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May 5th 2026

VOLUME 34 NO: 7 ISSUE 364

THE MAILBAG

Printed and Published by M.P. Krauze, Trading as The Quality Shop, 125 Hampton Street, Bridgetown W.A. 6255
 Telephone: 9761 1717 - Email: mailbag@bigpond.net.au - www.thequalityshop.com.au

Bridgetown Club Celebrates 80 Years with Community Open Day

The Bridgetown Club will mark its 80th anniversary with a community Open Day on Saturday 23 May 2026, inviting locals and visitors to celebrate and discover the Club's diverse program of activities.

Starting from midday, the day will feature pizzas for lunch, pies for dinner, historical displays, and opportunities to meet Club members and committee.

The Open Day will also showcase the wide range of regular activities that have made the Club a hub for community connection. These include weekly cards and darts games, monthly Open Mic Nights and Burger Nights, along with regular events such as Bingo Nights, Sundowners with live music, and themed meal nights.

A special reunion will be held from 3.00pm to 5.00pm as part of the Open Day, warmly welcoming anyone who has been connected with the Bridgetown Club over the years. Former members, past committee representatives, volunteers, players, performers, and community supporters are all invited to reconnect, share memories, and celebrate the Club's 80-year history together.

The Club's annual calendar features community events such as Quiz Night, AFL Grand Final celebrations, ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day services hosted with the RSL, Blues at Bridgetown live music events, Christmas Dinner, and New Year's Eve functions.

Creative and social activities are also held at the Club including LP Nights, Poetry Nights, theatre matinees in partnership with the Bridgetown Repertory Club, and board games evenings run with the Bridgetown Community Resource Centre... *Continued on page 12*



Men - Bryan Zemunik (Treasurer), Rob Bayes, Martin Gray, Rob Benson-Parry (President) and Kevin Walker- Ladies - Barbara Waller, Sue Hayter (Secretary), Alison Brewer (V. President)

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Ben Hewitt

AI Programmer

Ben Hewitt and Georgie Lutz run brand management programmes that help entrepreneurs and companies sell their goods online, on sites like Amazon.

They are programmes which help their clients' products to be positioned on top of search listings and in front of the right users when searching for items, posting new items or listing new items for sale. It's software which allows a smaller company to operate on a more level playing field in the same way as upfront marketing appearance of the larger much more developed corporations.

Ben and Georgie first met when they were travelling around in the eastern states, 'doing a lap', making their way around the country. Two years ago, they were going to stop over in Bridgetown for two weeks, two years later they are still here, they found a most wonderful place to live.

Ben is maintaining his current client list in brand management whilst he is developing an AI business program, with of course the best program development tool of all time, AI itself.

Ben is developing an AI platform which will work virtually. He envisions this development leading to a client base who can connect the platform to their business and bring in AI employees to support different roles, helping to streamline operations and support growth.

"I take a job description and turn that into a virtual AI employee." Ben explains

"I can create virtual AI employees with different areas of expertise, such as managing inventory where stock items can be reordered automatically, financial roles that help with managing invoicing, or even an admin assistant that can complete tasks on your behalf to save you time.

"Some of these agents could also manage things like social media - posting regularly and then tracking the impact of the advertising to see what is working and what is not.

...Continued on page 15

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Bella and Kylie

B Unique

On Easter Saturday, 4th April, Bella Lucas opened up her new venture business in Bridgetown at 117 Hampton Street, B Unique Handmade Bridgetown, selling locally made clothing, wooden kitchen utensils, honey and hot sauce gourmet produce, soaps, hand creams, diffusers, prints and pictures and lots, lots more locally made items.

"This has all come about with the closing of The Loft in the same location, B Unique is run in a similar fashion, I say it's the same but different." Bella explains.

"I have a Bachelor Degree in textile fine arts, making jewellery and clothing items and up-cycling goods from the off-shop have always been passions for me.



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"I also just love the whole shop front experience of meeting, talking and dealing with people, I feel the shop will be a perfect fit for me and my personality.

"The goods within the store are sold on consignment, we see how the items sell over a few months before making a particular range a feature within the store.

"I'm not only increasing the range but also the variety of stock, but still maintaining the locally produced in the region theme.

"If you drop in for a browse you are bound to be delighted with the range and creativity on sale. At this time, we have a great winter range of scarves, mittens and gloves to choose from, a range of origami cranes with crystal hangers and a unique range of hand bags with eye catching designs.

"The store is decorated throughout with, dare I say interesting old objects, manual typewriter, push lawn mower and a metal frame bed.

