ECHO East Grampians **Health Service** EAST GRAMPIANS HEALTH SERVICE



CE Report

Christmas wishes to all EGHS staff, visiting medical officers, volunteers and our wider community. I thank you for your effort during the year to ensure another successful year for East Grampians Health Service.

Over the last month, it was very pleasing to see East Grampians Health Service recognised as one of three finalists in the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards, celebrating a strong, sustainable workforce for our project that addresses gaps in childcare for a sustainable rural workforce. It was great to be a finalist against some large metropolitan health services.

The Annual General Meeting was held in late November. It was a great night celebrating our staff's academic and service achievements. It was uplifting to see the staff's delight when they won awards or were acknowledged for their long family, and Epworth Healthcare Group. I service.

Bridget Brennan, a Yorta Yorta and Dja Dja Wurrung woman and the host of News Breakfast on the ABC, was the guest speaker. The presentation was very moving, growing and developing their careers from her childhood at Buangor and Marian College to her journalistic career, which and for reinforcing the EGHS value of a has taken her around the world to London, Washington and Hong Kong, as well as learning culture. helping to establish the national broadcaster's first Indigenous Affairs Reporting Team, and hosting a national program on the ABC. It was genuinely uplifting to see what can be achieved with passion and drive.

Scholarships were also allocated through the East Grampians Health Service Building for the Future Foundation, Joe and Monika Kapp, Keith Little, the Laidlaw



sincerely thank these generous people for supporting the health service staff in

The AGM was also an occasion to bestow the highest award the health service can allocate, the life governorship.

CE Report cont. page 2

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CE Report cont.

It was great to recognise Nancy Panter for her tremendous contribution to the health service, particularly for her four years as chair of the board and a total of nine years on the board.

Nancy has a strong passion for increasing opportunities for rural women, and the nursing diploma course commenced in Ararat during her time on the EGHS board. Thank you very much for your efforts.

We are working with the Department of Health to fund a redevelopment of Willaura Hospital. It is pleasing that the Department has prioritised Willaura and is looking to upgrade the facilities to improve the services we offer. We are hopeful we will receive an early Christmas present in the form of an announcement.

Thank you to our staff, visiting medical officers and volunteers who are working across Christmas and the New Year. It is a significant commitment you are making to the service and community.

EGHS POSTS SURPLUS AFTER CHALLENGING YEAR

JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

East Grampians Health Service posted an operating surplus of \$129k for the financial year ended June 30 2025.

EGHS Board Treasurer Cameron Montgomery said at the 30th Annual General Meeting of the health service, that this financial report, while positive, came after another challenging year for the health service.

Mr Mongomery said 2025 saw continued inflationary and workforce pressures early on.

"It was also the first year of major funding guideline changes at the state level. Savings targets and further moves towards activity- based funding were main features," he said.

"Throughout all of this, EGHS was able to deliver on all of its agreed performance measures with the Department. A very positive result."

Mr Montgomery said the pressure on finances will continue in the short to medium term as demand on services and associated costs increase.

"The Board and Executive will continue to look at revenue generation and appropriate cost saving measures into the future. We will work in partnership with the Department of Health to balance the budget through growth and versatility of program delivery," he said.

East Grampians Health Service continues to plan for the future with its ongoing capital development and investment in staff development.

"We continued our program of capital replacement and renewal this year with \$3.16 million of additions. This was made up of items of plant and equipment and building redevelopment," Mr Montgomery said.

"A highlight this year was the building of the Medical Practical Laboratory. Designed to look like a real ward, this exciting development provides a dedicated space for clinical students to learn and practice in a real-life environment.

This valuable addition was officially opened in September 2025 and was funded by the Department of Health with the support of Deakin University.

"EGHS also renewed significant Theatre and Medical Imaging equipment and commenced remodelling work at Lowe Street residential care and the Urgent Care Centre. These replacements were largely made possible by the Department of Health through their capital division. Support has also been received from the Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation Ararat Branch, the East Grampians Health Service Building for the Future Foundation plus private donations and bequests."

Mr Montgomery stressed that any fundraising, donations or bequests received from the community were separately accounted for and did not go to fund operating deficits.

They are used for capital projects and supporting staff development that have an enduring benefit for the community or in specific alignment with the wishes of the donor.

"We publicly and humbly thank all those who have donated or have been involved in fundraising efforts," Mr Montgomery said.

Mr Montgomery also highlighted the ongoing commitment EGHS had to staff development at East Grampians Health Service.

"The health service sees the support of staff through training and development as crucial to ensuring the success of the service into the future," he said.

"While this can take various forms, we would especially like to thank the generous support of Monika and the late Joe Kapp, Keith Little, Geoff Laidlaw and family, the East Grampians Health Service Building for the Future Foundation and the Epworth Foundation for their scholarship programs."

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A YEAR OF HIGHLIGHTS AT EAST GRAMPIANS HEALTH SERVICE JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

general meeting last week, with the Board reporting on share the remarkable journey, achievements, and hopes successful vear and presenting organisational highlights and significant events.

Guest speaker at the AGM was co-host of the ABC's News Breakfast, Bridget Brennan, who grew up in Buangor and went to school at Marian College.

A proud Yorta Yorta and Dja Dja Wurrung woman, who helped establish the ABC's first Indigenous Affairs Reporting Team, Ms Brennan spoke about her roots growing up in Buangor and Ararat and her work across the world with the national broadcaster.

Board Chair Cameron Evans, in presenting his report, said the Annual General Meeting was an important date on the Board's calendar as it gave the board the chance to publicly thank staff, volunteers, visiting medical officers and community for their support and efforts over the year.

East Grampians Health Service held its 30th annual "It is my great pleasure to stand before you today and many of our health service." Mr Evans said.

> Mr Evans said over the past year, EGHS welcomed Premier Jacinta Allan and Member for Ripon Martha Haylett for the official opening of the Ararat Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Hub, and Minister for Health Mary-Anne Thomas, who met with the community services team, and visited the vibrant new short notice family daycare facility, as well as engaging in meaningful discussions about the Board's vision to redevelop Willaura Health Care.

> "In late 2024, we marked an impressive milestone, employing more than 600 staff, the highest number in the history of our health service," Mr Evans said.

