



Corop News

"The Call of the Brolga"

Issue No. 28 December 2010

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We're back

The Corop News is back! After a recess period for the past twelve months the Corop News editorial team has gathered together again to bring you an end-of-year edition complete with a COLOUR CENTRESPREAD!

Firstly, to our loyal readership, an explanation about our break. We are a small team of volunteers doing what we can for the community. We have busy lives, jobs, family and other interests. It is difficult to maintain the many hours required to put the newsletter together at a standard we believe makes each edition worthwhile. Once again we encourage contributions of articles and historic photos.

It is wonderful to see water in Lake Cooper again, with water gushing in from the Waranga Channel at the time of writing and Cornella Creek in flood. It has lifted our spirits to see water in our beloved lake again.

We have had a year of above average rainfall, which has produced great crops, green pastures and filled our waterways and dams. However, the ongoing rain is now starting to take a toll on many farmers' crops and the locusts are still a looming threat. Life on the land is never easy.

Apart from water in the lake the other big news for Corop is that the Corop Community Action Group was able to secure funding for the rebuilding of the Tennis and Community Centre. The building works are now well underway.

More detailed reports are to follow on the CCAG's activities, the Community Centre, Day on the Hill and other interesting articles.

We hope you enjoy the read and the photos and wish everyone a very merry and safe Christmas!



Anthony amid his work on the Corop Community Centre



Lake Cooper starts to look like a lake again!

Shaun Atley Drafted

Local young man, Shaun Atley was recently drafted in the AFL national draft. Widely tipped in the media to be picked in the 10, Shaun went at pick 17 and is now training with North Melbourne Kangaroos.

The Atleys have lived in Corop for many years and are set to return at the end of this year after some time in Corryong due to Brendan's employment.

Shaun has been playing with the Murray Bushrangers for the last couple of years. He has also starred in International Rules games and in state representative games.

Shaun's style of game has been likened to dual Brownlow Medalist, Chris Judd.

Although the family was happy for Shaun to play anywhere they are thankful, as is Shaun, to be located in Victoria.

