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March 7th 2023

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# THE MAILBAG

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 Telephone: 9761 1717 - Email: mailbag@bigpond.net.au - www.thequalityshop.com.au

## 10th Downunder Country Music Weekend

After a 3-year Covid related break, Traditional Country Music & Bush Poetry fans will return to the Bridgetown Showgrounds for the 10th Downunder Country Music Weekend.

Official programme starts at 11am Friday 17th March 2023 through to Sunday evening 19th March 2023.

Our favourite interstate artists returning are Graeme Hugo (SA), Kevin & Dehlia Brown (Qld), Chris Anderson & Bill Rowley (Vic), along with first timer Earl Kyle (NSW). Other first timers performing include Ginger Cox (Broome), Shane Dickson (Dongara) and Jannes Kleinman (Halls Head). Favourite locals who have been to every previous Downunder Country include Kate Hindle (Collie), John Orr (Warnbro), Pat Fraser (Perth) will be joined by other regular artists Kevin Bennett, Rob Hodgson, Dave Burgess, Mike & Libby, Lansdell Family and Neil Mills. Local Bridgetown singers Rozzi Smith and Erica Gail will once again be on show.



Lansdell Family



Ginger Cox



Terry Bennetts



Shane Dickson

Popular artist, SandyAnn and partner Ian Hobbs, performing as Coyote Loco, have headed back from Queensland and are opening the show.

Award winning Bush Balladeer, Terry Bennetts, will be performing and is also part of the Downunder Country backing band.

Campfire Country will be playing for the Old Time Dance during the evening dinner breaks, and their granddaughter Monique will be performing on the main stage this year.

Line Dancing sessions during the lunch breaks will be run by Krystyna Rees from Albany. If you want to have a sing, walk-up (Open Mic) sessions will be held Friday afternoon and Sunday evening... *Continued Page 11*



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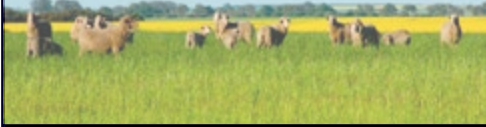
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Santo and Lisa Pratico with their 'Deadpool' themed car

## The Variety Bash

The Variety Bash is an epic event that has run since 1985. Teams and communities come together to take part in an eight-day event in their whacky wagons, taking off across WA with multiple stops in between, visiting local communities and schools, hand delivering Variety Grants.

Taking part in this worthwhile fundraising event this year will be Santo and Lisa Pratico, in their car a XF Ford sedan, which is cleverly wrapped in the theme of 'Deadpool', they will be dressed in costumes to compete the act.

Santo being Deadpool, someone virtually unstoppable and Lisa being Domino. Domino super power is one of being extremely lucky. Resilience and Luck, it's a combination we all need in life.

"It's all for a good cause: Variety, the Children's Charity, is all about giving a fair go to WA kids who are sick, disadvantaged or living with disability." Lisa explains.

"This will be the third year Santo and I have taken part in this fundraising event as 'Deadpool'.

"Before 'Deadpool' Santo took part in the event along with Nick Joseph, Andrew Hare and Mark D'lima in a 'Frozen' Holden.

"Initially we need to raise \$8,000 to take part in the rally. Really the rally is the reward for the fundraising efforts."

Lisa continues, "Our fundraising event this year is a Music Concert. This will be held on the 1st of April at Chudacud Estate, which is along the Bridgetown to Boyup Brook Road.

Pinstripe is the band which will be performing at the event. Gates will open at 4pm with the band starting at 8pm. Entry is \$40.00 per person, BYO Alcohol and food with free camping, showers and toilets available.

Just turn up on the night with cash in the pocket, we would love to see you all there helping us raise money for Variety WA."

