

# ~ MRCA Michelago Magpie 5 ~

4 June 2022 news peckings

from your Michelago Region Community Association



In this issue: Railway Station Treasure; Election Day; Railway Station promotion; Clickathon; Council Corner; Mental Health; Yoga for all; Pub Song; Michelago Moth; Christmas in July; **Council planning summary**; MRCA info; *Magpie* info.

## Railway Station Treasure – historic recruitment banner



*The newly found banner is held by the hands of Rob Smith and Gregg McFaul, 8 May. Photo LP*

A recent working bee at the historic Michelago Railway Station unearthed a large red banner, 3 by 1.5 metres, and appliquéd in cloth with a Union Jack, an Australian Ensign and the remaining letters 'THE MEN FR... OW... RIV...'



AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

REL/15959

The original 'The Men From Snowy River' banner is part of the national collection in the Australian War Memorial [Left: Accession Number REL/15959].

It was part of a WW1 'snowball' recruiting march that left Delegate on 6 January 1916, travelled through Bombala, Nimmitabel, Cooma, Bunyan, Bredbo, Michelago, Queanbeyan, Bungendore and Tarago, and arrived in Goulburn on 29 Jan 1916.

The original banner was used again in WW2 for a recruiting drive, this time by car and truck, along much the same route 6–11 July 1940.



For Australia's bicentenary, a re-enactment of the first two marches took place on 18-21 April 1988 again using the original banner. In Jan 2006, on the 90th anniversary of the march, a re-enactment and a civic reception at Delegate was held, although the original banner was not carried and a replica was used.

Is the banner at Michelago that replica or one of several created for the event?



*Re-enactment – Men from Snowy River march starting in Delegate, November 1, 2015 (Michelle Farran) ABC.net.au/news*

The replica, while certainly not as important as the original, still now holds a history of its own and deserves to live somewhere with care. It would be very interesting to hear the story of the 2006 anniversary and find a person willing to restore the replica banner and a home for it. One of the RSLs perhaps? Perhaps on the 110th anniversary just a few years away, it might be used again.

The *Maggie* invites anyone connected to the banner to write in and flesh out the true story. Just like the missing letters could be restored to 'The Men From Snowy River', the missing history could be restored to the tale.

I apologise if any of my research is erroneous, and I look forward to being (gently, please) corrected. Thank you to Gregg McFaul for this report. Thank you, also, to Rob Smith and Gregg for their continuing volunteer work on the cenotaph's surround.



## Community Event, aka Federal Election Day 21 May 2022

### How was your Democracy Sausage?

The Federal Election cued Australia-wide Democracy Sausage events.



*In the Michelago morning mist, MRCA Secretary Jo Jackson and partner Brendan set up the BBQ at the Michelago Public School polling station and, with rostered help from other volunteers, staffed it all day. Photo: Cristina Huesch*







**Left:**  
*Stella from  
Royalla*

**Right:**  
*Davo from  
Michelago*



**Left:** Michelago School's P&C cake stall was, as usual, a huge success. Above: all that was left at 2pm. Photos: LP, Cristina Huesch



**Left:** Michelago's Australian Electoral Commission boss, Anna Bunston, with Dave Bunston.

**Above:** Politics aside – only in Michelago?





## Railway Station promotion

Plans to develop the profile of Michelago's Heritage Railway Station were the focus of a discussion at the station between Belinda Sierzchula of the MRCA's Station sub-committee and Fiona Latham-Cannon of Digital Business Solutions on Monday, 9 May.

The sub-committee sought expert advice about promotion and marketing of the station through social media and businesses.

The promotional possibilities of Instagram were particularly interesting. A large number of Michelago visitors have posted photos and positive comments about the village and surrounding area, including the railway station.



*Belinda and Fiona*

*Photo: LP*

If realised, the aim to further develop the station as a tourist destination and event venue will help make it financially self-sustaining. At present, the MRCA can pay the expenses only through successful grant applications to government and free services from generous people like Jason Green of Yless4u, Martin Birrell and Wayne Hatcher (see *Magpies 3 & 4*). Covid-19 has so far forbidden crowded fund-raising events.



Fiona's is a federally funded organisation serving the Southern Region of NSW, approximately from Wollongong, through the Bega Valley and around the Snowy areas.

