

Jumping into the record books Ranges hletics





Hello from the Living Today team

I've got fond childhood memories of walking barefoot to the local park where I grew up to enjoy the sights, tastes and sounds of the monthly community fair and market. I remember the musical bands and performers that I'd listen to and watch as I sat on the grassy hill behind the stage. I remember the smell of wafting steam coming from pots of exotic foods laid out on the grass (food safety was a little different then). And I remember the 'lolly-man' stall. Ah yes, the 'lolly-man'! He was the highlight for us kids and someone we would visit to purchase from each time. However, we purchased usually without parental supervision, and I now look back with a tinge of regret after perhaps a higher than average number of visits to the dentist.

Well, it is that time of year again. No, not dentist time, but time for our own community's annual celebration – Celebrate Mooroolbark 2024!

Living Today magazine is most thankful to be in partnership with Celebrate Mooroolbark to promote this wonderful township event each year as we come together and celebrate our local community and its people.

As a member of the Celebrate Mooroolbark committee several years ago, I recall that as we planned each festival (when it was held at the Red Earth Park on Brice Avenue) we consciously had in mind families and the expense that such events might entail. So we tried to keep the cost low, thinking of those young families in the area who would be attending. And I believe members of the committee still pride themselves on the many free activities available. There is the Active Living Hub and the kids' activities, there is the classic cars car show, and there is the constant mix of performers and entertainment at the main stage in the rotunda. The highlight for my two kids is the performance by Steve the Magician, about which I get a blow-by-blow update at the end of the day.

At a time when the cost of living is impacting many, we hope that everyone will find something worth being involved in on Sunday March 17 from 10am to 4pm at Hookey Park and surrounds. Also, don't forget the Yarra Valley Wool and Handicrafts Show nearby in the Mooroolbark Community Centre featuring many of the artists and craft experts locally and from abroad.

You may notice a change at the festival locale this year with a new hue featured on the walls of the nearby library. As part of the Mooroolbark Street Art Project¹ the library has a fresh coat of paint and some bigger than lifesize friends to greet you. So come down, have a look and enjoy Celebrate Mooroolbark 2024.

We hope you enjoy this issue.

Matthew Gudze, Lead Pastor, Grace Communion Mooroolbark (sponsors of Living Today) on behalf of the Living Today Editorial Team.



Issue 86 // March 2024

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Like to contribute?

If you have a good news story about people or groups who are an inspiration to the community, please contact the editor on our church-office phone number or by email (details above).

PDFs of this issue and all past issues of Living Today can be accessed at: <u>livingtoday.org.au</u>

To join the email distribution list please send a request to <u>editor@livingtoday.org.au</u>

Our Sponsors

Living Today greatly appreciates the valuable contributions made by several businesses which partner with us in serving our local community through this magazine. Their financial sponsorship makes the magazine possible, and we gratefully acknowledge those partners in each issue.

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mission statement

To contribute towards and to help to foster a growing community spirit within our neighbourhood. We seek to achieve this by:

- Highlighting the many positives within our community
- Encouraging partnership in community initiatives
- Contributing to the process of identifying and addressing community needs and concerns



We meet every Sunday at 10.30am at the Mooroolbark Community Centre. Come along and enjoy a service and stay for a chat with delicious tea, coffee and biscuits.

Green Printing Credentials



Living Today is printed on Spicers Pacesetter uncoated paper. This paper is sourced from a mix of paper from managed forests and 30% recycled paper.

Celebrating the stars of our community

Without the work of dedicated community volunteers our Celebrate Mooroolbark annual festival cannot continue.

We are hoping that many of our readers will offer their time and skill to either continue volunteering in Mooroolbark or become first-time volunteers.

This double-page spread highlights the stories of two local volunteers. Mount Evelyn resident Paula Herlihy has mentored and inspired many Mooroolbark volunteers and was honoured with an OAM last year. And we reprint an article/excerpts with permission from the Lilydale Star Mail about a recent award for one of our Living Today writers.

