

Summer  
2014

# Michelago Newsletter

Michelago Region Community Association Newsletter

## Australia Day 2014

by Leanne Pattison

It was a perfectly Oz Australia Day. Blue sky, sun-seared grass, barbecued breakfast snags, community people old and new from the village, over the highway, down the tracks and out of the hills, children with balloons and flags, and a blue heeler tied to a fence. New life came to the old Michelago railway station. Peter Schroedl raised the flag and Fiona Tollis cued us with the anthem on her cd player. Councillor Martin Hughes introduced the Oz Day Ambassador, Wally Mills, who linked, from the heart,



his experiences as an engineer on the Snowy Scheme with Australian values of teamwork, mateship and hard work. Then we all yakked some more and went home. A good morning. Many thanks to Ivan Colaric for mowing the railway station grass for the Australia Day gathering.



Photos by: Leanne Pattison

## 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](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au)

### Email MRCA:

[mrca@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:mrca@michelagoregion.org.au)

### Newsletter and web site editor:

Sandra Lauer

*Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor or MRCA.*

## MRCA AGM & Supper

The Michelago Region Community Association will be holding its AGM on Friday 28th February 2014 at 6.30pm in the Michelago Memorial Hall.

The AGM will be followed by a dinner and a raffle provided by the committee. Please BYO drinks. All Welcome!

The Agenda for 2014 and the Minutes of the 2013 AGM are available online on the MRCA web site.

If you would like to nominate for a committee position or would like to nominate someone else, please fill in the nomination form (enclosed in this newsletter). Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

We encourage MRCA members and others to support the growing Michelago community and become involved with the MRCA Committee.

New Memberships and annual renewals can be made at the AGM or beforehand using the membership form.

Remember that to be able to vote at the AGM, you will need to be a financial member. **\$10 for individuals or \$15 for family membership.**

## MRCA President's Report

by Cate Spencer



I hope you all enjoyed a festive Christmas and restful holidays. At the start of a new year Michelago can look forward to the completion of some great community projects. All these do take time, particularly as those who contribute their time fit it in around home life, work and families. I wish to take this opportunity to give my heartfelt thanks to all those great members of our community who have given their time to

help with works and activities around the village with a view to making Michelago an even better community to live in. I hope you know who you are as I feel that if I tried to name you all I may forget someone.

The Clubhouse at the tennis courts/oval and the renovations to the Railway Station we would like to have finished by Mayfair, Sunday 4th May, so that we may show off features of the village to residents and visitors alike. Some of you may have had a sneak peek at the Railway Station as the Australia Day Breakfast BBQ was held at the Station and doors were open for those to see the progress. There was good crowd who enjoyed a delicious free breakfast and a visit from our local Australia Day Ambassador, Wally Mills.

If you are interested at all in helping in any way, please drop me an email on [mrca@michelagoregion.org.au](mailto:mrca@michelagoregion.org.au).

As you may have gathered that I am quite a project driven person, my husband is pleased that I fund raise and apply for grants so that I can achieve these projects and spend money that is not ours!

To update you on the progress on the tennis courts; we are waiting for funding from a Sport and Recreation Grant to be announced in March. (cross your fingers). Also in the pipeline is a new playground on the oval by the old toilet block, which we hope to gut and serve as a shelter. The playground will be designed for a wide age range of children and be accompanied by seating, tables, a pergola and BBQ. Funds from the 2014 Mayfair and grants will contribute to this infrastructure.

Planning has started for Mayfair. If you would like to help out in anyway, please call 0431 259 632 or email.

Well I have said enough for now, all the best for a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year from the MRCA committee.

## Murrumbucca Fire Update

The Murrumbucca fire situated north of Cooma near Shannons Flat, which started on Friday 31 January, burnt over 2100 hectares. The fire status is now at "patrol"; firefighting resources are only required for patrol purposes to ensure the fire is safe.

All our local rural fire brigades: Michelago, Colinton, Smiths Road, Anembo and Bredbo, attended the fire over numerous day/night shifts and provided welcome local assistance to Shannons Flat Rural Fire Brigade.

A big thank you to all the RFS volunteer firefighters who helped out, and to the welfare and support volunteers as well.

This fire is a timely reminder for all residents to have a Bushfire Survival Plan in place. Talk to your family and make it happen.

**Planning to make a plan is not a plan!**

## Embrace Your Inner Shark

by Jill Dobkin



At Karool Massage wellness is integrated into the massage experience. Each session is a bit different because every client is unique and brings their personal history with them to the table; so we work together to help you feel better. The main goal of a Karool massage is to give you an opportunity to reconnect with your body so you understand what's going right and we tweak areas where you need some help.

Embrace your 'Inner Shark'. What is she going on about? I'm talking about the amazing abilities of the shark to move with grace and fluidity, finding time to rest and restore so it has the power and energy when it needs to get moving.