*L: A passing tourist's Michelago photo on Instagram that Fiona showed on her phone. There's the magpie, of course. Credit: @drpepper1989*



## The Clickathon

*R: BJ, Ash's helper, dug to find the leak.*

To all those persistently clicking people who helped in the Essential Energy Click-to-win campaign, on 2 June Essential Energy announced their 2022 Community Choices Champions. MRCA came second in Zone 5 for \$2,000 in funding. More than 113,000 votes were cast for over 300 organisations across regional NSW. You can view all the winners here <https://www.essentialenergy.com.au/-/media/Project/EssentialEnergy/Website/Files/About-Us/CommunityChoicesChampions2022.pdf?la=en&hash=F94D50D611FE2832077626C3AC71D8284FEAF646>

In anticipation, the MRCA urgently purchased a reconditioned pump for the railway station from local plumber Ash Crivici. This ensured a water supply for the kitchen and toilet for the imminent Easter and ANZAC Day events. Unfortunately, this was a temporary fix, as other plumbing faults complicit in the previous water supply failure soon showed up, i.e. a leaking pipe and a broken toilet-valve. Therefore, most of the prize has already been put to good use. Thank you, Clickathon helpers.





## Council Corner – community consultation

Saturday, 28 May, Michelago Hall: the Integrated Planning and Reporting process was the focus of this meeting. SMRC Mayor Narelle Davis was the principal speaker, articulating clearly the options Council is presenting to the Shire. Chief Strategy Officer David Rawlings supplemented Narelle's occasionally interactive talk. Councillors Tanya Higgins (Deputy Mayor) and Tricia Hopkins, and Team Leader Strategic Planning Alex Adkins were also available to discuss issues with people afterwards.

Narelle has provided a summary of the options for the *Magpie*. It's at the end of this issue. It's long, but is an important document for all residents – there are possibly unpalatable choices to be made as this largely new Council faces financial realities, wants to present accurate information transparently, and definitely wants community feedback about which measures the community would prefer.



*From left: Tanya Higgins; Secretary-elect s355Hall Committee Jenny Wholohan; Alex Adkins, Tanya Higgins, Narelle Davis, John Rooney; Narelle Davis and David Rawlings chat with two Michelagoans. Photos: LP*



## Mental Health First Aid Courses – Michelago Memorial Hall



Adrian is kindly and generously giving his time to run these 2-day Mental Health First Aid Courses for our community.

Course dates are:

Saturday 18 & Sunday 19 June: 10am-4.30pm

Saturday 2 & Sunday 3 July: 10am-4.30pm

Lunch & afternoon tea are provided. Bookings essential as space is limited: <https://michelagoyoga.as.me/Workshops>

Each year 1 in 5 Australians will experience a mental illness. Many people are not knowledgeable or confident to offer assistance. Physical first aid is accepted and widespread in our community, but most do not cover mental health problems.

Mental Health First Aid® teaches people the skills to help someone they're concerned about. These courses are being offered free with many thanks to funding from the Snowy Monaro Regional Council's Get Ready funding.





## Yoga for all body types



**Monday 6.30pm** at Bredbo Hall:  
General Flow

**Thursday 6.30—7.45pm** at Michelago Hall: General Flow

**Friday 10—11am** at Michelago Hall:  
Slow Yoga with creche for the littlies.  
Babies are welcome to stay with their mum/carer or go with Dee in the creche – whatever you feel most comfortable with.

**Cost: \$20**

All classes include breath awareness and a breathing exercise, warm-up movements of the spine, yoga flow movements, stretching and a stress-relief relaxation at the end (also usually involves the teacher mixing up her lefts & rights at some point!)

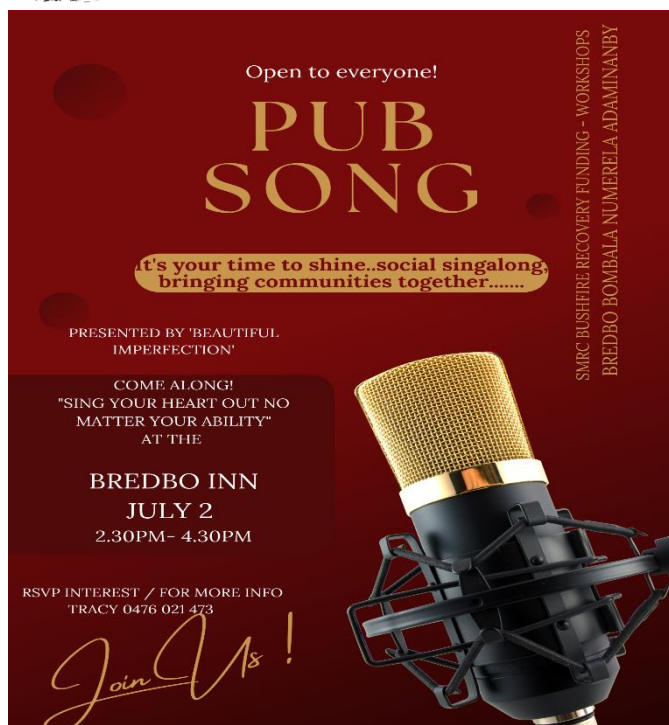
Everyone – men, women, children – are welcome and many different options are given to suit different abilities.