Over the years Lisa and Santo Pratico along with Nick Joseph, Andrew Hare and Mark D'lima have raised almost \$100,000 by taking part in the Variety Bash... *Continued Page 15.*

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## BYA Driver Support Program

Transport services are a big issue across the Warren-Blackwood region for young people. In the regions, being able to drive is a necessity for getting to employment, spending time with friends and in some cases be able to attend training facilities,

Obtaining their drivers licence gives our youth an opportunity to explore other options with fewer restrictions.

Blackwood Youth Action (BYA) has identified that some young people across our region have limited access to a suitable vehicle or to someone with the necessary experience to accompany them in achieving the required 'logbook' hours.

The BYA Driver Support Program has been created to address this issue by supporting young people to complete the 50 hours of supervised 'logbook' experience with one of program's Volunteer Driving Mentors.

BYA has partnered with Regional Youth Driving Education (RYDE) to create the Warren-Blackwood RYDE program. This program provides software specifically for



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RYDE which allows BYA Driver Support Program to book, coordinate and link with young people with mentors, and allows service providers and support workers to connect young people with the program.

BYA has the ability to deliver the sessions in Bridgetown and in Manjimup. It has two vehicles, a manual and an auto; these vehicles were purchased in 2022 and are fully insured and well maintained through this program.

The program has already had good support from people interested in mentoring but there is always a need for more. Each session is 90 minutes long and there is no minimum or maximum number of sessions a mentor must do.

The mentors are the key to the success of this program, helping young people to become more responsible and independent. The mentor role can be a rewarding experience as they support young people with their hours, share knowledge about negotiating roads, and build supportive relationships with the young person.

There is a cost to the young person of \$15.00 per session which goes towards the running of the program. Anyone wishing further information on this great program, or anyone interested in becoming a Volunteer Driving Mentor Contact Program Manager on 97993364 or [ryde@blackwoodyouthaction.com.au](mailto:ryde@blackwoodyouthaction.com.au)

## 19th March Nev's Steel Cup

## 2nd April Harcourts Heartland Bridgetown Cup



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**19th March**

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Lianne Jay, Christine Latham and Yvonne Dorricott

## South West Printmakers Exhibition

A group of south west artists have been busily preparing for their up and coming exhibition, The South West Printmakers, the theme of which is 'Retrospective Works'.

The exhibition kicks off on April 8<sup>th</sup> until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, with the official opening to be held on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April from 1pm till 3pm. Everyone is welcome.

The exhibition is being held at The Pop-Up Gallery in the Museum of the Great Southern, which is located at Residency Road in Albany and is open from 10am - 4pm daily (closed Good Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April) Entry is free.

For further details you may call Great Southern on (08) 9841 4844.

The South West Printmakers are a group of eight professional artists who have been together for 17 years. They live and work from their individual studios in Torbay, Bridgetown, Donnybrook, Dunsborough and Cowarumup; coming together on a monthly basis for a group meeting.

They also attend an annual art camp, which is of a one-to-two-week duration. These camps find the group in such localities as Goongarrie Station near Lake Ballard, Mukinbudin, Karjini, Kalbarri and the Dryandra Woodlands. On camp they seek information and inspiration to fuel their ongoing creative output and aspiration to educate others. The artists employ a variety of print forms and media; utilising a diversity of subject matter to showcase their unique experiences and expertise.

The works they produce feature in this exhibition, along with their annual print share from the last two years. A print share requires each artist to create an edition, or set number, of original prints which they then share with each other...Continued on page 13

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## Balingup Small Farm Field Day

The Balingup Small Farm Field Day is back on the Balingup Town Oval after 4 years – there being a smaller one in 2021. It is being held on Saturday 15th April 9am till 4pm.

The first Balingup Small Farm Field Day (BSFFD) was held in 1991 and is a not for profit, community event driven under the auspice of the Balingup Progress Association (BPA) – run by a Committee of volunteers with the help this year of a Coordinator.

The BSFFD concentrates on the activities of small farms with sections on livestock suitable for small holdings, small scale farm machinery and equipment, horticulture, small farm information, gourmet foods from local products, local crafts and a limited number of market stalls featuring predominantly local produce.