"Call in and see me Bella, or my assistant Kylie Tizard for that ideal handmade item."

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Have your say on local trails in Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes.

Love walking, riding, or exploring the outdoors? We want to hear from you.

As part of the Warren Blackwood Regional Trails Strategy, we're hosting a series of workshops and community drop-in sessions across Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes. This is your opportunity to share ideas, highlight local priorities, and help shape the future of trails in our region.

How it works:

- Workshops run for the full session time
- Drop-in sessions are informal, come along anytime

Upcoming sessions:

- BRIDGETOWN - Saturday 9th May 2026, 10am - 1pm, Bridgetown Lesser Hall (Workshop)
- GREENBUSHES - Monday 11th May 2026, 10am - 1pm, Greenbushes Community Resource Centre (Drop-in)

All welcome: locals, visitors, trail users, businesses and community groups.

No registration required, just come along and be part of the conversation.

For all regional workshop and drop in session dates, visit www.wbac.net.au or email trails@wbac.net.au

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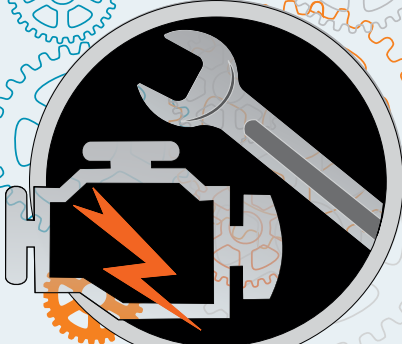
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Hugh and Melva Browne

Maranup Ford Book Release

Maranup Ford was the place to be on Sunday 26th April. Not only was the Caravan Park buzzing with visitors for the long weekend, so to was the Homestead and garden.

Four Generations of the Browne family, the descendants of Hugh and Freda Browne had gathered to meet distant cousins, recount memories and explore the ruins of the first home. They had also come to celebrate the launching of a new book that tells a story of the farm that was established in 1898.

Hugh Browne, grandson of Hugh and Freda, who has lived at Maranup for 85 years recalls personal experiences of family and farm. He also retells stories, told to him, of earlier life on the property. Stories of tragedy, of fire and flood, of a family isolated from mainstream society, that shared amongst themselves and with the neighboring families a busy life of hard work and social interaction.

This is a book that is easy to read. It is a story simply told and supplemented by some original letters and documents. Included in the book are a wide selection of photographs that date back into the nineteenth century. Some of those have, with the assistance of modern technology, been restored.

As the story moves on Hugh relates of his own life, his marriage to Melva, their life on the farm and their involvement in the community. From Junior Farmers and Pony Club to Local Government and Canberra conferences, shearing and tree planting, firefighting and encounters with an emu and a kangaroo are all covered by the 400 pages.

Hugh has drawn from a wealth of information learnt from his father, stories related as they worked together in the dairy, the orchard and the paddock. He was also able to use material from various essays left by his mother along with an album of photos that dated back to the late nineteenth century, when the property was selected. He was fortunate to have been able to use the skills and experience of Dennis and Lesleyann Lingane, who, over five months, patiently restored photos, rearranged text and repeatedly read thousands of words.

Maranup Ford and The Browne Family. Is available at the Bridgetown Newsagent, The Bridgetown Visitor Center, and in Greenbushes at The Discovery Center and the C.R.C.

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Mandy and Jane

Community Transport Project Seeks Local Feedback

Bridgetown Community Resource Centre (CRC) has developed a survey for Bridgetown residents in regard to the community transport needs for those within our community who may require assistance with transport services.

Jane Wittenoom, Bridgetown CRC Manger, and Mandy Kiely have issued the survey in the first instance to get factual information on the community requirements.

Mandy explains, "For some people, transport affects much more than medical appointments. It can also mean missing out on shopping, social activities, community events and staying connected with family and others. In a rural community, that can make a big difference to everyday life.

"There is of course lots of anecdotal evidence which talks about the need for transport services within our town, but for Bridgetown CRC to potentially take this further, we need some factual data from the community...*Continued on page 12*



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Talison Supports Regional Events

Talison was proud to again support the Balingup Small Farm Field Day, reinforcing our ongoing commitment to local community events that bring people together across the region

As a long-standing supporter of the Field Day, Talison funded a range of family-friendly activities this year, including the popular climbing wall (pictured below) and free entry for children aged under 12. The Talison marquee was once again a hub for families, with our giant sandpit and mining toys proving a hit throughout the day.

Talison's sponsorship is focused on helping families enjoy a low-cost, fun and inclusive day out, while supporting an event that celebrates regional life, local producers and community connection.

