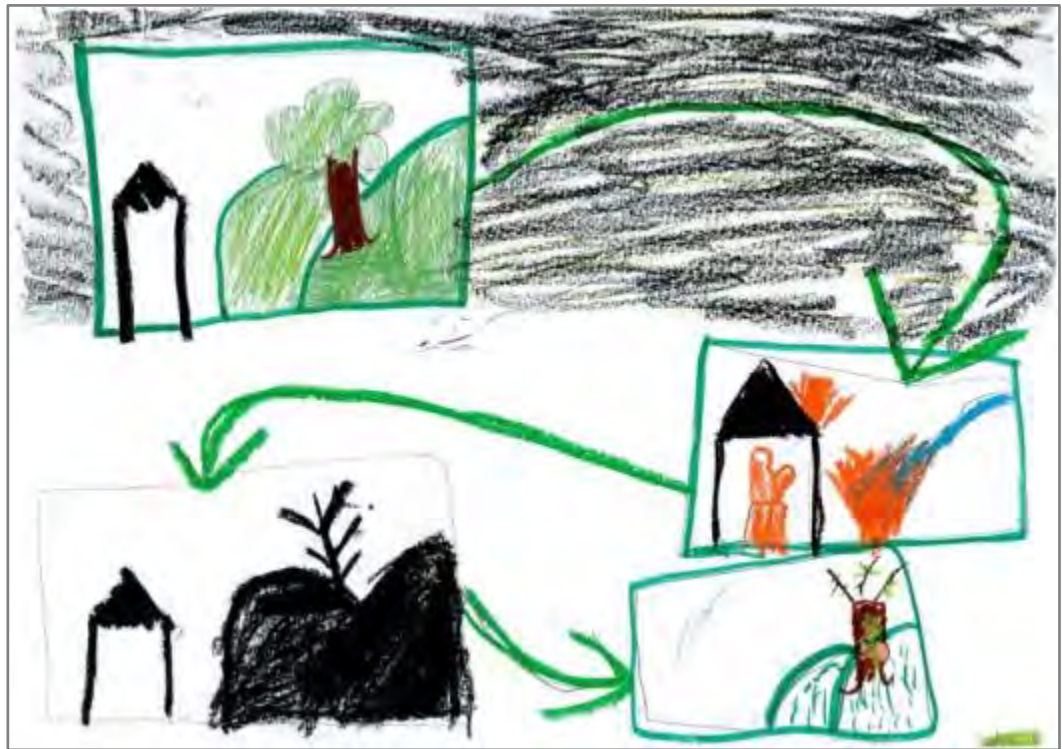


Dereel Community Newsletter

Issue 18 - May 2014



Picture by Molly from Rokewood Primary School.

Bushfire is a cycle of change; and while the environment regenerates quickly and renews after fire, it can take people and communities a lot longer to recover. But they can recover.

Welcome to Issue 18 of the Dereel Community Newsletter

It has been a busy few months over summer with more community activities, new groups starting, planning permits being lodged, houses and sheds being built and new opportunities being explored. We respectfully acknowledged the first anniversary of the bushfire, showcased Dereel's art and creativity and worked together to build something amazing which other communities can now use to help them in their own recovery journeys.

As some things continue to move forward, others are coming to a natural close. Many of the tools and equipment that had been donated for use in Dereel's bushfire clean-up in 2013 have been passed on to some of the Grampians communities that were affected by fires during summer 2014. The Community Recovery Group no longer needs to meet, and members have resumed their normal lives. The remaining donated clothing and goods that were generously stored and made available to Dereel residents by Ballarat UnitingCare until now, is going through its final distribution.

As we continue towards winter and the cooler months, the Dereel community continues to try new ideas, plan for new events, and inspire people to work together.



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A note from the Rural Recovery Officer

Kim Stanley-Eyles works part-time across the week to be flexible to meet the needs of the Dereel community during the bushfire recovery.

Generally (depending on how the week works out) Kim will be available:

- Mondays at the Dereel Community Centre, Swamp Road, 10am-5pm
- Thursdays at the Bannockburn Council Offices, Pope Street
- Other days, locations and times according to community and Council needs

If you would like to meet for a chat and a cuppa, please call, text or email Kim to book a time and location. We can meet at the Community Centre, at the Bannockburn Office, or another place as needed. The Community Centre will also be available on Mondays to drop in and use the free book library.