The BSFFD has guest speakers talk on topics related to the Field Day Theme –

‘Small Farms – Big Ideas’, This year Chris Ferreira will be the key speaker covering a range of topics from creating a Firewise garden through to drought resistant, sustainable productive land management education. Also there will be talks on making great compost, beekeeping basics and biosecurity. Plenty of activities for children including an animal petting zoo, camel rides, climbing wall and sand pit are on offer.

There will also be the opportunity to watch sheep dog trials, sheep shearing and demonstrations including wood turning, black smithing, log splitting plus more accompanied with local music playing on stage.

Heaps of food vans with a huge variety of different tastes, coffee and drinks are on offer all day.

Tickers are available on the website – save queuing up this year. Buy today. Adults are \$20, Pensioners with a pensioners card \$15, Under 16 FREE with parent/guardian and Carers FREE with a Companion Card holder.



### Last chance for Exhibitors

## Balingup Small Farm Field Day



IS BACK on Balingup Town Oval  
Allocations have started - Few sites left  
Go to the Exhibitors tab on our website

Fit in with our theme and join us!

'Small Farms - Big Ideas'

### ENTRY TICKETS - NOW AVAILABLE

## Balingup Small Farm Field Day

Saturday April 15th 2023 9am - 4pm



- \$20 Adult
- \$15 Pensioner with card
- Under 16 - Free with parent/guardian
- Companion Card holder - admit carer free

### Don't queue up like last time!

You will need a ticket to enter

Bookings and questions answered on our website:

[www.balingupsmallfarmfieldday.com.au](http://www.balingupsmallfarmfieldday.com.au)

No dogs, bikes or smoking



Balingup Small Farm Field Day



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# TALISON – SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



## Craig's Corner - *With Craig Dawson*

For those that don't know me I'm the General Manager - Operations with Talison Lithium Pty Ltd (**Talison, Company**) and I look forward to every month sharing with you insight into what is happening at our Greenbushes Lithium Operation and updates on our projects and community activities.

Last month Talison was pleased to be able to facilitate feedback sessions with community members from Bridgetown-Greenbushes and surrounding Shires. The sessions were facilitated by an external consultant (ERM Pty Ltd) who was the same consultant previously engaged by Talison to undertake the Community Perceptions Survey (CPS) back in August 2022.

Coincident with the CPS feedback sessions, ERM also coordinated a number of employee and community "open houses" and input sessions for the purposes of Talison's Social Impact Assessment (SIA). The sessions were well attended and ERM is now compiling all the input received ahead of presenting a report to Talison in the near future. A warm heart felt thank you to all community members who participated.

I am proud of the investment Talison makes at a local level in the Greenbushes area. Which is why I was surprised by the relatively minimal awareness, and to an extent criticism, some attendees at the 'Open House' sessions had regarding Talison's contribution to the community. In light of this, I thought I would take the opportunity to provide a brief overview of some of the ways in which Talison contributes to the community, and society in general, both locally and more broadly:

- The Greenbushes Lithium Operation (Site, Mine) supplies approximately 20% of the worlds Lithium which is critical in supporting the Global clean energy transition. Without the Mine's inputs, the clean energy transition would be significantly hampered in its progress;
- the Mine is the largest single employer in this part of the South West with more than 1,000 direct jobs and a very significant number of indirect jobs; and
- Talison supports local youth by means of its Apprentice and Traineeship programmes. For the 2023 year, Talison has engaged a total of six (6) apprentices and eight (8) Trainees.