We were also pleased to support the Donnybrook Festival over the Easter weekend by providing funding for the main marquee. Events like this rely on the dedication of local volunteers and businesses, and Talison is proud to play a part in helping support this successful festival that brings visitors to town and generates flow-on benefits for the wider community.

By supporting local events and festivals, Talison is proud to contribute to the vibrancy of the towns surrounding its operations, where our people live and work, supported by the passion and commitment of local communities.



New and Ongoing Community Initiatives

- Following community feedback, Talison is progressing plans for a public car rinse in Greenbushes to help manage dust impacts. Location planning considers community input, safety, environmental factors and operational requirements.
- A solar panel cleaning program for Greenbushes residents will commence as a trial later this year.
- The Stanifer Street upgrade is being delivered by the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes and is planned to commence in mid-April.
- The Stakeholder Reference Committee (SRC) has been meeting since September 2025, providing a forum for sharing information, discussion and community input. More information, including minutes of meetings, can be found at www.talisonlithium.com/community

Environmental Management Update

- Management of our impacts remains a key focus on site.
- We have completed commissioning of our expanded air quality monitoring network, which is now collecting data to support a long-term Human Health Risk Assessment.
- We are also investigating the expansion of our current noise monitoring network.
- Dust risk forecasts are issued routinely and used to guide proactive dust suppression, operational changes, or pausing activities when needed.
- Dust trigger levels are set below regulatory limits to provide early warning and allow action to be taken before impacts occur.
- Additional dust and blast monitors have been installed based on regulatory requirements, environmental considerations and community feedback.
- 24/7 dust monitoring data is publicly available via Talison's Dust Dashboard: To access visit www.talisonlithium.com/monitoring.

Removal of Old Mill Camp at North Greenbushes Underway

Talison has commenced the staged demobilisation of its worker accommodation village at North Greenbushes. Removal of infrastructure from Old Mill Camp by road began in early March and is expected to continue through to the end of June 2026.

Workers and contractors are now accommodated at Talison's permanent Caladenia Village on Maranup Ford Road, and Old Mill Camp is no longer required.

Truck movements associated with the demobilisation will occur on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, with up to five truck movements per day. The works have been carefully planned to spread vehicle movements across the week and minimise traffic impacts for the local community.

Transport of Lithium Products from Former Parkside facility at North Greenbushes

There may be increased activity at the former Parkside timber processing facility in North Greenbushes, now owned by Talison, over the coming months as lithium mineral products stored at the site are transported to market.

Trucks will transport the material on weekdays between 7:30am and 3:00pm each day until the end of June with up to four movements scheduled each day.

Winter Seeding Plantings Planned Along South Western Highway

Talison has started preparation works for planting on a small area of pasture on a property adjacent to the South Western Highway south of Greenbushes and the mining operations.

The area has been fenced and sprayed ahead of winter, when Talison's Environment team will plant seedlings and spread seed to establish a vegetative buffer along this section of the highway.

Mine Lookout Draws Steady Stream of Visitors to Greenbushes Each Month

Getting a birds-eye-view of Talison's Greenbushes Lithium Operation is proving popular, with more than a thousand visitors flocking to the Public Mine Lookout on Telluride Street each month. In January more than 2000 people visited the Lookout, with school holidays and long weekends attracting higher numbers.

The Public Mine Lookout is open from 8:00am to 5:00pm each day enabling people to see our mining pits first-hand. Information panels in the gazebo at the Lookout provide details about the long history of Greenbushes and the current operations.



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Live Music at the Freemasons

On Saturday 30th May Velvet Edge will be giving a live performance which has free entry for Freemasons Hotel patrons, those 18 years and older.

Velvet Edge is a band which plays classic rock music, music from the 70s and 80s and beyond.

Kim Nelli is the lead singer, her stage name is 'Ruby Rockit', she gives us an insight into what you will be entertained by on the night. "Velvet Edge is a band which was first formed from open mic nights at the 'Green Door' in Bridgetown.

"Velvet Edge has grown into a hard-working, crowd favourite band playing across WA, from Bunbury to Albany, Esperance to Kalgoorlie bringing their signature sound to pubs, parties, and packed dance floors.

"We play on the weekends, music being our passion, performing being our desire, with the creative energy we produce being the life force that makes up the balance in our lives.

"The band members are: Gavin on base, stage name 'Funky Geezer' laying down deep, driving base lines; Lead guitarist is Steve, stage name 'Miles Long' delivering sharp riffs and soaring guitar work; playing drums is Geoff, stage name 'Short Fall' powering it all from the drums; Sound Guy is Mitchell, stage name 'Sound Guy'.