Paula Herlihy, OAM



by Mary Bourchier

During the 2023 King's Birthday celebrations, Mount Evelyn resident Paula Ruth Herlihy received an Order of Australia award, in recognition of over 50 years of community service in the communities of Mount Evelyn and the Yarra Ranges.

Since the 1970s Paula has taken on many and varied roles, including founder, president, minutes taker, chair, secretary and treasurer for over 20 local community groups, such as the Mount Evelyn Township Group (METIC), Mount Evelyn History Group, Mount Evelyn Environment and Progress Group, Yarra Ranges Heritage Network and Friends of Wanderslore, Water Race and Quinn Reserve and Mount Evelyn Aqueduct groups, and is the current secretary of the Association of Eastern Historical Societies.

Being highly organised and motivated to help support local education, Paula also joined the Mount Evelyn Primary School and Monbulk High School councils and was actively involved in setting up Morrison Community House and the Mount Evelyn Montessori Playgroup.

Paula also found she had time and energy to lend a hand to Community Council, Community Education and other community groups including the Mount Evelyn RSL Sub-Branch, Mount Evelyn Pokemon Go Community Days and the Nursing Mothers Association.

Fireworks graphics by rawpixel.com on Freepik

Randall Bourchier

Article courtesy Lilydale Star Mail*

Leadership, dedication, understanding and community passion are words best used to describe the Yarra Ranges Ian De La Rue Award for Community Leadership recipient of 2024. Mooroolbark's Randall Bourchier was as humble as ever to receive the recognition on Friday 26 January.

"To say that I was surprised to receive this award would be an understatement because I never really considered myself as a leader but simply part of a group of people committed to the same end," he says.

"I've lived in Mooroolbark for decades and I've been involved in the community. It's been a delight to have a wonderful team of like-minded people who want to bring benefit to our township and to the people living and working in it."

But community work wasn't always part of Randall's life. As a young man he found himself in a dire position and it was only through faith that he found his way out.

"For me, it was doubly surprising because as a 20-year-old I found myself, as a result of my wilfulness, sitting in a prison cell, and from that beginning you wouldn't anticipate the years of working in community in a positive way," he says.

"Many people would consider that a retrograde and foolish step, but at that point I became a Christian and that gave me a whole new outlook on life."

Randall has mentored young people with KidsHope, led the congregation at Grace Communion Mooroolbark as a pastor and most notably helped establish the Mooroolbark Umbrella Group (MUG) in 2009, remaining president to this day. Through MUG, he has also been heavily involved in the setting up of Shop 16 at the Mooroolbark Terrace which acts as a drop-in centre and community space.



"MUG is a group of member organisations and people who have the similar goal of wanting to enhance the wellbeing and thriving of Mooroolbark," he says. "The logo is instructive because it's an upside down umbrella. So it's cradling the other things in Mooroolbark rather than trying to control or necessarily initiate."

Randall was instrumental in establishing the Ouiet Achiever Awards and, along with a team of volunteers, also ensured that the Goodness Gracious Network, formerly Nourish Network, could continue delivering food to families in need.

Similarly, upon hearing of the retirement of Janet Van Dijk, former editor of Mooroolbark's Living Today magazine, Randall continued "to highlight and celebrate the good things about Mooroolbark and its people".

Spreading kindness, support and friendship to those going through challenging times has been ever present in Randall's work but even more so after the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires, where he was on the ground as a chaplain, a role he has remained in for the last 35 years.

Grateful to have been supported by his community and the Yarra Ranges Council throughout his years of volunteering, Randall had one person to thank in particular.

"I couldn't have done it without my wife. We've just celebrated 50 years of marriage and she's been a wonderful help and support and partner in all of this and our family has been very supportive and encouraging."

* issuu.com/starnewsgroup/docs/2024-01-30_mte_341/1



What's on?

Sunday 17 March 2024, 10am-4pm

- ★ Activity tent
- Active Living Hub (scouts abseiling tower, guides mini golf and sports)
- ★ Animal farm
- ⋆ Go-carts (cost)
- ★ Amazing Mooroolbark Trail
- ★ Lucky Straws
- Colouring competition

- Garden activities, such as plant a seed and Community garden tours
- ★ Mooroolbark Library
- ⋆ Yarra Valley Wool and Handicrafts Show
- ★ Car Show
- ★ Gymbaroo
- ★ Judging of baking competitions.