If you feel a bit stiff, or perhaps you feel as though your body isn't moving as easily as you'd like it to, yoga may be a great option for you to try!

You can book your spot here: <https://michelagoyoga.as.me/> or contact Belinda on 0411 043 027 or [hello@michelagoyoga.com.au](mailto:hello@michelagoyoga.com.au)



## Pub Song at Bredbo 2 July – rsvp interest 0476 021 473 Tracy





### What is it?

A low-cost entertainment evening in Michelago, by community members, for community members. Each act has about 10 mins on stage to perform a brief entertainment. It can be a funny story, a poem, a song, a dance, juggling, something of interest to Michelago. Anything suitable for a family-based local audience

Presenting 13 entertainers/sessions with a bring-a-plate to share for supper intermission about half-time.

### Why?

Time has passed since the awful fires of 2019, followed by the Covid response and it's time to get together and acknowledge the efforts of the RFS members and families. To get together and have fun, remind ourselves how lucky we are to live here ... **and fund-raise for the RFS !!**

**There is also some serious talent that needs exposure at this event!!**

**Cost - Lots of gold coin donations will be accepted at the door on entry. How many depends on how grateful you are!! (Bills in an envelope will also be very acceptable.)**

A load of firewood kindly donated will be raffled on the night so bring \$ for tickets

### Where?

The Michelago Memorial Hall in Ryrie St Michelago

### What to bring

A supper to share, a sense of humour, a joke or funny story, and some courage to go with it .....!!

(and suggestions will be handed out at the door)

If you are a keen comedian, song singer, can dance a jig or tell a yarn and are looking for an open mic event to try it out....this is it!!

Email [annelouisepollard@gmail.com](mailto:annelouisepollard@gmail.com) or ph 0409220842 to book your spot in the exciting Michelago Moth!!! for homegrown entertainment.



### Christmas in July

The MRCA is hosting a Christmas in July luncheon on Sunday 24 July, 11am–3pm at the Michelago Community Hall.

Catering by Our Shop Sally! A Delicious Get-Together!

Tickets: \$10.00 each, primary school children free. Numbers are limited, so first in best dressed.

Tickets available online from:

<https://events.humanitix.com/michelago-region-christmas-in-july>





## Integrated Planning and Reporting: summary of discussion with the Michelago Community, Saturday May 28, 2022

To assist the community in understanding the draft Integrated Planning & Reporting documentation, Councillors Davis, Higgins, Hopkins and staff members David Rawlings and Alex Adkins provided information and insights into the key points to encourage your feedback. Rates and a potential rate variation were the key issues discussed, with many questions asked from the community members who attended.

Council provided the following document to the *Magpie*.

The consultation is open for feedback until Monday 6 June 2022. These plans and financial documents will shape our region and Council's future for years to come, so please have your say today (via the link at the end of this summary).

### What is a Special Rate Variation (SRV)?

An SRV allows Councils to increase rates above the rate peg increase determined each year by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

Applications for Special Rate Variations (SRV) must be submitted to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for assessment.

### Councils can apply for two types of Special Rate Variation

1. An increase in general income in a single year (i.e. a 'one-off' variation)
2. An increase in general income in more than one year (i.e. between 2 and 7 years).

### What is the process?

- 9 May – 6 June consultation is undertaken with the community
- 23 June - All consultation is considered by Council and a decision is made.

If Council decides not to go ahead with an SRV, the Council will then have to start planning how it will move to a financially sustainable position by continuing to look at service reviews and the level and types of services it can fund. While there is an indication of the impact in the scenarios, the Council will have to work through all of its current services and discuss with the community how they should change into the future.

