

~ Michelago Magpie 36~

4 April 2025

from your Michelago Region Community Association

All issues on www.michelagoregion.org.au

Print copies \$2 at Michelago General Store



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Services: Sewing & alterations, Rural Contracting, Plumber, Real Estate, Yless4U, Kids' Dance, Pilates.



Bumbalong fire 19 March



Photo: Helen Shimitras Gordon

The Bumbalong fire was big – 240 hectares. See also the RFS report, p. 16.

Colinton Brigade's Captain Tony Campbell said he 'would like to thank the Michelago, Bredbo, Cooma, Smiths Road, Anembo, Peak View, Guises Creek, Southern District, Shannon's flat, Adaminaby, Bredbo and Lake George Brigades for their assistance with the Bumbalong fire.'

This fire, as were the other two (p. 16), was a lovegrass fire.

Long-time residents of Michelago are well acquainted with the fiendish African Lovegrass. Newer residents need to know how to identify and deal with it ... and possibly to live with it. It's a scourge.

To quote Snowy Monaro Regional Council, African lovegrass grows prolifically in summer, creating a dense thatch of highly flammable dry material. This poses a major fire hazard, effectively extending the fire danger period to 12 months of the year where African lovegrass is present.

Information about how to prevent and control lovegrass can be found here:

<https://www.snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au/News-and-Media/News-articles/Weed-of-the-Week-African-lovegrass-2024-10>

Or by watching this striking video presented by Ross Sherlock:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/298487160325666/search/?q=ross%20sherlock>

Videos



Ross Sherlock Lovegrass Presentation
Monaro Farming Systems
3 Feb · 15K views

Note: the image at left is only a screenshot, not a link.



L: Bumbalong fire. 19 March

Photo: Helen Shimitras Gordon



The National Trust (ACT) visited Michelago Cemetery and Railway Station, had morning tea in the Memorial Hall and heard many stories about Michelago's history.

26 March. The thirty heritage hunters were led by Mary Johnston and Linda Roberts. With tour guides Kelly Paxman and Tony Maple, assisted by Liam Cotter (President, Cemetery Trust), they toured the cemetery from 9.30, then had morning tea at the Memorial Hall.

Above: The Hall was packed for morning tea, with visitors and locals alike entertained with stories and poetry about former days. This photo shows guests listening to Kerry's highlights of Michelago's history. The 'Magpie' plans to publish some highlights from various contributors in a later issue.

Many visitors then went to the heritage-listed railway station, which is still being renovated with funding from Heritage NSW and UGL, manager of regional NSW railways.

Kelly Paxman claims a distant link to the McTernans, one of the early settler families. She outlined the outstanding achievements in many fields of Major-General Granville Ryrie, son of Alexander, who bought Ryrie Station, which used to encompass most of the Michelago area. She spoke engagingly about other cemetery inhabitants, particularly focusing on the hard-working and multi-childbearing lives of women ... and the heartbreak represented by the graves of young children.

Tony Maple, the other guide of the National Trust tour, who has extensively researched Michelago history, moved the group to the northern side of the cemetery, near the grave of the original Garrett Cotter (arrived NSW 1822), and informatively entertained with stories of the area.



L: Liam supplemented Kelly's talk with facts about some of the early families.

R: Kelly at family graves of mother and children.



L: Tony De Salis next to the De Salis family plot. George & Mary Fane De Salis came to Michelago from Tharwa in 1900 and renamed their property 'Soglio'.

R: Linda Roberts, one of the National Trust (ACT) organisers, showed photos of Granville Ryrie.



Morning Tea, Memorial Hall

The Hall was filled with 55 people – 30 National Trust visitors, 19 representatives of original Michelago families, 5 other Michelago residents and one very special guest – Lindsay Richmond (see photo below and feature on p.7).

The 'old' families represented were Kelly, Coffey, Ryrie, McTernan, Russ, De Salis, Lawler, Cotter, Povey and Pollard.

Leanne Thurling (née Coffey), baker extraordinaire, assisted by Anne-Louise Pollard (aka Pud), provided a sumptuous spread and operated her coffee van outside the hall.

The MC, Kerry Rooney (née Kelly), MRCA President and main organiser of the event, gave an extensive address about Michelago history and invited other family members to speak.



L: Just some of the food provided for \$20 per head.



R: Leanne Thurling at her coffee van.



L: Kerry awarded Lindsay Richmond a certificate as 'Honorary Station Master' to mark his huge contribution to maintaining the Michelago Railway Station in former years.