As part of our modern life style it is quite typical to feel like we don't have enough time, nor energy to get all the things we need or want to do in a day. What about exercise or massage? Many of us regard 'exercise' as something we do recreationally and outside our normal working day. This may form only a small part of our daily activities, if at all. When we decide to 'do' exercise, it can be too rushed or intense and is something we need to "warm up" for or risk injury. Compared with our recent ancestors and from an evolutionary perspective, this is something of an aberration; our hunter-gatherer relatives would have in effect been exercising all day long. Physical activity is what we are designed for and what we repeatedly need in order to condition us for the demands of physical stress. Or in the case of our friend the shark — it dies if it stops moving. It should therefore be no surprise that functional disorders, including pain and disability of the musculoskeletal system, are associated with how we habitually use our bodies and our level of conditioning. How much do you sit in a day relative to how much you move?

I tell my clients that having a massage is wonderful, but it's only just the tip of the iceberg. Massage can be a catalyst for getting sorted in the body/mind, and hopefully as you start to feel better other aspects of life will fall into place. Remember, the real work begins off the table. Keeping the body and mind fit requires a commitment; this includes having a balance between work, play, and rest. When the body frees up, you start to feel more at ease; you move more flexibly, and you feel more emotionally resilient too — you're on your way to embracing your inner shark!

Next time you're enjoying a Karool Massage, know that you're doing a good thing — you're resting now so that you will be ready for action and fighting fit in no time at all.



**An Australian  
Aboriginal word  
for stone is  
Karool.**

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## Historical Snapshot: The Railway Hotel

by Gay Lawler

Speculation on the antics of the two main characters, depicted on the cover of the Michelago Calendar for 2014 (see photo below), is probably all there can be. However, the Railway Hotel in the background, obviously having played a large part in their condition, has a history recorded.



*Railway Hotel in Michelago (thank you to Michelle Lees for the photo)*

With the opening of the railway station (Dec.1887) a kilometre or so from the original village, Mrs. Jackson, one of the last licensees of Kennedy's Hibernian Hotel, saw the opportunity for an establishment in the 'new' village. Her intentions did not eventuate, cancelling her licence and leaving for Cooma in 1888.

William Ryan, describing himself 'of Micalago late innkeeper', applied in December 1887 for a Publican's Licence. The premises, to be known by the sign of the 'Railway Hotel', contained eight rooms exclusive of those for the use of the family. It was constructed of vertical weatherboards and sited opposite the station.

Mrs. Margaret Devlin followed as licensee. Ironically, the auctioning of the late Mrs. Kennedy's old Hibernian, buildings and land, took place in the Railway Hotel in 1895, purchaser Mr. W. Lenane. By the following year Mrs. Devlin was advertising for sale 'Lease, License and Goodwill of favourably known Railway Hotel, Michelago'.

Transfer was granted to John Cotter in October 1896. He and his wife were described as 'good and genial host and hostess' on their leaving after eight years in April 1903.

Mr. Thomas West succeeded for a short time followed by, Mr. Harry C. Russ in 1905, who 'effected great improvements'

Transfer was applied for by F.W. Vietch in June 1907. During his stint as licensee, a Special Licensing Court was formed to reduce the number of hotels in N.S.W. electorates. Thirty two hotels operated in Monaro electorate, one more than in Queanbeyan electorate, in which six had been given three years notice to close. The writing was on the wall. The lack of demand for traveller's accommodation was obviously a factor in the decision to withdraw the licence of the Railway Hotel, Michelago.

Mr. Alex McPherson saw the hotel through to closure from March 1910, renewing the license in December 1910 at a fee of

10 pounds (\$20) due to expire in May 1911.

The building became home to two families, both related to former licensees, the Russ and Ryans.

The hotel and licensees played a major role in Michelago's social activities and official visits, although to a lesser degree than the Hibernian, due now to the existence of the School of Arts.

Perhaps the most memorable occasion was the hearty unofficial welcome home given to Major Granville Rylie on his return from South Africa in August 1901. Pine branches and flags were hoisted, especially at the railway station and the hotel, giving the appearance of Christmas. Members of the 1st. Australian Horse, under their Sergeant Major, were on hand to welcome the Major, and after a hearty breakfast at John Cotter's hotel, was escorted home to 'Micalago Station'.

After the removal of the Post Office from the Railway Station in 1913 part of the old hotel was used for this purpose, Martin Ryan and his wife Annie being Post Master and Mistress for many years. Sadly the building no longer stands.

## Michelago Mayfair Magic - Make it Marvellous for You

from Ingrid Penberthy, Stall co-ordinator

Michelago Mayfair is on Sunday 4th May 2014 at the Michelago Oval.

Mayfair 2013 was a "Bonza" event. We had great numbers and lots of fun with live music all day. With several years behind us, the Mayfair is well and truly becoming established on the annual calendar of regional events and a worthwhile event for our many stallholders.

If you have comments or constructive suggestions to improve the Mayfair from last year's experience, please let us know so we can incorporate this into our planning for 2014. The MRCA is in full swing planning for the 2014 Mayfair, so we would really appreciate your help and suggestions to make it a great day for our community.