"The crowds we gather are of mixed ages, from 18 to those in their 80s with classic rock music finding a whole new generation which just loves the raw music from those times.

"We play music which people love to get up and dance to, we encourage the audience to sing along to those tunes which bring back memories from another time, all in all we play around thirty-two songs over a night.

"We bring along all our own equipment, a sound and light show which is sure to impress."

"Ruby Rockit" concludes with, "If you love real music with energy and edge, this is where you need to be, so come along or you will miss out on a truly entertaining evening".

'Let's Plan for Life' Event in Bridgetown

Bridgetown- Greenbushes residents are invited to come together for an important and empowering community event, Let's Plan for Life, set to take place on Thursday 14 May 2026 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the Bridgetown Town Hall.

Designed to bring information, support, and meaningful conversations under one roof, Let's Plan for Life is a free community event focused on health, wellbeing, and planning for later life. The event offers a welcoming environment where locals can connect with trusted organisations, ask questions, and learn more about the services available right here in the Bridgetown-Greenbushes community.

Organisers say the day is about connection and reassurance, particularly for older residents, carers, and families navigating complex topics around ageing, health, and future planning.

"This event brings friendly faces, real conversations, and practical help close to home," a spokesperson said. "It's about helping people feel informed, supported, and confident about the future."

Informative Keynote Speakers Throughout the Day. A highlight of the event is a series of keynote presentations from experienced professionals who will address topics many people think about but are often unsure how to approach.

The speaker program includes: 10:30 am – Geegeelup Update, Sean Mahoney from Geegeelup Village will share updates on plans and developments for the village.

11:30 am – Voluntary Assisted Dying, Jaye Lewis, Care Navigator from Rural Health West, will explain the current process, supports, and safeguards.

12:30 pm – Wills and Estate Planning, Matilda Lloyd

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of Bailiwick Legal will outline important legal considerations, including wills and advance care planning.

1:15 pm – Pre-Planning Funerals, Sharon Lomax from William Barrett & Sons will discuss how planning ahead can ease the burden on loved ones.

These sessions are designed to be informative, respectful, and accessible, with opportunities for attendees to ask questions and seek further guidance.

One-Stop Access to Local Support Services

In addition to the speakers, the event will bring together representatives from a wide range of local organisations, services, and businesses focused on health, independence, and community wellbeing. Attendees can speak directly with groups such as Advocare, Staying in Place, Bridgetown CRC, Better Life Centre, Rural Health West, NDIS, Bridgetown Hub, Bridgetown Greenbushes Suicide Prevention Network, and more.

Having so many services in one place allows community members to discover supports they may not even realise are available, making it easier to plan, prepare, and stay informed.

True to its community focus, Let's Plan for Life will also include free morning tea and lunch, encouraging attendees to relax, connect, and enjoy time together. The event is free and open to everyone, whether they are seeking specific information or simply want to learn what support is available for themselves or loved ones. Phone 9761 2712 or 0403 696 101.

ANZAC Day

This year April 25th 2026, our day of national remembrance, marked the 111th anniversary of the landing at Gallipoli.

Australians gathered at ANZAC Day services right across the country along with current serving service men and women in our navy, army and air forces to honour the memory of our original ANZACs with Dawn Services, Driveway Services, marches and other ceremonies.

Australia set aside this one day of the year to commemorate those who have served or are serving in the defence of Australia.

It's also a time to remember and contemplate the horrors of war, lest we become so complacent that we forget the tragedies and the heart ache that accompanies war.

Our hearts go out to all those who are caught up in conflicts and wars which are currently happening around the world today.

We are witnessing on our screens the effect on ordinary people, like ourselves, the hopelessness and the trauma that can suddenly descend on families in these situations. We watch as their world is destroyed around them in a war zone; it reminds us of the importance of being prepared, and that having good allies and maintaining a strong defence force is even more important today than it ever has been.

It a time for us to remember those who gave their lives that we may live as we do, "But for the grace of God, go I," we could be saying as we watch the despair unfolding on our screens.

It was pleasing to see that ANZAC Day 2026 was well attended locally as well as around Australian, and so it should be: Lest we forget.



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Transition Bridgetown

Open Space Sunday 24th May
You may have read recently in our local newspaper, an interview with Professor Kingsley Dixon – leading Western Australian botanist, scientist and researcher who has dedicated his career to improving wildlife conservation, saving endangered species and restoring degraded natural ecosystems.

