

The NBBC eNewsletter

No. 181 November 2025

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This is the last newsletter for 2025. The next newsletter will be published early February. This three-month gap will skip producing a January newsletter in the Christmas / New year period when contributors and the editor have other distractions and will enable the two-monthly cycle to end with a December issue next year.

Contributions, including photos, are welcome. Please email them to tonyral49@gmail.com by the end of January. (Note that the phone number for the Newsletter Editor on page 2 of the handbook is that of the former editor. My number is as listed in the membership roll.)

President's Report

Hello Members,

Spring is here and it's great to feel the warmth even though it is interspersed with some cooler days and some much welcome rain for our gardens.

The forecast for Melbourne **Cup Day** did perhaps deter some bowlers with three rinks playing, finishing at around 2.00pm just before the heavens opened again. The Bridge Group were well organised as always and took the opportunity to enjoy an afternoon of bridge in the warmth of the clubrooms. Many came dressed for a more formal day and we saw a variety of hats and fascinators on show.



Prior to the running of the Cup, we all enjoyed the delicious afternoon tea prepared by our hard-working Social Director Sue Stephens and her team. Thanks to Patrick Monahan for organising the sweeps, Craig Stephens and Chris Nolan for serving in the bar and all those who assisted in some way to make the day a success.

Our bowls season is in full swing after our **Pennant Season Launch** on the 10th of October which was very well attended. Plans and information for the 2025-2026 season were provided by our Chair of Selectors Peter Sexton. Deb Petty detailed updates to the Bowls Victoria Conditions of Play as well as an update regarding the new club uniforms. Bowls Director Peter Harry formally introduced and welcomed **Howard Sandler as our Head Coach** for 2025-2026 Bowls Season. Howard brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to our club to assist all our bowlers. We encourage all bowlers to

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attend our Friday training sessions with Howard whenever possible and train individually or with your Weekend / Midweek team to reinforce what we have learnt. Let's work hard and aim for success.

A group of **25 Year 8 students from Balwyn High School** are attending our club during Term 4 for their sport lessons. They attend on **Wednesday** afternoons between 2.10-3.10pm. Many thanks to the members who have come along to assist to date. There are still a few spaces available for the balance of the sessions so if you have an hour to spare and would like to help, please check the list by the main noticeboard and add your name. Ideally, having one club member for four students enables them to be more engaged and enjoy the entire session.

14 Camberwell Grammar students continue to attend our club on **Wednesday** afternoons from 3.45pm – 5.00pm to train for their Saturday interschool competitions. Their teacher and coach manage these sessions, so no assistance is required from our members. We are pleased to be able to again offer our facilities.

The Board has purchased and installed a **new flat plate BBQ**. This unit will be much easier to clean for visitors hiring our facilities and for our volunteer cooks at our club functions. Thanks to Brian Quinn and Michael Potter for managing this task. We were able to use the Gift Card the club received as a thank you from The Concierge Balwyn after 15 of our members attending an information morning tea in August. We were pleased to put these funds towards good use for the benefit of everyone. The Board will endeavour to sell the old BBQ which is still in reasonable condition.

Boroondara Council have recently installed two vents in the clubhouse roof to improve ventilation which will hopefully help the efficiency of the evaporative cooling and make the hall more comfortable during the summer months. We appreciate the continued support from our Council.

It is very pleasing to hear from Craft co-ordinator Lois Staunton that the target for the **NBBC/ KOGO Square Challenge** put to our members in early September may be reached. We were aiming for 400 knitted squares to be sent to KOGO to be made into blankets. A huge thank you to all the knitters who have contributed to this project. KOGO is a most worthwhile charity for our club to support particularly at this time of the year which can be a struggle for many people. Hand knitted items are distributed to over 400 Community Partner Organisations throughout Australia. If you would like more information, please visit their website [Kogo](#).

It may only be seven weeks until Christmas but there is much to do and enjoy prior to our summer break. Our Functions Manager Gayle Slessar displays our upcoming community bookings on the whiteboard near the bar. If you can assist on Friday 7th November at 6.30pm on the green or in the bar, please add your name or speak to Gayle directly. I encourage all members to assist in some way during the year. Sharing the workload is the key. Please speak to one of our Board members to find out in which area assistance would be appreciated.

