

# ~ MRCA Michelago Magpie 22 ~

5 December 2023



**BREAKING NEWS 5/12:** Cr Higgins writes: 'Steve Whan's office gave me a direct contact in Transport for NSW. I have spoken to them and we anticipate getting the green light the week of 12 December. While there will be legal documents to sign, this will hopefully be sufficient for Council to start the preparations to commence construction. Thanks everyone for writing. It is now considered a priority.'

*In this issue: Bridge campaign 1-3. Remembrance Day 4-5. Steve Whan. Council Corner 6. End of local govt? 7-8. Pre-school 8. Snr Lunch Group, Poets, Creek weeds, Cricket 9. Station heritage report & cleanup 10-11. Xmas trees, Seed Savers 12. Thai massage, Council fees 13. Donations, 'The night before Christmas – the real version' 14-15. Hall, Orange hawkweed 16-17. Roads 17-18. 'Silence' 20. Remembrance Day Address 21-22. Tinderry walk 22-23. Gingerbread houses & craft 23-24. MRCA & Magpie info 26. Events calendar 27.*

Services: Sewing 18; Bricklayer 14; Yoga 19; Hall bookings 24; Yless4U 25, Thai massage 13.



## The campaign continues – where's the new bridge?



You're right. It's not there. It should now be linking the c. 20 metres between the gravel track on the right (coming from Micalago Rd) to the dirt track on the left, on the other side of the creek (Ryrie St). The old railway bridge gives a geographical reference.

Emily and Rob Green's children, below, are growing up waiting for the safe crossing.



L: March 2020  
R: November 2023

**What can you do?**  
See next page.





Write to the NSW Minister for Transport, Jo Haylen. Ask her to please cut the red tape and tell the contractor, UGL, to approve the project: <https://www.nsw.gov.au/.../ministers/minister-for-transport>

Voters, make your voices heard! Keep up the pressure.



The funds for the bridge were approved in 2020. Council is all for the project. The holdup is with UGL, which is the contractor to look after country NSW railways. An outline of the situation is in *Magpie20* – read it on [www.michelagoregion.org.au](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au)

Images: Creative Commons



## Councillor Tanya Higgins says ...

### Ryrie St—Micalago Road Bridge

Despite Council being assured that approval to construct the bridge connecting Ryrie St with Micalago Road would be received in “early November”, instead Council was asked to provide UGL with further material and then were told it “may take several months more”.

I’m sorry, but it’s a hard “No” to that from me.

Given that the funding was approved in 2020, the application to UGL was made 20 months ago, and the bridge components have already been constructed, to still be waiting on a ridiculous administration process is not good enough.

I immediately got in contact with Steve Whan’s office, and I have been told informally that the bridge application has now been classified as ‘priority’.

At last Thursday’s Council meeting, I proposed that Council now write to all relevant Ministers including Steve Whan, Member for Monaro, the Hon Jo Haylen Minister for Transport, the Hon Ron Hoenig Minister for Local Government, the Hon Jenny Atchison Minister for Regional Transport and Roads seeking urgent intervention. This was passed with support from 7 Councillors.

*[I urge all Michelago residents to write to these Ministers as well as the Hon Tara Moriarty, Minister for Regional NSW, adding your voices to the appeal for some common sense and to cut through inefficient red tape! [Google her, click ‘Contact the Minister’, fill in the form, send. –Ed]*

Contact me on 0420 970 544 or [tanya.higgins@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tanya.higgins@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au) if you have any further ideas.



*L: Bridge site from end of Ryrie St.*

*R: Bridge site from the bit of gravel road coming off Micalago Rd.*



## MRCA's Bridge Campaign continues

*It's not this hard →*



MRCA sent the following letter to the NSW Transport Minister, Jo Heylen, this week. It was also published on Facebook's Michelago Notice Board.

Dear Minister

I write to beg your assistance in moving an absurd blockage in the installation of the Michelago Bridge.

Funding for the bridge, which will re-connect the village of Michelago, was approved in 2020. We understand that it is currently being held up by UGL, Transport for NSW's manager of rail network assets.

The Michelago Bridge is an essential connector for the two main streets of Michelago – Ryrie St and Micalago Road. Without the bridge, school children who could otherwise ride their bicycles to school have to be driven onto and off the Monaro highway in dangerous traffic. The Michelago RFS has to wait for its Micalago Road residents to navigate the Monaro Highway entry and exit before it can deploy a firefighting team. Further delay in building the bridge could easily result in tragedy.

We understand that the bridge is being built off-site and is well progressed. UGL/TfNSW is involved because the bridge requires acquisition by Snowy Monaro Regional Council of a small portion of land within the disused rail corridor. This is not a complex matter, but administrative blockages continue to delay installation of the bridge.

The Michelago and Region Community Association (MRCA) and no doubt SMRC, which receives regular complaints about the lack of progress on the bridge, would be hugely grateful if you could investigate, and expedite the required approvals.

The MRCA and I would be pleased to show you the problem on the ground, and request that you visit Michelago as soon as possible for this purpose.

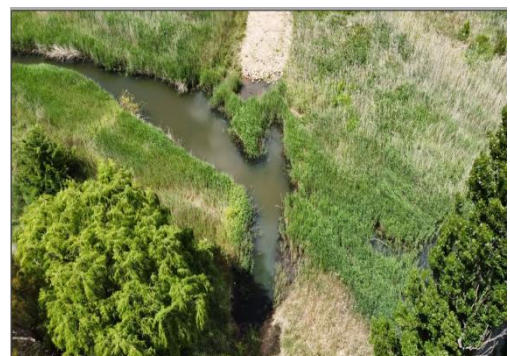
Best wishes

Di Fett

President, Michelago Region Community Association



*The white area is the gravel section coming from Micalago Rd and pointing across the creek to Ryrie St.*







On a windy and very warm morning, with presenters and attendees seeking the shade, the simple and moving Remembrance Day ceremony again graced the Michelago Railway Station.

