

~ Michelago Magpie 8 ~

20 September 2022 news peckings

from your Michelago Region Community Association



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Community meeting

Wednesday 5 October, 6pm, Hall. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and senior Council staff will address concerns of Michelago residents and be available to chat.



Micalago Road issue – update from SMRC Councillor Higgins



On 14 August I was alerted to a number of trucks which were dumping material into the disused iron ore mine pits on Micalago Road. Residents knew nothing about this development, so I immediately contacted Council's General Manager to investigate the situation. It was revealed that it was a legal operation with an approved Development Application, which allowed unrestricted truck movements along the unsealed road 11 hours per day, six days per week!



The activity is actually compliant under the current Land and Environment Plan. However, my questions, along with those of everyone else, were:

- Why were residents not notified as part of the DA assessment?
- How do we know what is being put in the ground is safe?
- How is the impact of all of those trucks on the road going to be managed?

Further issues arose:

- The alleged dangerous and disrespectful behaviour of the truck drivers, impacting on the health and safety of Micalago Road residents
- Questions about compliance with Council consent orders, road laws, Worksafe and EPA regulations.

I would like to thank everyone who contacted me, kept me informed of the situation and sent in photos.



(Photo credits unknown)

Outcomes to date:

- Confirmed that only Virgin Excavated Natural Material (VENM) is allowed to be used.
- Council has reviewed its processes and found that the Community Consultation Plan (the guiding document as to what activity triggers notifying residents) may need updating to ensure that this doesn't happen again.
- Senior Council staff negotiated new operating hours with the applicant, which are now 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday.
- Council's compliance team make regular and random site visits to assess level of compliance and soil testing.
- Council has been working with other agencies to check truck compliance and the EPA to ensure the soil is not contaminated.

- Any damage to the road caused by the trucks has to be fixed throughout the project.
- Council has restricted the road speed limits to 50km/h to the quarry site, and Cooma Police have been requested to patrol.
- Residents will be notified of any further DA modifications going forward.



Other Councillor activities

- Meeting with Mission Australia and MCAS with real estate agents to facilitate more accommodation options for those most in need.
- Bushfire Management Committee meeting
- Climate Change and Resilience meeting
- Citizenship Ceremony at Cooma Multicultural Centre
- Working with the consultants on the Independent Financial Sustainability Review of SMRC
- Assisted the Hon. Kristy McBain MP with a community pop-up office in Bombala
(Right: Photo Leanne Coleman)
- The September Council meeting in Bombala where I supported the Monaro Rail Trail and put up a motion to take to the Local Government NSW Annual Conference on the regional housing crisis.



Any questions, concerns or ideas? Please reach out: 0420 970 544
or tanya.higgins@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au



Michelago Community Choir

This is for all comers. Everybody can sing – many just need to be encouraged to find their voice, so don't worry if you feel vocally challenged.

The joy and well-being that singing together brings to every human heart is very real.



The venue is St Thomas church (Ryrie Street, just past the police station). It's central, compact and has good acoustics.

The starting date is Thursday 13 October. The time will be **7—8pm**. I hope this will give people time to get home from work.

A gold coin donation to cover costs is the only expense.

So warm up your vocal chords, put Thursday nights in your diary and come along to get that warm fuzzy feeling that choir nerds have known about for centuries.

Dee McFaul

MICHELAGO COMMUNITY CHOIR

WHEN: THURSDAYS 7PM - 8 PM

STARTING 13 October

WHERE: St Thomas's Church, Ryrie St.

MICHELAGO COMMUNITY CHOIR IS A FUN WAY OF CONNECTING WITH OTHERS AND EXPERIENCING THE JOY THAT SINGING TOGETHER BRINGS. NO



EXPERIENCE IS NEEDED, JUST ENTHUSIASM AND A SENSE OF ADVENTURE.

ALL ARE WELCOME.



Seed Savers and Growers Group

Our seed savers and growers group had the Growing Veggies from Seed workshop on Sunday 28 August at the railway station

We had about 12 people come along to learn about growing vegetables from seed and we all took away some transplanted seedlings and seeds to grow at home.