Phone: **5220 7162**
Mobile: **0408 516 189**
Fax: **5220 7100**
Email: kim.stanley-eyles@gplains.vic.gov.au



What's been happening?

Dr Robert Gordon's visit

A leading psychologist specialising in emergency recovery, Dr Robert Gordon and colleague David Younger came to the Dereel Hall to talk with residents about their fire experiences. It was a really good session where we discussed the process of personal and community recovery from a significant trauma, and that although it is completely normal to feel overwhelmed, angry or frustrated, people DO recover over time and with support. As one resident who had lost their home said *"after almost a year of counselling, this is the first time I have felt that what we are going through is really understood, and that there is hope to get through the tough times we are having now."* We are hoping to get Dr Robert Gordon back before the end of the year for a follow up community session.

Men's Shed grant announcement

Local member Terry Mulder MP announced that the Dereel and Surrounding Districts Men's Shed had received a \$34,000 grant from the Victoria Coalition Government that would finally allow the building of a local group shed. An additional \$7,000 was allocated from the Dereel Fire Fund as the community contribution. The local Men's Shed has been active for many years, however has had to meet and work in private sheds and at the community centre in lieu of its own work space. An important health initiative and a valuable part of the recovery process for the whole community, the Men's Shed has also been extremely active in the continuing clean-up and repair of fire affected properties.

Connecting the Tots

Connecting the Tots is a new trial program to encourage local parents and carers with small children to come together in facilitated play and learning sessions. A range of themes and activities encourage children to explore fun ideas. Initially running up until the end of June, we are hoping that there will be enough interest for this program to continue. Over time, parents and carers will become more involved in what the sessions cover and the invitation of session facilitators and activities. Connecting the Tots runs fortnightly on Mondays from **10-11:30am**. Gold coin contribution. For more information, contact Cheryl Jenkins 5220 7205.

Firewood almost ready for distribution

Remember the fallen timber from the roadsides that Council removed and stored locally so that it could season? Well, it is in the process of being blocked in preparation of being available as fire wood for this winter. The firewood is available for free for fire affected properties (you will need to split and stack it yourself), so please contact the Rural Recovery Officer to register your interest. If you are not fire affected, but would like to register your interest in paying for a load of firewood from the stockpile, please contact the Rural Recovery Officer. Firewood deliveries will be made by the Dereel Fire Brigade as a fundraiser. All funds raised from the sale of the stockpiled firewood to non-fire affected properties will go to the Dereel Memorial Hall and Community Centre.

Information and Introduction Sessions at the hall

We are looking at running a series of regular info/intro sessions run by the community for the community on weekends or evenings. Sessions will include things like writing a journal, self-publishing, calligraphy, basic pump maintenance, making costumes, different art and craft styles, music from recycling, and many more. Is there something you can do that you can show others, or something you'd like to know more about? Please contact Kim to find out more.



Dereel Bushfire Fund 'Where to next' survey

We would like to thank you for the feedback in response to 'where to next' survey for the Dereel Fire Fund.

This appeal was established by the Buninyong & District Community Bank to assist in relief, recovery and reconstruction efforts in Dereel and surrounding communities. The appeal fund Advisory Committee relies on input from the Community Recovery Group for guidance in distribution of the funds – a “voice for the people of Dereel” through the recovery process which ran meetings, information sessions and communicated with the community via regular newsletters. This Community Recovery Group made a successful application to the fund advisory committee for three projects using appeal funds:

- Project 1 (June 2013) - \$2,500 FIREWOOD.

Purchased truckloads of firewood to replace wood stacks lost in the fire. Directly supported 20 families who otherwise had no means of heating during the first cold winter.

- Project 2 (August 2013) - \$2,000 STOCKFEED.

Purchased truckloads of fodder to directly support 10 families whose stock had little feed because of fire damage to pastures and stock feed stores. This preserved income and the lives of stock, and reduced emotional stress of the individuals.