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As advised above, the next newsletter will be published in early February 2026. Messages and other important updates will continue to be communicated via email and posted on our website <https://northbalwynbowls.com/>. We encourage all members to check our website regularly for updates and book for all upcoming functions by logging into your profile on TidyHQ. Go to the Events page and “Get Tickets” to secure and pay for your entry. The details for the Bridge Christmas Lunch on 4th December are already available and details of the Christmas Dinner on 12th December will be published soon.

Finally, I extend our very best wishes to several of our members who are currently experiencing various health issues and we look forward to when they can return to enjoy the club activities.

Robyn McClelland
President.

Platinum Sponsor	
 The logo for Helloworld Travel Balwyn North. It features the word "helloworld" in white lowercase letters on a blue background. Below it, the word "TRAVEL" is in white uppercase letters on a red rectangular background. Underneath that, "THE TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS" is written in white uppercase letters. To the right of this, the words "Balwyn North" are written in large white uppercase letters.	
Ian Mollison is the Managing Director of Helloworld Balwyn North. Ian has been a Member and Sponsor of North Balwyn Bowling Club for 36 years. Ian's business offers exceptional knowledge, experience, and customer service. Members are strongly encouraged to see Ian for all their travel needs. "We pride ourselves on getting to know all our clients and in learning specifically what you want from your holiday experiences and how we can make that a reality every time you travel with us. We are also available to assist you on each step of the holiday journey, from planning to booking to travelling to returning home and to booking again!" 66 Doncaster Rd, Balwyn North Ph 9819 7173; Mobile 0418513 120	

Membership Report

A brief Membership report:

We've recently welcomed bowling members Leonie and Tom Hickie and Steven Fu, plus Bridge members Ruth Pocock, Jenny Tang, Patricia Goonetilleke, Ann Matthews, Annette Neville, Priya Singh, Rita Gupta, Leah McGinniss and Frank Tan. We hope you all enjoy your time at NBBC. We have a few more "new" bowlers trying out and hope they'll be joining up soon.

It's great to see the new polos being worn by our pennant players. Another order is being processed at the moment for those who missed the first round, and a subsequent order has been placed for legwear, hoodies and jackets.

Yvonne Wheeler

Bowls Director's Report

Cementing your Process – Notes from Kelly Mckerihen's session

PURPOSE

- Having a good pre shot routine helps with reliability. It should be process driven. What is your pre-shot routine? Write it down.
- Repetition = Consistency
- Know your building blocks and make sure you do that same thing every time.
- Create consistency, calm, and confidence every delivery. Repeat your process, not your result.

THINK - (Mental Preparation)

- Assess the head and select your shot.
- Visualise the line, weight, and finish.
- Commit 100% to your choice—no doubt.
- Take one slow breath in... and exhale to calm focus.

PREPARE - (Physical Setup)

- Place and align the mat.
- Grip bowl loosely—soft wrist and fingers.
- Stand balanced, eyes on your aiming point.
- Picture your bowl's journey.

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DELIVER - (Execution)

- Smooth backswing close to your body.
- Controlled release—no flicking.
- Focus on line and rhythm, not power.
- Follow through and stay low, eyes on target.

RESET – (Reflect and Refocus)

- Watch where the bowl finishes.
- Note: line? weight? both?
- No emotion—just feedback.
- Deep breath, shoulders relaxed—prepare for the next shot.

KEY REMINDERS

- **Breathe. See. Feel. Deliver.**
- Focus on the *process*, not the *result*.
- Stay loose—smooth equals consistent.
- Routine = rhythm = reliability.

Peter Harry

Gold Sponsors	
	At Pinnacle Living, we create vibrant, high-quality communities that bring retirement to life. Our aim is to consistently offer the very highest standards of excellence in our homes, facilities, staff and services. 165 Union Road Surrey Hills 3127 Ph 9890 8500
	Commonwealth Bank offers over-the-counter Banking, Home loans, Insurance, Investing and Superannuation services. 333 Whitehorse Rd, Balwyn 3103. Ph 9836 0122

Health & Safety Report

Kindness as a core value at NBBC. Acts of kindness at our club include making new members feel welcome, offering support to those who need it, and creating a positive atmosphere. Acts of kindness increase wellbeing and positively impact performance and enjoyment.

Be welcoming. Actively introduce yourself to new members, include them in conversations and activities. Remember our motto, “Play bowls, make friends.”

