shop

Reopens on Thursday 13 February from 9.30 am – 12.30 pm. A list of programs which we support from the income is displayed on the wall in the Op Shop.

### School Awards

At the final assembly each year we

present an award to two students at Caledonian Primary School to encourage them in their school life. One is for leadership and inclusiveness and one is to encourage a student who has faced challenges. They both come with a \$50.00 book voucher from Ballarat Books. This year the awards went to Jamieson and Charlie, both in Grade Six.

### Learn to Swim

We were pleased to hear at the BHPA meeting in January that 101 kids were taking part in the Learn to Swim program that we sponsor for \$2,000. The Brown Hill Progress Association have more details on page 4.



## safeTALK

**Most people thinking about suicide don't actually want to die - they need someone who can help them choose to stay alive.**

**safeTALK workshops empower participants to recognise invitations for help and give the gift of life through proven intervention methods. safeTALK stresses safety while challenging beliefs that inhibit open talk about suicide. Any over the age of 16 years may attend the workshop.**

**When: Saturday February 22, 2020  
9am – 1:00 pm (registration at 8:45am)**

**Where: Brown Hill Uniting Church,  
16 Thompson Street, Brown Hill**

***This event is free***

#### You will learn how to:

- \* notice and respond to situations where thoughts of suicide may be present
- \* provide practical help by using the TALK steps (Tell, Ask, Listen and Keep safe)
- \* act quickly to connect the person with someone trained in suicide intervention
- \* contribute to building a safer community.

**Registration mandatory by Thursday February 20 2020.**

**Visit: [eventbrite.com.au](https://eventbrite.com.au)**

Lifeline Ballarat P: 5322 4996

E: [Lifeline.Ballarat@vt.uniting.org](mailto:Lifeline.Ballarat@vt.uniting.org)

#### Free of charge to attend:

Funded by the Ballarat and District Suicide Prevention Network and presented by Lifeline Ballarat.

**Cancellation Policy:** Minimum numbers are required to proceed. We hope to see you there. If after registration you can not attend, please let us know so others do not miss out. Cancellation without notice or less than 48 hours notice will incur a \$50 cancellation fee.





## Annual Fair and Car boot sale

This will be held at the Church and in the grounds on the morning of Saturday 4 April starting at 9.00 am. Cakes, plants, produce, coffee van, breakfast, Devonshire tea. Car boot sites available for a donation of \$15.00. Phone 0409 812 470 for bookings. No sites available on the morning.

Liz Mason, Brown Hill Uniting Church

## Pancake Day

'Pancakes for Dessert' at the Brown Hill Uniting Church on Tuesday 25 February at 7.00 pm.

Pancakes with your choice of fruit, jam or syrup, cream or ice cream.

FREE, though a donation towards Uniting's Breezeway Meals Program accepted.


Come along and help us 'Flip for a good cause'!

Louise Wright, Brown Hill Uniting Church

## Brown Hill AusKick

Brown Hill community members and AFL Goldfields are starting an AusKick Centre at Brown Hill Oval, Reid Street. Sessions will be in Term Two 2020 on Fridays from 4.00 pm - 5.30 pm.

Nola, from Lachie's Legacy, (lachielegacy.com) has donated a bag of second-hand footy boots in good condition which will be made available to kids who register and need footy boots. They will be offered in order of registration. You can also trade in your clean, old footy boots for a



**IGNITE A PASSION FOR THE GAME!**  
**BROWN HILL AUSKICK – STARTING SOON!!!!!!**

**Where:** Brown Hill Recreation Reserve (Cricket Ground)

**Start Date:** Friday 17<sup>th</sup> April

**Time:** 4:00pm – 5:30pm

**TO REGISTER SEE BELOW**

*The first 15 kids who sign up at the Brown Hill Centre will receive a Guernsey, Shorts & Socks free of charge which has been kindly donated by the AFL Store (Ballarat) to the Brown Hill Auskick Centre.*

[play.afl/auskick](https://play.afl/auskick)

Recyclable paper.

discounted pair at the **Central Highlands Football League and Netball League's 'Junior Fun Day'** at Dunnstown Community Reserve on Sunday 23 February, 10.30 am - 1.00 pm.

To register for AusKick at the Brown Hill Oval, visit:  
[play.afl/auskick](https://play.afl/auskick)

Register now for a great offer from the AFL Store Ballarat (see above).

If you are interested in helping to coordinate the sessions or have any questions, please email:  
[Liam.Brady@afl.com.au](mailto:Liam.Brady@afl.com.au).

**Bronze sponsor:**



### Ballarat

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Armstrong Street South  
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[ballarat@theaflstore.com.au](mailto:ballarat@theaflstore.com.au)

**YOUR TEAM YOUR STORE**

# Brown Hill kids starting Prep in 2020

*We asked four local kids a few questions about starting Prep at some of our nearby schools. Super cute!*



**Konah, Warrenheip Primary School**

My Prep teacher is Mrs Le Marshall and I am excited about playing and drawing.

I am going to teach the other kids about running and playing. During outside time, I will have fun playing with my friends

When I grow up, I want to be an ambulance helper.



**Sienna, Caledonian Primary School**

I went to Linda Brown Pre-School and my Prep teacher is Mrs

Tunbridge. I am going to learn to write in lines and to read chapter books. I will teach other kids how to count to 100.

I'm excited about new friends and going on the monkey bars so that I can learn to climb across.

When I grow up, I want to be a doctor and on the weekend I'll be a ballerina.

When I am at school, daddy will go to work and mummy and Oliver will stay home and do some stuff together.



**Pippa, St Alipius Primary School**

I went to St Alipius Kindergarten.

My Prep teachers are Nicole and Caity and I am excited about making lots of new friends.

In Prep, I think it will be good to learn to do lots of reading and writing. I will be able to teach other kids to dance because I am a good dancer.

Playtime will be fun because I will play on the monkey bars with my friends.

When I grow up, I want to be a dance teacher.

When I am at school my family will go to work and do the washing.



**Jude, Little Bendigo Primary School**

I went to Brown Hill Kindergarten.

My Prep teacher is Miss D and I am looking forward to learning about sharks, fish and platypus. I also want to learn to read on my own, my letters and numbers and all about musical instruments.

I can teach the other kids about maps and countries around the world. Also all about space.

I'm excited about playing with LEGO. Also playing with my friends and meeting new people. I like playing new games.

At playtime, I will have fun with play doh and in the cubby and the big playground. I can't wait to go down the really big slides!

When I grow up, I want to be a busker, playing music. People will think I'm a great musician and clap.

When I am at school, my brother will do swimming lessons and on some days go to day care. Dad will go to work and teach kids. Mum will sometimes go to work, and paint lots of pots and go shopping.