Professor Kingsley is quoted as saying that, "You cannot reinstate the forest after mining. It is an ancient forest with complexities that we cannot solve." He is referring to the Dalgarp/ Donnelly Forests.

Hence, our first Open Space for 2026 will be on Sunday 24th May 2pm-4pm at the Uniting Church Hall at which the Bridgetown Greenbushes Friends of the Forest and Blackwood Environment Society will update our community on the No Mining in Dalgarp campaign and the quokka population which they have been monitoring there.

We will also be screening a documentary entitled 'The Forest' where a UK ecologist's research indicates that our earth can be saved by restoring the planet's forests. His original work was hijacked by corporations and politicians with disastrous effect. Now he's using science to fight back. Bring a plate of food to share for afternoon tea, have a cuppa and join us as we continue to raise awareness of what action can be done and what we stand to lose if we don't!

Register at transitionbridgetown19@gmail.com or text 0432 105 754

Repair Cafe is going from strength to strength! If you haven't been yet, pop in to see what it's all about on Sat 20th June 10am - 1pm at the Shire Lesser Hall. Save the date and dig out your items for repairing to bring along. Enquiries to Rob 0452 398 595 or email repaircafe6255@gmail.com

The Wash Against Waste Trailer has finished its outdoor volunteer events at Whispering Willows until the spring. It's been great having had it utilised and reducing waste from the music events. Thanks to Pip for leading the way in how it can work out at events to reduce waste.

It was a win-win few months there and the volunteers have loved it!

If you have an idea for utilising the Wash Trailer, please contact Emmanuel on 0408 888 476

Have you heard of Soup and Pitch? It's a concept that started in 2010 in Detroit. It's a way for local residents to present their creative ideas that support and build community. It's a free event, soup is served for dinner, donate \$10 to cast your vote for the conceptual plan that most appeals to you and has been most convincingly presented as a viable idea. The concept with the most votes gets to take home the money as funds to begin the project.

We plan to hold a 'Soup and Pitch' on Sunday 20th Sept so if you have an idea that you'd love to progress that fits this criteria, please let us know... *Continued on page 12*

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What We Fought For - and Why It Still Matters

The Hester Forest we know almost ceased to exist.

Today we take it for granted, a beautiful backdrop to Bridgetown, wonderful to visit and home to the Old Abattoir and Wandoo Valley Walks. What many may not know is how close we came to losing it, and how much this community gave to protect it.

Until the 1980s, every forest in the Shire was available for logging, right to the town boundary. A few small reserves existed but weren't protected in any meaningful sense, they doubled as rubbish dumps, gravel pits and firewood sources. The idea that Hester might one day be formally protected felt, to many, like wishful thinking.

When Bridgetown Greenbushes Friends of the Forest (BGFF) formed in 1987, one of its first acts was to put that wishful thinking on paper. The group lodged a submission calling for Hester's protection - 5,869 hectares of old-growth Jarrah remnants forming a natural green belt to the north-east of our town. The submission was completely ignored.

Seven years passed. Then, in November 1994, logging started in a small patch at Winnejump. BGFF was ready. On the very first day of operations, they successfully applied for an interim injunction to stop it. What followed was extraordinary: four years of legal proceedings through the Supreme Court of Western Australia and ultimately the High Court of Australia, fought by a community volunteer group on behalf of a forest that deserved better.

BGFF went on to challenge every attempt at logging in Hester. Coupe by coupe, year by year, the forest held. By 2004, seventeen years after that first ignored submission, Hester Conservation Park was declared, and the remainder of Hester was designated as proposed Conservation Parks and Forest Conservation Areas.

That history matters, because what is happening in the same forest today deserves the same community attention.

The threat today looks different - quieter, more procedural - but the principle is the same. IGO (part owner of Talison Lithium, and owner of Flinders who have the exploration applications across the Dalgapur Donnelly forest) received approval in late 2025 to carry out exploration within the proposed conservation areas in Hester State Forest, including the Old Abattoir and Wandoo Valley Walks. It continues their search for lithium-bearing pegmatites that began in 2024 on private properties, with the onset of landowners...*Continued on page 13*



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Bridgetown Club Celebrates 80 Years with Community Open Day

Continued from cover... The Club has also recently launched the Bridgetown Club Art Collective, providing an opportunity for local artists to gain exposure and sell their work on a consignment basis. Located near a key South West WA tourist route, the initiative connects visitors and buyers with high-quality original works from local and regional creatives in a welcoming and inclusive environment.