Be supportive. Our club relies on its members as volunteers; offer to lend a hand and share your knowledge or skills. Be a good listener or offer practical support if someone is dealing with challenges.

Be positive. Use positive language, give praise for a job well done, celebrate successes on the green or at the bridge table. Remember we all have our good and bad days; offer encouragement on all those days.

By choosing kindness in all we do, we strengthen our club and ensure NBBC remains a place where bowls, bridge, craft, gardening and friendships continue to flourish.

NBBC Health and Safety Committee.

Judy Birch, Alison Milne and Michael Potter.



Avoid misunderstandings!

Fair Play or Foul?

Pennant temperature rule

The rule in relation to the temperature reaching 36 degrees during a pennant match has been changed. In previous years the rule allowed the end to be completed. Now play will be suspended immediately.

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If the temperature at the club's Designated BOM weather station has reached 36 degrees Celsius or above at any time after play commences, play will be immediately suspended for up to 1 hour. It is the responsibility of the side managers to record the time that play is suspended.

(Reference: Metropolitan Pennant Conditions of Play 2025/26 Section 2 - 10.5)

More umpires needed

The Club is short of certified umpires and measurers for both midweek and weekend pennant and needs some more members to become certified umpires. In my experience as an umpire, I get called upon approximately twice each weekend and the majority of call outs are for measures. If you don't have the time to complete an umpires course, please consider a measurers course. Bowls Victoria runs courses for Officiating as summarized below. Detailed information about Officiating courses can be found on the Bowls Victoria web site under the Club Assist Tab.



Officiating Courses

The three components for Officiating are Marker Module, Measurer Module and National Umpire Module. (See <https://www.bowlsvic.org.au/clubassist/officiating/>)

You can do just the Marker and/or Measurer Module or for Umpires you do Marker, Measurer and Umpire Modules.

For all three Modules you can do either a combination of online learning and on-green training and assessment or face-to-face sessions for all three Modules.

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I am available to meet you at the club and assist with your training. So please phone me if you are interested.

Terence Staunton Umpire

NBBC Club Bowls

The club bowls and other bowling equipment are stored in the Bowls Room adjacent to the bar. The bowls as well as bowling arms are available for members to trial before buying their own. Indeed, new bowlers are encouraged to try different bowls, with the assistance of their coach, until they find the bowl which suits them best at which time they can then purchase their own set. Similarly, different bowling arms are available for trial use by those members contemplating moving to an arm.

Could members please note the following:

1. Bowls and bowls equipment are not to be removed from the club site without completing the borrowing form on the door of the Bowls Room.
2. Bowls and bowls equipment must be returned to the Bowls Room after use. The door should then be locked using the club key.
3. Please take care to fully push the bowls storage bins fully to the rear of the storage shelf.
4. Please do not drop bowls into the bins from height. This causes breakage of the bins which then need replacement.
5. If you wish to donate bowls or other equipment to the club, please notify the Club Bowls Supervisor before doing so, attach a brief note to the item then leave it in the Bowls Room.
6. Do not leave your own bowls in the Bowls Room - they will be considered as a donation to the club. Lockers can be hired for storage of your bowls and other items.

Thank you for your cooperation and Happy Bowling!

Simon Spurgeon
Club Bowls Supervisor

Bowling Myths and Maths

I think we all know that bowls take a wider path on a fast green than they do on a slow green. So, I am surprised at how often when I arrive at an away venue for pre-pennant practice I am told by someone who was there before me that the green is “fast and it is wide” or “slow and it is narrow” as if one day we may find ourselves at a venue where the green is fast and narrow or where it is slow and wide. Those combinations are not possible on a good (uniform) surface with no significant wind. This is because on a fast green we deliver the bowl with less initial velocity and it takes longer to reach the target so the effect of the bias pulling the bowl towards the centre line relative to the force of the initial momentum is greater compared to a slow green on which there is less time for the bias to exert its pull. We have to deliver the bowl with a greater aiming angle on a fast green to allow for the greater effect of the bias relative to the momentum. On greens of all speeds, the bowl curves more at the end of its journey as the bias is having a greater relative effect as the bowl slows down. Its momentum is pushing it along a path tangential to the current point of the curve while the bias continues to pull it in from that line.

If there is a significant wind, then there will be different curves for different sides of the green and/or for different directions. Wind can work with or against the bias to increase or decrease its effect and wind can increase or decrease the deceleration of the bowl and so affect the necessary initial velocity.