> "EGHS continues to offer diverse employment and professional development opportunities, especially for Deakin University, medical and nursing students.



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We remain committed to fostering a workforce that reflects our community's diversity, and to providing meaningful career pathways for all."

by the exciting redevelopment plans at Willaura.

"Our sights are set on securing Regional Health Infrastructure funding to bring this transformative vision to life, then get support from the Federal Government for the next stage," he said.

Mr Evans said EGHS's dedication to inclusion is shown through the Diversity and Inclusion Framework.

"We champion a vibrant and welcoming environment, where every individual's unique background and perspectives are valued. We are actively removing barriers, challenging stigma, and updating our processes to reflect best practice," he said.

"Our framework guides us in cultivating a safe, supportive, and empowering workplace; one that honours culture, gender, ethnicity, language, and beliefs. We are also proud to support Victorian Government diversity initiatives, including gender balance and the recognition of First Nations peoples, and to foster a culture of lifelong cultural learning."

Thanks to the generous support from the Department of Health, EGHS launched its electronic cancer medicine management system (ECMMS) enhancing both safety and efficiency in oncology care, and built a state-of-the-art practical laboratory to provide invaluable hands-on training for Deakin University medical students, Federation TAFE Diploma of Nursing students, and EGHS staff.

"During the Yarram Gap fire, EGHS demonstrated exceptional emergency preparedness, safely evacuating 12 residents and patients from Willaura to Ararat," Mr Evans said.

"Staff displayed remarkable calm, compassion, and skill, ensuring everyone's safety and wellbeing. Thank you to the staff who carried out the evacuation on Christmas night."

Looking ahead, Mr Evans said the health service was energised EGHS's in-home care programs continue to grow, through Home Support, Healthy@Home, Carer Support, and more, ensuring clients of all ages receive the assistance they need to thrive at home.

> EGHS is proud to lead the Grampians Rural Generalist Intern Training Program, welcoming nine junior doctors for enriching rural practice rotations. In partnership with Deakin University, the Doctor of Medicine program is entering its second year, training the next generation of local healthcare professionals in this region.

> "Our 'grow your own' initiative enables local students to pursue medical, nursing - and soon allied health - careers close to home," Mr Evans said.

> "In 2025, we welcomed eight registered nurses and seven enrolled nurses into our Graduate Nurse Program. The previous cohort's success, with all graduates choosing to remain with EGHS, is a testament to our supportive environment."

> Mr Evans said the Board celebrates and recognises staff who embody its values through ongoing education and excellence in care delivery, supported by scholarships made possible through the EGHS Building for the Future Foundation, and is grateful for the generous support of partners, the Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation Ararat Branch, who funded the purchase of a new anaesthetic machine.

> "Together, let us continue building a stronger, more inclusive, and vibrant community," Mr Evans said.

> "Thank you for your dedication, your passion, and your commitment to making EGHS a beacon of excellence and compassion for all."

THANKFUL THURSDAY

"I am very thankful to be a member of such an amazing, supportive and caring team, within Support Services. I describe our dept as a work family, where our teamwork, inclusion,

support, and guidance reach, and includes, all our staff."

TACEY OBRIEN CATERING & ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR

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STAFF EDUCATION AWARD RECIPIENTS

Clare Batten	Transition to Specialty Palliative Care Practice
Kim Buncle	Transition to Specialty Palliative Care Practice
Hannah Reid	Transition to Specialty Palliative Care Practice
Sharon Spalding	Transition to Specialty Palliative Care Practice
Sally-Ann Dunn	Cert IV in Allied Health Assistance
Jordyn Leggett	Cert IV in Allied Health Assistance
Casey Shaw	Certificate IV in Leisure and Health
Irene Hermosilla	Certificate IV in Sterilisation Services
Lachlan McRae	Certificate IV in Community Services
Scott Lowe	Certificate in Ageing Support
Pauline Alley	Diploma of Community Services
Tacey O'Brien	Diploma of Leadership and Management
Suzanna Christie	Diploma of Leadership and Management/Dip Competitive
	Systems & Processes
Jessica Hughes	Diploma of Leadership and Management/Dip Competitive
	Systems & Processes
Tamara James	Diploma of Leadership and Management/Dip Competitive
	Systems & Processes
Bart James	Diploma of Leadership and Management/Dip Competitive
	Systems & Processes
Ashley Leggett	Diploma of Leadership and Management/Dip Competitive
	Systems & Processes
Jessica Seres	Diploma of Leadership and Management/Dip Competitive
	Systems & Processes
Kylie Walker	Diploma of Leadership and Management/Dip Competitive
	Systems & Processes
Olivia Carr	Diploma of Nursing
Bethzalda Ferguson	Diploma of Nursing
Su Kaur	Diploma of Nursing
Ashlee Lindsay	Diploma of Nursing
Kirsty Millson	Diploma of Nursing
Carly Sporton	Diploma of Nursing
Bianca Williams	Diploma of Nursing
Melita Kulak	Diploma of Community Services
Lisa Nolen	Diploma of Social Media Marketing
Warren Cronin	Bachelor of Nursing
Sophie Hall	Bachelor of Nursing
Caitlin McIntosh	Bachelor of Nursing
Shenae Nyikos	Bachelor of Nursing
Kylie Ritchie	Bachelor of Nursing
Tanya Beechinor	Graduate Certificate in Health (Emergency)
Cassandra Drewniak	Graduate Certificate in Health (Emergency)
Naomi Schott	Graduate Certificate in Health (Emergency)
Kiarna Taylor	Graduate Certificate in Health (Emergency)
Bryll Villafuente	Graduate Certificate in Health (Emergency)
Breeanne Fratin	Graduate Certificate in Health (Management and Leadership)
Mariah Jones	Graduate Certificate in Health (Management and Leadership)
Jake Romein	Graduate Certificate in Health (Management and Leadership)
Amanda Cranstoun	Post Graduate Diploma in Midwifery







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STAFF EDUCATION AWARD RECIPIENTS























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NANCY PANTER NAMED LIFE GOVERNOR JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIASON

Long serving East Grampians Health Service former Board Director and Chair Nancy Panter was named a Life Governor at the health service's 30th Annual General Meeting.