After the welcome and the Acknowledgement of Country by MC Werner Lausberg, Sophie Higgins gave an expressive reading of the traditional *In Flanders Fields* and Leanne Thurling read her new, poignant poem, *Silence* (p20). Leanne P. gave the Commemorative Address (p21-22), based on her grandmother's nursing service in WWI.

There were floral tributes from individuals and the Council, the Last Post, the minute's silence, the Rouse, the National Anthem ... and John Williamson's *Give me a home among the gum trees*.



R: Sophie Higgins read '*In Flanders Fields*'.



R: Werner and Gisela Lausberg, relatively new Michelago residents, were essential helpers.







***Above: Jo Gaha wore Remembrance Day poppy colours; Leanne Thurling read her poem, 'Silence'.***

***Below L: Louise and Clare look at the flowers.***



**The MRCA organised the ceremony at relatively short notice and gives grateful thanks to all helpers.**





## Steve Whan meets Michelago



Steve Whan, Member for Monaro, and Minister for Skills, TAFE and Tertiary Education, has been visiting regional centres.

He and his electoral office administrator, Laura, were at the Michelago General Store 8 November to meet and consult with Michelago residents.

The visit had been advertised on Facebook's Michelago Notice Board.

MRCA Secretary Leanne updated him on the Ryrie St-Micalago Rd Bridge lack of progress and gave him a copy of *Magpie20*, which prominently features the issue.



He said most people who came to see him were mainly concerned about roads.



## Council Corner – Cr Tanya Higgins' November report

### Local Government NSW conference

I was part of the voting delegation at the LGNSW conference 12-14 November.

LGNSW is the association that represents Councils in NSW (and therefore all communities) and lobbies State and Federal governments on our behalf.

The annual conference sets out the priorities and lobbying agenda for the next 12 months.

Motions we supported include that LGNSW lobby the State government:

- To **stop shifting more responsibilities and costs onto local government** without a fiscal impact assessment;
- To **increase funding** to the Rural Fire Service;
- To **change legislation** which prevents councils charging rates to forestry and other unrateable land;
- To advocate for **Councils to have more autonomy on Minimum Lot Sizes** in rural NSW and allow rural councils more planning autonomy; and
- To join with the Federal and local governments in addressing the **housing crisis**.

In addition, we heard from the Minister for Local Government that he has referred **the issue of imposing the 'Red Fleet' onto local government asset registers** to a bipartisan Parliamentary Accounts Inquiry, and that there will be a separate investigation into LG funding overall. The Minister has been

impressed and inspired by what rural councils have been achieving despite a low rate base. However, he acknowledged that this is not sustainable.



*L: 19 November. Cr Higgins, Mick Pollard and Uncle JD at Cooma Rotary markets.*



## Is State government killing local government?

The letter below (published in the *Monaro Post*, 15.11.23) is by Phil Daley of Berridale, who had a long career in local government in NSW and has consented to its publication here.

It is highly relevant to Cr Higgins' report (above) on the recent LGNSW conference.

### IS THE END NIGH?

**It appears that the New South Wales State Government might have finally almost removed one tier of government, Local Government, by sending local governments financially to the wall.**

Over the years, it has often been suggested that with three tiers of government, we are over-governed.

If you were the tier government that had the ultimate control of local government, due to it having no constitutional recognition, you would certainly not volunteer to be the level of government to go into oblivion. So, without appearing to be the "bad guys" how do you achieve your aspirations?

**You start by** changing the rules of engagement (the new Local Government Act 1993 is a good place to start) and you continually change the rules over a long period of time so it does not make you look like the baddie. You give Councils little financial sweeteners along the way to get the community used to and reliant upon the additional services offered (again makes you look like the good guy) and then slowly lessen the funding or change the engagement rules so the local council has to cover the costs because the community has grown used to the service and expects it to continue.

**After you have had some success** in making Councils inefficient, you get financial consultants to report on how financially challenged the Councils are and certify them not fit for purpose.

**Then you merge the said Councils** under the guise of making them more efficient. You give them grant funding to expedite the merger, of course, and then put in place unrealistic reporting requirements. Of course the grants are insufficient to achieve what is expected and you even give them advice as to what Councils' staff structure and remuneration should be while at the same time installing yet another level of management.

All the time, **you place more onerous requirements** through changes of legislation, stricter reporting requirements, top-heavy planning and development regulations that make the Councils look like the baddies when all that is happening is that they are enforcing the State Government rules and regulations.

**You also decide to "fix" an unbroken bushfire volunteer organisation** by removing the function from local government and centralising the operation, again at great financial cost, making it cumbersome and then charge the Councils an increased emergency services levy, again over time so it makes you look like the goodies, and you also require Councils to be responsible for the fire-fighting fleet.

You will then probably increase the numbers and functions of the SES due to some flooding that was probably caused initially by poor planning and again attribute those costs against the Emergency Services Levy that the Councils' ratepayers have to bear.

Even though you have an Office of Local Government and a Department of Planning, **it is more about enforcing the government's requirements than assisting Councils to become more efficient.** The stranglehold those departments have over Councils is indecent.

**But let's not allow the Feds to get off scot free.** The Federal government asserts correctly that local government is a state government function because that is what our constitution states. Both of the major parties have had the opportunity over time to allow local government to have constitutional recognition through allowing a change to the constitution by way of a referendum, but no, they have let the sleeping dog lie, much to the detriment of their constituents.

How is it that the very organisation that **sets the rules for aged care** and also provides some funding is happy for local government to dig itself into a deeper financial mire when they have the means to ensure that the sector is fully supported financially and is morally viable? I am not suggesting for one moment that the Snowy Monaro Regional Council is squeaky clean from a management viewpoint as there are huge holes in its management structure and the way services are delivered that could be dramatically improved.