Tony Ralston

Silver Sponsors	
	BCiB is a division of Domina General Insurance Brokers and a leading insurance broker to the licensed bowling club industry throughout Australia. We are a proud major sponsor of lawn bowls throughout Australia.
	We invite you to Choices Flooring's stunning new showroom in Doncaster. We have the latest in residential flooring in carpet, timber, tile, laminate, luxury vinyl and the new hybrid flooring.
	Back to sleep exert a uniqueness in the world of bedding and mobility products - a specialised showroom in the heart of Balwyn, staffed by a friendly team whose only focus is helping you to sleep better, live better®, now, and into the future.

Social Director's Report

Welcome to the start of the pennant season! October kicked off with a fantastic opening evening, and we're thrilled to see such strong attendance and enthusiasm.

Thank You to Our Volunteers

A special thank you to **Anna Dunn**, **Ann Durrant**, and **Anna Sinclair** for their wonderful work in preparing supper after training and tidying up before our guest speakers began. Your efforts made the evening extra special!

Melbourne Cup Day "Get Together" – Tuesday, November 4

Robyn has reported on what was an enjoyable afternoon despite the inclement weather.



Christmas Hampers Raffle – Donations Needed by November 10

We're collecting items for our annual **Christmas Hampers Raffle**. A list of suitable donation items is posted on the club noticeboard and was emailed to all members. Please leave your contributions in the box near the door **no later than November 10**. Funds raised will support our club's Christmas festivities.

Club Christmas Dinner – Friday, December 12

Celebrate the season with us at our **Club Christmas Dinner!**

 Date: Friday, December 12

 Cost: \$35 per person

 Booking details will be available soon via TidyHQ.

Bridge Players' Christmas Lunch – Thursday, December 4

Bridge players, mark your calendars! Join us for a festive lunch before the final game of 2025.

 Invitations and booking info will be posted on **TidyHQ**.

Friday Night Socials Are Back!

With our **new BBQ installed**, we're excited to relaunch **Friday Night Socials**. Stay tuned for dates and details.

Sue Stephens

Craft Group

In September **Anna Sinclair** led us to make these very individual **Christmas Cards**. It is good to see our ladies taking the initiative now and designing their own cards (some with a little help from Anna). Cardmaking is very therapeutic and several of our ladies really enjoy this activity.



Therese James, Bev Brown and Lois Staunton brought in some donations for **KOGO**. Our **KOGO Knitted Square Challenge** got under way – looking for a target of 400 by 31st October 2025. As at 25th October I am pleased to say we have achieved 300 squares.



On Monday 13th October 2025, a majority of our ladies concentrated very hard to make up their Beaded Angel kit. There was not as much talking as usual because they were all focused on counting and not dropping any beads. Christmas is not far away so these Beaded Angels will soon be adorning Christmas trees and mantlepieces.

Sue O'Brien and Bev Brown brought in donations for **KOGO**. Betty Collins, Anna Sinclair and Ann Ballard worked on their own projects, we had a couple on holiday and one on the sick list.

Next month, provided Cheryl McCowan is back on the well list, she will be showing you how to make this Fabric Box from the kits she has made up, which could hold jewellery, chocolates or even be a little thread-catcher for off cuts. (Please bring something to do just in case Cheryl has not recovered.)



If you have the Second Monday morning of each month free, why not come and join us for a cuppa and a chat and perhaps you will enjoy making up one of our activities.

November will be our **last Craft session for 2025** and please remember our **Christmas lunch** is on **Monday, December 15th at 11.30-2.30pm, Box Hill RSL.**

LOIS STAUNTON

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Stop Press: KOGO Challenge Result

Betty Collins and Lois Staunton sincerely thank everyone who participated in the KOGO Challenge.



We set a **target of 400** squares aiming for at least one square per member. Our members, family and friends together with the help of 40 squares from The Wattle Park Ladies Golf Club (organized by Vice President, Jenny Woods, a NBBC Bridge Player) and 146 squares from St Helena Probus and friends (organized by Yvonne Lockwood, who is also a Thursday NBBC Bridge player) produced a **Grand Total of 582 squares**.

The Volunteers at KOGO will be able to make **either 19 Cot Blankets or 12 Adult Blankets** with our donation. Thank you again for this marvellous result.