In addition to its regular programs, the Club supports a variety of community and private events, including workshops, weddings, business networking evenings, and social competitions. The Bridgetown Club Open Day offers a unique opportunity to celebrate 80 years of community history while experiencing the welcoming and inclusive spirit that continues to define the Club. Now celebrating 80 years, the Bridgetown Club continues to be a place of connection, fellowship and community life, honouring the legacy of its founders while serving new generations.

Event Details: Bridgetown Club 80th Anniversary Open Day

13 Pioneer St, Bridgetown Saturday 23 May 2026
From midday. The community is warmly invited to attend. Club Vice President, Alison Brewer, said the Bridgetown Club's future is built on inclusion and community connection. "While the Bridgetown Club has a proud history, it is very much focused on the future. Women members play an active and valued role in the life of the Club today, and we are committed to being an inclusive, welcoming space for people of all ages and backgrounds. The Club is evolving with the community it serves, while still honouring its heritage."

Club President, Robert Benson-Parry, said the 80th anniversary was an opportunity to reflect on both legacy and progress.

"This milestone is about more than celebrating 80 years of history – it's about recognising how the Club has grown and adapted over time. We're proud of our past, grateful for the generations who built the Club, and excited about the direction we're heading as a modern, inclusive community organisation.

Historical Notes: The Bridgetown Club, formerly known as Fort Belvedere, is a distinctive Inter-War Bungalow built in 1936–37 for Godfrey and Mary Hester, prominent early settlers and community leaders in the Bridgetown district. Designed in the Inter-War Bungalow style, the building is recognised for its strong symmetrical façade, prominent central portico, semi-circular brick arch, and contrasting rendered and face brick detailing beneath a hipped-gable roof.

Godfrey Hester arrived in the district as a child in 1858 and went on to play a significant role in Bridgetown's agricultural, business, and civic life. Together with his wife Mary, he contributed greatly to the social and community fabric of the town. In 1946, following their passing, their Bridgetown home was bequeathed to the community and formally established as the Bridgetown Club.

The Club was incorporated in 1948 and has operated continuously since then, evolving from a traditional gentlemen's club to a modern, inclusive social club open to all members of the community. It remains one of Bridgetown's most recognisable landmarks and a rare surviving example of an Inter-War Bungalow adapted for long-term social use.

Authorised by Robert Benson-Parry, President
Contact: 0416 156 057 Alison Brewer, Vice President.

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Transition Bridgetown

Continued from page 10... Open Space Sunday 24th May

We will have time for 4 initiatives to be promoted. Email transitionbridgetown19@gmail.com to register your interest and outline your concept and we'll consider it as one of the pitches on the day!

Watch this space for further details but save the date in your diaries in the meantime. You'll hear lots more about Soup and Pitch in the months ahead and on our Facebook page.

Until next month, stay warm and well and thanks for your on-going interest and support with building resilience in our towns.

Community Transport Project Seeks Local Feedback

Continued from page 5... "This is why we are encouraging community members to complete the survey so we can be better informed about the various transport needs within our town."

The CRC is now talking with local residents, service providers and community groups to better understand where the biggest transport gaps are and what kind of support might work best.

We encourage all within our community to complete the questionnaire, which is available via a link on the Bridgetown CRC website: www.bridgetowncrc.org

Hard copies of the survey are also available at: Bridgetown CRC; Greenbushes CRC; Bridgetown Medical Centre; Ruby Medical Centre; Clovers Store; Bridgetown Pharmacy; Bridgetown Hospital; Bridgetown Hub; Bridgetown Library and the Bridgetown Shire Office.

Feedback from the survey will help build a clearer picture of local transport needs and guide the next stage of planning.

What We Fought For - and Why It Still Matters

Continued from page 11...Exploration in our forests requires the Environment Minister's agreement before work can begin, and IGO has had to demonstrate how it will protect the forest's environmental, flora, fauna and Aboriginal heritage values. The activities that commenced this year are low impact: hand tools for soil and rock sampling, geological mapping, ground gravity surveys and airborne geophysics. Currently there is no drilling proposed, no clearing of vegetation and only existing tracks will be used to access the forest.

Exploration is not mining, and these early-stage activities are a long way from the chainsaws BGFF faced in 1994. But a forest that took seventeen years of community determination to protect deserves our continued attention, so we have arranged to meet with IGO this month to learn more. If IGO finds what it is looking for, more intensive exploration is likely to follow and when that time comes, community voices will matter just as much as they did before.

The volunteers who fought for Hester 30 years ago did so because they believed this place was worth protecting. Our beautiful backdrop is still there. The walks are still there. Let's make sure it stays that way.

