

THE BRIDGE

DECEMBER 2025

LINKING THE COMMUNITIES OF BOISDALE, BUSHY PARK AND VALENCIA CREEK



From the Editor

Can you believe it, December is here already and we're starting our Christmas festivities early!

Lots happening already so check out the details in this edition, come along and join in the local activities.

Again a huge thank you to all our regular reporters, your contributions make The Bridge a great tool for keeping our communities connected. Special thanks to Rachel Dawkins for her keen eye as our proof reader and great appreciation to the wonderful Community Bank Maffra & District for their financial support enabling us to produce The Bridge each month. Thank you also to Belinda Marshall and the Boisdale Consolidated School office staff for printing The Bridge each month.

We don't have an edition in January, so we wish you all the joy of Christmas and a safe and fulfilling 2026.

From the editorial team - Helen and Rachel

Vale

PETER HOWSON - 21.08.1958 – 03.11.2025



Peter passed away suddenly at Monash Medical Centre following several years of ill health.

Peter was born in Maffra in 1958 to Mary and Ted Howson, being the fourth in a family of six children.

He began a carpentry apprenticeship with Lemchens & Skulte in Maffra in 1974.

It was at a Maffra football Club function that he met his lifelong partner Cheryl, and they married in 1979. Children Sarah, Matthew and Edward arrived in the 1980s and they established their farm at Wombat, Valencia Creek. Peter was always full of laughter and fun, he loved his family and grandkids, camping trips, boating, fishing, diving and was always an energetic Santa at the Maffra Angling Club and Valencia Creek Christmas Breakups. Peter was also a life member of the Maffra Angling Club.

He was always caring and compassionate to his mum Mary who is in McDonald Wing, visiting each week and taking her for outings.

We extend our condolences to Cheryl and all the family on the loss of Peter. He will be greatly missed by all.

Congratulations

To Amber Patterson and Ben Stacey, Main Street Boisdale, on the birth of Rory James Stacey on 29th November 2025. More beautiful babies for Boisdale!

Vale - RAYMOND JAMES MALCOLM

07.05.1938 - 18.11.2025

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Ray Malcolm. Raymond was the first child of James and Perl Malcolm of Boisdale, with younger siblings Margaret, Archibald (Dec) and Duncan.



He attended Boisdale State School, Maffra Higher Elementary School and Sale Technical School. After leaving school, Ray went to work on his parents' dairy farm but also took on casual jobs off farm.

Prior to getting his driver's licence, Wednesday and Saturday nights were often spent riding his bike to the pictures ("fleas and itches") in the Maffra Hall, with mates, Teddy Walton, David Tatterson and others.

In 1959 he spent six months in New Zealand, working and holidaying. On his return after working and studying in Melbourne, he returned to the farm at Boisdale. In 1960 at the Sale dance, Ray met a young student teacher, Pat Marshall; they fell in love and were married in April 1962.

In the meantime, his parents had purchased a neighbouring property on the Valencia Creek Road and this became their new home, where they welcomed Simone, Scott and Jane. In 1974 their original house was destroyed by fire and after a short time the present home was built. Ray and Pat's family was complete in 1976 with the arrival of twins Campbell and Caitlin.

Although they continued to milk cows on their farm for many years, as well as growing vegetables, Ray continued to seek additional income outside the farm including 17 years working at the Esso plant at Longford, as well as a stint offshore.



Amongst their busy family and community lives, Ray with a sound mechanical aptitude, could also be seen working and maintaining the various Citroen and Peugeot cars that they owned over many years.

Community involvement was a given in the Malcolm family and Ray continued this tradition with his

involvement in the Boisdale Hall Committee, the Boisdale CFA, the Boisdale Consolidated School and the Boisdale and Maffra Uniting Church where he was a Parish Elder. Several years ago, Ray was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, which gradually took its toll on his health. He passed away peacefully on November 18th at the Maffra Hospital, McDonald wing. His family, friends and our Boisdale and wider community will greatly miss his humour and friendly manner. We send our sincere condolences to Pat and all the family.

