



# Smoke Signals

Issue 225

[www.smokesignalscn.com](http://www.smokesignalscn.com)

February 2020

## THE MOUNT DIRECTION SIGNAL STATION



A fascinating relic of Tasmania's early history is here on our doorstep, but visited by few and probably unknown to many. Before the introduction

of the electric telegraph in 1858, the only communication between Launceston and George Town at the mouth of the Tamar River was by semaphore via three masts, one at Mount George, one at Mount Direction and one on Windmill Hill in Launceston.

The masts were 18 metres high with two crossbars 5 metres long which could be raised or lowered by chains - the position of the crossbars signified a number and a code was used to

send messages of shipping arriving in the Tamar.

The Mount Direction mast was erected in 1834, and in use until the electric telegraph was introduced in 1858. In 2000 the Mount Direction mast was re-erected.

The start of the track is just off the East Tamar Highway on the Dalrymple Road. It is a 2.3km climb to the top, graded easy to moderate. Apart from the splendid views you will see the ruin of the stone building from 1842, the re-erected signal pole and a rock cairn used as a trig point by the early colonial surveyors.

If you listen carefully you may even hear the ghostly voices of the many convicts confined here in the early years of the colony.

### FIRE – HELP PROTECT YOUR NEIGHBOURS

The fire season is far from over and, as we explained in our special Smoke Signals notice in January, there have unfortunately been some deliberately lit fires in our area. Please be alert - if you see anything suspicious at any time on local roads, please take registration numbers of any vehicles and report to police on 131444. If you see smoke or flames ring the Tasmanian Fire Service through the emergency number 000.



Signal Station Ruins

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## Letters To The Editor

Walking with my Labrador dog in Windermere recently we were both savagely attacked by another dog. I would sincerely like to thank Chris and Tracy Brookes for coming to my aid. Also Sam Stacey who brought me home, and Robert and Rose Montague for assisting me till the ambulance arrived then to hospital where I went into surgery. Our Labrador Laura then was taken to her vets where her wounds were taken care of. Last but certainly not least Jamie our local gardener for coming along and talking to Chris and Tracy who were very shaken up over the terrible ordeal. A big Thankyou to all well wishes of our community - forever grateful to one and all.  
Christine and Geoff Warren and our beautiful lab Laura

*Editor's Note: We understand the owner of the attacking dog surrendered it to Council where it was put down.*

Dear Editor

Across the country our unique wildlife is facing threats on every front imaginable, not least from bush fires. Some estimates suggest up to a billion mammals, birds, and reptiles have died or been seriously injured as a result of drought, bushfires and the subsequent loss of their habitat, water and food sources. The hot dry weather is taking its toll on Tasmania's wildlife too, and the distressing sight of roadkilled animals has certainly increased in our East Tamar area, not helped by so much development that's reducing their habitat even further. A plea therefore to all drivers to be mindful of wildlife that are venturing closer to the verges as they search for a few blades of grass to eat, and the possibility of moisture. Some normally nocturnal animals are so desperate they've been seen foraging during the day. Our wildlife is precious and we are incredibly lucky to have so many species in relative abundance. Let's keep it that way, and remember to slow down when driving in areas that are also home to wildlife.

Yours sincerely

Anne Layton-Bennett  
SWAN BAY 7252

## Smoke Signals Community Project Grants

Smoke Signals is produced and distributed entirely by volunteers and printed at no cost by Michael Ferguson MP, so all money raised from advertising in the Smoke Signals newsletter is available to fund worthy community projects. Applications are invited from community groups in the 2nd round of grants of up to \$1000 for local projects that will benefit a section of the community over a reasonable period of time. Criteria for eligibility and application forms can be found on our website:

<http://coolclimateclassroom.com/smokesignalscn.com/smokesignals.htm>

To be eligible for this round of Grants, applications must be received by Friday March 27th 2020.



## WINDERMERE CAFE

Windermere cafe would like to say thank you all for your continued support & we look forward to a fabulous new year ahead with some fantastic events coming up. The first one this year will be our Trivia night on Saturday March the 6th, \$20 per head includes a meal & a ticket for the lucky door prizes, call the cafe on 63281303 to book your table. We also have Devonshire teas every Saturday from 10:30am, our Sunday roast & our Wednesday lunch special roast pork & crackle for just \$12.50 !!!  
See you all soon

## BIRDS OF THE TAMAR By Jon Hosford

### Swamp Harrier

There is a pair of Swamp Harriers that you see in our district most times you drive into Launceston in the Spring to Autumn months. They live and hunt, with upraised wings, along the marshland and road verge between Landfall and the Mowbray outskirts.

This bird is easily distinguished by its upright wing pattern whilst gliding and the stark white rump stripe that distinguishes it from other birds of prey.