It was presented by Arian from Canberra Seed Savers, who are supporting our local group to get up and running.



Some of the top take-away tips:

- Plant your seeds about twice the depth of the width of the seed, in a container for transplanting to the garden or a bigger container later.
- Water from the top lightly to start with and then when the seeds start to sprout and grow they will prefer their water from the bottom.
- A sprinkling of sand is great to go over the top of small seeds like tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, etc.
- Plant more than you think you need and more often than you think is necessary. If you're super successful, you can always share, swap, sell your seedlings off :)



Our September Seed Savers and Growers group get-together will be at Lyn's house in Bredbo on Sunday 25 September 2–4pm. We're going to do a tour of her fantastic gardens and learn lots of great gardening tips from Lyn, who is a very experienced gardener. Please contact Belinda on 0411 043 027 or hello@michelagoyoga.com.au for details if you'd like to come along.

Our group is now selling locally grown & collected seeds at the Michelago General Store for \$2 a packet. The benefit of locally

grown seeds is that they adapt over time to the climate for better success in germination and growing. So check out our range and many thanks for supporting our local group!

Currently available: Climbing Beans, Tatsoi, Parsley, Yellow Straightneck Zucchini, Lettuce varieties, Collards, Carrot, Dill, Yellow Sunflower, Moneymaker Tomato, Lemon Cucumber, Amaranth, Asian Greens, Mustard Leaf.

For the Facebook-ers, we have a Facebook Group now (many thanks to Leah for setting it up!): Michelago Seed Savers << <https://www.facebook.com/groups/627278105428124> >>

R: 3 year-old Hugo's garden-sculpture chicken stands guard over his planted seeds.

Thanks to Belinda for the report and the photos.



'Grand in the Hand' update

Thank you to all those who have purchased tickets so far for our Michelago Hall Grand in the Hand fundraiser. We really appreciate your support! There are only about 20 tickets left. You can now buy them for cash at the General Store as well as online at <https://events.humanitix.com/a-grand-in-your-hand>

We want to update you on a change in our plans ...

We advertised this fundraiser to purchase a new fridge – and, through advertising our fundraiser, **we've kindly been donated a fairly new fridge in fantastic condition!** We are immensely grateful to Sophie for such a generous donation!

So – in full transparency – we are still running our Grand in a Hand fundraiser (as we really want one of our generous supporters to win the \$1K!) but the funds will no longer be to purchase a fridge; they will go into our general pool for hall repairs.



Above: Hello, functional fridge!

Our Hall Committee has a very long list of repairs & upgrades to be made, such as resealing the floor, repairing walls, painting, etc. This money will go towards making the space more usable. We will pick one of our many other projects to upgrade and will report.

We know many of you purchased a ticket to help our hall in general (and to go in the draw for the \$1K!), but we understand if the change in our plan to purchase a fridge for a different hall upgrade changes your desire for a ticket purchase.

So, if you would like a refund, just email us by 24 September at michelago.memorial.hall@gmail.com and we'll refund your ticket.

If we don't hear from you, we'll assume you're happy with your ticket purchase and we will draw the winning ticket at the General Store as soon as all of the tickets are sold.

The result will be on Facebook, on the MRCA noticeboard and in the *Magpie*. **One lucky ticket-holder will win \$1K!**

Thanks for your support of our local Michelago Memorial Hall and our wonderful community!

Other Information/Terms & Conditions

If we don't sell all the numbers, the winner will get half of the number sales. So, in that case, the more you buy, the more chances you have to win AND the more you'd win!

Hall committee members are ineligible to purchase numbers, but their family members can enter if they wish. Note that the winner will be drawn independently.

First names only will be written on the poster outside the store; if you would rather your name not be written on the poster, please let us know when you buy your number(s).

The winner is final and will be contacted by phone or email to arrange payment of the prize money.

Naomi & Belinda, on behalf of the Michelago Memorial Hall s355 Committee



Accompanist needed for Michelago Community Choir

Can you play the piano and sight-read? You could be the wonderful person to help the fledgling Community Choir really fly! Come along on 13 October and give it a go.

The singers and conductor would really appreciate your help. The keyboard and sheet music will be supplied by the conductor, Dee McFaul. Other details p.3.