R: Tony De Salis spoke about the history of his family.



L: Jean Reardon (née Kelly) and Marian Kelly

R: David Ryrie spoke about Micalago Station's pastoral history and connections with the region, e.g. iron ore being shipped to Port Kembla from Michelago.



L: Sally Hughes and Claire Borys, a National Trust visitor.

R: David Ryrie brought this Charles Kerry photo of wool bales on a bullock-drawn wagon at Micalago Station, taken c. 1895. The National Trust's Mary Johnston is holding it.





L: Catherine Turnbull with her father, John Kelly, and Anne-Louise Pollard.

Below: Leanne Thurling read her ballad 'The Boys' about the notorious Clark Brothers, local bushrangers.



... and then to the Michelago Railway Station

Lindsay Richmond, newly named Honorary Station Master (see above), and MRCA President Kerry Rooney (at R) showed National Trust members accessible parts of the historical building. All parts but the former waiting room and ticket office are closed while renovations progress.

It was news to visitors that the MRCA leases the station from UGL. Committee members care for the building and raise funds via grants, donations, MRCA membership fees (see p.23) and sales of the printed *Magpie*. The lease, insurance and electricity costs total about \$2,000 a year.



L: Lindsay explained that what was thought to be a well (padlocked) is a huge underground tank that fills with rainwater.

R: The ticket office floor's cubby-hole possibly stored ticket sales.





How our Railway Station was saved from the Bulldozers!

Kerry Rooney

As road transport grew in the 1970s, patronage of railways declined in country areas and governments stopped spending money on regional rail infrastructure.

In 1974, the Michelago Railway Station was closed with only two days' warning! Passenger trains ceased on the Queanbeyan to Bombala line in 1988 and freight trains in 1989 when the Chakola bridge over the Numeralla River was declared unsafe.

Ian Warden reported in the Canberra Times in 1978, that the Michelago Railway Station was being dismembered by vandals and well on the way to becoming a ruin.

The NSW Government planned to send in the bulldozers to raze our station to the ground. Thankfully, the ACT Division of the Australian Railway Historical Society (ARHS) came to the rescue. In 1981, ARHS negotiated a lease for the station and its volunteers began major restoration work on the buildings and installed a train turntable,

After years of back-breaking labour on the Queanbeyan to Michelago railway line, and having restored steam locomotives and carriages, the ARHS achieved its dream. In 1993 the Michelago Tourist Railway commenced operations for nine years. Michelago's whole community supported the Red Cross, Hall Committee and the Fire Brigade to cater for jazz trains, picnic trains and bush dances.

One of the many amazing volunteers with the former ARHS was Lindsay Richmond. Lindsay spent nearly every weekend at Michelago for decades. Lindsay's carpentry skills are evident in the fireplace surrounds and photograph frames which he made from floorboards recycled from the local tennis clubhouse. Lindsay is now a volunteer with the Canberra Railway Museum but still comes to working bees in Michelago to this day.

In recognition of his contribution to saving our station, MRCA conferred upon Lindsay the title of Honorary Station Master of the Historical Michelago Railway Station.

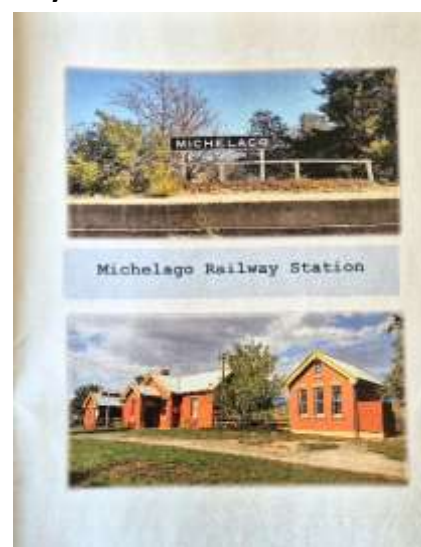
Advertisement for Brochure

If you would like to learn how the arrival of rail in 1887 changed Michelago forever, get the brochure on the Michelago Railway Station. It has 12 pages of historical photos and gives you all the facts. Just \$10 per copy; proceeds support the Michelago Railway Station. Contact kerryaroney@gmail.com to order yours today.



L: Lindsay Richmond and Anna Lucas at one of the working bees to tidy trees and gardens at the Michelago Railway Station.

R: The cover of Kerry's brochure about the station's history.