- Project 3 (August 2013) - \$7,000 MEN'S SHED.

Funds allocated to assist the community in establishing its Men's Shed. Community relief and recovery efforts lead by residents and Golden Plains Shire identified that rebuilding, relief and recovery in the whole community will be enhanced by the activities of the Men's Shed. This allocation has resulted in successful application to State and Federal governments for additional funding.

Golden Plains Shire Council contacted residents seeking the 'where to next' input.

Funds distributed so far through the three projects have been true to the purpose outlined above; supporting relief, recovery and reconstruction at individual, family and community levels. The funds allocated to the Men's Shed were integral to the success of the overall grant application and cannot be redirected.

Ninety-seven responses to the survey were very clear about the future of the fund – 90% of you supported winding it up. Given such a strong consensus, the funds remaining balance (approx. \$21,000) will be distributed and the fund wound up.

There was no such consensus, however, among responders about how to distribute the funds. The Advisory Committee reviewed many options, all with the original objective in mind, and giving consideration to the divisive nature of the debate amongst the community in this respect. The Committee's proposal for the final distribution, delivering a community-wide benefit, is as follows:

The Dereel Bushfire Appeal Fund will distribute the remaining funds to be shared equally between the Dereel and Rokewood Fire Brigades.

We would appreciate any concerns you might have with this decision to be directed to:

Jill Evans
Director Community Services
Golden Plains Shire
PO Box 111
Bannockburn
jevans@gplains.vic.gov.au



Captain Cat's Theatre – Five shows over February

A very successful initiative organised completely by volunteers, Captain Cat's Theatre brought together nearly 50 different individuals and groups to provide acting, sewing, singing, music, props, catering, advertising, photography, sound management and everything else required to make this happen. Over 160 people attended the five shows around the Dereel area, and helped to raise over \$1200 to go towards community development and recovery activities. As one resident recently wrote in the Rokewood and District Newsletter "I, as a resident of Dereel for 25 years have never seen so many happy smiling faces in the same place as seen after this group's performance on their first night."

Work is currently being done to turn the Captain Cat's Theatre into a self-contained package that will be freely available to any communities that want to use it as part of their own recovery process. Doing a community play like this brings together whole sections of a community in a positive way, gives the community some time off from dealing with the recovery, and can act as a fundraiser. To keep up-to-date with this, go to www.captaincatstheatre.info.

If you are interested in helping to start up a **Community Theatre group** in Dereel so that new shows can be performed, please call Kim on 0408 516 189 with your ideas and what you would like to help with. Actors, singers, musicians, costumers, prop makers, writers and everyone else are very welcome to join!





Golden Plains Arts Trail – ‘From the Flames’

Thirteen local artists exhibited at the Arts Trail held on 15-16 March. One of the largest combined exhibitions on the Arts Trail, the weekend brought together some amazing artwork and creativity from across the wider community. The local artists included Jeffrey Kirsten (sculpture), Caroline Everett (painting and jewellery), Lisa Hunter (photography and poetry), John Anthony (glass works), Sharon Bowman (spinning and fibre), Terry Breen (photography compilation), Bev Luke (quilting), Bridh Hancock (poetry), Captain Cat's Theatre (community theatre and costumery), Rokewood Primary School (children's drawings), Cape Clear Primary School (children's drawings), Kirsty Loschiavo (airbrushing) and Michelle deGroot (quilting). This successful event has brought together an amazing array of artists from across the community and showcased some of the extraordinary talent and creativity that Dereel has to offer.



From this event and Captain Cat's Theatre, a new group called 'Dereel Arty Crafty and Creative Peoples' has been formed to assist local artists in any medium to share ideas, support new initiatives, run workshops and classes, and perhaps even work towards new exhibitions and a local Artspace. If you are interested in getting involved, please call Kim on 0408 516 189, or find the group on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/812327138795447/>





Rejuvenation Quilt donated to the community

One of the artworks shown at this year's Golden Plains Arts Trail was a quilt by local artist Michelle deGroot. One of the many people affected by last year's bushfire, Michelle captured her experience in this extraordinary quilt. Starting off as a single piece of blank white material, the Rejuvenation Quilt is made up of countless pieces which have each been cut up and individually dyed, painted, stamped and stitched before coming back together again. Intricate stitching, applique and beading complete the amazing detail.