In addition to Talison's ongoing local sponsorship and donations programmes, Talison is proud to be a significant contributor to the economy of the South West region, Western Australia (WA) and Australia through the payment of employee salaries, rates, royalties and taxes:

- Income taxes paid to the Federal Government for the 2022 year were in excess of \$900 million;
- other taxes paid to the Federal Government for the 2022 year were just under \$20 million;
- Royalties paid to the WA Government for the 2022 year were in excess of \$260 million;
- other rates and taxes paid to the WA Government for the 2022 year were in excess of \$5 million;
- the annual base salary paid to Talison employees (not including contractor employees who work at the Mine) living in the Shires of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Donnybrook-Balingup, Manjimup, Boyup Brook and Nannup (based on January 2023 employee numbers – which will increase by 40-50% during the 2023 year) is estimated to be of the order of \$45 – \$50 million; and
- Talison is a major ratepayer within the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes accounting for somewhere between 5.0-7.5% of annual rates revenue raised by the Shire.

For the 2022 year, Talison's small donations/sponsorship programme supported 71 individual community groups with both cash and in-kind donations to the value of \$255,000. The Talison Board of Directors has approved a doubling of the funding pool available for supporting local community groups through Talison's small donations/sponsorship programme for the 2023 year.

Two important projects funded directly Talison in 2022 were the installation of the Greenbushes Primary School Shade Sails (\$40,000) and the Balingup Primary School undercover area (\$36,000).

The Talison Environment and Community teams contributed in excess of 400 hours of their time in supporting local community groups. I look forward to Talison's Community and Environment teams continuing to engage collaboratively with community groups for the betterment of people living within the South West. Talison will continue to explore opportunities to be involved with groups and projects which bring benefits to local communities.



Talison also has a number of key Community Partnerships which it sees as being of tangible benefit to local communities including:

- three (3) year \$600,000 partnership with Blackwood Youth Action;
- four (4) year \$61,000 partnership with the Chamber of Minerals and Energy WA to facilitate a digital technologies programme for schools in the Warren-Blackwood region;
- five (5) year partnership with Edith Cowan University for the provision of internships for students;
- one (1) year \$50,000 partnership with the Greenbushes Primary School;
- three (3) year \$90,000 partnership with Foodbank WA; and
- three (3) year partnership with St. Georges College Perth for the provision of accommodation scholarships for country students who wish to study in Perth.

I am immensely proud of the part that Talison and its employees play in supporting both the global clean energy transition and the local communities in which it operates. This is not to say that Talison can't do better – Talison always strive to ensure that it improves on a continual basis and Talison is continually looking for ways to better engage with, and support, local communities.

As some of you will have seen, roadwork has commenced for the upgrade to Stanifer Street between the South Western Highway and Greenbushes which is required to ensure safe traffic flows associated with the new Mine Services Area (MSA).

A Traffic Management Plan has been enacted which limits light vehicle traffic along Stanifer Street during the day whilst the works are being undertaken.

Talison acknowledges there were some teething issues at the start and that these works have and will continue to cause disruption to community members and recognises the inconvenience that will result – but the works are necessary to ensure the long-term safety of road users.

Congratulations to Tom Sherwell who achieved five (5) years of Service during February.

Talison is pleased to be able to continue to support community groups with the following donations/ sponsorships approved during February with cash or In-kind donations:

- Mayanup Campdraft;
- WA Bush Fire Museum and Heritage Group – Museum establishment;
- Donnybrook Blackwood Ravens Netball Club – Club establishment;
- Bridgetown Historical Society – Royal Western Australian Historical Society Annual State Conference;
- Donnybrook Ladies Hockey Club – Junior Hockey Program;
- Capel Horse and Pony Club – CCN-S Equestrian Event;
- Balingup Small Farm Field Day;
- Bunbury Orchestra Family Concert in Bridgetown;
- Greenbushes Discovery Centre – National Heritage Festival; and
- National Rock Garden and Geoscience Australia – Canberra.



Great to catch up with Greenbushes Primary School Principle Chris Mott and see students having fun playing under the new shade sails which were directly funded by Talison.

For more information on our Sponsorship and Donation Program please email our Community Team [gbcontact@talisonlithium.com](mailto:gbcontact@talisonlithium.com).