The Swamp harrier is a small headed, long legged brown hawk. It sits tall and slim on fence posts and soars low over swamp land and tall grasslands searching for ground birds and waterbirds, rabbits, other

small mammals, reptiles, frogs, and fish. Common enemies of harriers are Australian magpies and Masked lapwings, which dive bomb. and European starlings which mob individuals. They have been heavily blamed and persecuted for killing chickens, pheasants and ducklings.

This bird nests in Tasmania amongst other south eastern states,, usually in



cumbungi or other low vegetation. It lays 3-5 eggs in a low nest of heaped grass. After rearing chicks, a pair of Swamp Harriers will force their offspring to seek other places to live after an Autumn migration north to warmer pastures on mainland Australia.

These birds are very important in keeping a balance in our wetlands and pasture and are not known to threaten the viability of agricultural enterprises other than their reputation mentioned previously.

If you keep ducks or chickens, it is wise to allow them cover overhead, as generally birds of prey will seek domesticated targets whenever their predominant diet is short in supply.

## PLAY GROUP

Dilston Playgroup had a lovely break and has had a brilliant start to 2020. Our final play group for 2019 was such a fun morning of celebrating with party food and music with the guest of honour, Santa, giving out presents for all the children. We all had the most lovely morning and it was a fun way to end the playgroup year.

This year, the children and parents are enjoying interactions and friendships with existing families as well as new families. We have been having a very relaxed start to the year with dress ups, puzzles, hide and seek games, and sensory play activities.

Over the next few months Dilston Playgroup will be enjoying many activities and outings, such as cooking, water play activities, crafts and visiting local parks and playgrounds and enjoying this gorgeous summer.



Dilston Playgroup is held on Tuesdays 10am-12pm, at the Dilston Hall. Cost is \$3 (+ a piece of fruit to share).

All families welcome! Any inquiries, please call Amy on 0413394523.





## WHY BEES LOVE MY GARDEN



*Here are two emails circulated recently relevant to the wellbeing of our bees. Thanks Greta and Jess.*

### BEES AND WATER

A friend of mine puts marbles in her outside water bowl for the bees to stand on. Could also use pebbles. She changes and cleans the water and everything regularly.

Last week I bought 2 bags of marbles from the Reject shop and have been very happy to see heaps of bees sitting on them looking like they were drinking the water.

Since bees are small they can easily drown in the water you set up for them, so you should follow some guidelines on how to safely provide water to bees.

1. Corks, twigs, or stones in the water will prevent bees drowning.
2. Always make sure that the water for the bees is clean and fresh.
3. The water container should be wide and shallow. Not deep water because they can easily drown. If one bee starts drowning, other bees will try to help and that can start a chain reaction of drowning bees.

Adult bees also need water for food as they eat honey. Honey that bees store in honeycomb crystalizes after some time and the concentration of concentration glucose increases. Because of a high concentration of glucose, bees need water to dilute the honey.

Every bee colony has worker bees whose main task is collecting water and if necessary other worker bees will also join them. Every bee collecting water usually makes about 50 trips, each time collecting about 25 mg of water. When there is not enough water in the hive, then foraging worker bees will quit forage and help with water collection. In summer high, a colony may need several litres of water per day.

Even though a major source of water is nectar, bees also need other sources of water. Since bees actively search and collect water, they will collect water from any puddle, swimming

pool, river, lake, or water trough which is close to the hive.'

Adapted from My Beeline

Greta



Hi All

Year after year I have had problems with cherry slugs defoliating my cherry, plum, quince and pear trees. Throwing ash around as suggested by Peter Cundall was only minimally effective because of size of the trees and I didn't really like being covered in ash either. Then I thought I had found a great product (Success) , but the fine print revealed..highly toxic to bees...another wall of shame chemical.

So back to research. Finally found a post by a lady who suggested using Neem oil with a tiny bit of detergent. It works! I have been using this since the first black slimy little buggers made their appearance, very little damage so far and happy bees. From my reading Neem is fine to use. I now just keep an eye for further signs of slugs and just reapply a light spray as required. The other good thing is that even if it is a bit windy and I get some on myself it is not going to cause me any harm either. Win win all round.

It is also good for other things such as the caterpillars wanting to eat my new birch trees. Neem oil is quite cost effective as you only need a small amount.

Us gardeners generally have good intentions, but I feel when we are faced with really bad insect damage there is the temptation revert to using the bad chemicals 'just this once' so here is a bee friendly solution which works.

If anyone has found any other bee friendly solutions I would love to hear about it.

Cheers, Jess

## GARDEN CLUB NEWS

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

Garden Club members enjoyed a wonderful Christmas party at "Tarcoola" in Dilston, with a most enjoyable array of lunch dishes. Lou and John's garden courtyard is a beautiful spot for a large group of garden lovers and we all had a great time.