Michelle has generously donated the quilt to the Dereel community. It will be carefully framed behind glass and hung adjacent to the beautiful Jan Mitchel painting in the Community Centre. Funds raised by Captain Cat's Theatre for community recovery initiatives will be used to pay for the frame.



'Rejuvenation Quilt' by Michelle deGroot

Michelle will be running quilting workshops at the Community Centre **starting Friday 27 June 10:00am – 3:00pm** with a Kaleidoscope Quilt.

Cost is \$25 and please contact Michelle on 5346 1364 or 0439 005 301 to book your place and obtain your requirements list. Tea and coffee will be provided but please bring your own lunch.

A wonderful and unexpected donation

A few weeks ago, Dereel locals Doug and Kim made contact with a lovely lady from Kinglake called Anne. Anne was after some ducks, Doug was selling some, and Kim needed a pair she had bought from up that way brought down to Dereel, so it worked out really well. It turns out Anne had lost her home in Black Saturday and really understood what this community was going through. Doug recently received a lovely package and letter in the mail from Anne that he would like to share with you all.

"Dear Doug, It was a pleasure meeting you and your wife when we came and bought the ducks recently. The ducks have settled in well and the drake is a happy boy! I wanted to do something for the residents in Dereel as I know that just because the fires are out and the media have moved on everything does not automatically return to 'normal'. You mentioned that you are a member of the local Men's Shed, so I have taken the liberty of forwarding this parcel to you to distribute to local residents so you know you haven't been forgotten. As the weather cools and the winds blow I thought these beanies would be both useful and bright-coloured to help people left their spirits. They are in a variety of sizes and colours for all ages. I derived much pleasure in making these over the last couple of years after our fires and I hope they give the residents of Dereel great pleasure (and warm ears in the winter). Regards, Anne."



If you would like one of these beautiful beanies, please contact Kim or drop into the Community Centre on a Monday. Many many thanks to Anne for her heartfelt and generous gifts and well wishes.

Update on the new recovery groups

Heritage and History Group



The founding members sharing old maps and property information.



The township of Dereel as it was envisaged in 1925 but never finished.

Contact: Julie Donaghy
5346 1544
julied23@bigpond.com

Group meets most Mondays
10:00-11:30am.

This group aims to explore and document the diverse history and heritage of Dereel including Wurdi wurrung culture, gold-rush settlement and the early 1900 racing history. They are working towards identifying, documenting and preserving key historic features both uncovered and lost through

the fire. Also, linking heritage and culture into other local initiatives such as informative signage, walking trails and field days.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Dereel/323726694403989>,

http://history.dereel.com.au/wiki/Main_Page and <http://julied235.wix.com/history-of-dereel>

Community Garden



The Community Garden group after a tour of the Ballarat Community

Contact: Grace Grech,
0417 586 593
amazn.grace@hotmail.com

Group meets the first Tuesday of the month
at 11am. Working bees at other times.

Starting off by working on the public gardens around the Hall and Community Centre, the group are working towards developing a new Community Garden for Dereel. This will be a place where all families and individuals can come together and share stories, wisdom, plants, produce and seeds, a meal and some

good times. The gardens will not just be a place for growing plants and food, but a place to grow as a community. To grow skills and share them with each other and the younger people of our town. A place where we can become sustainable as a community and grow and share our own local produce.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/634464476626940/>

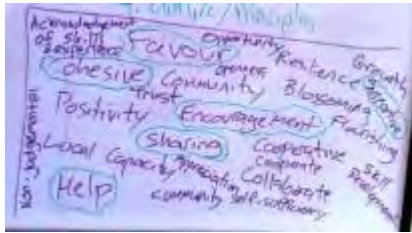


For some information on similar community gardens that have been successfully established to help connect and develop different communities, see the recently launched 'Community Gardens Manual: Community based gardening' on the Sustainable Gardening Australia website

<http://www.sgaonline.org.au/community-gardening/>



Dereel Open Sharing Group



Brainstorming what the group is aiming to achieve.