**It is time to either fund local government adequately** and to grant it constitutional recognition to enable sound management from both financial and service delivery aspects **or** replace it with a State government department that won't have a hope in hell of delivering the on-ground services we expect from our local Council staff.

**So**, State and Federal governments, either put local government out of its misery and take over all of its functions or fund the operations adequately to achieve what our community expects of its grassroots service delivery sector.

Phil Daley

*[My red emphases added –Ed]*

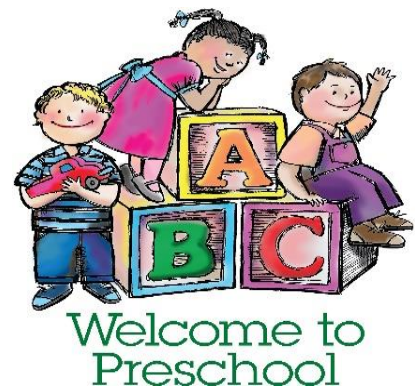
Berridale



**And now ... some good news ...**  
**Monaro Mobile Pre-school**

Good news! The Monaro mobile pre-school is scheduled to re-open in Term 1 2024.

From the Facebook page post 17 November: 'The Monaro Mobile Pre-School is a long-standing service which delivers quality outreach preschool programs for 3-6 year olds across the Monaro, including in Jindabyne, Berridale, and Michelago. The Monaro Mobile Preschool is now scheduled to re-open for Term 1 of 2024.'



It further states that the management is currently recruiting staff. *(Image from MM Pre-school Facebook)*

The Hall Committee looks forward to this community service using the Memorial Hall again.

**More Hall improvements** – see also p10.



The new, heavy acoustic curtains are going up. Allan is installing battens for securing the tracks, then hanging the curtains. *Photo: Allan Lehepuu*

The dishwasher still needs cabinetry and electrical work, then will be ready for use.







## Senior Lunch Group – 1pm, first Monday of the month, at the shop

The big roll-up on 6 November coincided with the happy occasion of Janet Kelly's birthday ☺



*R: The youngest Senior Person, Janet and John's grandson, Reggie Bingley.*



## Michelago Poets



**5 November.** With interesting poems and good food, the final meeting for the year was most enjoyable.

Three original works on the Christmas theme were Leanne Thurling's inventive *The night before Christmas – the real version* (p14–15), as well as Pud's and Leanne P's. Shay had another of her hilarious poems about farm life and Eddy one of his thoughtful, lyrical compositions. LP read AA Milne's *King John's Christmas*, new to some and lots of fun.



## Weed treatment along Michelago Creek

The blokes treating the blackberry, box elder and crack willow along selected parts of Michelago Creek had to stage their work because of wet, then windy, weather, but have now completed the job.

*R: Here they are, pushing through dense growth and negotiating wombat and rabbit holes.*



## Michelago Cricket Club

*Info from Michelago Captain David Hanns*

Michelago plays in B Grade in the Sunday social cricket competition. After Round 4, it was in fourth position on the ladder for three wins and only one loss. Remaining matches at Michelago will be 10 December and 4 February. Matches start 12.30pm. Details: ACT Sunday Social Cricket site.

Nov 26, 4<sup>th</sup> round match: Michelago batted 40 overs, all out for 181 and bowled the opposition out for 53.





## Michelago Railway Station: 'Do as much as necessary, but as little as possible'

### Heritage NSW & UGL grants

### Heritage consultant's inspection & report

Cleanup 21 November

*Kerry Rooney (this page's report)*

In *Magpie 19* we told you about the NSW government's \$17,000 heritage grant for the Michelago Railway Station. As advised in *Magpie 20*, UGL Regional Linx generously agreed to match that offer, giving us a potential kitty of \$34,000 to spruce up the station's interiors, its signal box and its sign. However, in deference to the railway station's importance as a heritage listed precinct, both the government and UGL asked us to get advice from an expert before starting work.

Pip Giovanelli is a heritage and conservation specialist engaged as a heritage adviser by our local council, Snowy Monaro. On 21 November Pip spent hours inspecting the station and subsequently provided a very clear, detailed report – *Michelago Railway Station Conservation scope of work and Heritage Impact Statement*.



*Kerry, Di, Pip, UGL's Tim*

The report aligns with the conservation principle espoused by Pip on the day: always do as much as necessary, but only as little as possible. Wherever original materials remain unpainted they should never be painted. Where repairs are needed due to rotting, water, vandals or termites, replace damaged materials with like-materials. In certain instances, it is best to get specialist conservationists to provide advice or do the work.

Pip advised that internal walls should all be given a thorough wash with sugar soap but only those with water damage should be plastered and painted. In regard to the floor boards, very minimal sanding should take place before recoating, otherwise there is a risk the tongue-in-groove connections will break.

The signals box, the Michelago sign and adjacent fencing seemed to especially interest Pip, who gave very specific advice about their repairs – eg replacing original rusted guttering with new OGEE guttering, and ensuring rust is fully removed from the letters on the sign.

We have provided copies of the report to Heritage NSW and UGL. We expect they will ask us to revise our original scope of work and get new quotes.

We gratefully acknowledge Snowy Monaro Regional Council for the services of their heritage consultant.

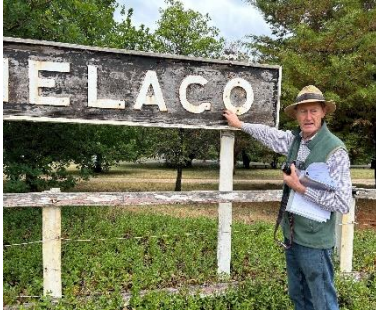
If anyone would like to read the full report, please contact Kerry via [kerryrooney@gmail.com](mailto:kerryrooney@gmail.com)



## cont. Heritage consultant's inspection

Accompanying Pip Giovanelli and MRCA representatives was Tim Ritchie, Manager of Southern Regional Services in Ventia, a partner company of UGL. Tim's job is to look after all the building assets in the country rail network in the southern half of NSW. Hence, he is the contact for the Michelago railway station buildings. (Note: he has nothing to do with The Bridge.)