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## Show Talk

Hello Everyone; At our February Meeting three new Committee Members joined us, Kiara, Audrey and Joel. We welcome them on board and look forward to their contribution and fresh ideas to further enhance the grounds, the Shows direction and the future progress of the Society.

There are so many things on our wish list that we would love to do on and around the grounds to further improve access for show patrons and those who hire the grounds and buildings. The Committee are proud of the longevity of the Society, the grounds and the amazing history and are committed to making improvements as best we can for the benefit of all those who use the grounds throughout the year. This year the Society will be 138 years old. The current Showground will be 118 years old and we will celebrate our 134th Show. The oldest building on the grounds is the Rotunda Bar (built in 1905) and in the early years the Publicans had to bid for the right to sell their brews to the Show Patrons. The newspapers of the day mentioned how fierce the bidding was.

The next event at the grounds will be the Downunder Country Music Weekend on 17 – 19 March. Downunder Country have been waiting three years to be able to Celebrate their 10th Anniversary and they are very excited to be able to hold their event again. One of the highlights are the walk-ups where a lot of our local talent will entertain. Centenary Hall transforms into a country music hub. If the weather is right most of the event will be held outside under a marquee. Bootscooting, dancing and poets will add to the mix. Bring along your own chair (preferably low back) and food and drinks are available all weekend. Flyers will be available at the front gate from Thursday 16th.

Our next Meeting will be held on Wednesday 8th March 7.30pm in the Presidents Room at the Showgrounds. If you would like to know more about the Committee or the Agricultural Society's role in the Community, contact mob. 0437 602 836 or email: [info@bridgetownshow.com.au](mailto:info@bridgetownshow.com.au)



# Blackwood Regen Fest Taster

## Saturday 25 March 2023

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Electric vehicle Q and A - keeping goats  
Local spray free BBQ - cash only

### Bush Dance with live band Bridgetown Rec Centre

**7PM - 10PM**

Family friendly bush dance with caller  
BYO food and drinks

Tickets at door - Adult: \$10, Youth 12-18: \$5  
Children under 12: free - cash only

**9.00** How to make kombucha

**9.30** From dry paddocks to food forest

**10.00** Blackwood Biosecurity

**10.30** Growing your own firewood

**11.00** Holistic community development

**11.30** Giant tomato piñata

**12.00** Making beeswax wraps

**12.30** Increasing carbon in your soil

**1.00** BYA YEOp shop fashion show

**7PM** Bush Dance at the rec centre

This is a low waste event. Please bring your water bottle and keep cup  
For more information find us on facebook @blackwoodearthevents or call 0424 257 585





*'Demi' and Nicola Bingham*

## Prestbury Park Saddlery

A business which is a passion. Nicola and Ashley Bingham moved to Bridgetown in 2014 having purchased an eleven acres property in town, which was ideal for the lifestyle the couple wanted to create for themselves.

All this came about when they first came to Australia to visit Ashley's parents who have a property in Bridgetown. Quite taken by the aspects of the south west, they looked around several south west towns for a place they could make their own, settling on a property in Bridgetown, the town reminding them of the village they grew up in England, Prestbury Park in Gloucestershire

They brought the property in Bridgetown before returning to Australia to live. "The property came with four Alpacas still in residence, who have become great additions to the

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collection of animals calling the property home. It was also conveniently divided up into several smaller paddocks which was ideal for keeping horses." Nicola explained.

"After having horses all of my life and with the huge strain of having to leave my competition horse back in the England to retire, I'm sure Ashley can confirm the first twelve months of no horses around that I was a little touchy to live with. However, I quickly made friends with a couple of local riders who kindly lent me their trusty steeds to get my horse fix to see me through until the right horse strolled into my life.

"We now have two horses, 'Demi' a Friesian Warmblood mare who is my trusty mount, and 'Bugsy' also a Friesian warmblood, is Ashley's ride, being a mechanic, he loves all forms of horse power. There's also 'Bailey' a companion pony who is over 30 years old, but still causing chaos and behaving much younger than his years. Completing our menagerie of animals, we also have two dogs and two cats, all of which have now become a part of our wonderful lifestyle."