We'd like to share the day with you. If you are interested in booking a stall, please give us a call for a chat or simply complete the booking form enclosed in the newsletter.

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.

Areas where we will need helpers are: advertising, sponsors, entertainment, food, car parking, set up, stall holders, children's activities, rural displays, bar sales, community tent, local produce.

### Mayfair contact details...

#### Stallholders

Ingrid Penberthy: phone 0412 222 077 or  
e-mail mayfairstallholders@gmail.com

#### General Enquiries

Cate Spencer: phone 0431 259 632 or  
e-mail famspence@yless4u.com.au  
Fiona Tollis: phone 0478 227 565 or  
e-mail fionatollis@internode.on.net

*Michelago Mayfair 2014*

## Don't Leave Country Patients Out in the Cold

The email below is from Dr Linda Samera, a CommunityRun (<http://www.communityrun.org>) member.

As a patient living in remote NSW, she's seen the impact of accommodation closures at city hospitals for country patients. As a General Practitioner, she's seen the negative health impacts.

Sign and share Linda's petition to put pressure on the NSW Health Minister, Jillian Skinner to provide affordable accommodation for country patients:  
<http://www.communityrun.org/petitions/no-more-accommodation-for-country-patients-in-the-city>

Dear CommunityRun Member,

*I have an autoimmune disease that requires me to travel more than 500km to Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital every month where I spend one week receiving medical treatment.*

*Up until now, my husband and I stayed at Blue Gum Lodge, which was wheelchair friendly, close to the hospital and allowed us to cook our own healthy and affordable meals. But Blue Gum Lodge closed on 31 January 2014. Sadly, it's not the first time this has happened. Prince of Wales Hospital and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital have also closed their country patient accommodation in the past few years. One by one, major hospitals in NSW are closing their essential accommodation for country patients.*

*NSW regional and rural patients suffering from serious illnesses, like myself, are often forced to spend days or months living away from their homes in order to receive the life-saving treatment they need. It is imperative that all major hospitals in NSW have affordable and accessible on-site or nearby patient accommodation for people traveling from regional and rural towns to receive medical care.*

*Can you join me in calling on NSW Health Minister, Jillian Skinner, to provide affordable and accessible hospital accommodation for country patients?*

*In my career as a remote area general practitioner I've seen patients turn down treatment because they couldn't afford accommodation in the city. I've also seen families financially destroyed by huge bills resulting from long stays in the city for life-saving treatment.*

*All of us living in the country are vulnerable because many treatments for diseases and injuries are only available at city hospitals. The NSW government needs to make health care fair and equitable by providing affordable and accessible accommodation nearby every major hospital.*

*The divide between the health of rural and city Australians has been well documented. But there shouldn't be any second-class citizens when it comes to health care in NSW and no patient should have to put up with second rate health care because they live outside a major city.*

*Providing accommodation that is affordable and accessible is the first step to closing that gap. Will you join me in asking NSW Health Minister, Jillian Skinner, to provide affordable and accessible hospital accommodation for country patients?*

Thanks for taking action, Dr Linda Samera.

The Michelago newsletter is also available online,  
in full colour: [www.michelagoregion.org.au](http://www.michelagoregion.org.au).

## Male or Female? It's all in the colour and size... or is it?

by Sandra Lauer

Have you ever wondered why some male and female birds look the same, whilst others look completely different? Bird and other species are said to be "sexually dimorphic" when there are obvious differences between the male and female of the same species (size, colour, shape or behaviour).

Birds are often sexually dimorphic due to differences in their colour and/or plumage (feathers). In many species that exhibit strong sexual dimorphism, young males resemble the females until they are one or two years old.

In our region we have some wonderful examples.

Whister, robin, fairy-wren and triller females are often a duller colour (brown or grey) whereas the males have strongly defined markings and/or coloured plumage.



White-winged triller female (left) & male (right). Photos: Sandra Lauer.

Some differences between the sexes are very subtle. Adult male Galahs have dark brown eyes and adult female Galahs have reddish pink eyes. White-throated Treecreeper females have a tiny golden flash on their cheek; almost impossible to see unless you are looking for it.

Many bird species may look the same, however the males may behave differently, particularly during their breeding season. The male Diamond Firetail will hold a piece of grass in his beak (the larger the better), whilst balancing on a branch, to demonstrate to the females that he is a better suitor than all the other males. "Hello ladies..." A soft mournful call and/or bobbing up and down completes the display. Many other species of Australian finches use similar techniques to attract the females.



Diamond Firetail with grass.  
Photo: Sandra Lauer

There are, however, always exceptions to the rules! Some birds such as the Superb Fairy-wren change their plumage colour during the breeding season. In winter (off season for breeding) they look very much like a female. Wedge-tailed Eagle females are larger than the males; a common trait amongst raptors or birds of prey.

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. 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. <http://www.canberrabirds.org.au>