If you are interested in joining BGFF, contact Alison Wright at president@bgff.org.au or 0427 385 640.



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Warren Blackwood Heritage Rally

On Sunday 19th May the Warren Blackwood chapter of the Veteran & Classic Car Club ran its third annual Warren Blackwood Historic Rally.

The members are drawn from Bridgetown, Greenbushes, Boyup Brook and Manjimup. Also supporting the run was a strong contingent down for the weekend from Perth.

The event commenced from the Bridgetown River Park along with a Legacy run sharing the Park, being the weekend before ANZAC Day. The weather was very kind as we were bookended with two almost cyclonic storms on the Friday night and again on Monday.

There was the usual registration scramble as there was a sharp 8.30 am departure arranged with our police closing the highway for the start. Our 45 participants got going in convoy through the town led by the classic museum fire engine with sirens and hooters blowing. The route this year was to Balingup and then along the picturesque Blackwood River to Nannup and back through the forest to Bridgetown – timing was good in that the countryside had turned green for the events following the recent rains.

Rhys Mitchell again hosted us for coffee and biscuits at his historic Greystones homestead where we took the group photo using a drone.

Forty-five cars participated ranging from Kevin Cochranes WO 1926 Bentley, which is in its centenary year, to a 308 Ferrari and a V12 E Type. These were complemented by a range of French, English and Australian cars with the 1952 Austin Maintenance Van towing a 1952 trailer carrying a 1928 AJS big bore 350 motorbike in its original state, a combined 246 years of motoring, Nick



Maxfield dressed for the occasion.

Each participant received a numbered rally plate to commemorate the occasion and recognising our sponsors, Talison Lithium and the Heritage Council supporting the Southern Forests and Valleys Heritage fortnight.

After the photo we moved to the town square for a public display of vehicles and some 70 participants gathered at the Freemasons Hotel for lunch and fellowship. After our local President formally welcomed everyone, we got on with fellowship and supporting our charity this year, Shit Box Rally for Cancer Research.

Each year the Rally sponsors an organisation, this year it was Estelle Carlson who is again participating in the Shit Box Rally for Cancer Research. She joined us in her yellow 2002 Toyota often seen parked close to the VIBE service station. The participants in the rally collected \$476 for this fine cause.

Participants left committing to the fellowship and fun next year. We have now run this event for three years and members are keen to make it a weekend event.

A rally gives the car owner the opportunity to show off his pride and joy as the rally of cars always draw a huge crowd, this allows the owners of the car to speak endlessly to an appreciative audience about their passion.

I have seen a meeting come to life when a participant has pulled out of his bag, a side draught Webber carburettor, only then to be overwhelmed with answers to his problems he has had with this item. Evan Edwards

Men's Shed

Continued from back page... There are community projects to be involved in, where being part of a group which makes items like lending libraries, benches and recycled cabinets or repairs items like the odd broken chair or table, are projects which benefit the community, bat boxes and possum boxes, not only giving you a worthwhile feeling but also giving you a project where you can apply your newly acquired skills.

Steve concludes with, "With the shed men have a place where they can feel comfortable and confident in themselves. They may regain a renewed purpose in life.

"Most importantly Bridgetown's Men's Shed is not only a workshop but also a meeting place for men; some members come for the fellowship, others come to be productive, either way the members of the shed find that other members are looking out for them.

"We need you to become new member, but you will find you need the Men's Shed more."

If you are new to town, or you are someone who would like some further information, you can call the secretary of the Bridgetown Men's Shed, Rob Gibb on phone 0452398595 or email on rjg1962@gmail.com

Show Talk

Hi Everyone, At the AGM the Committee welcomed Jillian (Jil) Neave to the Secretary position. President, Roger Gutteridge, Senior Vice President Hayley Thorpe, Junior Vice President Maxine Clifford, Treasurer Stef Karafilis. Corinne Rule was elected as a councillor and will undertake camping coordination. We also welcome Nick Pantou to the Agricultural Society council.

Stolen Event Sign: As a busy volunteer community group who care for and manage all aspects of the grounds, hold the Annual Bridgetown Show, provide camping and support many varied community events throughout the year, it saddens us to know that some person/s need to steal property from the showgrounds. The BAS volunteers work hard at seeking grants, volunteer support and accommodating as many events as possible to fund the ongoing upkeep. The large orange Event Ahead sign was unhooked and taken at the conclusion of the 2025 Blues event. Our attempts to locate the sign have been unsuccessful so far. It would be appreciated if anyone with any information could inform the Society.