Federal elections – Eden Monaro – meet the candidates – Kristy McBain

The MRCA President, Kerry Rooney, has liaised with the Michelago General Store to arrange meet-greet-question sessions with the candidates for the two major parties. It's possible that other candidates could have similar opportunities.



Sitting Labor Member, Kristy McBain (at right), Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, will be at the Michelago General Store on Saturday 5 April, 11.30 am.

Federal elections – Eden Monaro – meet the candidates – Jo van der Plaats



23 March. Jo, the Liberal Party candidate for Eden Monaro, had an attentive audience and responded to many questions and concerns at the Michelago General Store.

R: Jo with Aldo and Julie Giucci



Easter Egg Hunt 19 April

Sam Walton

The Easter Egg Bunny would like to invite you to the annual Easter egg hunt on Easter Saturday (19 April) at the Michelago Railway Station.



Turn up at 9.45 am at the park (above the Clive Kelly Oval) for check-in and we'll aim to start the hunt at the station at 10.00 am.

You can either purchase a \$7.50 child's ticket or a \$21 family ticket.



Tea, coffee and Hot Cross Buns will be provided for the adults.

Tickets: www.events.humanitix.com



ANZAC Day



The ANZAC Day ceremony will commence at 10 am, Friday 25 April at the Michelago Railway Station.

Attendees will be invited to lay a wreath at the Cenotaph should they wish to do so.

The Community Choir (see p.20) will sing the Australian and New Zealand national anthems and the popular *To a grateful world*.

Please bring a plate to share for morning tea. This will follow the ceremony at the railway station.



Democracy Sausages 3 May

The Michelago Region Community Association and Michelago Public School will again collaborate to brighten the Federal Government election for you with a BBQ and maybe a cake stall.

Make voting an even more significant occasion with a Democracy Sausage or two before and/or after. Funds will support both the school and the MRCA's maintenance of the Michelago Railway Station.

Cash and credit card payments are both welcome.



DEMOCRACY SAUSAGE



Community clean-up day at the historical Michelago Railway Station

23 March. Spurred by the imminent National Trust (ACT) visit and with an eye to Anzac Day and the Easter Egg Hunt, supporters of the station weeded gardens, thinned irises, dug out fennel, trimmed hedges, dead-headed roses, mulched, cleared cobwebs, dusted, cleared the fireplace, swept, washed floors and tables, cleaned toilets and removed some unnecessary furniture. The historical photos, awaiting Kerry's fresh labels, were re-hung.



The heritage-approved renovations are not yet complete and two rooms are closed, but the waiting room, although still anticipating paint on the re-plastered areas (see *Magpie 35*), is ready for use and admiration.

Grateful thanks to: Kerry Rooney, Tony De Salis, Sally Hughes, Catherine Turnbull, Leah Oliver, Leannes Thurling and Pattison, Jo Gaha, Margaret Farmer, Annette Fitzgerald, Michael Scanlon, Michael & Di Fett, John Rooney, Josh Kunkler (hedge trimmer) and Derek Giucci.

L: Michael polished the men's urinal.

The MRCA is grateful to the workers from the Cooma Correctional Centre, who recently mowed the grass and whipper-snipped along the railway tracks, thanks to Sally's liaison with the Centre.





Some of the above: the polishing team beautified the waiting room, many weeded and mulched, Tony and Annette were cobweb specialists, Di finished off the feral fennel, Sally hied off with the high-chair, Josh trimmed the hedges, Leanne T cleaned walls, Leah and Leanne P cleaned loos.



Minutes Secretary needed urgently

The Michelago Regional Community Association Inc needs a new Minutes Secretary. It's a volunteer position, in common with those of other members of the MRCA Committee.

All you'd be asked to do is to attend the monthly meeting (second Wednesday), take the minutes, check your draft for accuracy with the President (Kerry Rooney), then send a completed draft to the rest of the committee for approval at the next meeting.

Various people have taken the meeting minutes over the past few months. You can see these minutes at the website www.michelagoregion.org.au on the 'Community Association – Meetings' tab.

If you're reasonably ok with written English and Word and would like to make an important administrative contribution to the community, please write to newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au

Everyone's contribution is valued, and yours would be especially so.





Local Sportsman

Congratulations to Fergus Kelly, who has been selected to trial for representative Rugby League in Bateman's Bay on Friday 4 April.

Fergus is in Year 6 and attends Michelago Public School.