Pip's meticulous inspection took nearly five hours. The MRCA representatives deeply appreciated his knowledge, common sense and clear, detailed explanations.



*L: Electrician Tony De Luca explained the pros and cons of a proposed new power point location.*

*R: The depression in the original concrete step in the Booking Office doorway shows the effect of years of feet.*



## Cleanup 21 November

Six people answered the call for a cleanup and pruning session. Tony DeSalis and Sally Hughes did lots of dusting, wiping and de-cobwebbing. Tony De Luca and Somsri Khaochong cleaned out a thick layer of dead leaves from the men's urinal and hosed it clean. Di and Leanne did other spots when not following Pip, Tim and Kerry's heritage inspection and explanations.







## Christmas trees



9 December, Hall carpark, from

9am. Locally sourced trees will be sold as an **Anembo Fire Brigade fundraiser** for \$60 each, which compares favourably with Canberra prices.

Anembo doesn't have the resources of other rural fire brigades to help with fundraising, so this is a good opportunity for locals to support these fireies who are always there to work alongside the region's other brigades.

*R: Children and decorations not supplied. This photo is of a St Pat's Christmas celebration, 2022.*



## Seed Savers

26 November. Many types and stages of seedlings for plants edible and decorative were shared and swapped at the last meeting of the year. Strawberries and blackberry jam were shared products.



Jenny and Allen's productive garden, both outside and in the greenhouse, shows that just about any container can be adapted for garden use.



*L: The herb tower* started as a metal-frame shelving unit. Allan removed the shelves, reinforced the frame with metal angle, lined it with old pieces of metal cladding and painted it. He then attached it to a concrete pad, filled it with garden soil and cut triangular holes all around the metal cladding. Jenny has inserted various herbs that grow out through those holes.

*R: Gary admired the healthy tomatoes.*



The next Seed Savers gathering will be early-ish next year, tba. If you have no seeds, seedlings, cuttings or produce to share, no problem. Come anyway. Just join in the garden talk. All welcome.





## Thai massage – coming soon to the Michelago Railway Station



Somsri Khaochong will soon be offering her excellent massage skills to the Michelago community.

Somsri works regularly at Sawasdi Thai Massage near Bunnings in Tuggeranong.

Days, times and donation amounts for the station venue will be advertised within a couple of weeks on Facebook and in the next *Magpie*. Eftpos is being organised.

Bookings via Tony De Luca's phone: 0427 308 239. If that's out of range, call or leave a message on 02 62308 239.



## Council proposing new planning fees and charges

**Media Release Friday 24 November 2023**

*Clancy Noakes, Communications Officer*

Following a resolution at the November Ordinary Council Meeting, prospective fees and charges for proponent-initiated planning proposals are open for community feedback until Friday 15 December 2023.

An independent financial sustainability review (FSR) of Council was completed in October 2022, with a recommendation that Council complete a review of fees and charges across the organisation.

The FSR revealed that Council is not recovering the costs of providing some services through the fees and charges collected when these services are provided. This proposal seeks to cover the costs associated with proponent-initiated planning proposals.

Council performed a full review and regional benchmarking process into what is being proposed here, with an aim to ensure that the proposal is fair and equitable.

Visit [www.yoursaysnowymonaro.com.au/proponent-initiated-planning-fee-proposal](http://www.yoursaysnowymonaro.com.au/proponent-initiated-planning-fee-proposal) to have your say on the proposed fees and charges for proponent-initiated planning proposals today.

**Contact us with any questions, concerns, or for further information.**



**Email [council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au) or call 1300 345 345.**



## Big Council mower

*R: Ryrie St, 6 November. The extendible arm on this big mower works on sloping verges that smaller mowers can't handle and in areas not covered by the contractor's agreement with Council.*





## Donations – thank you!

Generous community support of the MRCA-maintained Michelago Railway Station and the MRCA's *Michelago Magpie* was apparent in the recently cleared two donation boxes at the shop.

The *Magpie* box yielded \$148.25 and the Railway Station box \$78.75.

The asking price for a printed *Magpie* is \$2, which goes to support the Railway Station.

Kwik Kopy's *Magpie* printing costs are still covered by the remnant BCRRF fund, good for a few more issues. After that's finished, the MRCA will need to look at home printing just a few copies and focusing mainly on email delivery.



## Bricks or rocks – call Wayne at Solid AF Bricklaying



## The Night before Christmas (the real version)

Leanne Thurling

With Christmas Eve approaching and Santa in a lather

The elves had called a stop-work strike, no toys on shelves to gather.

They demanded better pay, an extra candy cane at least

And better work conditions with a four-day working week.

Well, Santa huffed and blustered, he really was quite mean

No way would he give lazy elves the things they said they'd need

He said that he would 'sack the lot', make all the toys himself

He didn't need the help of all those useless bloody elves.

The union boss of elves was Bob, who was very elf-assured.

He held firm along the picket line, he shoulders thick and broad,

A knowing smile upon his face, when to the workshop Santa went

And Nev, the sneaky elf, to spy on Santa Claus was sent

Well, Santa realised that all the elves had worked so hard

So maybe kids across the world would be happy with a card!

He'd only tallied quotas, the rest was not his job

And it irked him when he realised he'd have to talk with Bob!