John showed us the coir mulch he had recently acquired from Hillwood Berry Farm and talked to us about its excellent mulching properties. It is a weed free medium in which strawberries are grown. We were all quite impressed and I know that some of us will seek to purchase some later in the year when it is available again. An extra-special treat was the attendance of Mark Hay from Allans Garden Centre at Prospect. Mark has a vast knowledge of plants and gardening, and answered all of our garden questions giving good solutions for some of the more problematic areas of gardening (pest control, etc.) He also brought along a selection of plants for purchase – which were very popular!

John and Lou's garden was looking well cared for, and the veggie garden was well-stocked. Lou likes to create different ways of cooking and preserving the produce from their garden. They grow 99% of the fruit and vegetables they consume, which I think you will agree, is a very fine effort!

Thank you to Lou for her fabulous catering and to both Lou and John for hosting our Christmas party in such a beautiful setting. A big thank you to John for organising to have Mark Hay in attendance.

Our next Garden Club gathering will be a tour of Birch Grove Gardens in Beaconsfield in February.

**New Members**

We would like to welcome two new members to Garden Club – Wendy and Jess. We hope that you enjoy participating in the coming months.



The beautiful courtyard was perfect for lunch



Mark Hay enjoying lunch with Garden Club members



Some happy Garden Club members



John Baily demonstrating the use of coir mulch

If you would like to participate in Garden Club, please contact me by email or telephone. New members are very welcome.

Kerri Curtis

Email: [kerridwen51@gmail.com](mailto:kerridwen51@gmail.com)

Telephone: 0407 447 344



## CHURCH NEWS     St Matthias' Anglican Church

### Harvest Festival Market

St. Matthias' Church, 431 Windermere Rd  
Saturday February 22nd 10-2pm

**S**talls: produce, jams, preserves, cakes, flower posies, BBQ, Devonshire Tea, church history merchandise, and a Silent Auction of a wide range of excellent items.

Family activities: art/craft activities, colonial games, displays of church history, graveyard history exploration, "living history" icons of the district to chat with, friends to catch up with, and a free production of an historical re-enactment of "The Diary of Mrs Gaunt" at 1pm.

**How can you help?** Be part of the fun!! And of course, bring your family and friends along on the day.

But also, we will need beforehand: donations for the Silent Auction excess fresh fruit, vegetables, small empty jars and 375 ml bottles etc, as well as offers to make preserves and cakes (we can supply sugar and jars.), and flowers for posies

**On the day:** we need helpers to set up/take down tents and serve on stalls, as well as lots of produce, cakes(no cream please), sauces, jams, chutneys, herbs, etc. A great way for new residents to meet others.

(contact Jenny Chandler 63281341, Marg Hosford 6328 1163/0409317806 for pick-up of excess produce at any time and to express your interest to be involved)

The Market will be re-located to Dilston Hall, John Lees Dr Dilston, if weather is extreme.



St Matthias' Church  
431 Windermere Rd.

Services

2nd and 4th Sundays of the month  
9am

Christianity Explored ( <https://www.christianityexplored.org/>): a weekly video/discussion group will be run to search into questions of faith. Starting Fri. Feb 14: 4-6pm ( so there's still time for Valentines dinner at the Café afterwards!) See below for contact details.

### What else has been happening at St Matthias' recently?

- A joyous baptism of Robert and Rosalie Montague's 3 grandchildren.
- A wonderful evening at the Christmas Eve Community Carols with 98 joining in the celebration of Christ's birth and enjoying refreshments on the riverbank following the service.
- A new-look music program every service with Di and Mary on the organ, Sharon and Kathy on guitar, and all in harmony with their beautiful voices. Numbers at services are growing, and the atmosphere is one of joy and hope. When our world seems overcome with bushfires, epidemics, and environmental uncertainty, a little joy, hope and faith is so uplifting. With a wonderful morning tea afterwards, it is a sure way to revitalise your heart and soul twice a month.

Follow us on Facebook [stmatthias'windermere](#) or contact [hosfordm@bigpond.net.au](mailto:hosfordm@bigpond.net.au) to be included in our weekly group email to get all the updated news; especially regarding Easter Sunday and other special events.

Rector: Dane Courtney 0408622182

Roger Hesketh 0437569685

Ken Box 0408023578





## EAST TAMAR MENS SHED

  
**NOW OPEN ON TUESDAYS**

### Shed Opening Hours

Tuesday 9.00am and 2pm

Wednesday 9.00am and 2pm

Saturday 9.00am and 2pm

We are happy to announce an extra day of operation on a Tuesday. Any of our members who wish to attend on this extra session are welcome as are enquiries from those who are looking for a way to join with other men or learn new skills.

Our community members are benefiting from our band of men who have numerous skills to make and repair various items around the home. We do need to charge a fee for service, to pay our ongoing costs, so we are sometimes realistic as to whether it is worth the effort to repair that piece of furniture that you love. We will assess honestly if a project you have in mind is worthy of our special attention, or at least advise you what to do with it if we can't help.