A Life Governor is the most prestigious recognition of commitment and dedication to the health service and is the highest honour bestowed by East Grampians Health Service.

Ms Panter was appointed to the Board in 2014 and became chair in 2018, until stepping down in 2022.

She completed her term on the Board in June 2023 in accordance with Department of Health rules that Board directors can only serve for nine years.

Ms Panter led the board with passion and was focused on improving the career opportunities East Grampians Health Service could offer local community members, particularly women.

She also had a keen focus on Board Continuous Improvement and the Governance Committee was established during her first two years as Chair.

The Community Health Centre was funded and completed in Ms Panter's term as well as the second theatre, and the solar undercover carpark.

On receiving her award, Ms Panter thanked the health service and Board for the honour.

In 2014 Ms Panter left a corporate career in San Francisco to start at family at Eversley.

Her mother in law suggested that she apply for the Board Director position advertised in the local paper.

"At that time Louse Staley was president, she met me for coffee and talked to me about how wonderful an opportunity it was to serve the community and to use the knowledge and expertise you have over your career to give back to the community in which you live," Ms Panter said.

"So, within six months of moving here I was serving on the Board of EGHS.

"I learnt so much, I knew it was an opportunity to use my skillset to help the board and help EGHS, but I also knew it was an opportunity to learn, and like so many others here tonight receiving scholarships and undertaking learning and then giving back to the hospital and to our community, that is what I did."

Ms Panter said her time on the Board was wonderful but also at times challenging.

"We certainly were able to do many amazing things, including the undercover carpark which came about after we had our first child at EGHS and we wondered why there was nowhere for us to park when we had our infant, it was wonderful we were able to find an opportunity and get that sponsored for us to have solar power," she said.

"From little ideas big things can certainly grow."

Ms Panter offered encouragement to East Grampians Health Service staff to take their skills, which they obtain through EGHS and throughout their careers, and find other ways to utilise those skills.

"We're a really special community in Ararat and I am so proud to live here and I'm extremely grateful for the opportunity to be on the board for nine years and hopefully, made the place a little better," she said.

"It's a community and everybody works together in this organisation and it's important to continue that and challenge ideas.

"There is a fabulous culture in this organisation to listen and be listened to and I think that's something to be really proud of."



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PIETER PRETORIUS AWARDED FOR LONG SERVICE TO EGHS

JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

East Grampians Health Service Visiting Medical Officer Dr Pieter Pretorius was awarded for 20 years of service to EGHS at the 30th Annual General Meeting.

Dr Pretorius has been a cornerstone of rural healthcare in Ararat since his arrival from South Africa in 2004. Moving with his wife, Ane, and their three young daughters, Dr Pretorius quickly became an integral part of the medical and wider community.

In 2005, he became a partner of the Ararat Medical Centre, where he has built a long-standing practice providing comprehensive care to the community.

As part of his GP work, he provided obstetric care at EGHS, including caesarean sections, until 2023, supporting countless families through some of the most important moments of their lives.

He has also served as a Visiting Medical Officer at East Grampians Health Service since 2004, contributing his skills and commitment to hospital-based care.

Dr Pretorius' dedication to teaching has been equally profound. From the earliest days of Deakin University's Rural Clinical School 15 years ago, he has played a pivotal role in the education and training of future doctors.

Today, he continues to guide the next generation of rural practitioners as the Regional Supervisor for Deakin University, while also mentoring GP registrars in their clinical training.

With his dedication to both patient care and medical education, Dr Pretorius has made a lasting contribution to rural healthcare and to the Ararat community he has called home for over 20 years.

EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush thanked all Visiting Medical Officers for their contribution to EGHS.

"Our visiting medical staff continue to play a vital role in providing the services we deliver to our community, and once again, thank you for your contribution," he said.

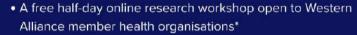
"We also thank their partners and families, as I am sure when the phone rings in the middle of the night they know they are supporting EGHS as well.

"Thank you Pieter, for your great support to East Grampians Health Service and the community for 20 years."









- Designed for health practitioners with little or no previous research or quality improvement experience
- Ideal for those wanting to gain foundational knowledge and skills to begin a health research or quality improvement project



9am - 12.30pm - Wed 25 Feb OR Tues 17 Mar 2026



Click HERE to register or scan QR code

Register by 6 February 2026





For more information: Go to <u>STaRR training website</u> or email Alison via <u>starrsupport@deakin.edu.au</u>

*Barwon Health, Colac Area Health, East Grampians Health Service, Grampians Health, Maryborough District Health Service, Portland District Health, South West Healthcare, Western District Health Service, Western Victoria Primary Health Network





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EGHS AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS

JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

Since 2009, the EGHS Building for the Future Foundation has Laidlaw family in memory of Angela. awarded scholarships to staff valued at more than \$700,000, to enable them to undertake further studies in their chosen field.

At the 30th Annual General Meeting, EGHS awarded study in addition to the usual requirements of their role. scholarships to 10 staff, including scholarships from the The recipient of the 2025 Angela Laidlaw Clinical Scholarship Foundation, as well as Epworth Healthcare, the Angela Laidlaw Clinical Scholarship and the Ord Family Scholarship.

The Building for the Future Foundation made available Keith Little generously provided two scholarships in the name scholarships up the value of \$30,000 this year to ensure the long-term viability of services. The recipients of the 2025 Foundation scholarships were Shonna Stewart and Joshua Ramsdell who will both undertake a Bachelor of Nursing.

Kate Pitcher was the recipient of the Building for the Future Foundation \$20,000 scholarship to support an EGHS employee to complete a Master course. Kate will undertake a Master of Leadership and Management in Healthcare.

The Foundation also made available three scholarships in the name of Joe Kapp up to the value of \$15,000.

The recipients of the 2025 Joe Kapp scholarships were Leslie Pyke, who will undertake a Diploma in Leadership and Management, Hannah Jennings, who will undertake a Women and Leadership Australia Impact Program and David Romeril, who will undertake a Certificate IV in Leadership and Management.

Epworth Healthcare generously made available a scholarship up to the value of \$15,000, to ensure improvements in the long term viability of obstetric services.

EGHS is grateful for the support of Epworth Healthcare who "East Grampians Health Service is grateful for the support of assists EGHS in recruiting and training midwives.

