

Spring
2013

Michelago Newsletter

Michelago Region Community Association Newsletter

Bush Fire Season

The statutory bush fire danger period has commenced in NSW and runs from **1 October 2013 to 31 March 2014.**

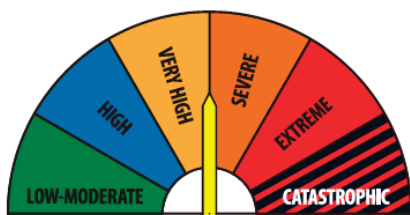
Make sure you have your bushfire survival plan in place and call 000 to report any fires.

If you are planning to light a fire in the open during the bush fire season, you will need a Fire Permit.

The aim of the Fire Permit is to ensure fire will be used safely. A Permit imposes conditions on the way a fire is lit and maintained, and can only be issued by authorised Permit Issuing Officers.

Contact your local rural fire brigade or Cooma Fire Control Centre for details.

Use extreme care if clearing grass or weeds and **DO NOT** use equipment that can create sparks such as a metal blade brushcutter, angle grinder, portable welder or other such tools on a Total Fire Ban day.



Total Fire Ban (TOBAN) Rules

During a Total Fire Ban no fire may be lit in the open and all Fire permits are suspended. This includes incinerators and barbecues which burn solid fuel, e.g. wood or charcoal.



Can I use an electric barbecue?

You can use an electric barbecue for cooking as long as it is under the direct control of a responsible adult, who is present at all times while it is operating, and no combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating.

Can I use a gas barbecue?

You can use a gas barbecue under the following conditions:

It is under the direct control of a responsible adult, present at all times while it is operating;

No combustible material is allowed within two metres at any time it is operating; You have an immediate and continuous supply of water; and

The barbecue is within 20 metres of a permanent private dwelling such as a home;

The barbecue is within a picnic area and the appliance is approved by Council, National Parks or State Forest.

Can I use a solid fuel barbecue, like a wood or charcoal barbecue?

No.

I have a permit. Can I use fire during a total fire ban?

Contact

MRCA Committee:

President: Cate Spencer

Vice President: Fiona Tollis

Treasurer: Chris Higgins

Secretary: Sandra Lauer

Committee members: Maureen Morgan, Janeta Morison, Bronwyn Gattringer, Leanne Pattison.

The MRCA committee meets on the first Monday of each month (except January) in the Michelago Memorial Hall from 7pm. All welcome. This is a good opportunity to raise any issues you might have that the MRCA can assist with.

Website:

www.michelagoregion.org.au

Email MRCA:

mrca@michelagoregion.org.au

Newsletter and web site editor:

Sandra Lauer

On Total Fire Ban Days the lighting of fire is prohibited and your Fire Permit will be automatically suspended. Your permit resumes once the total fire ban is lifted.

Are there exemptions during a total fire ban?

A range of activities may be exempt from Total Fire Bans, such as emergency infrastructure work, bee hive smokers, mining operations, sugar cane harvesting or ceremonial fires. The NSW RFS Commissioner is responsible for exemptions to Total Fire Bans. These exemptions are detailed in the NSW Government Gazette each time a total fire ban is declared.

What penalties are there for lighting a fire during a total fire ban?

Lighting a fire on a day of Total Fire Ban attracts a fine of up to \$5500 and/or 12 months gaol. Penalties for a fire that escapes and damages or destroys life, property or the environment can attract much greater fines and gaol terms with maximums at \$100,000 and/or 14 years gaol.

For more information or to download a copy of the bush fire survival plan, visit the NSW Rural Fire Service web site: www.rfs.nsw.gov.au.

Planning to make a plan is not a plan!

MRCA Presidents' Report

by Cate Spencer and Fiona Tollis

Well we have made it through winter, though the weather is still being fickle. Who knows what to expect from day to day with regard to the skies. In Michelago however there are a few things to expect.

Our Pot Luck Suppers have been held in the hall every 6 weeks or so and we have seen new faces and repeat faces each time. They have been relaxed, informal dining and chat with lots of delicious meals to share. Thank you to those who have attended to make these evening so much fun. We hope these evenings will continue in the New Year.