He was selected through 2 previous trials in Queanbeyan to make the starting team. Trials will be held down the coast to select a team to compete in the NSW Primary Schools Sports Association 12 Years Rugby League State Championships in June.

Good luck, Ferg!

Photo: R. Kelly



Priority weed inspections by Council

Emily Griffin, Biosecurity Officer

Over the coming months, Council's Biosecurity Officers will be in the Michelago area conducting priority weed inspections.

The purpose of these inspections is to search for State and regional priority weeds to ensure any infestations are identified and controlled before they are able to become established, as well as to provide information and advice on the identification and management of widespread weeds like African lovegrass and St John's wort.

State priority weeds are those that are not present in the state, or are only present in very low numbers, and pose significant risks to agriculture, the environment, or human and animal health.

Regional priority weeds are high risk species which may be present in other parts of NSW but are not yet established or widespread in the South East region.

While livestock and feed movements have traditionally been the primary focus of surveillance for new species on the Monaro, garden and aquarium plants are becoming an increasingly significant risk pathway for new species.

Landholders are encouraged to contact Council on 1300 345 345 or council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au for assistance with the identification and control of any plants of concern or to book a free appointment with a Biosecurity Officer for in-person advice tailored to your property.

For more information on State and regional priority weeds, see below:

<https://www.snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au/files/assets/public/v1/environment-and-waste/biosecurity/prohibited-matter-booklet.pdf>

https://www.ils.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/722706/South-East-Regional-Strategic-Weed-Management-Plan-2023-2027.pdf



Cross Country Carnival at the Clive Kelly Oval

On Friday 14, our school came together for an action-packed day at our annual Cross-Country event! Students walked down to the oval full of energy and excitement, ready to represent their sports teams with pride.



MICHELAGO PUBLIC SCHOOL

It was amazing to see every student giving it their all, showing determination, perseverance and great sportsmanship throughout the races. Whether they were sprinting to the finish line or cheering on their classmates, everyone demonstrated our school values of Respect, Responsibility and Safety.

10 students who have made it through to the district cross country travelled to Delegate Golf Course on Monday 31. A huge congratulations to all participants for their fantastic efforts.

Michelago students always do their best

Photos: Abby McPherson





LOCAL SEWING SERVICES

Clothing not quite fitting right?

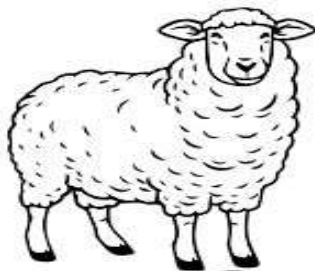
Pants too long?



Altering hems, resizing, repurposing, adjusting a formal garment
- the right fit makes all the difference!

Also mending/patching clothing and adjusting household items.
Whatever your need, get in touch and I'll see what can be done.

If you would like to learn to sew, or have a sewing machine but not sure how to get the most out of it, please get in touch to book yourself a lesson.



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WEED SPRAYING - RURAL FENCING

SHEARING - CRUTCHING

WOOL HANDLING

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Michelago General Store news

Taco night at the store

- The store hosted an all-you-can-eat taco night on Friday 14 March.
- It was fully booked within 1 day of being posted to the community.
- We had 40 people dine in, including a family from our sister village, Bredbo.
- Each table received a spread including pulled beef and chicken cooked low and slow for 6 hours.
- Everyone took advantage of the new liquor licence and enjoyed a beer and wine with their meal, and there was even a jug of sangria.
- Next dinner event: Friday 11th April. Stay tuned on the store socials for updates.



2025 Snowy Business Awards

- We are finalists in 4 award categories for the Snowy Business awards 2025.
- Excellence in Small Business, Excellence in Innovation, Outstanding Visitor Experience and Popular Choice.
- The awards are taking place on Friday 28th March in Jindabyne and will be attended by Belinda and Jess along with their partners Dale and Alana.

Future events

- Mothers Day All Inclusive Paint & Sip. See the social pages for more information or to book tickets head to www.artbynetty.com

Australia Post

- There has been an increase in the number and size of parcels being delivered to the store.
- We are a community postal agent and have limited storage capacity at the store.
- What we need from the community:
 - Collect your parcels as soon as possible. Items that are not collected within a week will be returned. We will make every effort to contact receivers before returning.
 - Be mindful of our rural location and postal implications. We appreciate that some items can be cheaper to purchase online, but please be mindful that Australia Post and couriers will not deliver to your home.
 - Be mindful of peak periods (lunch times and Saturday mornings) and please avoid these times for parcel collection.
 - Your parcel is ready for collection when you receive an 'Awaiting for collection at Michelago CPA' notification.