Competitions



Let's get crafty! Competitions are back at the Wool Show and we'd love to see your entries from the applicable categories below.

The theme is "With a Touch of Green" and we can't wait to see how you interpret it! We'll have more information on how to submit your entries soon!

The categories are Age 4-8, 9-12, 13-18 and Open.

Check out the upcoming events on the back page of this issue of Living Today for full details or email **yarravalleywoolshow@celebratemooroolbark.com**





Get your aprons on and join our 2024 Baking Competition!

The categories are:

- * Banana Muffins (10 years & under)
- ★ Banana Muffins (open)
- ★ Carrot Cake (open)
- ★ Lemon Slice (open)
- ★ Your choice (open)

Cost to enter: gold coin

Drop off at Shop 16, Mooroolbark Terrace 3-4pm, Friday 16 March or 10-10.30am, Saturday 17 March. **competitions@celebratemooroolbark.com**

More details are available on the website: **celebratemooroolbark.com/competitions**

Celebrating our Traders at Celebrate Mooroolbark

Mooroolbark Traders Group, alongside many other individual traders in Mooroolbark, like to contribute to the community's annual festival Celebrate Mooroolbark as they feel it brings good vibes and atmosphere to our town.

As traders we have numerous ways in which we can be involved, including sponsoring the festival, donating items for raffles and competitions, advertising the festival in shop windows, having a stall, running kids' activities or having our doors open to the many families enjoying a day in town for the festivities.

Thank you to the following Traders in Mooroolbark who currently have a part in the festival in some way:

- **Mooroolbark Library** 10am-4pm, activities, advertising plus hosting a drop off point for the colouring competition
- Mooroolbark Gymbaroo Stall/Activity for kids
- Mooroolbark History Group Display
- **Bendigo Bank** Significant Sponsor and stall on Saturday with Piggy mascot
- Shop 16 Community Connect Use of space for volunteer hub and entry for Mooroolbark trail prizes
- Mixed Makers studio Open with kids' activities happening
- Yarra Valley Gourmet Sausages Donating Power
- Methvens Professionals Real Estate Major Sponsor, and manning the Traders stall on the day for community engagement and discussion
- Lions Club Major Sponsor & BBQ
- **Mooroolbark Wool** Wool Show stall & help in organising the woolshow
- Mooroolbark community garden Stall
- Scouts Abseiling Tower
- Guides Mini golf and sausage sizzle.
- Run Kids' activities

Mooroolbark Traders Group

Table at the Community Connect Shop 16 in the Terrace, display of Partner businesses in the new partnership program, discussing local projects and having a listening ear for community wants and needs.

Mooroolbark Terrace Shopping Centre

Use of spaces providing shade, quiet and cool. Use of toilets for public access, use of marquees.

Mooroolbark Community Garden

The new Mooroolbark Community Garden will be providing a 'quiet area' where there will be coffee, scones, plant sales, children's garden activities, garden tours and information on what they do.

mooroolbark

Festival Sponsors

Celebrate Mooroolbark would not be possible without the support of our generous sponsors. Year after year these sponsors have donated not only their money but also their time and expertise to play their part in making the festival such a success.



As our premier sponsor, **Yarra Ranges Council** has generously committed to providing annual financial support. Thanks to Council for their part in enabling the festival to grow each year and encouraging values of empowerment, inclusion, sustainability, and innovation through Celebrate Mooroolbark.

* Professionals

Thank you to the **Professionals Mooroolbark** for 21 years of financial support and for generous incidentals, such as the distribution of this special festival edition of Living Today. Special thanks also go to Managing Director Geoff Earney for embracing the philosophy: "When the community prospers, business likewise prospers."

📕 Bendigo Bank

Bendigo Bank Mooroolbark branch has loyally partnered with the Festival and Living Today since its inception. Thanks go to Rowan Alexander and his team for seeing the longer-term potential for the festival. We acknowledge our Community Bank's crucial contribution not only to Celebrate Mooroolbark but also to our town.