As tensions at the North Pole cooled, maybe it would be all good

When a crying Mrs Claus rushed in – she'd burnt the Christmas pud –





Oh, what else can happen on this night before the big event?  
 Then the reindeer started playing up with mischievous intent  
 Well, the elves worked long and hard to make the toys and load the sleigh  
 And hopefully get a grumpy Santa off and on his way.  
 With Santa in the driver's seat, the wind was blowing snow  
 The reindeer launched up skyward with a Ho Ho Bloody Ho  
 As Santa flew around the world in record time this night  
 His suit was chafing everywhere, his pants had gotten tight  
 Mrs Claus has shrunk my Christmas suit, thought Santa with Despair  
 He'd have to dodge the chimney thing, and enter with more care  
 'Cause people didn't build the standard chimneys any more  
 With air conditioning ducts located underneath the floor  
 And all the years of milk and biscuits left upon the tables  
 Had left him diabetic and his belly far from stable.  
 Oh, how he wished that things were still the same as days of old  
 When naughty kids were left, instead of toys, a lump of coal  
 That would reduce the workload – he would give it greater thought  
 But Mrs Claus would veto, and it would all amount to nought  
 So he pushed and squeezed and struggled to bring toys to girls and boys  
 And the magic dust from EBay didn't work when it was deployed.  
 The final toy delivered, Santa hobbled to the sleigh  
 The reindeer full on carrots, they were off and on their way  
 Now home at last, this strangling suit was thrown upon the floor  
 He'd burn the bloody thing so he couldn't wear it any more.  
 Now lounging in his underpants he felt a little cheer  
 With cricket on the telly and a frosty can of beer!  
 Now something troubled Santa as he lay upon the lounge ...  
 The Grinch would steal the presents, through the chimneys up and down  
 Now Santa and Grinch were mates; they'd shared a brew or two  
 But the hard work Santa did this night, old Grinchy would undo  
 This nefarious alliance, unbeknownst to Mrs Claus  
 She'd have a cat if she found out – the trouble it would cause ...  
 He thought how he could sabotage the Grinch's plans this night  
 Then a thought had popped into his head with how to make it right.  
 He'd call the Grinch to meet him at the local for a drink  
 And he'd keep him there by shouting, given Grinchy was a stinger  
 He'd make sure the Grinch was hobbled, for his mischief yet to come  
 And hopefully he'd be sleeping till the rising of the sun.  
 Well, his plan had worked as children opened presents Christmas morn  
 And the Grinch was very grinchy as he nursed his head so sore  
 And Santa smiled unto himself, one up he'd gotten now  
 But Grinchy would be livid, he'd get even for this foul.  
 So, the war began between these two on every Christmas Eve  
 As Grinch and Santa battled for the gong ... can you believe?





## Memorial Hall

New, Council-initiated, OHS-compliant steps, following NSW Govt regs. *L to R: back door hung on wrong side; door now hung on right side (thanks, Allan); steps to correctly hung kitchen door.*



### Hall doings update (See also p8)

*Jenny Wholohan, Secretary, Hall Committee*

- Sunday afternoon 3 December was the Gingerbread House decorating session. There were also some other craft activities for children who weren't doing gingerbread. All were welcome.
- Works are afoot to put up new timber supports that will be strong enough to hang the wonderful acoustic curtains (they are fully lined wool fabric in royal blue – very smart).
- The new dishwasher is installed and the surrounding cabinetry is being finished to complete the job.
- The previous problem with one of the rear exits has been fixed with the door now hinged on the opposite side to allow unobstructed movement down the newly-installed stairs.
- After our unsuccessful bid for grant money to complete the solar project with battery storage, an application has been submitted for a different grant. It's now at the fingers-crossed stage.
- We understand the Monaro Mobile Pre-school will be restarting at the hall in the new year. Further details will be noted as they come to hand.
- Thanks to Allan Lehepuu for mowing the grass at the hall. The Committee is liaising with Council to see if there is any likelihood of any funding to have the mowing done on a regular basis but, at the moment, we rely on willing volunteers (when available).
- The next scheduled Committee meeting will be in February 2024, but necessary work will continue in the background.



## Orange Hawkweed (*Pilosella aurantiaca*)

Council's 1 November email, 'Weed of the Week', featured this 'emerging and potentially devastating threat to the Snowy Monaro'.

Orange hawkweed is prohibited matter in NSW and is listed on the Australian National Environmental Weed Alert List. As a prohibited matter species it cannot be kept, bred, propagated, traded, moved or dealt with in any way. A person who becomes aware of, or suspects the presence of orange hawkweed, must immediately notify Council or the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

**Orange hawkweed has distinctive bright orange flowers with yellow centres and square-edge petals. Plants can flower from as early as November to as late as April, with peak flowering occurring around Christmas. Without the flowers, they're hard to find.**



**Photo:** E. Sakkar. [www.environment.nsw.gov.au](http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au) [The site also has an engaging video of a dog trained to detect the plant. –Ed]



## Why is orange hawkweed a problem?

It is highly invasive and grows in thick clusters of up to 3,800 plants per square metre, so is a serious weed in temperate and subalpine areas of the world. If allowed to establish in the Snowy Monaro and Kosciuszko National Park, the impact would be devastating to both the environment and local agriculture.

Orange hawkweed spreads quickly and:

- Damages conservation lands
- Reduces agricultural productivity
- Forms dense mats and outcompetes other species
- Reduces the number of native plants
- Reduces habitat for native animals
- The plants spread via runners and seeds, enabling rapid population growth

What do you have to do if you detect orange hawkweed?

Do not attempt to destroy or control orange hawkweed on your own. If you find, or suspect you have found orange hawkweed on your property, in public, or anywhere else in our region – call Council on 1300 345 345 or the NSW Biosecurity Helpline on 1800 680 244 immediately.

We will provide prompt and thorough weed identification and control at no cost to the landowner where orange hawkweed is suspected or confirmed.