Local folk

Fiona and John Tollis and their family, long-term Michelago residents, recently enjoyed the new barbecue facilities and shade structures at the Michelago Sports Ground / Oval. *(Photo Tanya Higgins)*





Michelago Memorial Hall acoustics

There have been complaints for many years about the poor acoustics of the Hall. People have been able to hear speakers satisfactorily only when a microphone is used or when the building is quite full with people.

The hall now has an excellent AV system with a projector, screen and speakers, purchased with a Council grant some years ago and recently made fully operational. It would be great for community

movie nights if the sound didn't bounce all over the place!

For an initial acoustics strategy, the Hall Committee is considering quotes for wider, thicker curtains.

These would also improve the aesthetics of the building.



Cold Country Koala Project

This is an opportunity to be involved in koala surveys and property improvement.



The official Area of Regional Koala Significance (ARKS) for our region stretches across and along the Tinderry range, from the Tinderry Nature Reserve right down to Numeralla and beyond. You can see the map at:

<https://www.facebook.com/uppermurrumbidgeelandcarecommittee/photos/pcb.3229883370563354/3229883190563372/>

Although the map doesn't appear to include Michelago, the government-defined region has fairly meaningless borders. This specific project is for 'the ARKS and surrounding areas'.

It includes activities near the Snowy Mountains, and koalas have been seen on the far side of the highway, so definitely Michelago is in scope. Note that the form itself is not a survey but a landholder expression of interest to participate.

That could be in co-funding restoration/improvement/protection works, or being open to audio-surveys (and other surveys, like drones and scat-dogs?) on suitable properties.

Given koalas have been seen even at the Bredbo pub (outside only!) as well as Googong and close to Queanbeyan, they clearly roam quite widely beyond the ARKS.

It's very hard to spot koalas with the unaided eye, but their distinctive calls travel a long distance, and that's why the audio surveys are proving very useful.



Local Land Services (LLS) published some videos from the previous round of this project:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOMV1Ok5F_g and

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6kvr4M2sp0>

Please register your interest by Friday 7th October 2022. The online registration form can be found [here](#) or contact Georgeanna at upper.murrumbidgee@gmail.com or on 0429 779 928.

Markus Buchhorn, President, Michelago Landcare



Mobile library's updated schedule



The Mobile Library schedule for the rest of the year is below. PLEASE NOTE, the days on the schedule are the same but the hours are not as they were before. The car is outside the school for an hour, between 10 and 11 on the scheduled days. *Fiona Wharton, Library Resource Management Office*



October	PUBLIC HOLIDAY	17	31
November	14	28	
December	5	19	



The 'Little Red Car', packed with books fortnightly for Michelagoans. There's no driver for the bus.



Sewing Class re-scheduled



Covid first rescheduled Jenny's sewing class to 18 September but has now caused a further delay.

Jenny will post a new date when her full health returns.





Yoga for every body

Do you feel tense, stiff, stressed or tired? Yoga can help!

Slow, gentle yoga can increase your flexibility, mobility,
strength & sense of calm



Yoga is for all body types – you don't have to be flexible, co-ordinated, fit, etc to do yoga! You just have to show up and move in the ways that benefit your body.

Friday 9.15am at the Michelago Hall

(Children welcome but there's no proper crèche at the moment so they're in the hall with us.)

Class cost: \$20. You can book your spot here: <https://michelagoyoga.as.me/>

**or for more information contact Belinda on 0411 043 027 or
hello@michelagoyoga.com.au**



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Internet Packages to suit all needs!

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\$ 35 per month

Thank you, Yless4u ☺

... for contributing the proceeds of your Internet Gamer Night (\$40) towards the maintenance of the Michelago Historic Railway Station.



Michelago Rural Fire Brigade



Brigade officials for 2022—23

Captain: Brent Wallis (general enquiries 0435 794 432; emergencies 000)

Senior Deputy Captain: Scott Teys

Deputy Captains: Keith Howker, Abby McPherson, David Ferris, Derek Giucci

Training Officer: Gregg McFaul **Treasurer:** Brien Hallett

Report from Gregg McFaul, Training Officer

The Monaro District RFS website has useful links about fire safety in our community:

<https://monarorfs.org.au/for-our-monaro-community/>

Thankfully, it has been a very quiet winter, with minimal callouts for fires or traffic accidents. Thanks to all who are helping to keep it that way.