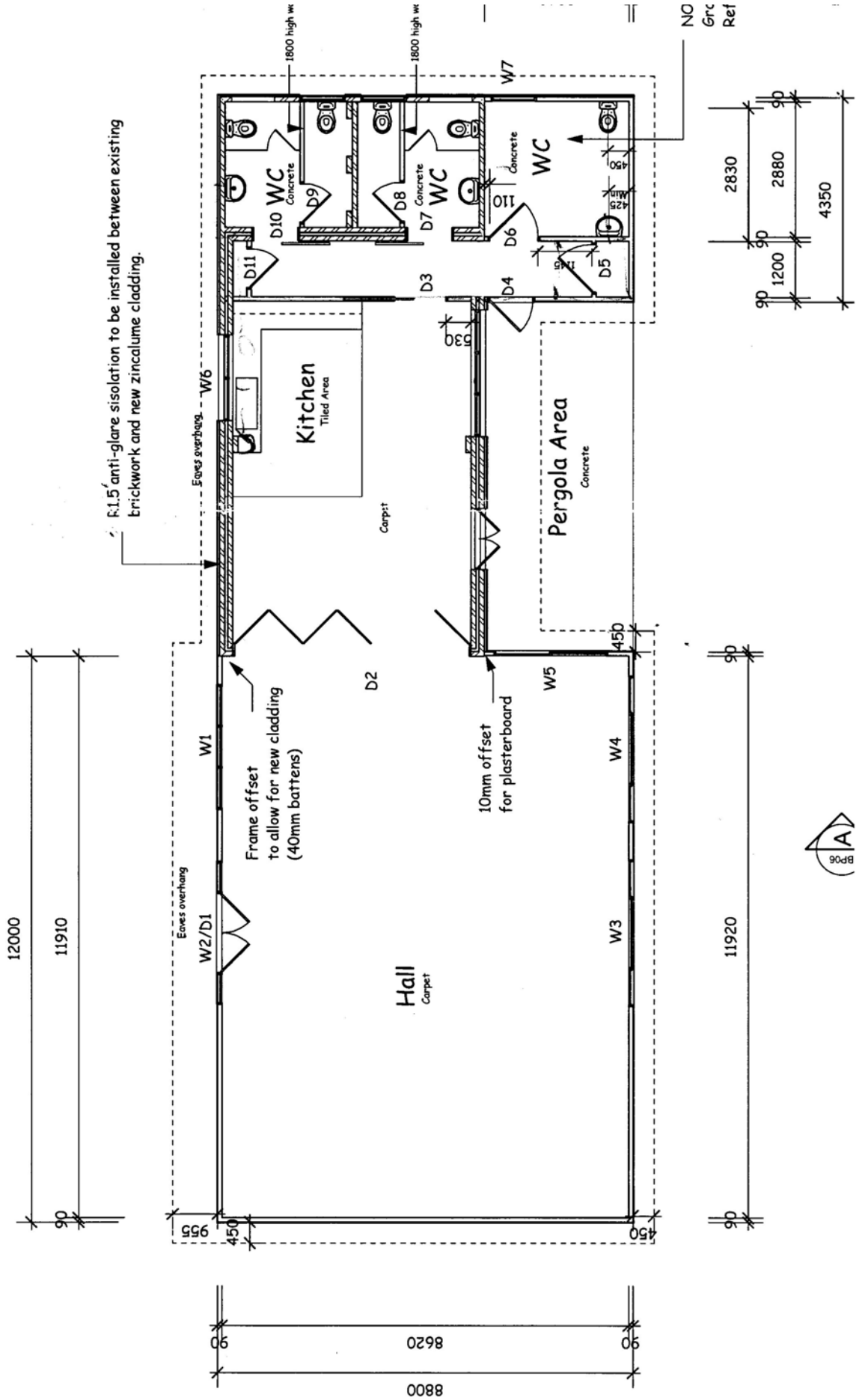
The renowned Atley football matches on their Corop home-ground will take on a whole new meaning for Shaun and his brothers Joe and Jacob. Maybe Jacqui and Dominique will have to find somewhere else to train for hurdles?



Shaun Atley - already a star

[EDITOR'S NOTE: Is there something about the name Shaun, AFL and Corop? Former Corop resident, Shaun Hart, won the Norm Smith Medal for Brisbane Lion's Premiership in 2001].

The final plans for the new Corop Community Centre



Corop Community Centre Re-development

When the Corop Community Action Group formed in 2000, it had nowhere to meet, the old Corop Public Hall having long since succumbed to the ravages of time and termites.

The only public space was the tennis pavilion, an austere brick shelter with limited facilities. The Tennis Club was in decline, and was happy to share its building with the CCAG, and eventually hand it over to our care. The last upgrade to the building was to build toilet facilities, and these were funded by a Federal Government grant.

They were officially opened by the then newly elected Member for Murray, Hon Sharman Stone MP, some 15 years ago. This was Dr Stone's first official engagement as our local member of parliament, and she remains interested in Corop and the activities of CCAG. Dr Stone also opened the stone shelter in the town, and has been booked to attend the opening ceremony for the 'Corop Dunny', when we get round to organising it!

The Tennis Pavilion was painted and carpeted by the CCAG, and was adequate for committee meetings and meetings of small groups, but could not accommodate functions such as the Christmas Party, the Corop Cup, or Dinner Dances. We have been fortunate in having access to Lake Cooper Estate tasting room, the Victorian Water Ski Association Club Rooms, and Camp Currumbene for larger functions, but this relied on the generosity and co-operation of the respective owners, and while this was always forthcoming, the Group and the town community needed a place which they could call their own.



Framework for the upgrade to the toilet facilities takes shape

Plans were drawn up for an expansion of the old pavilion, and application made through the Shire of Campaspe for a grant from Regional Development Victoria. We were delighted to receive the news that the Shire had received a grant of \$149,000 from RDV, which when added to \$30,000 of Shire funds and a contribution in cash and kind from the community was sufficient to proceed with the project – with a total budget of \$183,000.