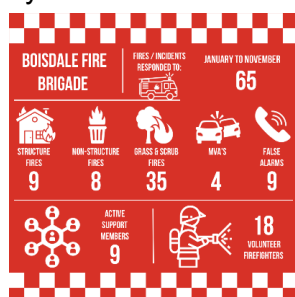
Ed: Thank you to Duncan for these special memories. What a wonderful tribute to Ray today with so many in attendance at his funeral. RIP Ray.



Local CFAs – Boisdale Brigade

Looking back at the year for Boisdale Fire Brigade it has been a busy one. A total of 65 callouts for the year up until now (in 2024 we only had 43 callouts). The strangest callout was to a boat fire in Maffra! The increase in numbers is because we are now supporting Maffra Fire Brigade at a lot more incidents. We have had four new members join the brigade, with one living next to the station. Now the station is open and the truck is ready for us when we arrive for a callout!

Recently we've had members start training on how to operate the Ultra Heavy Tanker (UHT). We have one UHT based at Perry Bridge, this tanker holds 10,000 litres of water and is a huge asset to all manner of incidents that need large amounts of water in rural areas.



The UHT tanker will again be at our **Free Community Day on Sunday 7th December from 10am – 1pm at the Boisdale Recreation Reserve**. It might also be used for a very special assignment, transporting Santa and all his gifts at 1pm. Bring the family along, it will be a fun day. Boisdale CFA and its members wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and all the best

for 2026. **Tim Crooke, Secretary Boisdale CFA.**

Valencia Creek CFA

Ongoing training continues for Valencia Creek Brigade members in preparation for the coming season. Three new volunteers are undertaking their registration and General Fire Fighter (GFF) training.

Members from the brigade recently attended the funeral of Alby Chambers, a well-known and respected Tinamba local and former CFA Captain and Life Member of Tinamba Fire Brigade.

Members will be on hand at the Community Day at Boisdale on Sunday December 7 if you have any queries about fire season preparation or getting involved with CFA.

David Montague, Captain Valencia Creek CFA
Mob: 0427 454 207



Boisdale-Briagolong Red Cross

Red Cross will next meet in Feb.- March 2026, see the February edition of The Bridge for details. Local members of the **Red Cross Emergency Team** will be present at the CFA Community Day on Sunday December 7 at Boisdale with literature to support families and children in emergency events. **For enquiries contact - Helen Montague 0448 349 420**

Boisdale Stables and

Boisdale & District Progress Assoc.



Join us for the Boisdale Community Christmas Breakup on Friday 5th December from 5.30pm at the Boisdale Stables.

BYO drinks and nibbles to share, soft drinks and lollies supplied for the children.

A Gourmet Hamper Raffle will be drawn on the night, and a Christmas tree will be auctioned.

Please invite your neighbours and friends to join in the festivities.

A working bee will be held on Friday morning at 10am to set up for the evening event. Come and help if you can.

Please note that we will not have the normal Friday Night Happy Hour on 19th December and will recommence on the third Friday in February 2026.

Thankyou to all our volunteers who have assisted during the year and special thanks to Bob Newman for mowing the lawns prior to weddings and events.



The Boisdale & District Progress Assoc. and the Boisdale Stables wish everyone a very happy Christmas and a wonderful 2026.

Kath Coggan, Stables Secretary

Boisdale Garden Club

Our Christmas Breakup this year was held at the Rosedale Hotel on Saturday 29th November.

Our first meeting for 2026 will be on Saturday 14th February at 1 pm and we are planning to visit Judy Traill's new home in Maffra at 54 Alfred Street.

We wish everyone a happy Christmas and a safe and healthy 2026. Many thanks to The Bridge for their support during the year.

For further details contact Joy on 0429 036 999

Boisdale Tai Chi Group

Is held at the Boisdale Public Hall on Wednesday mornings starting at 10.00 am, followed by morning tea
Cost: \$5.00 per session

Tai Chi will close for Christmas after Wednesday 17th December and recommence the week that school resumes in 2026.