Bronze Sponsors			
	Pete's Signs We provide a huge range of signage solutions for businesses, shops, sporting clubs and schools		Meat in a Box 68A Doncaster Rd, Balwyn North VIC 3104
	Harvest Bakery Harvest Bakery is located at 255A Belmore Rd, Balwyn North		
	Joyce Optometrists - George & Matilda EyeCare Our qualified optometrists use the latest techniques and equipment, ensuring your eyes receive the very best care possible.		

Bridge Wildcards



Let's look at **PLAYING NO TRUMPS**, everyone's favourite. 😊

I'm taking the liberty of reproducing an email sent out during Covid, in July 2020, from our Bridge Club's founder, teacher and friend, Ian Speed. Ian inspired me to improve my bridge play, and you'll see that with emails like this, one can only hope to reach his level of expertise.

Happy bridging, Morry Freedman ❤️

There are so many aspects of the game that require partnership understanding which is difficult to acquire in a short time. Simplicity is important in things such as basic bidding system, 1 NT bidding strength, NT responses (Stayman, Transfers), Overcalls, Forcing bids, Opening leads, discarding systems, giving attitude or count to partner, and playing the right cards from cards of equal value. All good fun. The one thing that does not change though is declarer play. It is all down to you. There is no value getting to the right contract with the following two hands and then not making it.

The hands are:

West: S: AQJ10	East: S: 864	7	4-3
H: 832	H: A1096	7	4-3
D: AQ2	D: K83	6	3-3
C: KQ2	C: A96	6	3-3

West dealer. Bidding is easy: 1NT 2C 2S 3NT. Contract is 3NT played by West and North leads 7D. Plan the play.

Count Yurtricks (a famous Austrian Nobleman Bridge player) left us with a legacy that we must abide by. Give yourself 30 seconds to see what is going to happen and what you can control. Keep practicing it until you get better at it. When you count the tricks in this hand try to get a process in place. This is the process that I use:

a) Consider the lengths of each suit S (7) H (7) D (6) C (6). This is a very common NT distribution 7766. Consider the distribution within each suit. S (4-3) H (4-3) D (3-3) C (3-3). Nothing special there as there are no long suits in either hand. 4 tricks are the most that you can make in any suit. For example, a 7 card suit that is 5-2 is a chance to make 4 or 5 tricks but 4-3 combination can make 4 tricks max. If you practice it, you get very quick at it. Focus the brain. The outcome is that any suit under 7 cards is a possible danger as the opposition hold more cards than you do and any suit 7 or above is a chance to make extra tricks.

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b) Count the certain tricks that you have if you cash certain winners. You have 3xC, 3xD, 1xH and 1xS which is 8 certain tricks. Be aware that this is a high number of certainties when in 3NT. The usual number is 6 or 7 so you are very well placed. One inexperienced tactic to take, is to start cashing without thinking. I am sure that this is brought about by some bad experiences that we have all had when we lose a trick and it seems like the sky is falling as the opposition gets into a suit that never seems to end. If you cash the tricks above, the opposition will have all the remaining Clubs, all the remaining Diamonds the KQJ Hearts and the K of Spades. Only bad defence will give you another trick. You need 1 more to make your contract and as many overtricks as you can.

c) Look for possibilities. There are no extras in D and C (two six card suits breaking 3-3). Of the two 7 card suits H is very ragged with KQJ missing. The only safe and profitable option is the Spades suit which has 3 certain tricks with AQJ10 with the K the only card that can stop 4 tricks. You have two options with this suit. Play A followed by the Q (losing to the K) and then cash J10 for 3 tricks. The second option is to try to trap the KS in the South seat. Why not give that a try? If you do it early while you have cover everywhere, then if it works you are a big chance to make 11 tricks. The idea is to lead from the East seat and play the QS if the K does not fall. If it works you need to get back into the east seat and do it again. There are 3 entries into the East Seat. The AC, KD and AH. Obviously using the AH is the most dangerous as it opens up the Heart suit so the KD and AC are the first two options to take with the AH being the third option if you need it.

d) How to do this in 30 seconds. Sure 45 years' experience helps, but a process like the above helps. I will give you a 30 second thought process which takes so much longer to type than think. Ready?

7766 distribution 43, 43, 33, 33 - flat. 8 certain tricks. S and H two 7 card suits. Spades a much better option. All suits covered. H is the most ragged suit. Lead is D so may be long suit there. Finesses or not? Yes, try - no danger if fails. Have 3 entries into Dummy if it succeeds. Take KD to give first entry into dummy and try finesse. Thank you partner - nice cards - King please.