Call 1300 345 345 or email [council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au)

*[This article is a précis of that received from Council. –Ed]*



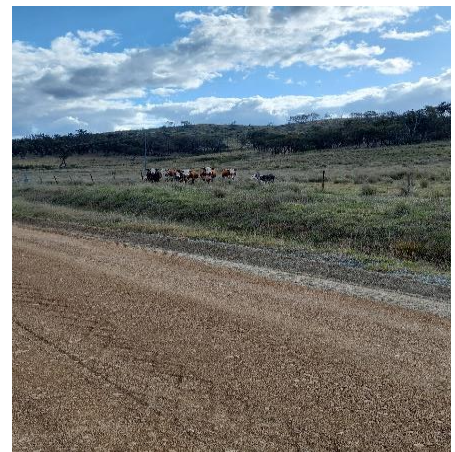
## Burra Road upgrade



6 November. Burra Rd had its first upgrade in 12 months.

*R: Surprised cows.*

*Photos: K. Rooney*



## Snowy Monaro roads

SMRC media release 17 Nov.

With fine weather forecast this spring in the Snowy Monaro, Council's roads team are getting ready to get to work on our region's roadways. Substantial resealing projects are set to commence across the region this November.

Council works year-round across a region of 15,162 km<sup>2</sup> to maintain, repair and upgrade the over 2600 kilometres of road under our care.

We are investing more time, money and resourcing than ever before into our road network, and are committed to making every journey in our region as safe, quick and enjoyable as possible.

Resealing works scheduled to commence in November 2023, weather permitting:

Locality	Road	Section	Total length of work
Delegate	Delegate Road	As identified	5.6km
Middlingbank	Middlingbank Road	Sandy Creek to Wullwye Creek	3.8km
Jindabyne	The Snowy River Way	Old Settlers Road to Barry Way	4.1km
Adaminaby	Bobeyan Road	Snowy Mountains Highway to end of seal	5.75km
Michelago	Tinderry Road	Burra Road to Coffeys Road	3.1km

When driving in a roadwork area, drivers are reminded to please be mindful of workers, moving equipment, and potential hazards on the roadway. Always obey the posted roadwork speed limit and drive to the conditions.

Contact us at [council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au) or 1300 345 345 for more information.

## JENNY'S REPAIRS & ALTERATIONS SERVICE



**\*\* very reasonable rates \*\***



Anything from sewing on buttons, altering hems, resizing, repurposing, to adjusting a formal garment. Also mending, patching or altering such household items as curtains, bedding linen, cushion covers, etc.

You may not need to throw out that favourite piece you love to wear, or maybe there's something you've just bought that doesn't really fit.

*Save yourself \$\$ by keeping items useful for longer and help to minimise waste*

Contact Jenny: Ph. 0400 484 485 Email: [jenny258@bigpond.com](mailto:jenny258@bigpond.com)





# Breathe, Move, Relax:

## Thursday 6.30pm at Michelago Hall \$20



**Yoga is for everyone, no matter your body type!**

**Slow, mindful movement for improved strength, flexibility, mobility and relaxation. All shapes offered can be modified to suit whatever is most beneficial for your body.**

**Yoga can help to decrease stress and improve your overall mental health & wellbeing, help with managing back pain, assist in the recovery from injuries or just generally improve your overall strength, mobility and balance.**

**Please BYO mat, blanket & cushion.**

**Please message or call Belinda on 0411 043 027 to book in (bookings preferred just in case the class is cancelled for any reason) or for any additional information.**

**Private sessions are also available if you're not sure about coming along to a class or if you have something specific you'd like to work on.**



## Silence

A breeze across the poppy fields  
The sounds of battle quiet  
The ghosts of soldiers never leave  
Mates forever by their side  
In foreign lands they gave their lives  
Their families left to grieve  
We gather now to pay respect  
And think of those now free  
Stand still and straight this armistice  
In silence at this hour  
Remember those who gave their lives  
For the peace we live with now.

*Leanne Thurling*







## Remembrance Day Address 2023

Leanne Pattison

She was the only daughter of an immigrant Irish family. Her name was Florence Maud Mary Swan and she was 17 when she pinned up her long red hair, defied her family, and in 1912 went to do nurse training at the Royal Melbourne Hospital.

She didn't like her name, especially when it was shortened to 'Flo'. She said it made her sound like a river. For her new life, she gave herself a new name, one you couldn't mess with – Anne. It was clear and straightforward, as was she.

She graduated in time for World War I, joined the Army after her fiancé was killed and, with other Australian nurses, sailed to Salonica, in Greece, to one of the Scottish Women's Hospitals for Foreign Services. This was where many of the Gallipoli wounded were sent.

Most of us have family or friend links to those cataclysms called the two Great Wars, or to other wars since. We have family stories. Some are just story-shadows from the names on a cenotaph, the shadows fading more and more after two or three generations.

Some stories don't want to be remembered. Some we hold close to us, in remembrance. This story is one of mine.

Anne was my grandmother. She sometimes told the young me about Salonica. About the wounded, she told me only that they were 'brave boys'.

One soldier made her a present from a piece of rope, a tiny dog with frayed, bushy tail, knots for paws, and button eyes, which she gave to me so, so much later.

It was a link with heaven knows what in the past for her, and, for me, a link with her and, through her, an experience I could only imagine. A remembrance.

Maybe she even nursed the young man who would have been her future brother-in-law, my great-uncle Byron Pattison, who, shot in the leg at Gallipoli, died of gangrene. *At right, 1914*

These young women, these nurses, were not only courageous. They were resilient, welcoming humour in hard times.

A favourite story of Sister Swan was of the unpopular Matron going into the female officers' tent dunny, sitting down to do the necessary, and a strong wind completely ripping away the tent, to the utter delight of all witnesses.



*Above: c.1915*



As an old woman, she'd tell the story, giggle, light a cigarette, and stare through the smoke into the past. I wish I knew more about what she remembered. I wish I'd been old enough to know the importance of family memories.

Years after she came home from that testing place in war, and after five of her seven children had enlisted for World War II, she dreamt that she was standing on a troop ship and watching soldiers march along the wharf to another ship.

One of them, her son Byron (whom we later found had been captured and beheaded on the island of Ambon), looked up, smiled and waved goodbye.