Contact: Mitchel Fielding
0467 779 453
misfisattva@gmail.com

Group meets fortnightly Sunday 1:30-3:30pm.

The Open Sharing group intends to build on the strong cooperative spirit of community in Dereel and surrounds by making it easier for locals to help each other. People will be able to register skills and interests they would like to contribute or share with others. Individuals or groups can then ask for help and invite those interested to volunteer their skills and time. The intention is to make this sharing visible and open, to build trust and confidence in community support.

Nesting boxes for returning native animals



Jennifer, Gaia, Paul and Mungo with their donation of 39 hand-made Australian Native nesting boxes.

Contact: Kim Stanley-Eyles
0408 516 189, 5220 7162
kim.stanley-eyles@gplains.vic.gov.au

Group is still to set a regular meeting day and time

This group will make and install a range of native animal nesting boxes so that they can provide habitat for animals returning to bushfire affected areas. This initiative will network a number of groups including the Men's Shed, Ballarat Environment Network (BEN), local primary schools and local wildlife rescue groups. The Davey-Johnstone

family have donated 39 hand-made nesting boxes built to species specific requirements. A number of landowners have asked to host different nesting boxes when they are available including on private property and local reserves.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/190382044502961/>

Hot Day Clubs for at-risk groups

Two different demographics are more at risk in an emergency such as bushfire, carers with small children and older or less mobile members of the community.

Activating a survival plan that involves packing cars, property preparations, moving equipment or getting to a place of relative safety can be difficult enough during high fire danger days. The added stresses involved when trying to juggle small children (especially if you are the only adult there) or particular health issues or physical considerations, can make it even harder to respond safely and quickly. Two Hot Day Clubs are being established where members plan and work together to develop a range of activation triggers, communication methods and suitable activities. When activated, those that wish can leave the extreme fire risk area early on designated high risk days and enjoy a range of activities in a less at-risk area. This could be anything from group shopping trips, recreation clubs, movies or play dates; ideally they will be activities that help keep cool in the summer heat while being sociable and enjoyable.

Contact: Kim Stanley-Eyles, 0408 516 189, 5220 7162
kim.stanley-eyles@gplains.vic.gov.au



Contacts, Support and Useful Information

Bushfire Legal Help – 5331 5999

For enquiries about free legal assistance please call Lisa Buckland at the Central Highlands Community Legal Centre or email lisa_buckland@clc.net.au

Centacare Ballarat – 1300 303 988

Centacare Ballarat is able to assist you and your family with information about resources available to you, including practical support, counselling services and referral to other support services and organisations. Please telephone Centacare Ballarat and ask for Lauren.

Centrelink – 1800 050 004

Priority treatment will be provided on all services at Ballarat Centrelink to those affected by the Dereel fire. Please mention on arrival at Ballarat Centrelink that you are a fire-affected resident to receive priority treatment. Visit Ballarat Centrelink at 12 Albert Street, Ballarat or **1800 050 004**. Centrelink can also be contacted on 132 850 for Exceptional Circumstances Relief Help. This number can be accessed Monday to Friday 8:00am - 5:00pm.

Facebook – Dereel 2013 Fire Help Page

The **Dereel 2013 Fire Help Page** Facebook group is managed by Tracey, Jade and Kim. The site is great for online chats and updates, upcoming events, bushfire planning and preparation information, and people can ask for assistance and arrange to borrow items or donate items.

Justice of the Peace – 5346 1294

Loes Pearson, JP, is available in the Dereel community to certify documents, accept Stat. Decs, and other official document certification. Please call in the evenings to arrange an appointment.

Native vegetation – 5220 7111

Landholders are reminded that native vegetation is protected and removal may require a Planning Permit. If you are unsure if the vegetation removal you're planning is legal, contact Council's Natural Resources Officer for free advice.

Tools to borrow – 5220 7162

There are still a small number of tools available for the community to use for gardening work. Many of the tools previously available have been donated to the Grampians for use in their immediate fire recovery needs.

Weed control – 5220 7111

For free advice on identifying and controlling weeds, contact Council's Natural Resources Officer.