- If you are trying to track a parcel please be prepared with your tracking information. We cannot help you without it.
- If you're coming to collect a parcel, stop for a coffee, grab a bite to eat and enjoy our space!

SupaGas

- We have been experiencing some frustration and confusion from Supagas customers, primarily due to required paperwork and rental charges.
- The processes and information for the 45kg gas bottles are as follows:
 - To take a 45kg bottle you must have an account with Supagas. We have forms in store for you to complete, after which we then send them off to be processed.
 - There is a rental charge (for the bottle) that is charged by Supagas (not the store). If you receive a letter with the Supagas letterhead, please note that we have not sent it and we cannot assist.
 - Customers must complete paperwork with each swap. This is a required Supagas process to track inventory in and out.
 - Store staff are not always available or have the capacity to assist with lifting gas bottles. Please be mindful of this when coming for a gas bottle.
 - There are guidelines for the transport of gas bottles and these are displayed on the gas cages. Please be mindful of this when collecting a gas bottle.

Other news

- We had a request to create and deliver a gift hamper for a local family who have recently welcomed a new baby. The gift pack included a range of local goods including a dried flower bunch, candle, soap, loose leaf tea and a grazing box. It was fun to put together and a joy to be able to deliver something delicious to this family. If anyone is wanting to coordinate a gift hamper or needs a grazing box for any occasion, please reach out.
- Bin Day Deal. We have loved seeing people on a Saturday morning as they pop into the village for the weekly bin collection. We have a combo deal of an egg & bacon roll and a medium coffee for \$14.00. Pop on in and say g'day!
- Spotlight on junior crew member Liz Kelly. She continues to exceed expectations in every way possible and is a true asset to the team and a joy to be around. Well done, Lizzy – keep up the good work!



R: Lizzie Kelly and Maddie Antoniak



Belinda Hayes
 Owner and Manager
 (02) 0229 4022 or 0424 388 875
 info@michelago.com.au
 12 Myra Street
 Michelago NSW 2328



Multi-brigade RFS training at Colinton *Gregg McFaul*



8 March. A very successful joint training was hosted by Colinton Brigade.



Participating brigades were Burra, Anembo, Guises Creek, Smiths Road, Michelago, Jerrabomberra Creek, NSW Fire and Rescue Queanbeyan and Colinton.

Everyone had a chance to learn about grassland fires, first aid, relay pumping, fire-mapper, breathing apparatus, and interoperability between brigades and Services.

Thank you to Colinton for the food, hospitality and organisation for a really enjoyable day.



The Rural Fire Service in action

Report by Gregg McFaul, Michelago Brigade

The RFS had several turn-outs in March.

A large, fast-moving fire across Bumbalong Rd proved challenging and consumed 240 hectares. Many crews turned out to help from across the district to a blaze that required aerial support from the RFS helicopter out of Cooma.

Thank you to Colinton Brigade and also to the Bredbo Pie Shop for catering support at the end of a long, arduous day.

A fire was contained on Burra Rd.

The same evening, another was contained on Ryrie Hill Rd. Credit where credit is due – the excellent, quick response by the local residents and a fleet of property-based fire-trailers stopped it in its tracks.

Report from Tony Campbell:

Colinton Brigade Captain Tony Campbell posted on Facebook: 'Colinton RFB and Michelago RFB quickly contained a small grass fire at Ryrie Hill Road yesterday evening. Thanks to crews and the landholder for their efforts to contain the spread effectively.'

Although the weather may be cooling down, it's a reminder that fires can still occur when the vegetation is dry.'

R: Site of the grass fire on Ryrie Hill Rd.

Photo: Colinton Brigade, permission via Tony Campbell

 Call 000 if you see an unattended fire.





L-R: Allan Lehepuu, Mark Flett, John Moore, Charlie Stuart, SMRC Mayor Chris Hanna, John Parr, Member for Monaro The Hon. Steve Whan MP, Andrew Lucas, SMRC Councillor John Rooney, Tony DeLuca, Matt Mill, NSW RFS District Manager Jim Darrant.

On Saturday 29 March 2025, the NSW Rural Fire Service conducted the formal handover of the new fire tanker to the Anembo Rural Fire Brigade.