Construction commenced in October with Frank Moretto the builder. A new space of around 100 square metres is going up on the west side of the existing building, and additional toilets have been added to meet regulations for the larger space. We will have a new kitchen facility in the old part of the building to enable us to store and reheat meals and provide suppers, etc., and the main hall opens onto the tennis courts, providing expanded outdoor space for partying on a warm night, a comfortable vantage point to watch on-court battles, or a safe, supervised environment for kids to play.

The building work is expected to be complete by the end of January 2011, and community members have volunteered to paint and provide external landscaping and site-works.



The main room takes shape with the old kitchen and tennis courts in the background

CCAG Update

The key focus of the Corop Community Action Group over the past 12 months has been the upgrade of our only community building. While members of the group have had input into the design, etc, Clem Furphy, CCAG President, has been the key driver behind this project with the assistance of Shane Stacey from the Shire. It is exciting to see the building renovations and extension that are now well underway.

Other items on our agenda have been: flagpoles established at the western end of the town with new harvest banners; the 2009 Corop Cup; the 2009 Christmas party; the new facade of the Corop Dunny; new Christmas decorations including a Christmas star with solar lights mounted on the Corop Shelter; Friends and Neighbor's nights with Lake Cooper Estate, including a farewell to Edith Johnson and the Johnson family; catering for a Rotary lunch for 70 people in June up at Lake Cooper Estate; 'Day on the Hill' gourmet BBQ - our major fundraiser; the unveiling of the Australia Day Honour Board in Rochester (Corop was mentioned for the Luncheon on the Lake in 2003); obtaining Events grants for Day on the Hill and the Christmas party; a social night for the CCAG at the Victoria Hotel in Elmore and at Acocks for Xmas; and the wrap-up of the VicRoads project afternoon tea at Lake Cooper Estate...all these things were over the course of the last 12 months so we have been quietly busy!

The AGM held in August saw Clem Furphy re-elected President, Alan Edwards Vice-President, Bill Fell Treasurer, and Jo Fell Secretary. We have welcomed two new members, Darren Bloomfield and Richard Coulson. We welcome new members and people keen to help in any way – please let us know.



The VicRoads afternoon tea at Lake Cooper Estate
(Photo: Courtesy of VicRoads)

‘Place Making’ Workshop

By Katrina Hall

Recently, I had the opportunity to attend a community development type workshop titled ‘Place making – The Art of Authentic Engagement’ organised by Campaspe Primary Care Partnership. As a person interested in what makes a community ‘tick’ and what holds it together I went along, curious as to what all this was about.

The workshop was facilitated by Gilbert Rochecouste and Jacque Robinson from *Village Well*, an organisation that promotes sustainable community development through training, education, consultancy etc. (website: www.villagewell.org)

Gilbert and Jacqui talked about what makes living in an area enjoyable and satisfying as they talked about the old fashioned concept of a village – a place that had a central town square where the locals gathered and socialised, a park or playground for the children, a town hall or community centre, a library, etc with the shops surrounding the town square and the residences just beyond the shops and the square. This traditional village concept is now what urban planners and developers are being encouraged to embrace to bring life back into communities – whether they be urban or rural. They also encouraged a greater sharing of amenities between groups and clubs rather than each having their own ‘space’ or building.

They talked about the detrimental effects of creating large housing estates, where people are isolated from one another, have no community infrastructure and therefore no need to come together and create that sense of community. A healthy community is one where people feel they belong, they feel safe and they have a sense of purpose and identity in that community. Only now are governments and urban planners beginning to realise the flow on effects of poor mental health, social and family breakdown by not creating and nurturing a sense of ‘place’ for people. People need to feel connected and a part of something greater than themselves.

“Place Making is the process of creating meaningful and connected places”.

As Gil and Jacqui stated: “If you start with people and place you get people and place”; if you start with design first and foremost in your town planning, then you get a wonderful design but maybe not somewhere that people feel connected, or happy. They explained that if you put people and place first, the rest will follow. If people enjoy where they live and it shows in the care and pride, amenities etc of a place, then tourists and newcomers will want to come there. First and foremost locals must love their own town before they can attract tourists.