For more information, contact Judy on 0400 443 167.

Boisdale Public Hall

Boisdale Hall is available for bookings please contact

Samantha White via Mob. **0428 549 045**

or email: boisdalepublichall@gmail.com

Judy Traill, Chair - 0400 443 167

Boisdale Recreation Reserve

It was announced at a Rec. Reserve meeting last week that the Reserve Committee has been successful in their funding application to the Community Bank Maffra & District for a new ride-on lawn mower for the Boisdale Community!

A huge thank you to the bank from the committee, community and to all our volunteers who mow the public areas in the township. The Boisdale Hall, Progress Assoc. and the Boisdale Stables and St George's Anglican Church all donate funds to assist with fuel and maintenance. This is a wonderful community initiative.

Work continues on the Netball Court Redevelopment project. See BBFNC report regarding their Mardi Gras entrants and fundraising for 2026.



Christmas Grinch Award to the person or persons who stole the circular nest swing from the Boisdale Playground. Very upsetting for the local children.

Tim Crooke – Chair, Rec. Reserve Committee

Community Bank Maffra & District

We would like to wish all our customers a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

2025 saw the Community Bank Maffra & District celebrate 10 years of community banking, with the branch opening in 2015.

During this time the Community Bank has given back over \$1 million to the community through sponsorships and grants. Many local sporting clubs, schools, community groups and events have benefited from the sponsorship program. This wouldn't be possible without our customers and community support.

For grant or sponsorship information see link below:

<https://communitybankmaffra.smartygrants.com.au/>

Bank Opening hours: M-W 9.30- 4pm, Thurs. 9.30-5pm and Fri. 9.30- 4pm.

The Bridge is very appreciative of funding from the Community Bank Maffra & District for this year and to the Boisdale Consolidated School enabling the production and printing of this newsletter each month.

Valencia Soldiers Memorial Hall

The Valencia Creek Christmas Tree will be held on Friday 12th December from 5.30pm at the Valencia Creek Hall.

BBQ available if you wish to cook your food. Lollies and icy poles for the kids.

Santa arriving at 7pm and lots of activities for the kids.

Christmas Hampers will be drawn on the night.

Donations of goods appreciated.

Enquiries to Danielle 0400 691 055 or to Jarrah on 0417 546 112

New Years Eve with the Briagolong Bush Band



As usual the band will perform all the favourite songs and bush dances at the Valencia Creek Hall, so come along and help us bring in a great New Year. Music from 8pm, BBQ available from 6pm for those who want to come early.

\$30 pp. Bookings to Garry on 0439 454 428.

And stay tuned for The Pleasures, Catherine Britt and Lachlan Bryan, also The Deserters from Melbourne on 21st February 2026.

<https://www.facebook.com/valenciacreekhall>

For general hall bookings contact **Cath Noble on 0427 149 253.**

Please note that the Friday Night Happy Hour due to be held this Friday 5th December at Valencia Creek will not be on, locals are invited to come to the Boisdale Christmas Breakup at the Stables instead.

St George's Anglican Church, Boisdale

Join us on **Christmas Eve at St George's Boisdale at 8pm** to celebrate the true meaning of Christmas with a communion and carol service. Everyone is most welcome.

See the Gippsland Times for Maffra Christmas Church services.

Contact Helen 0448 349 420 for further information.





Boisdale Consolidated School (BCS)

It seems that each newsletter brings with it an update to our staffing profile, and this week is no exception. Jasmine Woolford has informed us that she has accepted a position at Guthridge Primary School commencing in 2026. I am sure the school community will join me in wishing Jasmine all the best. Although it is late in the year, we have advertised the position on Recruitment Online and are hopeful that we will secure a strong replacement to join our team for 2026.

Amy Lace has also decided to step down from her role as Assistant Principal, to concentrate on her young family. I would also like to share with families the classroom staffing decisions that have been confirmed for next year. These arrangements reflect both the needs of our students and the strengths of our staff.