In this case, the King S was in the wrong hand but 10 tricks romps in and there is some chance to put the pressure on the defence for a cheap trick in Hearts after the Spade finesse fails. When put back on lead after the S finesse fails, I would then give up a cheap H trick without using the Ace. After that, the defence is in some trouble. They are going to be squeezed when you cash the Spades. The person with long D's and the one with long C's will want to keep them, and it is amazing how often they are drawn to throw away cover to the Heart honours in a situation like this, especially if they don't count what declarer has. Leave AH until the second last card and occasionally the 10 comes good. When it works at the table be humble and don't celebrate, but remember to high five your partner later and tell them how good you were.

[Ian Speed]

Pickleball at NBBC

The Pickleball Experiment

Pickleball is a paddle sport that blends elements of tennis, badminton, and table tennis. Played on a smaller court with a low net, the game uses a paddle and a plastic ball with holes. It can be played as singles or doubles, is easy to learn, and is known for being accessible to a wide range of ages and skill levels.

The idea of introducing the game was as a means of attracting visitors (particularly locals) through our front gates and introduce them the many activities we offer, particularly lawn bowls. Currently under the supervision of a professional coach (Anthony Baranoski) we have two one-hour sessions on Fridays at 09:30 & 10:30am. We are attracting a lot of guests, two of whom I believe have indicated their intention to join.

NBBC was successful in our application for a council grant to support the pickleball programme and already a portion of those funds have enabled us to double the courts to 4 (already completed), as well as enable us to source 4 nets, 20 paddles and 100balls.



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Under a professional coach (Anthony) we are currently running 2 x 1 hour sessions on a Friday starting at 09:30 and while we are achieving a full complement of players for the early session, we are wanting for the 10:30 slot.

I believe we need a serious social media programme to encourage local people to come to NBBC, not just for pickleball, but for any of our activities. The grant for social media from the council was about \$400. Hopefully, our directors will see their way clear to promote our club's activities using social media, for which this \$400 can be a contribution.

Peter O'Brien
Pickleball Co-Ordinator

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	Plumbers Choice is a Trade Only plumbing supplies, our goal is to change the way plumbing goods are sold in Australia
	Jellis Craig are local area experts, delivering the best results for all clients as they share their passion and knowledge of Melbourne real estate. 244A Whitehorse Rd, Balwyn
	Zen Herbal Liniment & Zen Sports Spray help relieve minor sports injuries including bruises, sprains and general muscle aches. Perfect for bowlers!

Bronze Plus Sponsors	
	A Real Health A professional & holistic healing centre, combining naturopathy, painless acupuncture, and low-level laser therapy. 437 Belmore Rd, Mont Albert North VIC 3129
	Regan Motors Regan Motors has been selling and servicing new and used vehicles in Balwyn and the surrounding areas for over 70 years.

Garden Plots

Hi plotters and potential plotters, as we still have a couple of vacant plots (as of writing this) ready for your spring plantings. Now that the soil is starting to warm up as the sun starts to shine it's a great time to think about what vegetables you can plant heading into Xmas.



I have planted some zucchini seedlings which are already starting to flower and hope to have zucchini ready for the Xmas feast. Also, I have spinach, cucumber, parsley and coriander in and ready to go. There are many vegetables and herbs to plant at this time of year. Radishes are great and easy to grow. Plant these from seeds and thin out once they start to shoot through and you will be staggered as to how quickly they grow. Also, the following vegetables and herbs are good for planting currently. Spring onions, garlic, tomatoes, beans, lettuce, carrots from seeds and silver beet are just a few but I'm sure there are many more depending on what you like. I have just dug in plenty of compost and manure together with some new soil and you will be staggered as to how your seedlings thrive with some of this.

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Talking of compost, make sure you use the council-funded bins we have on each plot. If you are just starting your bin, start off with some carbon containing ingredients such as newspaper, cardboard, straw, etc. then add some nitrogen containing ingredients such as green garden waste and kitchen waste (no onions, garlic or citrus as the worms don't take kindly to these). Some ground coffee leftovers are also ok but I prefer to put these on the plot to help control the weeds. Once you have started, add a few worms which help to munch up the compost. I poke a stick into my compost to help aerate it and keep it moist. Once it starts to smell earthy, it's ready to spread and mix with your soil. (See also <https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/how-to/compost/9433472>)



Enjoy your plots and happy to swap any produce once we can see it growing. It should be a great year for zucchini.