They gave several great examples of towns revitalising their amenities, using colour and a paint-brush, murals, planter boxes made by locals, paths created and motifs made to reflect the local environment; others focused on reflecting the multicultural nature of their community and sometimes these were celebrated through temporary celebrations and decorations rather than a permanent fixture.

Other concepts they talked about included the importance of a community having **ownership** and input into projects, that a community needs to have its own sense of vision, values and principles that guides the type of community they want to create or sustain; and the importance of good governance. They also gave detailed information on how to authentically engage with a community and the importance of a skilled facilitator in this process.

So, What makes a great place? (extract from Village Well)

“The following are universal qualities that make great villages, town-centres, piazzas and communities around the world:

- Sense of connectedness/ sense of place
- Geographical boundary (start and finish)
- Sense of safety, intimacy, security
- Diversity of stories through;
 - Cultural context
 - Creative and artistic expression
 - Heritage/ history of built form
- Sense of longevity and continuity
- Sense of vitality
- Visibility of its daily workings
- Mixed-use (live, work and play)
- Street activity, markets, culture
- A central meeting place
- Spaces for public events and happenings
- Sitting and resting spaces
- Place space
- Community eating places
- Ease of access
- Child, woman, elderly and family friendly
- Mixed levels
- Sunlight
- Interesting and varied shops”

(Extract from Village Well’s presentation)

What does all this mean for us here in Corop and residents of Campaspe Shire? It’s a reminder of what many of us already realise about what makes a place an enjoyable and meaningful place to live. But for me the important message was about the community having ownership over what they want in their town and being the driving force for that. This also meant working in collaboration both within the community but also with Council, who are there to help bring plans and ideas to fruition. With a strong representation from the Campaspe Shire at this workshop, I am hopeful that they will take on board the ideas at this workshop and help with the facilitation and governance of projects throughout all the communities in our Shire.



Jo Fell

Tiny Towns Summit

By Jo Fell

On Sunday 17 October this year, one of our number went to a forum that was held in Girgarre. The purpose of the forum was to not only find ways of activating enthusiasm, strengths and creativity in one's own town, but also possible future collaboration between members and groups of other small towns in the area utilising their skills and assets where ours might be lacking, as well as combining our talents to achieve great things. This was a workshop to make people think and to see things from a different perspective.

Those present included people from Girgarre, Tongala, Ky-valley, Kyabram, Gunbower, Koyuga, Tooleen, Rushworth, Stanhope, Corop and others. There were also some representatives from the Campaspe Shire Office and council.

This initial workshop will be followed by another sometime early in the New Year to see what people have taken away from it and developed (or not) in their own place. Initially, we saw this as an opportunity to evaluate exactly what we want for Corop and its population and what we see or want for Corop's future. Our subsequent move was to hold a brainstorming session of ideas, which encompass our vision for Corop.

This was started off with the CCAG group and will be thrown into the ring at the Corop Christmas party for further discussion and input. We have gathered some brilliant ideas for the town, and will continue with the development and evaluation sections once we have opened the discussion to the whole community. We look forward to seeing what comes of it in the New Year.

Grand Final Day

Although there was no winner on the day in the football, all who attended the Grand Final Day at lake Cooper Estate were winners.

The goal-kicking and handball competitions were well received as were the sweeps and general frivolity.

Thanks to Gerry and Geraldine for hosting the event.



Jacqui Brown hones her handball skills

Corop Cemetery Trust

Recently the Corop Cemetery Trust held their last meeting for 2010. It was decided a twilight meeting at the cemetery would allow the opportunity to do an audit of the state of the headstones.



The Phelan family grave from over 100 year ago is 5x2.5metres and has 9 names on the headstone

The audit process compelled members to closely inspect all graves. New trust-members, Darren Bloomfield and Bill Barkla were amazed at the many amazing features and oddities in the cemetery. Aspects such as family plots, ornate wrought iron, stone engravings, wording on tombstones, double-sided headstones, grandeur, age and history were intriguing.