Another thing to expect in Michelago is an enlarged and functioning Clubhouse at the oval, with toilets to follow. Paul Kennedy is slowly working away at the jobs required, following on from Will Stone kindly setting up the plumbing system. As help is needed we will be calling on the helpful residents. Our next stage is to finish pulling up the old floor and to pour a new concrete slab floor. If that is an area that you could help us in, your call would be greatly appreciated. (Cate, ph. 6235 9217)

Expectations don't stop there as the Railway station is receiving a well-earned face-lift. The garden has been cleaned up, the old tank removed in anticipation of a replacement and inside the rooms are being cleaned, painted and walls repaired. We have some men from the Cooma Correctional Centre to help for that. They are a helpful bunch who are encouraged along with fresh baked goods each time they come. We are preparing to mount old photos and open it up for your perusal as a Michelago Gallery. If you have any old photos or memorabilia to add to gallery/ museum they would be valued additions. Come join us for a cuppa, soon.

Lastly, expect to see our tennis courts being used in the not too distant future as the MRCA are busily continuing to apply to various grants to help meet the costs of these community projects. To date we have one for the Clubhouse Upgrade and we have just received another to go towards the Railway station as a meeting place for Our Golden Oldies!

Historical Snapshot: Michelago Tennis Club

by Gay Lawler

With recent fund raising activities and working bees to restore the local tennis courts and pavilion, it is interesting to hark back to some of the early events of the Club and the role it played in our village. Reports to the Queanbeyan Age from a local correspondent give a glimpse of these early years.

A young club in 1899, membership drew from the village and surrounding rural holdings. 'Quite a number of ladies and gentlemen enjoy constant out door exercise, and the Club is likely to become fairly strong.' Matches between Queanbeyan and other clubs were hoped to eventuate during the season.

In the ensuing years Michelago played teams from Queanbeyan, Burra, Williamsdale, Royalla, Bredbo, Cooma, Little Plains, Jerangle, Chakola and Colinton. Some Michelago players were also members of the Colinton Club.

Fund raising events were held quite regularly at the Michelago Hall. The annual dance in July was generally well attended with local talent responsible for the music. A 'good floor' was of huge importance to the success of such an evening!



Michelago playing Jerangle in 1934

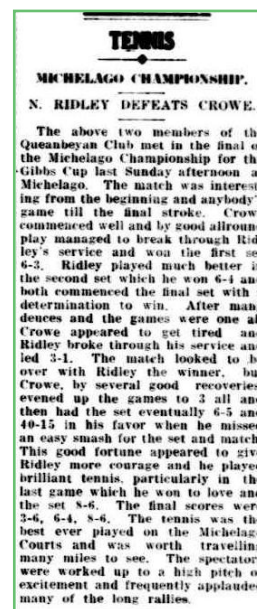
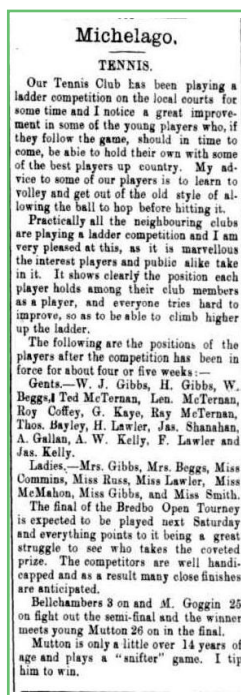
Tennis had supplemented cricket at Michelago by 1919. Even the school was caught up in the game, laying out a court and forming a school tennis club.

By 1921 'ladder competitions', played locally and on surrounding courts, led to improvements in young players, assisting them to hold their own with those older and with more experience.

Annual court fees at this time were 1 pound (\$2) for gents, 5 shillings (50c.) for ladies. Tickets for a 'Social' held in 1920 were fixed at 6 shillings and 6 pence (6/6 = 66c.) Ladies cordially invited.

At about this time a handsome cup was donated by keen sportsman and local storekeeper William Gibbs, for competition amongst players residing within a 50 mile radius (approx. 80km.). The Michelago Open Handicap Tournament, as the name suggests, was played on the local courts, with no shortage of nominations received from surrounding clubs.

Keen competition between clubs, and a high standard of play, gave both participants and spectators great satisfaction. Transport and refreshments were shared by families and friends, bringing communities together. All in all, Tennis was a great addition to Michelago life.