The recipient of the 2025 scholarship was Bree Lowe, who will undertake a Graduate Diploma of Midwifery.

The Angela Laidlaw Clinical Scholarship is donated by the

This scholarship creates opportunities for staff working in clinical areas to be supported in recognition for effort and where they are prepared to demonstrate commitment to

was Marnie Skiller, who will undertake a Graduate Certificate of Perioperative Nursing.

of Ray and Wayne Ord.

Decades after receiving a free university education degree, he gave the proceeds of the sale of a block of land to EGHS to fund scholarships.

The recipients of the 2025 Ray and Wayne Ord Scholarship were Neen Neen Wai Ju, who will under a Graduate Certificate of Perioperative Nursing, and Angela Nagpal, who will undertake a Certificate IV in Human Resources Management.

The EGHS Building for the Future Foundation also made available five \$500 scholarships for local secondary students who are studying in a health related field.

Recipients were Teyjeshwar Thandi (Bachelor of Radiography and Medical Imaging), Miki Hermosilla (Bachelor of Exercise and Sports Science), Emma Vallance (Diploma of Nursing), Seth Dairo (Diploma of Nursing) and Kiara Davis (Bachelor of Nursing).

EGHS Board Chair Cameron Evans congratulated all staff who were awarded scholarships and wished them well in their studies.

the Building for the Future Foundation, Epworth Healthcare, the Laidlaw family, Keith Little, and Monika and the late Joe Kapp, in enabling our staff to pursue further study and improve their skills, which ultimately benefits the health service and the community," Mr Evans said.





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EGHS AWARDS SCHOLARSHIPS







EGHS Building for the Future Foundation Trustee Graeme Foster is pictured with **Bree Lowe**



EGHS Building for the Future Foundation Trustee Graeme Foster is pictured with **Hannah Jennings**



EGHS Building for the Future Foundation Trustee Graeme Foster is pictured with Joshua Ramsdell

Shonna Stewart



EGHS Building for the Future Foundation Trustee Graeme Foster is pictured with **Kate Pitcher**



EGHS Building for the Future Foundation Trustee Graeme Foster is pictured with **Leslie Pyke**





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EGHS STAFF AWARDED FOR LONG SERVICE

JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

East Grampians Health Service staff were awarded for long service at the 30th Annual General Meeting.

Staff were awarded for years of service ranging from 10 years up to a remarkable 50 years of service by former Director of Support Services Stuart Kerr, who retired this year.

Stuart commenced work at the Ararat and District Hospital on August 15 1975.

He began his career as a cleaner, then gained an apprenticeship as a chef, before going on to become the Manager of catering. He took over environmental services and maintenance and became Manager Support Services. In 2004 Stuart obtained a Diploma of Business (PIHHC, Dip Bus) and was appointed to the role of Director Support Services in 2007.

"It has been a tremendous journey working at East Grampians Health Service seeing many changes and challenges during this time," Stuart said.

"It has been a privilege and honour to receive this 50 years' service award."

Also receiving awards for impressive terms of service included Megan Taylor for 40 years' service and Julie Frawley, Yvonne Grigg and Blair Kilpatrick for 35 years of service.

Megan commenced her training at what was the Ararat and District Hospital, in May 1985.

She has since upskilled her registration to include the medication and IV components as well as completing training in Dialysis.

Megan mainly works in the Perioperative Unit and relieves in the Dialysis Unit for annual leave and long service leave, but is now also working one permanent day a week in the Dialysis Unit

Megan takes pride in her work and tries to excel in all that she does as well as promoting the hospital.

Long service recipients include: 10 years – Elizabeth Atkinson, Yvette Brady, Amanda Cranstoun, Cassie Cunard, Andrew Dean, Sally-Ann Dunn, Carolyn Frankum, Camilla Govan, Ricki Gray, Paul Hewitt, Ashlee Kilpatrick-Blight, Jordyn Leggett, Christina Lloyd, Rommy Nicht, Tony Roberts, Lisa Shill, Kylie Simmonds, Clare Stacpoole, Emma Varley, Simone Webb, 15 Years – Suzanna Christie, Judi Debney, Kim Hartwich, Beth Hutchison, Tricia Madex, Sarah Power, Jan-Maree Ruddle, Claire Sladdin, Peter Thompson, 20 Years – Gillian Couwenberg, Leanne Culph, Maree Fraser, Olga Purdie, 25 years – Christine Briody, Caroline Hamilton, Fiona Miller, Danielle Wheeler, 30 years – Ann Grierson, Janine McElroy, 35 years – Julie Frawley, Yvonne Grigg, Blair Kilpatrick, 40 years – Megan Taylor, 50 years – Stuart Kerr.









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EGHS STAFF AWARDED FOR LONG SERVICE













15 year service award recipient Kim Hartwich

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EGHS STAFF AWARDED FOR LONG SERVICE





















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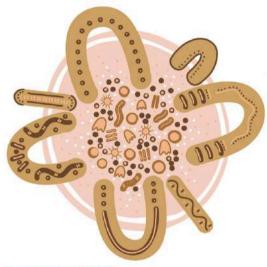
FIRST NATIONS NEWS

CLARE STACPOOLE - FIRST NATIONS LIASION LEAD

UPCOMING EVENTS

Our next staff yarn is on in January. Our First Nations Garden should be ready to use, so let's utilise this beautiful space.

EGHS FIRST NATIONS STAFF YARN



WHEN: MONDAY 19TH JANUARY

TIME: IPM

WHERE: FIRST NATIONS GARDEN

PLEASE RSVP CLARE: AHLO@EGHS.NET.AU FOR CATERING PURPOSES.

Barengi Gadjin are holding a Wotjobaluk Nations Festival to celebrate 20 years of native title recognition. This will be held on the 13th December at the Horseshoe Bend Campground.