The Thomson family grave has a plot either side of a shared headstone with engraving both sides and ornate wrought iron

The trust now has the necessary detail to develop a prioritised maintenance and renovation program in the future. We will be applying for grants to rebuild some graves that are of extreme significance but are in a poor state of repair. A new fence on the North-side is also envisaged.

CFA Update

The Corop Fire Brigade is pleased to announce Tim Orr as the Secretary and Kylie Bloomfield as Treasurer.

We would like to thank all members in Fundraising towards new equipment at the Bunnings BBQ and The Day on the Hill. Fire Campaspe Catchment Danger period starts on Monday 13th December, no burning off without a permit from this date.

Corop RFB is a volunteer Brigade and all fundraising is to benefit our community with new fire fighting equipment and resources for further training.

Stubby Holders are available at the Corop Store, receipts are available for tax deductions, support your brigade and community.

All new members welcome. Have a Safe and Happy Christmas
Capt: D. Bloomfield 0417 391 128 Sec: T. Orr 0417 597 191

The Day on the Hill

Geraldine and Gerry McHarg of Lake Cooper Estate hosted the sixth annual "Day on the Hill" on Sunday 17th October. Although the weather had been threatening, the day was fine and those who attended were able to taste the new release wines - the 2008 Reserve Shiraz, 2009 Cabernet Merlot and the 2009 Dry Lake Shiraz.

The Corop Community Action Group led by catering wiz Denise Acocks, worked enthusiastically to produce their renowned gourmet barbeque. The homemade coleslaw, relishes and sauces beautifully set off the local meat barbecued to perfection by the CCAG members. Salad rolls and wraps were a new addition to their menu this year.



Part of the serving crew for the CCAG Barbeque

The group also ran a raffle of wines donated by the local wineries; this was won by Michelle and Dick Sherman of Colac.

As always there were many activities to participate in including bocce, children's games and jumping castle, stalls selling gourmet goodies and cards and the very popular helicopter rides. It was a great thrill to fly over Lake Cooper, which had water in it for the first time since the "Day on the Hill" has been held.



Tim Orr, John Kennedy and Bob Bartlett take a well-earned break from the heat of the BBQs

This year although the crowds were down slightly we had a very satisfying day both financially and socially. We would like to thank Geraldine and Gerry for enabling us to take part in this wonderful event.



Clem Furphy presents Geraldine and Gerry with a token of thanks for their generous community support

Corop Cup 2009

We know this is over a year ago but the Corop News is also a public record of significant events.

Finally the drought of an Australian, rather than an international, winning the mighty Corop Cup has been broken.

An extremely strong field had the sizeable crowd almost at fever pitch at the start of the race. The Corop Cup certainly lived up to its reputation as one of the greatest events on the calendar, with most of the stayers still in with a chance right up to the end.

The legendary mare, Lady Joyce, from the Speers Stables, started the sentimental favourite. She put in an amazing last-ditch effort to take out the ultimate prize.

It was only after the all clear was given that the emotions started to spill over. During the presentation of the prestigious 'cup' there was hardly a dry eye. Obviously overwhelmed by the magnitude of the win, Mrs Joyce Speers sobbed, 'Who would have thought? I never expected to win.'



Kaye Speers, and "Lady" Joyce Speers proudly receive the Corop Cup from CCAG President, Clem Furphy

In the annals of history of this remarkable event, the records will never really show the magnitude of this momentous occasion.

Big stallion Tricky Ricky took out 'the colts' event and pretty filly Runaroun Roz got over the line in the other preliminary.

In the men's, Fashions on the Field, Geoff Speer again took out the title. In the ladies', Sue Barlow took out the title from Katrina Hall and from Chris Devine.

Although the Cup went into recess in 2010, we look forward to 2011's cup with great anticipation. There are plans afoot for an extra-special event.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Christmas in Corop – Sunday 12th December
The opening of the Corop Community Centre
Watch your letterbox for details

This newsletter was compiled by: Carmel Pearson, Jo Fell, Pat Kennedy, Bill Barkla and Katrina Hall. Thanks to everyone who contributed and to the Rochester Secondary College for its ongoing support in copying this newsletter.

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DONATIONS: Donations and written or photographic contributions can be sent to the above address.