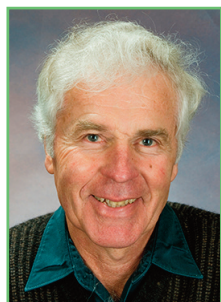


Articles from the Queanbeyan Age, 28th June 1921 (left) and 3rd November 1925 (right) (source: Trove NLA)

Council News

News Bulletin - Councillor Martin Hughes

The long-awaited Local Environment Plan (LEP) has at last been released and can be viewed at:
<http://www.cooma.nsw.gov.au/component/content/article/105-developmentassessment/943-lep.html>



If that is a bit too much to type in, go to the website and click on Planning & Development and then Local Environment Plan 2013. Council staff are in the process of studying the Plan to determine how many of the amendments to the Draft have been included. The amendments were based on information and recommendations provided by the community through an extensive consultation process of the Draft. Cooma-Monaro Shire Council now has one LEP,

instead of three, which will simplify planning and development throughout the shire. The Council is currently working on a revised Development Control Plan that sits under the LEP and provides additional information on planning issues.

I am still forwarding on to the community any circulars that I receive in order to keep you all informed as to events and other news.

As Chair of the Australia Day Working Party, I would like to encourage you all to consider nominating someone from your community to be our Local Citizen of the Year, Junior Citizen, Sportsperson or Junior Sportsperson. Three other categories are available. Community Event of the Year, Community Group of the Year and, a new one, Artist of the Year. Nomination forms can be downloaded off the Council website or collected from the Cooma Visitors Centre, Cooma Library or Council Offices in Bombala Street.

And your community association, the MRCA, will be holding an Australia Day BBQ breakfast either at the Hall or at the Railway Station on Sunday 26 January 2014. Cooma's Australia Day Ambassador will also be attending.

Rather than repeat what can be gathered from the Communique and Calendars that I send around, I would like to take this opportunity to express my and my fellow councillors' appreciation for the great community spirit and dedication of time and effort that many residents of the area, from Bumbalong Road to Kelly Road and up into the Tinderry Range, have demonstrated over the past year. Your interest and involvement have realised successful events and projects that encourage the community to socialise and contribute to the improvement of amenities and facilities. To name a few: - the MayFair, Driver Reviver at Colinton Rest Area, Pot Luck Suppers at the Michelago Village Hall and the drive to restore the Railway Station as a community asset and to improve the village oval facilities.

It is also hoped that the Michelago Rural Fire Brigade will have a new home next year with all necessary amenities. Council is impressed with the progress and achievements realised by its northern residents and is available to assist in projects wherever possible.

I will finish by wishing you all a safe summer (don't forget your property protection plan) and a happy holiday season when it arrives. If anyone not on my email mail-out list would like to be included, please let me know on martsalhugs@gmail.com.

Pot Luck Supper

Our next Pot Luck supper is on Saturday 30th November from 6pm until 10pm, at the Michelago Hall.

Our regular Pot Luck suppers have been a fantastic success. They have provided a great opportunity for residents to catch up and meet other members of our community.

For catering purposes, each family should bring a dish to share that will feed approximately five people. Those whose **surname starts with N-Z bring a main course** to share and those whose **surname starts with A-M bring a dessert** to share. Singles may bring some nibbles or a side dish, e.g. rice. BYO drinks/alcohol, however tea and coffee will be provided.

To help cover the cost of hiring the hall and other expenses we ask people to contribute **\$5 per head or \$10 per family**.

RSVP: Cate via e-mail famspace@yless4u.com.au or phone 6235 9217.

We encourage you all to come along and enjoy the atmosphere. It is a family friendly event, so please encourage your family, friends and neighbours (including children) to come along!

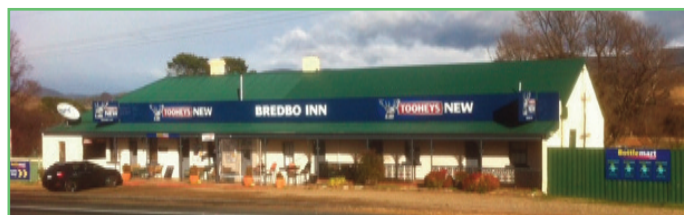
We will start Pot Luck suppers again in 2014 on 15th February.

Bredbo Inn Hotel

The Bredbo Inn was recently renovated, so here is a short article about what is on offer from the proprietors:

Our Restaurant is open 5 days a week, Wednesday to Sunday - Lunch 12noon-2pm and Dinner 6pm-8pm.

Our Courtesy Bus will operate from Michelago shop or anywhere reasonable on request. You must phone to book: 6454 4109. Make your group booking and enjoy a worry free night at the hotel for only a gold coin donation. With Christmas coming we are able to cater for your Christmas get together.