The Schedule is as follows:

9:30am-12:00pm - Ceremony (Mob & Kin + Invited Guests)

12:00pm — Photography: Milestone Gathering (Mob & Kin + Invited Guests)

12:30pm-2:00pm — Cultural Workshops & Food (Mob & Kin + Invited Guests)

2:00pm-5:00pm — Rest, Refresh & Connect (Mob & Kin + Invited Guests)

5:00pm — Ceremony (Mob, Kin & General Public)

6:30pm-9:30pm — Dinner, Night Market & Music (Mob, Kin & General Public)

9:30pm-11:00pm — Our Place Our Story (Mob, Kin & General Public)

Workdays:

Monday: 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM Tuesday: 12:30 PM – 4:30 PM Friday: 8:00 AM – 12:00 PM

You can reach me at: Email: ahlo@eghs.net.au Phone: 0474 079 031

Please contact me for anything First Nations or just to have a yarn

As we approach the end of the year, please remember to complete your Aboriginal Cultural Awareness online education.

Our upcoming events for next year are currently being planned. If you would like to be involved in the planning or think you might have time on the days to help out, please contact me so we can have a yarn about how you can be involved.

DID YOU KNOW?

Gariwerd (The Grampians National Park) is the richest site for Aboriginal rock art in Victoria. The region has the largest number of rock art sites in Southern Australia and over 80% of Victoria's rock art sites, some dating back more than 20,000 years. There are approximately 200 rock art sites recorded in Gariwerd with five sites open to the public. Most art sites are situated under rock over hangs providing shelter and strategic viewing points of the surrounds.

These sites are a great place to visit to immerse yourself in the rich culture of the Aboriginal people.

The sites include:
Billimina Art site
Gulgurn Manja Shelter
Bunjil Shelter
Manja Shelter
Ngamadjidj Shelter



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FINALIST IN VICTORIAN PUBLIC HEALTHCARE AWARDS

JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

East Grampians health Service was a finalist in the Victorian Public Healthcare Awards.

EGHS was a finalist in the 'Celebrating a strong and sustainable workforce' category, with the entry focusing on the flexible family day care service implemented at EGHS in September 2024.

Board Chair Cam Evans, Chief Executive Nick Bush, Director of Development and Improvement Jaclyn Bishop, Director of Finance Tony Roberts and Childcare Project Implementation Officer Donna Halloran-Foster attended the awards evening in Melbourne.

The winner of the section was Eastern Health, with the Royal Melbourne Hospital also finalist.





ARARAT RSL DONATES \$8000 TO ONCOLOGY UNIT

JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

East Grampians Health Service Oncology Unit, which will be used to provide a new treatment chair that will benefit patients receiving cancer treatment.

The funds were raised through the annual Ararat RSL Pink Day fundraising event, lead by RSL employee Margaret Kelly.

The Pink Day event involved a morning tea, raffles, live music, donations, and three Ararat RSL staff members bravely shaving their heads in support of all those living with breast cancer, including Ms Kelly, Jenni Jacobi and Will Cairnes.

Ms Kelly said she had personally experienced the kindness, compassion and unwavering support of the EGHS Oncology team throughout her own cancer journey.

"Without the dedication and care provided here, the struggle would have been far greater, and for that I am truly grateful," Ms Kelly said.

the entire community, we hope this

The Argrat RSL has donated \$8000 to the contribution will in some way assist those who are currently facing this disease.

"It is our wish that it brings comfort, support or resources to those who need it most.

"Thank you for everything you do for our community. Your commitment makes a profound difference in the lives of so many."

EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush thanked the Ararat RSL for its generous donation to the Oncology Unit.

"The health service is very grateful to the Ararat RSL team for this generous donation and for the work behind the annual Pink Day," Mr Bush said.

"We are also grateful for the support of the community, who generously donated towards the Oncology Unit on Pink Day and who support our staff and patients."



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HEALTH SERVICE BENEFITS FROM G J GARDNER HOMES COMMUNITY GROWTH PROGRAM

JODIE HOLWELL, COMMUNITY LIAISON

G J Gardner Homes Ararat has donated to East Grampians Health Service through its Community Growth Program.

General Manager of G J Gardner Homes Ararat Corey Heard presented a cheque to EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush for \$570, on behalf of clients Romaine and Cameron Lawrie.

Mr Heard said clients who build with G J Gardner Homes have the option to sign up for the Community Growth Program, nominating their preferred local club, charity, school, kindergarten or not-for-profit organisation, with G J Gardner Homes contributing 0.1% of the contract price to the nominated charity.

"G J Gardner Homes prides itself on being part of the local community and through the Community Growth Program shows its appreciation by giving back to the locals who support us," he said.

EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush thanked G J Gardner Homes and clients Romaine and Cameron Lawrie for their generosity.

"Funds donated will go towards equipment and services to benefit our patients and consumers," Mr Bush said.

"We are grateful for the support of G J Gardner Homes and their Community Growth Program. The support of our community and generosity of local businesses enables us to continue to provide quality care to our community."



Corey Heard (right) General Manager of G J Gardner Homes Ararat presents a cheque to EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush.

BLOKES IN THE BUSH

JODIE HOLWELL, COMMUNITY LIAISON

The Ararat Branch of the Victoria Police Blue Ribbon Foundation's 'Blokes in the Bush' event was a great success, reaching out to raise awareness for blokes about prostate cancer.

It was pleasing to see around 80 blokes and some partners along to share their stories, as well as those on the panel, Simon Clayfield, Leo Harrington, Steve Shannon and Roger Phillis.

The Foundation is grateful to special guest David Parkin for attending, himself a prostate cancer survivor and patron of the Male Bag Foundation.

Gay Corbett, prostate cancer specialist nurse for the Grampians Region, also provided great information to the 'blokes' who attended.



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EAST GRAMPIANS RESEARCH SHINES AT WESTERN ALLIANCE SYMPOSIUM CELINA DAY, RESEARCH ASSISTANT - DEVELOPMENT & IMPROVEMENT

Research at East Grampians Health Service continues to gain which was conducted with the Ararat community. momentum, with several staff and consumer representatives chosen to present at the Western Alliance Symposium in November.

Ballarat to hear about health research across western Victoria.

Western Alliance is a rural-focused academic health science centre accredited by the National Health and Medical Research Training and Development Manager, Claire Sladdin, presented Council and based in western Victoria. EGHS is one of its 11 the results of the Nurse Response Team roll out at EGHS. Jake member organisations. Western Alliance supports its members Romein, Allied Health Clinical Educator, spoke on expanding by providing research training, funding, mentorship and the modified sport program to other rural communities. advocacy. The annual symposium is an important opportunity Research Assistant, Celina Day, presented research on EGHS' to highlight the latest health research in our region and connect aged care staff peer support program. The team with other researchers.