At the same event, there were a number of National Service medals presented to those Anembo fire fighters who have been active in the RFS for a significant number of years. Those of special mention included John Moore for 55 years of active service, Allan Lehepuu for 47 years, Tony DeLuca for 30 years, also Matt Mill and the current Captain, David DeLuca.

Then a number of Long Service medals were presented to other members of the Brigade who have devoted their time over many years to act in such positions as President, Secretary, Treasurer and Auditor.

Thanks were expressed to all Anembo Brigade members who volunteer many, many hours of their time to keep the organisation functioning so well.

To the sound of very welcome rain, we all then partook of a delicious, freshly prepared lunch.

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Michelago Dance classes



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Mondays 5.00pm - 6.00pm
Michelago Hall



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Saturday mornings 9:30 - 10:15
Michelago Community Hall
Starts 1 February 2025

Term 1 2025 - 9 Weeks
Total upfront payment is \$135

Registration is for the specified dates listed on the registration and waiver notice. Bring a pilates mat and water bottle

** No refund for non attendance **

Register using QRCode or bit.ly/3E9D5so



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Michelago and District Landcare Group Inc.

The Annual General Meeting was held 12 March at the Michelago Railway Station.

Those elected: President – Markus Buchhorn, Secretary – Karen Marriner, Treasurer – Belinda Sierzchula.

Markus informed the meeting that Michelago Landcare was the beneficiary of a willed amount for a project benefitting landowners and the village community. It's sufficient to fund a tree-planting project on the Crown Land between the creek and Clive Kelly Oval. This is a project that's been on Michelago Landcare's wish list for some time. It's also in accord with the Michelago Master Plan (remember that?), which envisages a walkway along this land.

The feral-pig trap donated by Local Land Services is available free to Landcare members for up to 4 weeks. Instructions will be provided. (More info: see *Magpie 33, p. 15*).

Meeting attendees then walked to the Michelago Creek with biodiversity experts Antia Brademann and Georgiana Storey to assess likely plantings.

Georgiana noted that there will be a Koala-and-Coffee (free) session at the General Store from 9.30 on Saturday, 5 April.

Michelago Landcare membership has fallen, despite general community interest in the local environment. The organisation is required to pay insurance and funds are diminishing. Please show your support by renewing your membership or joining via the easy link below:

Family \$16.50/year: <https://buy.stripe.com/fZeeWE3QO8mTdbi3cc>

Individual \$11/year: <https://buy.stripe.com/cN24i05YW5aH8V2aEF>



L: Antia explained different zone levels for suitable plants.

R: Dead crack willow from last year's funded poisoning.



SNOWY MONARO
REGIONAL LIBRARY

Outreach Service Requests

You can request books and other items for delivery by the Library Outreach Service 4 ways

- To reserve online, visit www.snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au/Library
- To order by email, contact books@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au
- To order by phone, call (02) 6451 1630
- Hand a list to the library staff member





Real estate advice you can trust

Chris Churchill of Blackshaw

Call for an obligation-free chat: 0417 080 460

E: cchurchill@blackshaw.com.au



Michelago Community Choir Thursdays, 7–8 pm, St Thomas Church, Ryrie St.

Remember, singing is the most fun you can have standing up.

And it's just one hour per week. Not to be missed.



No experience is needed, just enthusiasm and a sense of adventure. You don't even have to be able to read music. There are lovely people there and everyone is very welcome.

Even if you feel unsure or shy, it could be worth giving it a go to see if it's good for *you*.

Go on. Come along. You know you want to.



Michelago Memorial Hall Bookings

memorial.hall@michelagoregion.org.au or 0494 178 469

The Hall has all facilities for your function.

Hall hire rates

- a) \$17.00 p/h. Refundable Deposit Bond: \$170.00 per Event
- b) Private Party/event: \$290.00 per Event
Refundable Deposit Bond (private event): \$250.00 per Event
- c) Equipment Hire (tables, chairs, urn, etc) for out-of-hall use: \$1 per chair, \$5 per table.
Other equipment by arrangement with the Hall Committee.





Weed alert – Water Lettuce (*Pista stratiotes*)

Council Media Release 20 March

Council's biosecurity team was recently alerted to the online sale of water lettuce, a regional priority weed, from a Cooma residence.

The plants were initially purchased interstate by the individual who was unaware of its status as a regional priority weed. Once biosecurity officers explained the status of the weed and its potential to impact the environment, the plants were surrendered for destruction, preventing the risk of spread and safeguarding local waterways from potential harm.