Croydon-Mooroolbark Lions Club exist to benefit the common good in our community. Thank you to the Club for their longstanding support, financially and through their regular presence at the Festival, offering a low-cost food option for our familyfriendly event.

Fishprint

Fishprint, our local specialists in print who generously donates all the print media required to advertise the Festival each year. They also provide our print required on the day of the Festival including the Site Map and appreciation certificates.

livingtoday

Living Today is our free quarterly magazine published as a gift to the region by Grace Communion Mooroolbark has regularly included segments on the Festival.

ROSS MACKAY

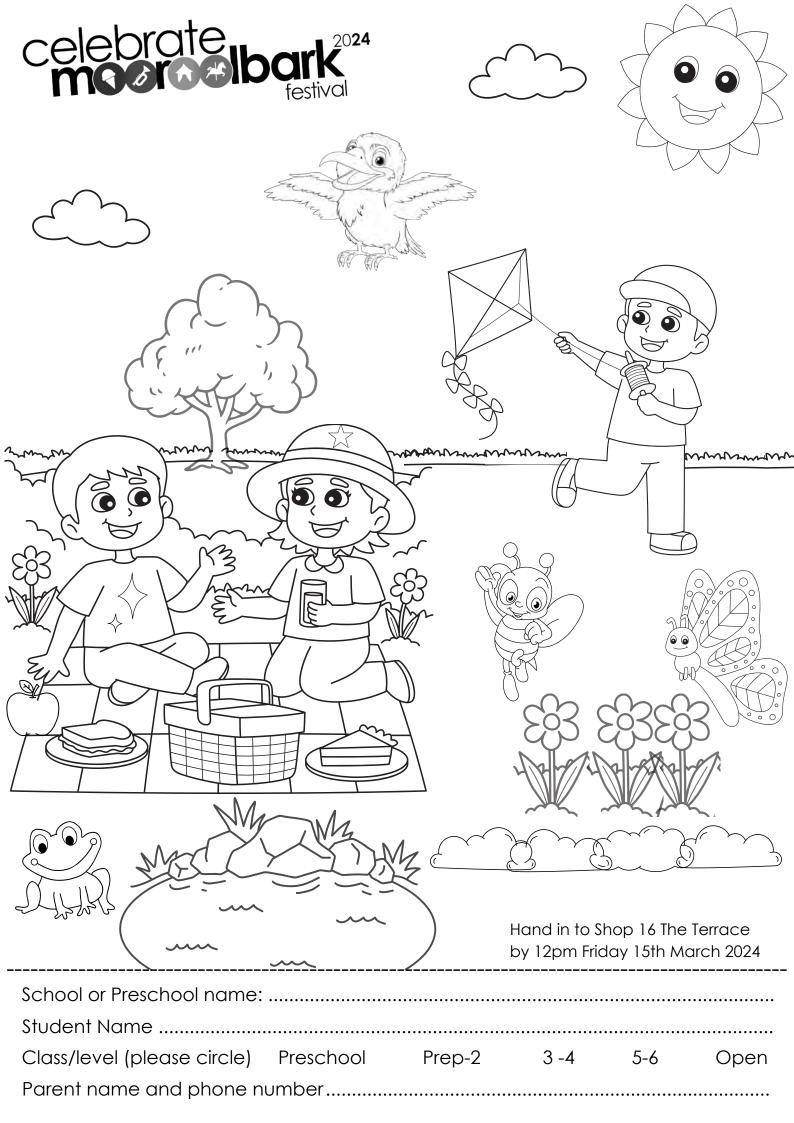
Ross MacKay is the creative genius behind the graphic design that appear on Celebrate Mooroolbark materials each year. Thanks to Ross for his creative energy and transforming the festival vision into the colourful, eye-catching visuals we all enjoy.



Comprehensive Tagging Service offers professional test and tag services for all types of businesses. They serve major clients who are household names and test thousands of appliances and machinery.