On day one, consumer advocate, Glenys Andrew, shared her insights on an expert panel discussing how to write a successful business case. She relayed her experience of working with EGHS Feedback from one concurrent session Chair was that there is to successfully get the Red Cross Lifeblood bus back to Ararat, "great work coming out of Ararat". We can't help but agree! which was well received by the audience. Natalie Bransgrove (Federation University) presented her research on consumer experiences of Hospital in the Home,

Pictured Jaclyn Bishop, Jake Romein, Celina Day, Ella

Ottrey, Claire Sladdin, Nick Bush

On day two, EGHS staff spoke in concurrent sessions, one of which was chaired by Western Alliance Research Translation Coordinator and EGHS staff member, Dr Ella Ottrey. Dr Jaclyn Over two days, more than 150 [EO1] attendees gathered in Bishop, Director of Development and Improvement, spoke on the Just Cos Initiative and later presented research on attracting student researchers to regional health services.

> acknowledged their colleagues who had contributed to the research projects, and appreciated the support of EGHS Chief Executive Nick Bush who attended day two.



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GREAT RESULT FOR BLUE RIBBON FOUNDATION CUBBY HOUSE RAFFLE

An iniative by Blue Ribbon - Ararat Branch has resulted in a great pre Christmas outcome with the announcement of the Cubby House raffle winner being drawn by Mayor, Bob Sanders with Cherrie Marshall of Ararat the lucky winner.

The Cubby House idea started quite sometime ago when an acquaintence at the Bundoora Trade Training Centre in Melbourne offered a pre assembled Cubby House to Blue Ribbon in Argrat to utilise for a 'Cubby House' fundraiser.

An approach to Ararat College has seen their Year 12 VCAL students take up the challenge in recent months of assembling, painting and decorating the Cubby House, and what an outstanding job they did with the finished product.

With the drawing of the raffle on Monday, 1st December in front of the Ararat Town Hall, Ararat Branch President Dianne Radford said "The community response to the Cubby House raffle has been amazing and with the assistance of raffle ticket helpers we have raised \$3,238.85, a great result and this will go towards our new Ararat Branch project to raise \$250,000 towards a new Mammagraphy Machine for the Blue Ribbon Foundation Wing at East Grampians Health Service (Ararat Hospital). Many thanks to everyone involved and especially locally Ararat College for their efforts in assembling, Pictured: Jess Seres, Chief Medical Imaging Officer and to Deb's Diner for their exceptional raffle ticket selling which certainly Sabrina Lewicki, Kate Gleeson, Mayor Cr Bob Sanders, enhanced the final result."



Dean Pinniaer

FOOTY ROCKS WINNERS JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

Young Theo Nitschke found the lucky Brisbane Lions rock, painted and hidden by residents from 70 Lowe Street, and was awarded a Sherrin football kindly donated by the Ararat Eagles Football Netball Club.

70 Lowe Street residents painted the rocks in the footy colours of the AFL finalists and they were hidden around Ararat.

Ararat Eagles Football Netball Club's Penny Walton visited 70 Lowe Street to hand over the prize to Theo, his older brother Abel and his family.

Meg Haddow was the runner up, winning a voucher donated by Mountains of Chocolate.

Thank you to the Ararat Eagles and Mountains of Chocolate for your generosity and support of this community event.



SPECIAL REUNION CELEBRATING EXCEPTIONAL CARE AT EGHS BEC PETERS - DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL SERVICES

It was an extra-special reunion for staff at East Grampians Health Service when they welcomed back baby Junaidah and her parents, Junaid and Zareena.

Born at just 32 weeks in September, little Junaidah's safe arrival was made possible by the skill, expertise and teamwork of the EGHS team.

Advice was obtained from the Paediatric Infant Perinatal Emergency Retrieval team, who decided the best outcome for the baby was immediate birth at Ararat rather than being transferred to Melbourne.

In a heartfelt letter of thanks, Junaid and Zareena shared their deep gratitude.

"We truly feel blessed and thankful to have been cared for by such an amazing team," they said.

"EGHS is not just a hospital, it's a family that stands with you in the most precious moment of life."

Director of Clinical Services, Bec Peters, said the reunion was a wonderful reminder of the strength and capability within the organisation.

"We have a great team of highly skilled clinicians at EGHS who are well equipped to manage obstetric emergencies," she said.

"The teamwork here is outstanding, with everyone pulling together to ensure good care and good outcomes across the whole health service."

After hearing this uplifting patient story at the October Board meeting, EGHS Board members expressed their appreciation to staff across ultrasound in the Medical Imaging Department, the Inpatient Unit, as well as maternity and theatre staff, for their exceptional care and commitment.

"The reunion was not only a celebration of baby Junaidah's progress, but also a testament to the dedication, professionalism and kindness of the EGHS team—qualities that continue to make a difference to families in our community," Ms Peters said.





JILL RETIRES AFTER REMARKABLE 70 YEAR NURSING CAREER JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

remarkable 70 years of nursing.

nursing career in Australia, with the final 30 years spent at Willaura Health Care, a campus of East Grampians Health Service.

With a twin brother, Jill (christened Valma) was born in Corowa, New South Wales, with nursing in her blood, as her mother was also a nurse, and her father a wood cutter and railway man.

Some years later the family moved into dairy farming and eventually relocated to Chiltern near Beechworth. It was After nine years, due to family reasons, Jill resigned from the Spinal hard work, with Jill and her brother milking 38 cows by hand, rising at 4.30am every morning, before riding their bikes to school.

When she was 14 she attended the Wangaratta Technical School where she studied dressmaking (as well as still working on the family farm), with her sewing skills proving valuable throughout her life as she also held part time jobs sewing alongside her nursing career.

Jill left the family farm and lied about her age so she could begin work at the Wodonga Hospital where she worked in the kitchen, waitressed and worked one day per week in x ray, which was a catalyst for her future nursing career

Commencing her career at the Austin Hospital in February 1956, Jill began her nursing training and graduated in May 1957 with a Certificate of Nursing Aid Toorak Nursing Aid School/Austin Hospital. As was tradition, Jill spent three months in each ward when working at the Austin Hospital.