This swift response highlights the critical role biosecurity plays in protecting our environment and economy from the threat of invasive species.

Water lettuce is one of several aquatic weeds that pose significant risks to local ecosystems, recreation and tourism.



Invasive aquatic species can rapidly infest waterways, blocking sunlight, depleting oxygen levels and disrupting aquatic life. They can also impede access for boats and people, reducing the recreational value of water bodies in the region.

Image: SMRC

Council urges the public to be aware of the risks associated with purchasing plants or seeds from unregulated online sources, especially those offered for sale from other states. Legislation governing the sale, transport and introduction of certain plant species varies between jurisdictions and what may be legal in one area could be a prohibited weed in another.

For a full list of state and regional priority weeds, their status and control objectives, visit the [South East Regional Strategic Weed Management Plan 2023–2027](#).

Residents are encouraged to contact Council's biosecurity team on 1300 345 345 or council@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au for more information on priority weeds or to report any suspicious plant sales or sightings.

Clancy Noakes, Communications Officer clancy.noakes@snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au



Rail Trail proposal update

Andrew Carter, Committee Member, Monaro Rail Trail Inc.

www.monarorailtrail.com.au

Supporters of the Monaro Rail Trail (MRT) proposal are envious that the Northern Rivers Rail Trail (NRRT) has recently taken out Silver in the Tourist Attractions category at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards, March 2025, securing its place as one of the nation's premier visitor experiences. In its first 2 years of operation, this 24km trail has attracted 218,000 users and in its first year injected \$3.7million into the Tweed shire economy. Long time supporter and current MRT Secretary, Andrew Carter, believes that the MRT when built, will match and probably better the attractions of the rail trail at Murwillumbah in northern NSW.

Meanwhile, local support for the MRT took a step forward in February this year when Queanbeyan Palerang Regional Council submitted a grant application** to fund construction of the first stage of the MRT. If successful, this grant should enable construction of 21km from Queanbeyan to a point near Royalla. Later, and with support from Snowy Monaro Regional Council, and success with grant applications, funding will link the trail from Royalla to Michelago.



Above: Murwillumbah rail trail. Bridge restoration showcases rail history near Murwillumbah.

Editor's comments:

1. When the MRCA met with rail trail consultants, MRCA made it clear that no rail tracks were to be removed in the heritage-listed Michelago Rail Precinct. The rail trail would need to find an alternative route around the Precinct.
2. **The minutes of the Queanbeyan Palerang Council meeting say that the Council endorsed an application. That is, the Council did not submit an application.



Micalago Rd quarry issue – Notes from webcast of SMRC meeting 20.3.2025

At its meeting on 20 March, Snowy Monaro Regional Council considered a motion by Cr Williamson to undertake an independent audit into the investigation of complaints relating to the alleged dumping of unapproved materials at an old quarry site on Micalago Road.

Cr Williamson's motion asked that the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) undertake the audit. Cr Davis strengthened the motion by asking that a law firm with expertise in environmental and development law assist ARIC and Council with the audit.

After lengthy debate, Council agreed to the amended motion. The audit is due by the end of May 2025.

Council also agreed that the enquiry should find whether all relevant agencies had been notified, e.g. SafeWork NSW, EPA, and that these be formally notified.

It was agreed that if the audit budget were insufficient to cover costs, other funding would come from unrestricted reserves.



Rescuing injured tortoises – safety hint

Tortoises are unaware of traffic safety and move slowly, so many are injured or killed as they cross the road.

A local resident recently had difficulty finding a secure spot in her car for transporting an injured tortoise to a Wildcare tortoise-carer. She recommends that travellers keep a large towel (and maybe a cardboard box) in the car boot for wrapping such an animal so it's safely secure. <https://www.wildcare.net.au/get-involved>





Magpie information

Get the Magpie free by email: send name and email address to newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au Print copies are \$2 at the Michelago shop. This goes to the Railway Station maintenance. Previous issues are available on www.michelagoregion.org.au

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Contributions: photos (jpg preferred, please) and news items are welcome. Please send them to newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au Please give your name and put *Magpie* in the subject line. Published items will be attributed.

If you have events or activities planned and would like them listed in the *Magpie* calendar, please email them to newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au

The MRCA committee reserves the right to edit contributions for length and clarity.

Photos and articles, unless otherwise accredited, are by Leanne Pattison, *Magpie* Editor. Other images are taken from free Creative Commons.