The ground is wet but the grass has cured over winter and is crispy dry, so please be careful as we come into spring and begin slashing in amongst the stony ground. Please have an extinguisher on hand when running the slasher.

The RFS welcomes the new members attending the introductory Bushfire Fighters (BF) course being run in September at Cooma. It is a couple of really enjoyable weekends, both as student or as instructor. Another course is planned for Nov-Dec 2022, if there is demand.

If you are interested in joining the RFS, come and say hello at the Michelago fire shed 2nd Sunday of the month, 9am. Hope to see you there.



New Fire Danger Rating Index

September will see the new Fire Danger Rating Index, a nationally consistent and simplified index of four ratings rather than the previous six, a recommendation out of the Royal Commission into the 2020 fire season.

From September 2022 the four ratings will be:

Moderate: plan and prepare

High: be ready to act

Extreme: take action now to protect life and property:

Catastrophic: for your survival, leave bushfire risk areas.



North Black Range, 13.12.2019. Photo Keith Howker

Reference: ABC Rural 21 Aug 2022, and www.rfs.nsw.gov.au



Chilean needle grass



You are invited to a Council-run session being held in Cooma on Friday 30th September 2–4 pm to learn how to identify Chilean Needle Grass.

Photos: L—Andrew Storrie; R—John Hosking





Chilean Needle Grass is likely to be the next big weed on the Monaro. Everyone who manages land is urged to become familiar with what it looks like and the risks involved if it gets established.

More information on its impacts can be found [here](#) and [here](#). (Also look at [this](#) for the NZ experience and [here](#) for the current *published* distribution). Council's current advice is also attached.

Photo: Donna Smithyman

At these drop-in sessions, Council's Biosecurity staff will be available to show people what it looks like and how it differs from look-alikes (e.g. phalaris). Seeing it for yourself, and spending 10-20 minutes being shown how to pick it out, is by far the best way to learn how to spot it.

In a few weeks' time when things have greened up, it will become more difficult to pick out. So now is an excellent time to get your 'eye in'.

The location is Cooma Creek common near the Church Road junction with Snowy Mountains Highway. -36.242452, 149.132643. Click [this link](#) for a Google Maps location.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you require more information about this event.



Thank you, Markus (Michelago Landcare President), for this forward from USLN.

[Images from: <https://weeds.dpi.nsw.gov.au/Weeds/chileanneedlegrass>

Find more information about Chilean Needle Grass on this NSW Government site – Ed.]

Council Facilities on Thursday 22 September (public holiday due to death of Queen Elizabeth II)

- Libraries: closed
- Cooma & Jindabyne landfills: closed
- Visitors' centres: open normal hours (Cooma 9—3, 7 days; Bombala 10—4, Mon—Sat.)
- Kerbside bin collections will continue as normal.



Hire of Memorial Community Hall

Please contact our Bookings Officer, Rachel Harling.

E: memorial.hall@michelagoregion.org.au P: 0431 528 258 Hire fees: www.michelagoregion.org.au



Michelago Region Community Association – what is it?

Everyone in the region is a member of the Michelago community, right?

Most, if not all community members have ideas about how the region should develop and what benefits the community. Yes?

Council, many years ago, pleaded for a representative community voice, so some energetic people formed the MRCA to try to be that voice and to organise good things for the community. The more people who are on the membership list, the stronger the voice.

It's a legally constituted Association with consequent safeguards for the members.

Committee members have come and gone but all have had community interests at heart. Some, however, have been discouraged by the occasional suspicion that the MRCA is some kind of 'secret society' with hidden agendas. It's not.

Minutes and financial statements are available. Members elect the committee at the AGM in February. Any Michelagoan is welcome to join and contribute. It's inclusive. Work is done by volunteers. The annual membership fee helps costs – in a small way! Successful applications for government grants have helped MRCA achievements a great deal.