Jill married young shearer Brian Broderick in 1959, with her husband very supportive of her nursing career. The couple and Brian have two children a son Paul and a daughter Lucinda.

After settling into the Austin Hospital, Jill loved her time "She provided outstanding patient care, monitored vital signs, there and spent nine years in the Spinal Unit, where at times she was second in charge, specialising in dressings on the head tractions.

Jill worked closely with a top British spinal specialist and neurologist, Dr Ludwig Guttman, who specialised in the treatment and rehabilitation of paraplegia and other spinal disabilities/injuries. Dr Guttman escaped to England after fleeing Nazi Germany prior to the holocaust. He was instrumental in later years setting up the Paralympic games.

Due to this specialised training, Jill oversaw the 'turning team' which consisted of a team of nurses/orderlies, requiring careful and precise techniques to prevent further injuries, to maintain spinal alignment and complications related to pressure injuries.

Willaura Health Care nurse Jill Broderick has retired after a Jill was responsible for training orderlies to do this precise and important role, and it was also her job to support the head to In all probability, Jill's distinguished career is the longest minimise movement that could have a catastrophic effect on the

> Also during her time at the Austin Hospital, Jill met and underwent training with esteemed English doctor, Dr Cheshire, who specialised in bowel and bladder disorders and Jill became adept at identifying and managing a variety of bladder and urinary disorders.

> Jill also had the opportunity to work closely with Dr Geoffrey Edelsten for three months at his super clinic in Kingsbury, and she described him as a very intelligent man.

> Unit and supported the family income with her sewing, but still provided nursing services around the Reservoir area, with care for fractures, dressing and attending to her patients' hygiene needs.

> In 1974 Jill started working at the Reservoir Private Hospital, and over the next 16 years worked in a variety of wards including medical, surgical and midwifery wards, as well as the Central Sterilising Department. For nine years, she also worked one day a week at the Radford Nursing Home at the same time as working at RPH.

> The family fell in love with the Lake Bolac area when they called in there while driving through the area when their children were competing in sport, and after Brian was made redundant from Monash Plant Hire, the family moved to Lake Bolac in 1995.

> Friend Mary Ann Otto mentioned there was a nursing position at the Willaura Hospital, so Jill contacted the hospital and was offered a position in the hostel, and continued her nursing career in Willaura for 30 years.

> Jill is also a hardworking and well respected member of the Lake Bolac community, having long term involvement in many clubs and organisations there.

built a house in Reservoir and lived there for 35 years. Jill Manager of Willaura Health Care Liz Atkinson said that Jill was a valued employee at Willaura, who loved her job and is much respected.

> assisted with personal care and performed basic wound care. More importantly Jill promoted and encouraged patient/resident independence," she said.

> "Jill has been the heart and soul of Willaura Health Care - always willing to make herself available for shifts often at short notice.

> "She once said that when she retires and walks out the door she will be forgotten - this could not be further from the truth, Jill will never be forgotten and has left a long and lasting legacy at Willaura Health Care."

> Staff joined together at a special afternoon tea to farewell Jill at Willaura Health Care.

> > See Photos page 21

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EGHS STAFF FITNESS

KELLY RYAN - EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST

Join us every Tuesday from 5:15 PM – 6:15 PM for staff fitness! This weekly session is free and welcomes all fitness levels and is a great way to improve your health and well-being. Some weeks, we'll mix it up with modified sports, including:

- Indoor activities at the Ararat Fitness Centre (during winter months)
- Outdoor activities like Pilates (in warmer months)

Why Join?

Exercise boosts your health by strengthening muscles and bones, reducing the risk of chronic conditions, and enhancing mood and cognitive function.

We create a warm and inviting atmosphere for all staff to feel comfortable and have fun.

Stay updated on activities and last-minute changes by joining our EGHS Staff Fitness Facebook group.

CHC gym = Community Health Centre Gym Ararat Fitness Centre: 61-73 High Street, Ararat

Please click the link to join: <u>Ararat Fitness Centre: 61-73 High Street, Ararat</u>

Please click the link to join: https://www.facebook.com/groups/ 272393883425954



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NEW ARRIVALS AT EGHS - OCTOBER

JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

Alli Lewis and Zayne Hall have welcomed a baby boy, Bobby Kenneth Hall.

Baby Bobby was born on October 1 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, weighing 4317 grams.

"The staff were absolutely amazing and were great during labour and recovery," Alli Lewis and Zayne Hall.



Jiril Cherian George and Thanuja Eleena Mathew have welcomed a son, Bennet Jiril.

Baby Bennet Jiril was born on October 12, 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, weighing 2750 grams, and has a big sister at home, Annet Rosie Jiril.

"Big thanks to the EGHS team for your care and compassion. Thank you to all the doctors and midwives for your wonderful care and support," Jiril Cherian George and Thanuja Eleena Mathew.

- Piglet
on't spell it. You feel it."
- Pooh
A Nilne

Two-year-old Phoebe has a little sister to play with, on the arrival of Gianna Monica Asplin.

Baby Gianna is the daughter of Kathryn Perks and Peter Asplin and was born on October 19 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, weighing 3719 grams.

"Phoebe is very excited to bring baby sister home," Kathryn Perks and Peter Asplin.



Maddy and Brayden Scherger have welcomed their first child, a daughter, Sadie Maree Scherger.

Baby Sadie was born on October 16 2025, weighing 3609 grams.

"A big thank you to Amanda, Dr Reid and the entire midwifery team for their time in the lead up, for the birth and care afterwards of our Sadie," Maddy and Brayden Scherger.

Danielle Garley has welcomed a daughter, Stevie.

Baby Stevie was born on October 21 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, weighing 3565 grams, and has a sibling Vada.

"Can't thank the team at EGHS enough.

I felt supported and important the entire time," Danielle Garley.



Maeve Altmann has a new baby brother, with the arrival of Lewis Rodney Ernest Altmann.

Baby Lewis is the son of Lily and Cameron Altmann and was born on October 18 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, weighing 4250 grams.