Cheers

Plotter Chris
Chris Walker



Club Personality

Club Personalities -32 & 33 Eric and Helen McGee



Eric was born in 1931 at Albury N.S.W. Where his father found work during the depression. The family moved to Williamstown in 1939, and Eric schooled at North Williamstown and Footscray Tech.

He took up an apprenticeship at the Naval dockyard in cabinetmaking and studied for a building diploma at night school. He was an active member of Williamstown Lifesaving Club which later formed the Point Lonsdale Lifesaving Club.

Eric met Helen on the beach at Point Lonsdale. They married in 1958 and have lived in Tannock St Nth Balwyn St for 67 years. He has been a busy and involved member of many groups and organisations including Balwyn Apex, Rotary, Probus, and The North Balwyn Bowls Club (17 years).

Eric has kept a life-long interest in lifesaving being a “Life” member of Williamstown and Point Lonsdale lifesaving clubs and involved with four other state and federal organisations.

He learned to play the violin in primary school and has been involved in playing with community symphony orchestras “for ever”. *Heidelberg Symphony plays 4 concerts a year to a sellout audience of 500.* Eric also plays the saxophone and clarinet and has been a member of various dance bands.



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Work-wise, Eric formed and managed McGee Constructions in about 1956 and has built about 400 projects employing around 30 men.

When he retired from building, he studied and built violins making 15 violins, 2 violas and a cello which he says, “*I now have to sell*”.

He has loved the Bowls Club and all the fun and activities he has been involved with and is looking forward to many more games.

Since retirement he has enjoyed travelling around the Australian outback with Helen, four-wheel driving with a camper trailer graduating to a caravan.

Helen was born in Ivanhoe in 1932, the third of four children. She attended Ivanhoe Girls Grammar where they were encouraged to do everything and she did! Playing sports, debating and taking leadership roles. She went on to study Occupational Therapy, a decision probably influenced by the fact that her two elder sisters were disabled. One being deaf and the other with Downs Syndrome.

Occupational Therapy was a new course established in Melbourne in 1948, instigated post WW2 as injured service men and women returned to Australia. She commenced in 1951 and graduated in 1954. Her first job was at Janefield residential centre for intellectually disabled (one year), followed by five years at Marathon School for cerebral palsied children.

During these years She met and married Eric McGee, a builder and keen surfer and musician. They built their home in 1957/58 in North Balwyn which was just emerging from paddocks and orchards with unmade roads and no sewerage. They are still in the same home to this day.

Helen took a break from (paid) work in 1960 when they adopted their family of a son and a daughter. She became very involved with School committees. She attended the Presbyterian Church, played tennis and spent many weekends at Surf Lifesaving Carnivals from Lakes Entrance to Portland! They had a Combi van with two cots for the children and a tent (hard to imagine Eric as a Hippie).

Then came a period of more stability when they retreated to a Holiday House at Balnarring Beach and took on Sailing in the summer and Skiing in the winter. – “*one of the happiest and busiest time of our lives*”, says Helen.

Helen returned to (paid) work in 1975 at the Psychogeriatric Day Hospital in the old Kew Mental Hospital complex. This was a really rewarding experience, interacting with men and women who with very debilitating lifestyles had such interesting stories to tell and a complete change from her previous work with children.

The work at that time involved relocating elderly residents of the psychiatric hospitals, many of whom had been in institutions for most of their lives. Finding accommodation for them and their assisting-

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carers was transformational for all concerned. Such an all-encompassing transition is something Helen still has doubts about.

Since retiring in 1995 Helen has enjoyed Bridge and, together with Eric, meals on wheels, bowls, and, in her words, “his music, and my listening”.

At NBBC Helen has played for many years at lead, 2nd and 3rd, craftily avoiding the position of Skip! She has been an active member of the club as a Selector, Provender, Committee Member, but her favourite role was as Welfare Officer. She has been recognised for her service with a Life Membership.

Helen is hopeful that their involvement with Aged Care will stand them in good stead for the future, especially as they forget their names and muddle their appointments.

Helen and Eric embody the life and soul of the Club, and we are all thankful for their efforts and our lives have been enriched for knowing them.

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