To belong, first download the membership form at www.michelagoregion.org.au

It's only \$10 p/a single and \$15 p/a family. Please include your name.

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

- (1) You make it more representative.
- (2) You get updates from Council.
- (3) All funds go to running costs, including upkeep, rental and electricity for Michelago's Heritage Railway Station. The Committee is working on 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.

Meetings are open: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6 pm, Railway Station. All Michelagoans are welcome.

MRCA Committee 2022—23: President Di Fett; Vice President Brent Wallis; Secretary Jo Jackson; Treasurer Stuart Peterson; Railway Station subcommittee Kerry Rooney & Belinda Sierzchula; *Magpie* editor Leanne Pattison; Cristina Huesch; Gary Morris; Tony DeSalis.

MRCA contact: mrca@michelagoregion.org.au



Magpie information

Previous *Magpies* are on the MRCA website: www.michelagoregion.org.au

Advertisements: businesses can purchase a half- to one-page advertisement space (size depending on other content) for \$30.00 for three issues. Non-business ads are free.

Contributions: You can send letters, photos and news items to newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au Please give your name and put *Magpie* in the subject line. Items will be attributed. The MRCA committee reserves the right to edit contributions. Copyright belongs to the author or photographer.

Know someone who wants to get the *Michelago Magpie*? All we need is their name and email address sent to newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au



~ Michelago Magpie Calendar ~

From your Michelago Region Community Association

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

What's on?



If your friends want to get the *Magpie* and *Magpie Calendar*, just send names and emails to the email address above.



Regular

- **Fire Brigade** training. Monthly 2nd Sun 9am—1pm and (usually) the last Thurs 6—8pm. Location varies. Contact details on MRCA notice board at Michelago General Store.
- **Hall Committee** general meeting. Hall. Monthly 3rd Wed 5.30pm. Hall bookings: michelago.hall@michelagoregion.org.au
- **HIIT** exercise class. Hall. Sat 8am. \$10.
- **MRCA** general meeting (open). Railway station. Monthly 2nd Wed 6pm.
- **Pony Club**. Monthly 2nd Sunday. <https://www.pcansw.org.au/clubs/list/michelago>
- **Pre-School**. Hall. Teacher: Debbie 0412 485 212. Weekly. Mondays 6am—6pm.
- **Seed Savers**. Monthly, last Sun 2pm. Gold coin. Usually railway station but to confirm the locations or if you have other questions, please call or email Belinda: 0411 043 027 or hello@michelagoyoga.com.au
- **St Patrick's** Catholic Church. Mass monthly usu. 2nd Sat, 5.30pm (6pm daylight saving). Updates on Facebook's Michelago Noticeboard.
- **St Thomas's** Anglican Church. Holy Communion. Monthly, 3rd Sunday 11am.
- **Trail Riders**: usu. monthly, 1st 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. *[These are updated contacts.]*
- **Yoga**: breathe, move, relax. Hall. Fri 9.15am. \$20. BYO mat but some mats available. Booking: <https://michelagoyoga.as.me/> or just show up and pay cash. Enquiries: Belinda 0411 043 027 or hello@michelagoyoga.com.au



One-offs (that we know about)

September

- Michelago **Landcare** occasional meeting: TBA. Landcare members will be notified (for info and to get your name on the list, email landcare@michelagoregion.org.au)
- **Seed Savers & Growers**. 25 September 2—4pm. Bredbo. See p.5 for details or 'Regular' above.

October

- **Community-Council meeting** Wednesday 5, 6pm at the Hall. (See p.1 this *Magpie*.)
- **Community BBQ** lunch. Sat 22. Guest speakers. To be confirmed. BCRRF funded.

November

- **Bush dance & BBQ**, Sat. 19 at the Hall. Partly funded by BCRRF grant. Details to be confirmed.

November, December and into the New Year: the MRCA has a few family/community gatherings semi-planned, mainly focused around the new barbecue facilities at the Michelago Oval. These will be BCRRF funded as part of the government (federal & state) grant that enabled us to build the barbecue and shelters. The MRCA will notify the community of these events via *Magpie*, Facebook and the MRCA noticeboard at the General Store.