2026 Classroom Staffing

• **Prep:** Michelle Boyd • **1/2A:** Brittany Booker & Eliza Rowley • **1/2B:** Emma Germain • **2/3A:** Meg Marshall • **3/4A:** Emma Wojcinski & Em Porter • **4/5A:** Harriet English & Amy Lace • **5/6A:** To be confirmed • **5/6B:** Brooke Ellis • **Art:** Jess Mackay & Em Porter • **PE:** Marissa Barrett • **STEM:** Marissa Barrett & Amy Lace • **Music & Instrumental:** Claire Martin

Statewide Orientation Day will take place on Tuesday 9 December, and students will spend the day in their 2026 grades. Class placements will be finalised early next week, with families receiving this information by Friday. Our Leadership Assembly will also be held on the Statewide Transition Day at 2:30pm.

There will also be changes to the Maffra Town bus services in 2026. Due to increasing running costs, the school has made the decision to move to two Maffra buses. We are currently awaiting confirmation of the new routes from Dysons, and once finalised, families will receive their new stop allocation.

On a lighter note, our students have been very excited this week with the arrival of four new baby chickens, which hatched over the past few days. As we recently said farewell to our roosters, this may be our last batch for a little while. We extend a big thank you to the Agricultural students and staff at Maffra Secondary College, who kindly replaced our chickens during the July school holidays. We are also adding a chook tractor and 50 chickens to our school farm. Students will take part in egg collection, including weighing and packaging eggs for sale through the school office—another great hands-on learning opportunity.



The BCS Christmas BBQ is on Thursday 11 December from 4.30 – 7.00pm. See the school

newsletter for further details. Thank you for your continued support as we prepare for a smooth and successful transition into the 2026 school year.

Belinda Marshall, Principal. Phone 5145 4391.

The Birdman of Boisdale

GREY CURRAWONG

Is similar to other currawongs in that it is a mainly dark bird with some white markings and a yellow eye. The Grey Currawong is however a highly variable species, with six distinct subspecies throughout its range. All subspecies have a white-tipped tail.

Location: In the west of its range, the Grey Currawong is the only



currawong species to be found. In the east, it can be distinguished from the Pied Currawong, *S. graculina*, by its less robust and less hooked bill, its generally greyer rather than black plumage, and its higher pitched, ringing or 'clinking' call. It can be distinguished from the similarly sized White-winged Chough, which has a longer tail with no white, a more slender down-curved beak and a red eye.

The six distinct subspecies of the Grey Currawong have ranges from far south-western to south-eastern Australia, including Tasmania. The 'Clinking Currawong', *race arguta*, is confined to Tasmania and the Bass Strait islands; the 'Black-winged Currawong', *race melanopectera*, is found in the Mallee districts around the Victorian/South Australian border; the 'Brown Currawong', *race intermedia*, is found on the Eyre and Yorke Peninsulas, South Australia; the *race plumbea* replaces the nominate in the north-west of South Australia, the south-west of Northern Territory and the southern half of Western Australia; the *race halmaturina* is confined to Kangaroo Island, South Australia.

Habitat: The Currawong inhabits a wide range of habitats from the coast to the semi-desert, including forests, woodlands, mallee, coastal and other heaths. Also found in remnant vegetation on roadsides and farms, in orchards, and in suburban areas.

Seasonal movements: Tends to be more sedentary than the Pied Currawong. Some altitudinal migration, moving to lower areas in winter. The Grey Currawong is an omnivore, eating small animals such as birds, rodents, frogs as well as eggs, insects, seeds, fruits and carrion (dead animals). They forage both on the ground and in trees, often on tree trunks using their bills as a probe for insects.

Breeding: It builds a large shallow bowl-shaped nest of sticks in the outer canopy of a tree, usually about 5 m to 15 m above the ground. The nest is lined with dry grasses. The female incubates alone but both sexes feed the young.

Eventurers - Boisdale photographers Ian and Velta Fellowes - 0427 472 451.