Nicola's enjoyment with horses is Dressage. To this end they have had an arena purposely built for her to train her horse in and maintain her dressage skills.

*...Continued on page 12*

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What a glorious start to Autumn. The softness of the morning and evening light is so welcome and the week ahead looks positively mild. We are so very fortunate to live where we do.

Over the course of the past few weeks, we are seeing new residents living in Bridgetown and Greenbushes joining the many diverse community groups we have in our area. People with various interests, experience and skills, are in turn filling us with renewed energy and enthusiasm.

It was a great turn out for the Black Cockatoo Crisis film and hopefully lots of you who attended, will be moved to apply to be involved with the Great Cocky Count to be held on 2nd April from 5.30pm - 7pm.

You can find the registration details at this site  
<https://birdlife.org.au/events/great-cocky-count/>

Elsewhere in this edition of the Mailbag, is the advertisement for the Blackwood Regen Fest Taster on Saturday 25th March 9am - 2pm at the Ashbil Community Garden.

We are very excited to be involved with this as it has been a combined group event - Blackwood Events for the Earth.

Here's just some of experiences and presentations you can enjoy:

- From dry paddocks to food forest;
- Growing your own firewood;
- Holistic community development;
- What's in the giant tomato piñata;
- Making beeswax wraps;
- Increasing carbon in your soil,
- EV cars, a YEOP shop fashion show and more.

To wind up the day, a Live Band Bush Dance will be performing at the Bridgetown Rec Centre from 7pm - 10pm.

BYO everything, all waste to be taken home with you. Join in the dance and have fun.

It's an inexpensive family day and evening for all to enjoy and celebrate how well we can live with little impact on the earth.

Check it all out on the poster! Come along to show your support for our community groups who raise awareness in caring for the Earth as well as participate, share and learn more about how we can live better in our towns.

See you there!



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## To the Editor

One of the first things I did when I moved to Bridgetown two years ago, was to join the Ashbil Community Garden. It was the best thing I could have done. Working with people who nurture and care about the environment was blissful.

I learnt a lot about raised garden beds, seed saving and also the many gardening tips and plant cuttings I received made my life more interesting. We have monthly and also pop-up produce stalls with fresh food, pickles and jams for donation only, helping our community in these challenging times while fostering relationships.

Kindy kids come and paint colourful handprints on the walls, they have merry picnics, play in the children's playground and learn to chat with the sprightly, older gardeners.

Sometimes, however, we are saddened by negative behaviours such as the smashing vandalism of the pottery faces of our scarecrows, the theft of our donated fountain that was in the peace garden and the produce that walks off during the night, in particular a huge Jarrahdale pumpkin that was not even ready for picking.

But still, we love the place: planting, weeding, laughing and supporting our community and each other. We would love to have new members. It is not just a place for retired people – we would love to have younger members and I hope this letter will realise that. Afterall, we need the young mixing with the older to pass on information to each other so nothing ever gets lost. Hope to see you there.

Wendy Stewart; Committee Member of Ashbil Community Garden.

## 10th Downunder Country Music Weekend...Continued from cover

Peter Nettleton is once again organising a great line-up of Bush Poets performing at various times over the weekend, including the Poets Breakfast Sunday morning.

BYO low back chairs and food will be available all weekend. Camping on site \$10pp for 3 nights payable at the gate. Weekend pass \$50 or Friday \$20 Saturday \$30 Sunday \$15. Contact details: David and Therese Higginson 0429 109334 or Coleen Russell 9761 9055. Email [downundercountry@westnet.com.au](mailto:downundercountry@westnet.com.au)

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## Prestbury Park Saddlery

Continued from page 9

Prestbury Park Saddlery is the business Nicola is establishing in Bridgetown. It is located on Hampton Street opposite the Memorial Park as you come into town from the north. It is open three days a week, Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

"We sell the 'every day bits and pieces' needed for caring for a horse. I have a large range of supplements, first aid kits items for your horse, along with riding boots, saddle rugs, saddle pads and turn out rugs, and a good range of riding and casual attire for both men and women.