Community Association information

To join the MRCA, first download the membership form from the home page at www.michelagoregion.org.au

It's only \$10 p/a single and \$15 p/a family.

Joining or renewing, you can pay by EFT: BSB 633000 Account number 126401058

Account name: Michelago Region Community Association Inc.

Please remember to include your name.

There are **four good reasons** for joining the Michelago Region Community Association:

1. The more representative we are, the more we can achieve for our village and region.
2. You get updates from Council.
3. All funds go to running costs, including upkeep, rental and insurance for Michelago's heritage-listed Railway Station. The Committee applies for government grants and occasionally organises other fund-raisers, depending on available personnel.
4. It's sociable – you know what's happening, who's doing what, and you participate only if you want to.

The MRCA Committee <http://www.michelagoregion.org.au/mrca/>

Meetings are open: 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6 pm, Railway Station. Next: 9 April. All Michelagans are welcome. The minutes are on the website: www.michelagoregion.org.au

What's on?



Please send quick updates of what's coming up, what's on and any corrections to newsletter@michelagoregion.org.au If the *Magpie* knows about it, it will be here.

Regular Venues, contacts and times can change; information is here as received.

- **Choir** Thursdays, 7–8pm, St Thomas Church, Ryrie St. See p.20.
- **Colinton Fire Brigade** Training 2nd Saturday of the month, from 1pm. 4574 Monaro Hwy, Colinton. Contact: secretarycolintonrfs@gmail.com
- **Dance class for kids.** Term 1, Mondays 5–6pm. Michelago Hall. Details p.18.
- **Michelago Fire Brigade** training usually second Sunday of the month, 9am–1pm. Contact details: MRCA notice board at the Michelago General Store. Captain Abby 0417 548 118. Note change for March: 3rd Sunday, due to the long weekend. See p.9.
- **Hall Committee** general meeting. Hall. Currently every 2nd month, 3rd Wed 6pm.
- **Hall bookings** memorial.hall@michelagoregion.org.au 0494 178 469. Current hire rates: p.20.
- **HIIT** (high intensity interval training) exercise class with Peter (0417 427 494). Hall. Sat 8am. \$10. 'Works for all ages.'
- **Library** Mobile library. Thursdays to collect pre-orders outside the school 10.30 –11.30. See p.19.
- **Massage** Michelle O'Leary comes to you. 0401 535 414
- **MRCA** general meeting (open). Railway station. Usually monthly, 2nd Wed 6pm. Next: 9 April.
- **Pilates** Saturdays, 9.30-10.15 am, Hall. See p.18 and flyer on shop noticeboard.
- **Pony Club** Pony Club Monthly 2nd Sunday. Enquiries: Secretary: Romney (0428 297 514) or President: Rhys (0401 778 004) or email michelagoponyclub.secretary@gmail.com
Also see <https://ponyclubaustralia.com.au> (Note changes to previous posts.)
- **Seed Savers** Enquiries: SMS or contact Belinda: 0411 043 027 or hello@michelagoyoga.com.au or Jenny 0400 484 485 or jenny258@bigpond.com Next gathering Sun 13, 2pm, tennis clubhouse.
- **Senior Lunch Group** 1st Monday of the month, 1pm. Location varies. Call Janet 0414 785 865.
- **St Patrick's** Catholic Church. Updates on Michelago's Facebook Noticeboard.
- **St Thomas's** Anglican Church. Holy Communion. Monthly, 3rd Sunday 11am.
- **Trail Riders** Usually monthly, 1st Sat. Check details on Tinderry tab of Australian Trail Horse Riders Association (ATHRA). President Don Munns 0407 235 407. Membership: contact Secretary Heidi Dreyer 0434 197 122.

One-offs (that we know about) Venues and times can change. Information is here as received.

April

- Saturday 5, 11.30 a.m. Michelago General Store. Kristy McBain, Labor Party candidate (sitting Member) for Federal Government election. See p. 8.
- Saturday 5, 9.30. Koalas-and-Coffee (free). Landcare.
- Saturday 19. Easter Egg Hunt. Michelago Railway Station. 9.45 am for 10.00. See p. 8
- Friday 25, 10.30 a.m. ANZAC Day ceremony, then morning tea. Railway station. See p.8.

May

- Saturday 3, from 9 a.m. Michelago School. BBQ Democracy Sausages for the Federal Election. Possibly a P&C cake stall, too. See p.9.