Entertainment Committee: We are still seeking additional interested volunteers to help plan and put together entertainment for our Annual Show. You do not need to join the main BAS committee, just be interested in sharing ideas, be able to reach out to some entertainers and support the entertainment side of the show, on show day. For information, contact Hayley via entertainment@bridgetownshow.com.au, via our Facebook page or pop into Bridgetown Newsagency for a chat.

Coming Events: The Blackwood D&D Winterfest will be the next major event at the grounds. Further information next month.

Next Meeting: will be Wednesday 13th May 7.00pm, 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 (Calls only – no Texts) or email: admin@bridgetownshow.com.au website www.bridgetownshow.com.au like us on Facebook 'Bridgetown Agricultural Show' or follow us on Instagram

AI Programmer

Continued from page 2...“We are creating virtual employees and AI agents so companies can then subscribe to the platform, decide which agents of expertise they want to be incorporated into their business to perform their required roles within the business.

Some of these agents could also manage things like social media - posting regularly and then tracking the impact of the advertising to see what is working and what is not.”

AI is now being used in roughly 65% of Australian businesses in lots of various ad hoc ways. As an answering service for incoming telephone calls, for making appointments and changing appointment times, or sending text messages to remind people of an upcoming appointment, or as you may have experienced lately as a vetting service for incoming phone calls, a process which asks you to leave your name and phone number and we will see if the person will want to contact you.

Recent AI improvements in robots have seen robots in China competing against humans in a half marathon race, the robots' balance and stability was greatly improved by AI, the robots won.

Ben's favourite saying at the moment is “Get comfortable with being uncomfortable with AI”.

“The most difficult part of AI will be the transition - helping people understand how to use it and apply it in their day-to-day lives. But over time, everyone, in one way or another, will be using AI.”

The business platform Ben is building is quite a sophisticated one as well as being an important one.

Ben concludes with, “AI for me isn't about replacing people - it's about building systems that support them, remove bottlenecks and allow businesses to grow more effectively.”

Thank You Bridgetown

A heartfelt thanks to everyone in Bridgetown who supported the annual Red Cross March Appeal by donating to our tinshake, attending the Quiz Nite and supporting us in providing the morning tea for Anzac Day as well as those who are participating in the footy tipping competition. A Special Thanks goes out to the following businesses who supported us in kind – the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes, Bridgetown Hotel, Shedley's Wines, IGA, Mitre 10, Hillview Gardens, Bridgetown Newsagent, Wattleseed Cafe and Maureen Scherini. The above March Appeal events have enabled us to provide \$3,000 to assist the Australian Red Cross in its many supportive activities throughout the country.

We are a shrinking organisation – as are many other organisations everywhere – and thoroughly appreciate the number of volunteers who help out at the above events, notably on Anzac Day.

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Men's Shed

Bridgetown's Men's Shed, which is located between the Silver Chain and Bridgetown Hospital on Peninsula Road, has now been established for over twenty years and they are looking for new members.

Bridgetown Men's Shed is one of the best well-equipped woodworking sheds you will ever come across, but more importantly it is a welcoming, non-judgemental environment where the most important time of day is morning tea time.

Steve Bosley has recently become a member of the Men's Shed and tells of his experience. "I was asked several times to come and have a wander in and see what it's like in the shed, but having very little knowledge about wood working or the equipment which is in the shed, I always had an excuse for not turning up.

"Once I gained the courage to show up and see what happens there, I was hooked.

"The welcoming nature of the members, and the camaraderie amongst the members showed me the importance of being there.

"I found it an important meeting place for men, a place where men could 'chew the fat', a place where men could be rude to each other, in a blokey way, and a place where my thoughts and concerns could be heard.



Men shed morning tea: Merrick, IIL, John, Rob, Steve, Jeff, Barry, Pete, Neale, Terry.

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"Men's sheds are now recognised as a place for men to meet and make new friends, have a laugh and maybe make a few things in the workshop.

"The shed is open three days a week, Monday, Tuesday and Thursdays from 8am to 12 noon.

"I have now found when there is a long weekend and the shed does not open on a Monday, I feel somehow I'm missing out."

The equipment in the shed is diverse and varied, there is a large table saw, planers and thicknessers, band saws, spindle moulders, drop saws, drill presses along with clamps and just about any hand tool you would ever need, as well as a dedicated spray room.

They have qualified people who can guide you on any wood working project, supervise you when using the equipment and they have the experience and knowledge you will need to complete the job well.

Really, no wood working experience is necessary...*Continued on page 14*

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