"A huge thank you to the team at EGHS for helping to deliver our son safely. We apologise for having to wake you all up so early in the morning!" Lily and Cameron Altmann.





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NEW ARRIVALS AT EGHS - NOVEMBER JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON

Binita Banstola and Sandeep Kandel have welcomed a son, Bihaan Kandel.

Baby Bihaan was born on November 14 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, weighing 2893 grams.

Makayla Goodwin and Blaide Hemley have welcomed a new baby into the family, Lyndsey Hemley.

Baby Lyndsey was born on November 24 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, and has a sibling, Brooklyn.

"Thank you to all staff, it was very busy with so many babies born, but you all did amazing. Love the work. Amazing team," Makayla Goodwin and Blaide Hemley.

Nate Holden has a new baby sister to play with, on the arrival of Elodie Lyn Holden.

Baby Elodie is the daughter of Olivia Cook and Brenton Holden and was born on November 26 2025 at East Grampians Health Service, weighing 4420 grams.

"Can't thank the doctor enough for safely delivering our daughter. Thank you to the midwives and nurses for being so caring and helpful," Olivia Cook and Brenton Holden.







WORLD DIABETES DAY 2025

EGHS celebrated World Diabetes Day on 14 November to raise awareness, support each other, and inspire positive change for Aussies living with diabetes.

Remember simple daily choices can make a difference.

Diabetes Australia is celebrating \$40 million invested in research, the launch of 1800PREVENT (type 2 diabetes), record-breaking support for Diabuddies, and new partnerships with GroHealth and Youfoodz.

Pictured right are valued EGHS Diabetes Educators Breeanne Fratin and Julie Lang



GRAMPIANS HEALTH LIBRARY NEWS JODIE HOLWELL - COMMUNITY LIAISON



Grampians Health Library acknowledges International Men's Day, which was held Wednesday 19th November 2025.

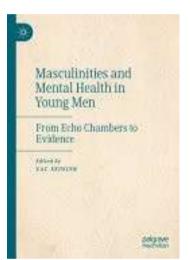
This year's theme is <u>Supporting Men and Boys</u>. You can also visit the <u>Australian Men's Health Forum</u> for more information. <u>Grampians Health Library</u> provides access to evidence based articles, books and eBooks focused on men's health. Here are three recent articles about men's health issues.

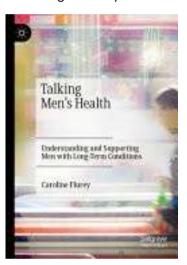
Testosterone and men's health: An in-depth exploration of their relationship. Yassin, A., et al. (2025). UroPrecision, 3(1): 36-46

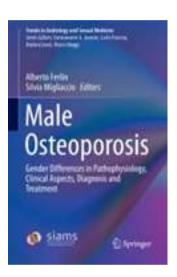
<u>Understanding the lifestyle risk profile of men and their engagement with preventative care: A cross-sectional survey</u>. Mursa, R., et al. (2025). Journal of Advanced Nursing, 81(5): 2418-2425

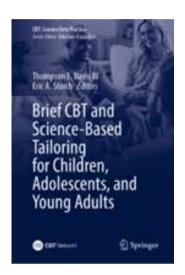
<u>Insights #3 - Chapter 3: The two-way relationship between socio-economic status and health conditions for Australian men.</u> Woldegiorgis, M., et al. (2025). Ten to Men: The Australian Longitudinal Study on Male Health: Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Here are four eBooks: Click on the cover to go directly to the eBook.









THANKFUL THURSDAY

"I am truly thankful for the staff who work at GVC and Lowe St. Their willingness to ask questions regarding residents in their care helps identify actual/potential deterioration, which then can be addressed before the concern becomes more severe. Their recognising and thus responding to clinical deterioration in a prompt manner has helped reduce resident hospital admissions to both IPU and UCC. Also, a special thanks to HITH staff for their support in providing care in their home environment rather than in a hospital setting."

DEBORAH BENNETT
NURSEPRACTITIONER/EDUCATOR
EDUCATION

PARKLAND PURSUITS

MICHELLE MASLEN, PAM WHEELER AND JOSIE HICKEY - LIFESTYLE COORDINATORS

It's hard to believe that our year is almost over. With all the various celebrations in front of us we are braced for a very busy time and before we know it, we will be cheering in the New Year.

November flew by too quickly; we had a great time enjoying Halloween with the Willaura Primary School Students who popped up to visit dressed in their fantastic costumes for a trick or treat. The residents celebrated the Melbourne Cup with a special lunch and Oaks Day with a beautiful High Tea. Scones made by none other than our residents Frank, Kath and Lorraine. Everyone got into the spirit with fascinators, costumes and of course a sweep. We were entertained by Michael, Keith and Carol who visit from Hamilton on a regular basis. The residents really enjoy having sing-along and a chat with them. And we would like to thank Lyn Russell for coming out and providing us with a lovely Remembrance Day Service.

Our regular Church services continue, and we are all organised for 2026. This month our outings have included lunch at the Halls Gap Pub, a drive to Warrak to see the Minions, afternoon tea in Lake Bolac and a trip to the Little Brick House in Dunkeld just to name a few. Our men have been visiting local farms with some morning tea to share and have really enjoyed being able to have a look around. We thank them for having us. We love popping into the Dove Cafe to catch up with the locals and look forward to the visits from the local school and kindergarten kids.

Our regular activities such as exercise classes, art and craft, various versions of bingo, fun active games and trivia or quiz games continue to weave their way around our busy social schedules.

Kind Regards The Willaura Leisure and Lifestyle Team

















Pictured is Frank



Pictured is John with the Willaura Primary School Students



Pictured are Frank and Lorraine



Pictured are Frank, Derick and Garry



Pictured are Brian and Kathy





PERIOPERATIVE NURSES WEEK 2025



Pictured are Marnie Skiller, Nicole Carlyle and Heather O'Brien



Pictured are Carlia Byron and Naomi Anderson



Pictured are Kathryn Pevitt and Tracey Hunt



Pictured is Dale Johnston





Pictured is Tim Baker



Pictured is Naomi Anderson



Pictured is Neen Neen Wai Ju, Nursing Student



Pictured are Kirsty Millson and Karen James

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East Grampians Health Service

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