David Hodgett MP proudly supports the 2024 Celebate Mooroolbark Festival.

We are also supported by Aaron Violi MP, Bridget Vallance MP and Sonja Terpstra MP.



Certain Doom

Part three of our continuing story for kids // by Ross MacKay

Certain Doom. Not possible doom, not could-goeither-way doom but Certain Doom. The kind of doom that necessitated a capital D and quite possible capital OOM too but that was yet to be ascertained.

"Right, so, um if it's so certain," I began, "then I guess there's not a lot to be done and, well I'd better be off. Nice to meet you Francois," I gabbled and turned to leave, rather unsuccessfully given I had nowhere to go.

"OK, so maybe only Certain – if nothing is done about it – DOOM," said Francois, rather worryingly upping the stakes in the capital letters department.

"To be honest I'm not sure I care what kind of doom it is," I said. "I'm pretty sure there's not a word you could put in front of doom to make it any more palatable. I mean it's hardly likely to be *nice* doom or *exciting* doom is it?" I continued my previous gabbling looking swiftly around for any way out of here. I had to avoid this *certain* doom that it seemed Francois was *certain* I was to do something about. This wasn't fair; I had only come through the door in search of excitement and adventure, not...

"Oh yes," said Francois, making no attempt to hide the fact he was reading my mind again. "There's certain to be excitement and adventure..."

"...before I meet my CERTAIN DOOM!" I finished his sentence for him.

"Well let's hope not, we wouldn't have selected you if we thought... oh wait, we didn't select you. Oh bum!" Francois slumped back into his chair in the process of which he accidentally hit a small dark green lever.

Behind me came a sound a bit like *Fswisshhhahhhh*. It was a bit like a *hissssss*, but with a larger variety of letters and complex low notes. I spun around to find one of the indented circles on the wall slowly opening. Like a camera shutter it opened from the centre out until it was no longer a dark green circle but an opening that was my way out of here! This was my chance to escape any possible encounters with Certain DOOM and just maybe get back home. I made a beeline for the opening and just as I threw myself in I heard Francois call after me:

"Oh so you changed your mind. That's the way! Throw yourself into it head first, just beware of the..."

I was never to know what it was he was trying to warn me of. Looking back now it could have been any number of things. What would have been more helpful right there and then though would have been the simple warning that I was throwing myself into the top of a waterslide that, had this been a theme park, would have most certainly been called "Certain DOOM". To read parts one and two of this story visit <u>livingtoday.org.au</u> and view Past Issues. **Part one** is in Sept 2023 and **Part two** is in Dec 2023. Look out for Part four in June 2024!

"And then you made this really odd sound a bit like when a cactus sneezes. You have to admit, it was a *little* bit funny."

I looked around. I was sitting in a shallow pond in a forest clearing. Sticking out of the trees behind me was the bottom end of the water slide down which I must have just come. The last few minutes had been a terrifying mix of water, flashes of green, more water and strange conflicting feelings that bounced back and forth between thinking this was the best fun I'd ever had and *thisisiti'mgonnadieanyminutenow.....* wheeeeeeewhatfun....argharghargh!

"Um, are you listening to me? I was trying to explain all the odd noises you made on the way down. Hello I'm a bit weird."

I realised then that I must have been in a bit of a daze on exiting the waterslide and that this strange fellow had been talking at me for a while. I tried to rewind and catch up.

"You're a bit weird?" I managed.

"That's my name, Abythwryd pronounced 'a bit weird', hehe, I know, sounds like I'm saying 'I'm a bit weird', but I think that's the point. My parents were a bit... eccentric." He stared off into space for a few moments, then shook his head and looked back at me, "Hello Alllan. Now I know you're not who we were expecting but that's OK, Francois tells me you're very keen, didn't hesitate and threw yourself right into the slide. And that was before he even got to explain everything properly. So it's up to me to give you the briefing. Did he get the to part about the Certain DOOM?"

I got up. I walked over to Abthwyrd. I said that I was sorry. And then I ran away into the woods. I may have screamed.