Our accommodation is up and running. Everything is brand new and all the rooms have their own ensuite.

We are relaunching the Members Social Club...

Special offers for members will be available such as Happy Hour, Meal Deals, Members' Cash Draw, Members' Theme Nights, Darts and Pool Competitions etc. Monthly events will be held and sent by email to each Member. Joining Fee is \$10.00 (\$5.00 to the Bredbo Rural Fire Service and \$5 to the social club account).

To join, please fill in the details below and return to the Hotel.

Bredbo Inn Social Club Membership

Name:	Address:
Phone:	E-mail:

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Michelago Public School P&C

by Anna Bunston, Secretary, Michelago P&C

We have a great P&C at Michelago, dedicated parents who work closely with staff at our wonderful school to provide great opportunities for the children.

This year we've run sausage sizzles at Cooma Woolworths, the school on election day and more recently a huge effort at Bunnings Tuggeranong. We had a lot of fun running a disco at the Community Hall for local kids at the end of term 2.



Photo: Beth Van Dooren

The Senior class are about to head to Cooba for their annual school camp, with the costs partially covered by P&C funds. We've also been able to pay for professional music lessons for all the children and are looking forward to the children demonstrating their new skills on the recorder (amongst other things) at the end of year presentation night on Thursday 12 December at the Hall.

Bushfire Season - Be Prepared

Information Session - 14th November 2013

Southern Monaro Emergency Management Committee representatives will be holding an information evening for Shire residents in anticipation of the fast approaching bushfire risk season.

The public meeting to be held at Cooma Ex-Services Club will include presentations from Rural Fire Service, Police, Fire and Rescue, State Emergency Service and Ambulance. Advice will be given about preparing for an emergency, understanding emergency warnings and do's and don'ts when trouble strikes.

All residents are invited to attend, meet your emergency services representatives and have your questions answered.

Where: Cooma Ex-Services Club, Vale Street, Cooma
When: 7.00pm-9.00pm Thursday 14 November 2013

If you require further information, please contact Pat Booker on (02) 6455 1810.

2014 CALENDARS

The MRCA has the 2014 Michelago calendars for sale.

A perfect present for Christmas... **available now at the Michelago General Store for only \$20.**

Limited numbers, so get in before they all sell out!

CONTRIBUTE TO THE MAYFAIR MAGIC

The MRCA is already planning for the 2014 Mayfair, so we would really appreciate your help and suggestions to make it a great day for our community.

Please let us know how you might like to contribute. Any offer is welcome; you could run a stall, be a Mayfair co-ordinator or volunteer to assist on the day. Contact Cate via phone 6235 9217 or e-mail famspence@yless4u.com.au.

Our first meeting is on **Saturday 23rd November from 10am** at the Michelago General Store. Free tea/coffee provided!

Beware of the Cuckoo

by Sandra Lauer

Imagine that you are feeding baby that is two to three times bigger than you, every ten minutes, throughout the day. Sounds a bit daunting doesn't it? During the breeding season quite a few of our local birds face that challenge each year!

Many cuckoos are parasitic birds; they lay their eggs in the nests of other (host) species of birds such as honeyeaters, thornbills, flycatchers and wrens. When the baby cuckoo hatches, it evicts all the host offspring from the nest, by pushing existing eggs or baby chicks out of the nest. The baby cuckoo is then fed by the host parents, who believe that the chick is their own. The cuckoo rapidly outgrows the parents (see photo), who frantically search for enough food to feed the young cuckoo.

In our region we have three main species of cuckoos to keep an eye out for: Pallid, Shining Bronze and Horsfield's Bronze. The Pallid Cuckoo has also been nicknamed the "brain fever bird" due to its insistent call. If you have ever heard one calling, you will understand why!



Buff-rumped Thornbills feeding a Horsfield's Bronze- Cuckoo chick

Photo: Sandra Lauer

If you are interested in bird-watching or conservation efforts to improve local habitats for birds, why not consider joining the Canberra Ornithologists Group (COG) to learn more about our local birds (<http://www.canberrabirds.org.au>). All are welcome to come along to the many COG outings in our local area. The younger members of our community are especially welcome and encouraged to get involved.

Bredbo 125th Anniversary

Bredbo recently celebrated their 125th anniversary over the weekend of 26/27 October. The MRCA, on behalf of the Michelago community, would like to congratulate the residents of Bredbo.