### If Council resolves to apply for an SRV, the following then occurs:

- November 2022 - A notice of intention is submitted to IPART
- February 2023 - Council applies to IPART for a special variation
- February 2023 - Further community consultation is undertaken
- May 2023 - A final decision is made by IPART and Council is notified
- June 2023 – Council needs to resolve to set the rates at an amount no higher than any approved increase.

### What has Council been doing to improve its financial position and reduce the burden on ratepayers?

Council has reduced costs by \$5million per annum over the last three years, including by:

- Cutting management costs \$700,000
- Reducing staffing costs \$2million
- Reducing photocopying costs \$200,000
- Increased focus on allocating costs to grant funded programs
- Reduction on building maintenance costs \$700,000.



### Who makes the decision about whether a Special Rate Variation is approved?

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) makes the final decision on whether a proposed Special Rate Variation is approved, partially approved or rejected. This decision is final and IPART will not reassess an application after it has made its decision.

### What are the rate options being considered?

Rate options: the scenarios below indicate the change in rate levels after ten years and provide an example of the extent of service change that would occur over that timeframe. Next year, rates will increase only by the rate peg in all cases.

Option 1 will see an increase of \$4.20 per week after ten years, following only the state government's yearly rate peg increase and reducing services:

- Increases only the rate peg amounts
- Biosecurity services reduced by 40%
- Building/Development assessments – minimum regulatory role only; no assistance
- Rangers doing work week only and responding only to extreme issues on weekends
- Minimal response to illegal dumping
- Close some community facilities
- Reduce library operating days
- Reduce park areas by 30%
- Reduce front-counter services – available at Cooma office only
- Cease any economic development or tourism/events activities and support
- Minimal strategic planning to occur • Move out of residential aged care services.

Option 2 will see an increase of \$16 per week after ten years, inclusive of the state government's yearly rate peg increase, by investing in current services. Increases in rate levels to fully fund the long-term cost of all the current infrastructure building and services:

- Roads: Fund road reseal every 15 years on average
- Fund gravel resheeting every eight years on average
- Gravel maintenance grade every year on average
- Introduce program to renew buildings over time
- Increase maintenance funding to appropriate level
- Move out of residential aged care services.

Option 3 will see an increase of \$7.70 per week after ten years, inclusive of the state government's yearly rate peg increase, and reducing services partially:

- A partial increase in rates and service changes to match funding
- Building/Development assessments – minimum regulatory role only; no assistance.
- Rangers during work week only and responding to extreme issues only on weekends
- Close some community facilities
- Reduce front counter services – available at Cooma office only
- Not undertake any tourism activities
- Move out of residential aged care services.

Option 4 will see an increase of \$9.40 per week after ten years, inclusive of the state government's yearly rate peg increase, and a small service reduction:

- A partial increase in rates over a number of years and service change to match funding
- Not undertake any tourism activities • Move out of residential aged care services.

The options provide examples of what the Council would need to do at different levels of rates being invested by the community. The final direction may be different to any of the scenarios.

To have your say and tell us which of the above scenarios you want to see, head to [www.yoursaysnowymonaro.com.au](http://www.yoursaysnowymonaro.com.au) <<http://www.yoursaysnowymonaro.com.au>> today.

Consultation ends Monday 6 June 2022.

Have your say!



*The above summary was provided by Mayor Davis at the Magpie's request. –Ed*



## 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. Peanuts. 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 Railway Station.

These costs are eating into reserves because of Covid-cancellations of two fundraising Spring Fairs and a Christmas Market. The Committee is working on other fund-raiser options and really appreciates all the volunteer assistance.

4. It's sociable – you know what's happening, who's doing what, and you participate only if you want to.

Di and Leanne for the MRCA Committee

<http://www.michelagoregion.org.au/mrca/>

**Meetings are open:** 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month, 6 pm, Railway Station. All Michelagoans are welcome.



## Magpie information

**Advertisements:** businesses can purchase a quarter-page advertisement space for \$30.00 for three issues (it might end up being up to a half-page, depending on space). Why per three issues rather than per month? Well, (a) sending an invoice monthly is more of an administrative task for we volunteers, and (b) we can't guarantee a timeframe for issues – issues depend on available content and volunteer time. Non-business ads are free.

**Contributions:** You can send reactions, letters, photos and news items to [newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au). Please give your name and put *Magpie* in the subject line. Published items will be attributed. The MRCA committee reserves the right to edit contributions for length and concision. *Leanne Pattison, Editor.*