This was all too much for me. One minute I was shopping with my Mum for my sister's birthday party and the next I'm meant to be the saviour of some strange world? If it hadn't been for how terrifyingly real that waterslide had been I would have thought that I was dreaming. But this was real, everything was real. The door. Francois. The slide. The Certain Doom. Abthwyrd. The ten foot tall pink tulip with very sharp teeth that loomed over me drooling and licking its lips. It was all real and quite terrifying.

Background graphic by Freepik

Wait, what?



Jumping into the record books

by Ross MacKay

When your toddler starts to show a penchant for jumping off things like six foot walls, one might start to get worried. Or alternatively one might decide to take a more opportunistic view and check out if there are any world records for two-years-olds jumping off tall things. That's exactly what Christine Willis of Mooroolbark did when her son Harlem (now aged 10) began to take great delight in *jumping*. In her own words, Harlem was "born to jump". Her research revealed a two-year-old that had broken a record for jumping which led her to discover Canadian-based organisation, *Kids World Records*.

Harlem's older siblings had always shown athletic talent especially in the field of hurdles. They have been to the World Under 20s Championships finishing 5th, and his older brother is currently training for the Olympics this year. Harlem however was diagnosed with autism at the age of four, which sadly led many people to simply write him off when it came to achieving the same levels of ability as his siblings.

The hope had always been that Harlem would follow in the footsteps of his older siblings. Christine says, "When he was four, the physiotherapist said he had the legs of an eight-year-old boy – very athletic. He jumps all over the place, off the furniture and off high things. Under things, through things, over things!" Harlem does Parkour and Little Athletics and Christine also spends time training him. There has been no stopping him putting his jumping skills to good use – while his siblings win medals *running* and jumping, Harlem is breaking records *standing* and jumping!

Over the course of the past year Harlem has clocked up a whopping 11 world records for various styles of jumping. He has broken the record for standing long jump on several occasions (his current record being



203cm), highest standing jump, highest standing tuck jump, jumping down a number of stairs (current record 9 stairs) and even holds the record for largest foot size for a seven-to-nine-year-old!

Harlem's most recent record-breaking result was *The most consecutive 50cm box jumps in 30 seconds*. He completed this record in February this year with a total of 21 jumps. Now he has his sights set on *The most kids' world records held by one child* world record!

You can view Harlem's records – plus many others from across the world – at the Kids World Records website (<u>kidsworldrecords.com</u>). Just put in a search for 'jump' and you'll find his face beaming out at you multiple times. And as seen on the cover of this issue of Living Today, one can proudly show off their record-breaking performances with a host of medals!

Harlem's story is one of resilience, of finding a new and unique way to have your skills recognised. He has been able to take the joy and passion he has for jumping and channel that energy into breaking world records, all without leaving the country. Harlem is carving his own niche, taking a different route to his siblings, and showing that there is more than one way to get ahead in this world, which Harlem certainly is doing in *leaps* and *bounds*!

Barbara Austin Community Spirit Award

by Renae Jones

Barbara Austin was an integral part of Mooroolbark's volunteer community. She was involved with organisations such as the Disabled People's Company, People's Pantry and was our beloved Chair for the Celebrate Mooroolbark Festival.

To honour Barb's commitment to community, the Celebrate Mooroolbark Committee has created the Barbara Austin Community Spirit Award. This award will be presented annually to someone in the community who embodies the qualities we saw in Barb – humble, passionate, positive, kind, welcoming, and persevering. This year the committee has chosen a recipient that will be announced at the Festival. From 2025 it will be reaching out to the community to allow them to nominate a special volunteer who meets the criteria.



Cost of living

by Emma Wilkins, Centre for Public Christianity

I know what's meant by "cost-of-living". I know it's about money, the economy, inflation, interest rates. But don't you think those words, so often chanted in the news, could be taken from, or used to make, a poem?

Cost of living. I think less about the rising price of rent, of petrol, milk and bread, than of parents sick with worry, up all night, waiting for their teen to return home; a grown man, helping a father who no longer knows his name, to bed; a schoolgirl, who sees her friend 'forgot' his lunch, again, and pretends to not want hers. It reminds me of the always worthwhile, often costly task – of loving.