She woke her husband and said 'By's just been killed.' He said, 'Don't be silly, dear. Go back to sleep.' And, do you know, she was right.

When she told me this, I knew why there was one particular photograph always near her lounge chair.

The present is not just now. It is our past, too, from which we make our future. And it's made of remembrance.

That's *my* story.  
What's yours?

*'Lest we forget'*



*With husband, Ralph. 1957*



*Their son, Byron. 1940*



## **A walk in the Tinderries**

*Markus Buchhorn, President, Michelago Region Landcare*

**18 November**



Michelago Landcare arranged a half-day visit to Markus and Julie's property at the top of the Tinderry Range. The tour was run in partnership with Friends of Grasslands ([FOG.org.au](http://FOG.org.au)) for the first

time and we ended up with 29 participants – the largest tour we've ever run! The group ranged in age from the very young to the young-at-heart, and a very good time was had by all.



The tour visited some of the major granite outcrops that are visible from Michelago and the highway, and also took participants through various sections of forests, open heathlands and alpine grasslands, and around a lovely swamp that was just about to burst into flowering.

The plants this year are very confused by what season it is (aren't we all?), with some species flowering very early, others very late, and a few still hedging their bets.



A number of orchids were spotted at various points along the tour (including *Diuris*, *Caladenia* and *Thelymitra* species). A few lizards, though perhaps fortunately no snakes, also checked out the noise we were making, and the bird watchers were kept entertained by the many species that call the Tinderry their home.



The weather was great, a little cooler and breezier than the valley floor, and the views, as always, were spectacular!

Michelago Landcare tries to run this tour every year during 'Spring'. If you're interested in more information contact Markus at [landcare@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:landcare@michelagoregion.org.au).

*People photos: Andrew Zelnik, Friends of Grasslands (fog.org.au). Flower photos: Markus Buchhorn*



## Gingerbread and Christmas card craft at the Hall

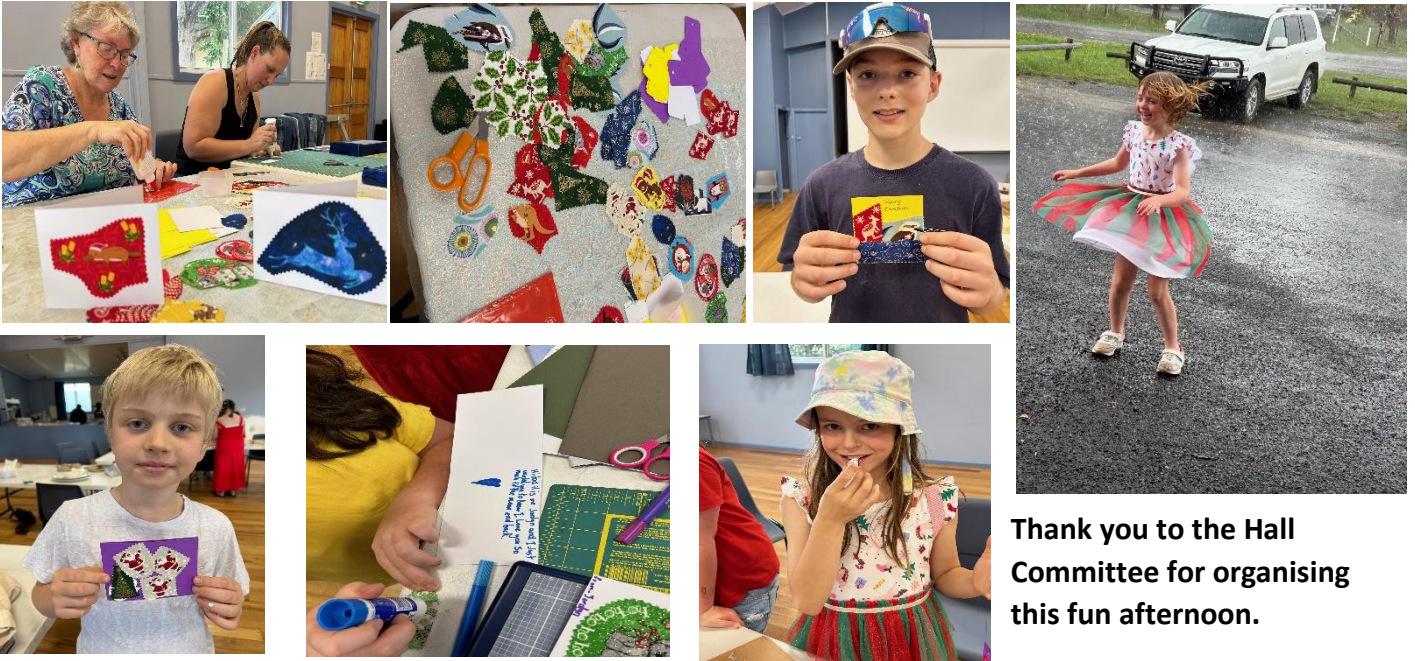
**3 December** Michelago's artistic talents produced a wide range of designs from the templates of gingerbread houses and people. Michelagoans of all ages challenged architectural norms.

Gingerbread house: first, erect your flat pack with icing sugar paste (problems if it's too watery; a chimney can fall off), then let your imagination loose. Gingerbread people: design a person.





Then you can make a Christmas card, eat the leftover icing or dance in the rain.



Thank you to the Hall Committee for organising this fun afternoon.



### Cooma's Diwali celebrations



18 November Councillor Tanya Higgins attended Cooma's annual Diwali Day festival, an example of Australia's rich cultural variety.

'Diwali is the Hindu festival of lights, with variations celebrated in other Indian religions. It symbolises the spiritual victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance.'

*Text credit: Wikipedia*



**Memorial Hall bookings – 0493 638 878 or [memorial.hall@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:memorial.hall@michelagoregion.org.au)**

This is the Schedule of Fees for the hire of the Michelago Memorial Hall for the financial year 2023-2024.