"We also pass on our knowledge freely to customers when and where needed, after 15 years as an international groom, riding and grooming for many of the UKs top dressage and event riders, there is a lot of useful hints and tips we can pass on. The products we run in store I have either used previously during my years grooming, or I use them daily now in my own yard at home, so we can give our customers an honest opinion of the items, to this day we have had great feedback for the products we stock, both equine and canine, that's right we stock products for dogs too.

"Having a horse and forming a bond with a large animal is very special. Respecting their size and power is a must, horses are an extremely kind caring animal once you have their mateship.

"Having horses, or any animal you have a responsibility for, is a truly grounding experience. They are a seven day a week job, 365 days of the year. They cannot be parked or turned off for a time, and in that regard, they are character building." Nicola concludes.

Nicola and Ashley are an industrious and delightful couple who are now calling Bridgetown home.

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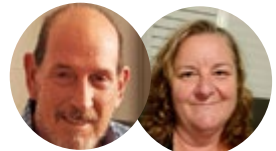
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John has been working in the industry for 22 years as an independent agent & has worked with other franchise agencies, Lisa has been working in the industry for 4 years.

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## South West Printmakers Exhibition

...Continued from page 4

"Exchanging prints really brings the group together, and is a wonderful way for us to collect each other's work, and to see how we are all evolving as individual artists", agree Bridgetown members Yvonne Dorricott, Christine Latham and Lianne Jay.

They exhibit regularly at Bunbury Regional Art Gallery and the Pop-Up Gallery at the Museum of The Great Southern. They have also exhibited in Subiaco, Fremantle, Mount Magnet and Collie.

The group loves to share their printmaking skills and experience, so they are encouraging the public to come along and view the exhibition.

They will also offer three printmaking workshops during this time. For further details you may call the Museum of the Great Southern on (08) 9841 4844.

A member of the South West Printmakers will be staffing the gallery for the duration of the exhibition, so there will always be a printmaker available to talk to.

Members will happily share their thoughts and ideas behind their individual works and answer any questions about making prints, they call the talk 'Printmakers Secrets'.



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## Revitalised Rabbit Hole

Moments in Time by Martin Sherlock will be the March exhibition at the Rabbits Hole Gallery.

It will be available for viewing from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> March. Open from 10am to 3pm Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and 9am to 2pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Martin is a highly productive artist who is producing an abundance of art, this being his third exhibition in the past nine months. Producing a lot of art has the added benefit for Martin to develop and hone his skills.

On display will be a wide variety of his talent, from sculptures to paintings, "I like to try every style, every medium and any technique I can manage in my endeavour to create my artwork, I have an unquenchable curiosity to learn as much as I can." Martin reflects.

"The paintings on display are a varied mix of landscapes, shadows style, abstract art and human figure paintings, the sculptures are of goblins, trees which are planter stands and tables as well as out back drover figurine.

"Over the last four months the Rabbit Hole has gone through an evolution, those which had been frequent visitors before the change have been 'wowed' by the changes that have taken place.

"The Rabbit Hole has attracted new artists to join as members. There are now textile artists, jewellery artists, sculpture artists and artist using the art form of Steampunk art."

Steampunk art includes the kind of artwork which is created by aesthetically blending the essence of the industrial age instruments like cogs, gears, clockwork and machine parts with Victorian art form.

Martin continues, "The improvements at the Rabbit Hole Gallery have come about since becoming a not-for profit organisation.

"With the new artist member system there is always an artist on rooster, though usually it has been two or three artists on hand at most times. A shire grant has gone towards better lighting, and painting of the walls: the improvements have made the gallery larger, brighter and have revitalised gallery."