Regular Events for your Calendar

Come along to any or all of the things happening at the Dereel Hall:

Alcoholics Anonymous

*Every Sunday, 4-5pm, BBQ after
New members welcome*

More Info: Kev 5346 1419 or Rory 0474 633 393



Connecting the Tots

*Every second Monday, 10-11:30am (next one 2 June – 'Fun with Fibre')
For all children and their carers*

More Info: Cheryl Jenkins 5220 7205 cjenkins@gplains.vic.gov.au

Campfire Conversations

*The first Thursday of the month,
Dereel Hall, 6-9pm (6-7pm social and dinner, 7-9pm session)*

More Info: Eric and Lesley Dell 0448 599 665

Leigh Catchment CERT (Community Emergency Response Team)

*The first Wednesday of each month at the CERT Shed (Swamp Road)
New members welcome.*

More Info: Colin Watson 5346 1389

Dereel and Surrounding Communities Men's Shed

Every Wednesday, 11am-2pm

Men and women welcome

More Info: Doug Braddy 5346 1073

Dereel Fire Brigade

If you would like more information on what is involved with becoming a volunteer in either a fire-fighting or support role, please contact us at bmt@dereelcfa.org.au

Health Nurse

Every Tuesday and Thursday, 8:30am-12pm

More Info: Bennita the Health Nurse 0427 095 998

Line Dancing (brought to you by Campfire Conversations)

Every Friday night 7:30-9:30pm

More Info: Eric and Lesley Dell 0448 599 665

Walking Group

Every Tuesday & Thursday, 8:30am-12pm

More Info: Bennita the Health Nurse 0427 095 998

Planning, Preparation and Emergency Information

Facebook



Dereel 2013 Fire Help Page
CFA (Country Fire Authority)

Campfire Conversations
Golden Plains Shire Council

For bushfire planning advice, incident updates and planned burns on public land

CFA website - www.cfa.vic.gov.au

DEPI website - www.depi.vic.gov.au

1800 240 667 Victorian Bushfire Information Line

1800 668 511 To register your burn off (throughout the year)

Upload the **FireReady app** for warnings on your mobile device

<http://www.cfa.vic.gov.au/plan-prepare/fireready-app/>

000 In a life threatening emergency

How do you prefer to receive your Dereel Fire Community Newsletter?

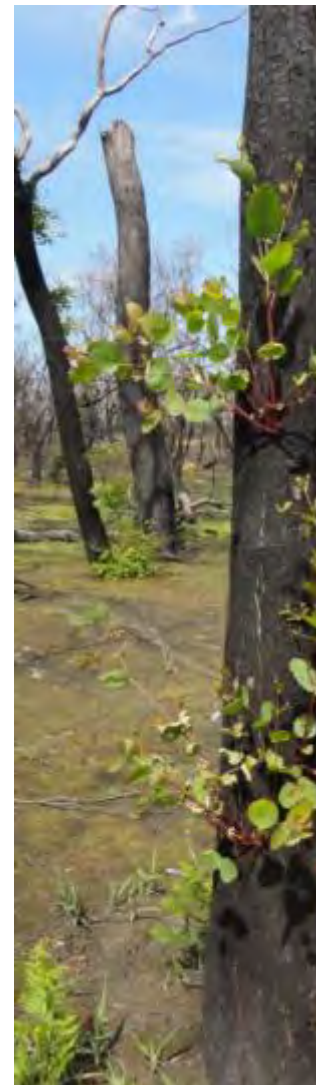
- Printed copy mailed to me
- Digital copy emailed to me
- Pick up a printed copy from my local venue
- Email notification that a new edition is available to be downloaded from the Golden Plains Shire Council website
www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au
- Facebook group – Dereel 2013 Fire Help Page
- Facebook group – Campfire Conversations
- Facebook group – Dereel CFA Brigade

Your feedback is important.

Please let us know your preferences so we can continue to improve how this newsletter is created and distributed.

Email, text, fax, post or telephone through your name, preference and contact details to the Rural Recovery Officer (details are on page two).

Also, if you have a story, photograph or submission for the next edition or would like an update on something you are interested in, please let the RRO know.



DEREEL FIRE COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER EDITION 18

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