- a) A flat fee per hour: \$17.00  
Refundable Deposit Bond: \$170.00
- b) Private Evening / Party Function: \$240.00  
Refundable Deposit Bond: \$250.00
- c) Hire of equipment, eg tables, chairs, kitchen, to be arranged on a case-by-case with the Committee.





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## Magpie information

Get the Magpie free by email: send name and email address to [newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au) Print copies at the Michelago shop are \$2. Previous issues are available on [www.michelagoregion.org.au](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au)

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**Contributions:** photos (jpg preferred, please) and news items are welcome. Please send them to [Lpatt@internode.on.net](mailto:Lpatt@internode.on.net) Please give your name and put *Magpie* in the subject line. Published items will be attributed.

If you have events or activities planned and would like them listed in the *Magpie* calendar, please email them to [Lpatt@internode.on.net](mailto:Lpatt@internode.on.net)

The MRCA committee reserves the right to edit contributions for length and clarity.

**Aims:** to publicise community events and activities and promote community identity. Yes, the Facebook pages do that, but the *Magpie* tries to give a more cohesive, detailed picture.

*Photos and articles, unless otherwise accredited, are by Leanne Pattison, Magpie Editor.*



## MRCA information

To belong to the MRCA, first download the membership form at [www.michelagoregion.org.au](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au) It's only \$10 p/a single and \$15 p/a family. To renew, see the same for bank details, and please include your name.

There are **four good reasons** for joining the Michelago Region Community Association:

1. The more representative we are, the more we can achieve for our village and region.
2. You get updates from Council.
3. All funds go to running costs, including upkeep, rental and insurance for Michelago's heritage-listed Railway Station. The Committee applies for government grants and occasionally organises other fund-raisers, depending on available personnel.
4. It's sociable – you know what's happening, who's doing what, and you participate only if you want to.

The MRCA Committee <http://www.michelagoregion.org.au/mrca/>

**Meetings are open:** 2<sup>nd</sup> **Tues** of the month, 6 pm, Railway Station. All Michelagoans are welcome. The minutes are on the website: [www.michelagoregion.org.au](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au)

**MRCA AGM:** March 2024, date tba. Please consider being involved and helping the community.





## ~ Michelago Magpie Calendar ~

Please send quick updates of what's coming up, what's on and any corrections to [newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au) If the *Magpie* knows about it, it will be here.

If your friends want to be on the mailing list for the *Magpie* and its calendar, send names and emails to the above address.

Previous issues of the *Magpie* are on [www.michelagoregion.org.au](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au)

### Regular (Venues, contacts and times can change; information is here as received.)

- **Choir** Thursdays, 7-8pm, St Thomas Church, Ryrie St (next to the police station).
- **Fire Brigade** training second Sunday of the month, 9am–1pm. Contact details: MRCA notice board at the Michelago General Store. Final 2023 training: Sunday 10 Dec. 9am-1pm.
- **Hall** Committee general meeting. Hall. Monthly 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed 6pm.
- **Hall bookings:** [memorial.hall@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:memorial.hall@michelagoregion.org.au) or phone new number 0493 638 878. Current hire rates: see 23.
- **HIIT** (high intensity interval training) exercise class with Peter (0417 427 494). Hall. Sat 8am. \$10. 'Works for all ages.'
- **Library.** Mobile library. 2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays, outside the school. See below. (See *Magpie14* for complete 2023 library schedule. It's also on the Shop's MRCA Noticeboard).
- **MRCA** general meeting (open). Railway station. Monthly 2<sup>nd</sup> Tues 6pm. Next: 12 Dec.
- **Pony Club.** Monthly 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday. Enquiries: Rhys (0401 778 004) or Alisha (0422 623 304) or email [michelagoponyclub.secretary@gmail.com](mailto:michelagoponyclub.secretary@gmail.com) Also see <https://ponyclubaustralia.com.au/>
- **Pre-School.** Hall. Scheduled to re-start Term 1 2024. No details yet available. Check Monaro Mobile Pre-School site.
- **Seed Savers.** Usually 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month. No meeting December. Next in January, tba. To check dates and locations or if you have other questions, please SMS or email Belinda: 0411 043 027 or [hello@michelagoyoga.com.au](mailto:hello@michelagoyoga.com.au)
- **Senior Lunch Group.** 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of the month, 1pm, the Shop.
- **St Patrick's** Catholic Church. Mass monthly, usu. 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat, 5.30pm. Updates on Facebook's Michelago Noticeboard.
- **Thai massage.** Railway Station. Details tba – see p13.
- **St Thomas's** Anglican Church. Holy Communion. Monthly, 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday 11am.
- **Trail Riders:** usu. monthly, 1<sup>st</sup> Sat. Check details on Tinderry tab of Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA). *Magpie 4* has a feature write-up. President Don Munns 0407 235 407. Membership – Secretary Heidi Dreyer 0434 197 122.
- **Yoga:** Thursdays, 6.30 pm, Michelago Hall. \$20. Enquiries: Belinda 0411 043 027. For all bodies.

### One-offs (that we know about) (Venues and times can change; information is here as received.)

#### December

- **Michelago Fire Brigade** final 2023 training Sunday 10 Dec 9am-1pm.
- **Cricket comp.** MCC at the (Clive Kelly) Oval, Sunday 10 Dec 12.30pm.
- **Christmas trees, locally sourced.** 9 Dec. Hall carpark from 9am. Fundraiser Anembo Fire Brigade. \$60.
- **Christmas Carols with the Community Choir.** Railway Station, 23 Dec. 6pm.
- **Christmas Mass, St Patrick's.** 25<sup>th</sup>, 8am.

January Possibly a **Community Oz Day bbq at the (Clive Kelly) Oval.** MRCA is applying for food funding. Notices on Facebook's MRCA and Community Noticeboards if it's a goer.