St John's Anglican Church Christmas Fair



This coming Saturday 6th December from 9am at St John's, Maffra.

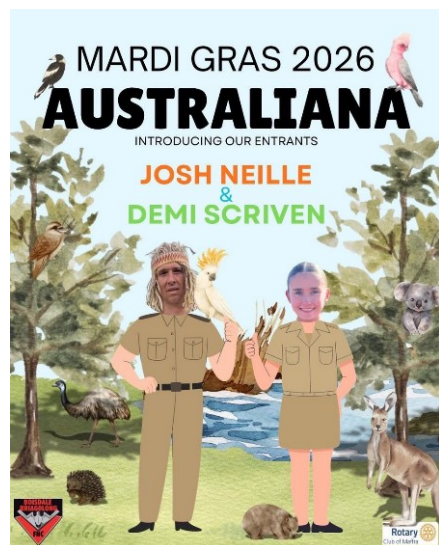
A great chance to get your Christmas cooking and some great homemade gifts.



The Maffra Mardi Gras

The Rotary Club of Maffra is very pleased that the **Boisdale/Briagolong Football Netball Club is entering the Fundraising part of the Maffra Rotary Family Mardi Gras.** The Club is putting in joint Fundraising Entrants, Josh Neille and Demi Scriven.

Maffra Rotary will be supporting them with fundraising opportunities between January 30th and March 14th 2026 and I'm sure that the Boisdale/Briagolong



communities will get behind them so that they can achieve their objectives.

They are aiming to upgrade their netball facilities, including new change rooms, umpires room, first aid, children's play area, storage room and new courts – all very worthwhile and needed improvements.

Plus, we have Linda Allman and Rebecca Berry from Stretton Park and Laurina Lodge Aged Care as entrants.

Stretton Park and Laurina Lodge Admin. and Clinical Managers, Linda Allman and Rebecca Berry, will jointly participate in the upcoming Maffra Mardi Gras.

I'm sure that Maffra and Heyfield residents will support these entrants in their fundraising events.



They are raising money to purchase a hoist and lifting equipment to better support their residents with limited mobility.

And Tami Beechey from the 1st Stratford Scouts is another entrant raising funds to have a new shed erected. I'm sure the Stratford community will get behind her and support her in the fundraising period from the end of January to March 14th 2026.

Mardi Gras Day is March 14th, so put that in your diaries for a fun afternoon out, with street parade, market and food stalls, free children's entertainment and jumping castles. Even better, get your favourite club or organisation to enter a float or walking group!

Entries are free, and vintage or unusual vehicles are welcome too!

Contact kath@wideband.net for a float form,

maffra.mardigras@rotary9815.org.au

for Mardi Gras enquiries or

maffra.secretary@rotary9815.org.au

for general enquiries about Rotary.

Claire Cochrane, President

Maffra Christmas Festival



Wednesday 17th December at 5.30pm, Johnson St, Maffra.



Reports for The Bridge are due in the last week of each month. **Contact Helen to be placed on our email distribution list for a coloured copy each month.**

Copies are available from the Boisdale Post Office.

Editor: Helen Montague. Mob: 0448 349 420 or email dhmontague@bigpond.com

Proof reader: Rachel Dawkins.





Dates for Local Christmas Events

Friday 5th December from 5.30pm - Boisdale Christmas Break up at the Stables.
Saturday 6th December, 9am - St John's Christmas Fair, Maffra.

Sunday 7th December - CFA Community Day at Boisdale from 10am.

Friday 12th December - Valencia Creek Christmas Tree from 5.30pm

Wednesday 17th December - 5.30pm - Maffra Christmas Festival

Sunday 21st December - 4.00pm - Maffra Christmas Carols at Maffra Memorial Hall. Free event, with songs and Santa visit

Wednesday 24th December - Christmas Eve Church service at St George's Boisdale at 8pm.

Wednesday 31st December - New Year's Eve - Briagolong Bush Band @ Valencia Creek Hall.