Cost of living. Like burden of care, like right to die, it's said so casually but it can make me want to weep. It reminds me of how bleak this life can be and often is.

It reminds me of a survey in which one in two respondents thought that disability should qualify an adult to ask for help to die. Fortythree per cent deemed mental illness valid grounds, some thought homelessness, or poverty, were too. It's one thing to cry, "My life is not worth living!" when you're facing profound hardship, when you're in relentless pain, but I wonder what it's like when others, rather than protest, agree.

We've all suffered in this place; some less, some more – and doubtless will. Thinking of 'the cost' there sometimes is to carry on, stirs me to lament. But then my spirits rise with what comes next. The task: beautiful and noble, full of wonder, laced with hope – 'of living'.

This article has been republished with the permission of Centre for Public Christianity. **publicchristianity.org**

This magazine is sponsored by Grace Communion Mooroolbark (previously known as Mooroolbark Christian Fellowship), a congregation of Grace Communion International. If you would like more information or pastoral support, our local congregational contact is Matthew Gudze on (O3) 9737 O126.

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Local Churches at Easter

Grace Communion Mooroolbark Mooroolbark Community Centre, 125 Brice Avenue, Mooroolbark

Thursday 28th March (venue to be confirmed) Maundy Thursday - 7.30pm

Sunday 31st March Easter Sunday - 10.30am

mooroolbark.gci.org.au

Life Ministry Church 15-49 Old Melbourne Rd, Chirnside Park

Friday 29th March Good Friday service - 10am

Sunday 31st March Resurrection Sunday - 10am & 6pm

lifeministry.church

Mooroolbark Baptist Church 153-157 Hull Rd, Croydon

Thursday 28th March "Service of Shadows" - 8pm

Friday 29th March Good Friday - 9am

Sunday 31st March Easter Sunday - 10am

mbc.org.au



Mooroolbark Salvation Army Corps 305 Manchester Rd, Chirnside Park

Friday 29th March Good Friday - 10am

Sunday 31st March Easter Sunday - 10am

salvationarmy.org.au/locations/victoria/ v330/mooroolbark-corps

St Peter Julian Eymard, Mooroolbark Parish 240 Hull Rd, Mooroolbark

Thursday 28th March Holy Thursday Mass - 7.00pm

Friday 29th March, Good Friday

Stations of the Cross 10.00 am in church and outdoors (weather permitting)

Veneration of the Cross at 3.00pm

Saturday 30th March The Easter Vigil - 7.00pm

Sunday 31st March Easter Mass - 9.00am and 11.00am

<u>spje.org.au</u>

Mooroolbark (St. Margaret's) Uniting Church 207-219 Hull Rd, Mooroolbark

Friday 29th March Good Friday service - 10am

Sunday 31st March Resurrection Sunday - 10am

mooroolbark.unitingchurch.org.au

Background photo by mrsiraphol on Freepik





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March-June 2024

elebra

mooroo com





activities, stalls

& more!

Let's get crafty! Competitions are back at the wool show and we'd love to see your entries from the applicable categories below. The theme is With a touch of green...

Age 4-8: Craft a pompom animal/creature, construct a fabric person/animal or make something from nature using things found outdoors.

Age 9-12: Use scrap fabric to make dolls clothes, construct a fabric animal or toy, knit a 14 cm square using any stitch or make something from nature using things found outdoors.

Age 13-18: Upcycle any garment, create a piece of wearable art or knit/crochet any garment.

Open: Knit or crochet a beanie or scarf, a toy or animal, a jacket or jumper or upcycle any garment.

More information on how to submit your entries will be available on our website celebratemooroolbark.com soon.



20**24**

400

festival

MARCH

Hookey Park

SUNDAY

Time for a home loan health check!

With the current cost of living, there's never been a better time to review your home loan.

Enquire online at bendigobank.com.au/healthcheck or call you nearest branch on 03 9726 5388.

Community Bank · Mooroolbark

🔥 Bendigo Bank

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