The Rabbit Hole is on Hampton Street opposite the Freemason's Lodge and is always worth a visit.

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# The Variety Bash

continued from page 2

The Bash this year will be starting on the 8th September in Merredin and finishing on the 16<sup>th</sup> September in Denham.

The excitement of preparing the cars and taking part in the rally is what keeps the fundraising teams coming back for more, a thrilled Lisa explains, "We're talking about a 'carnival on wheels', as we navigate the adrenaline-pumping 'off the map' tracks we get to travel onto our destination.

"All the cars taking part in the rally are two-wheel drive, this requires the teams to look out for one another and work together to meet the difficulty of the terrain and last the distance.

"The cars have a couple of must have modification, the chassis are raised for greater ground clearance, there is a full-length sump guard which protects the whole underneath of the car, and most importantly we have two towing couplings, one on the front and one on the rear of the car for those times when we get bogged or breakdown.

"Last year forty-four cars started the event with forty cars finishing.

"It's not a race, it's a wonderful life experience like no other, although sometimes the drivers just cannot help themselves.

"Along the way we get to experience some of WA's most beautiful and remote places with support of an experienced crew, private caterers and the opportunity to see the impact of our fundraising has along the way.

"There really isn't anything quite like it. The camaraderie and devotion each basher has speaks for itself, hence why we see so many regular participants returning to the event year after year."

Variety WA helps by providing vital and practical equipment, programs and experiences for children in need to overcome the obstacles they face. Assisting them to live life to the fullest to help 'kids be kids.' Their work allows children to gain mobility and freedom, to get out and about in the community, increase self-esteem and achieve independence.

If there are any families or community groups out there that need help, please reach out to Variety WA and apply for a grant, [www.variety.org.au](http://www.variety.org.au)

## Bridgetown Stamp Club



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## Ladies in Black

The Bridgetown Repertory Theatre next production is a musical, Ladies in Black.

The Musical is by Carolyn Burns and Tim Finn, based on Madeleine St John's 1993 novel, which studies women working in fictional department store.

Set in Sydney in the 1950s, a post war city 'a buzz with change', the musical tells the story of school leaver Lesley who joins the sales staff in a fashionable department store.

Over a summer that changes her life, she befriends the colourful denizens of the women's clothing department. Each of the characters are on the precipice of change; facing independence, working for a living and coming to terms with what it means to be a woman. A coming-of-age story for both the women and for the city they live in.

Robert Benson-Parry is directing the production and he tells us how the musical is progressing, "To bring this production to the Bridgetown stage it will be a collaborative effort, I have Wayne Paget-Steadman who is the choreographer and Julia Robinson as the music director.

"We have fourteen cast members, five of those are male roles. The leading role of Lesley will be played by a seventeen-year-old Ella McGuire.

"In our pre-production read through of the script the cast members giggled and laughed at our societies attitude changes which have taken place since the 1950s, some of attitudes back then have now become politically incorrect and are very amusing today.



Fiona Nitschke, Angela Paget-Stedman, Julia Robinson and Colleen Curry rehearsing

"There are several stories running through the musical making it very interesting, but it's not the usual boy meets girl musical story line. We enter the world of Goode's through the eyes of Lesley, a seventeen-year-old recent high school graduate who has dreams of going to university, and becoming a poet. She renames herself Lisa on her Goode's job application form; There is Fay, a 29-year-old woman who is worried she might never marry; Patty, whose husband has a fear he might be sterile; Miss Jacobs, a kind older woman with a mysterious past, and Magda, a Lithuanian refugee who has re-settled, along with her Hungarian husband, in Mosman. Magda is mocked and feared in equal parts by her co-workers - they call her the 'crazy continental!'"

This very interesting Australian musical which will remind us all of how far our society has developed in such a short time. The musical will be staged over eight performances from April 20<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>, a performance which should not be missed.

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