We specialise in woodwork and metalwork, having machinery capable of taking on a wide range of projects. We also make good coffee, so if you are up for a chat, do drop in.

Our contribution to the Xmas Market was a great success, and a big THANKYOU to Fiona Miller and Pat Hollier for their coordination of this event. We have several items of very creative, high quality outdoor furniture available for sale, so please call in to see us. You will find us a very friendly mob to deal with.

Recently we did a rubbish roundup on the entry to John Lees Drive and will continue to monitor this area for cleanliness.



Some items for sale



ETMS is assisted by equipment grants from the Tasmanian Government.

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# Dilston Fire Brigade



## Tasmania Fire Service

**Register the fire by calling freecall 1800 000 699**

By telling the Tasmania Fire Service about your fire you may help prevent false alarms.

### 2019/2020 Fire Season...

...rolls on!

Since the last issue of smoke signals the fire season in Tasmania, and indeed on the mainland, has kept us and many other brigades very busy.

The fire at Fingal kept us on our toes for 3 weeks with many hours put in to help try and contain this fire.

While 22,000ha is not an insignificant area burnt, we are at this stage looking at this number as a bit of a win, with the southern Fingal fire having the potential to run into the Douglas Apsley National Park, and onto the coast.

Locally we were unfortunately victim to an individual or individuals unknown, who took it upon them selves to light several fires along John Lees Drive just before New Year. As some of you may have noticed, one of these fires was directly next to the Dilston Fire Station. A lucky save and thanks to the quick action of our Third Officer Ben Jones, and the other responding brigade members.

We want to take this

opportunity to whole heartedly thank members of the community who very quickly rang 000 including observations of vehicles seen in the area.

Whilst we are still experiencing a high number of calls, the brigade management wishes to express their gratitude to all brigade members for their efforts over the last couple of months.

### RECRUITING 2020

As noted last issue, we are currently recruiting to bolster our numbers.

We have letter dropped all households, and by the time this issue is delivered we will have held our information session at the station on Sunday February 9.

If you were not able to attend, or missed the flyer, and would still like to find out what volunteering with us is all about, drop us a line to one of the numbers listed below!

### 2019 XMAS SANTA RUN!

A sincere thankyou to the whole community for the turnout for this years XMAS

Santa Rub. It was great to see all the kids, big and small, get into the festive mood, and we are appreciative for the donations to the brigade on the days that were well enjoyed at our end of year BBQ.

### Thankyou LJ Hooker!

We want to take a minute here to acknowledge the very generous offer made to the brigade from Justin Goebel and his team at LJ Hooker, in their offer of a donation to the brigade from a future property sale. This is very much appreciated and we are humbled to say the least!

### ...and, Thankyou DILSTON WINDERMERE SWAY BAY COMMUNITY!

In addition to above, we have been beset with a range of helpful donations from community members, from chips and soft drinks, to chocolates, water and cakes, and much more. We are truly grateful for the generosity shown!



[www.facebook.com/DilstonFireBrigade](https://www.facebook.com/DilstonFireBrigade)  
[www.facebook.com/TasmaniaFireService](https://www.facebook.com/TasmaniaFireService)

### Brigade Contacts

Raoul Stow	0417 351 423
Paul Blakie	0417 592 424
Ben Jones	0417 877 001
Ken Nolan	0448 320 996







## SAD NEWS:

BAIN, Annette. Annette, the loving wife of Stewart died on 6th December 2019. Our sympathy to Stewart and the family.

## HAPPY NEWS:

YOUNG, Aurora Isobel Young born January 27th 2020, a darling baby girl for Sarah and Travis Young of Mt Direction. A grand-daughter for Sally and David Young. Welcome to your little one.

**WEDDINGS:** We have three weddings to report:

PEARCE, Brie daughter of Tanya and Max Pearce who married Nick Andrewartha on 30th November 2019 at Avalon near Swansea.

CHAMP, Joel son of Shari and Jamie who married Manika Dadson on 11th January at Fulbrook Family Farm at Nabowla.

DONNELLY, Keith son of Nancy and Jeff who married Stacey Richardson on 19th January at Ghost Rock Vineyard, Port Sorell. (A surprise 40th that turned out to be a surprise wedding!)



## JEFF IS GOING TO BE 90!!

JEFF Donnelly turns 90 on 6th April and we have booked the Hillwood Football Clubrooms for afternoon tea on Sunday 5th April. Everyone is welcome to drop in between 2.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m.

## KIDS CLUB NEWS FROM SUSAN GILLMAN

We are hoping to start Kids Club on 7th February.

Cost \$4

Children aged 5 - 12 welcome

Fortnightly during school terms

Parents are not required to stay but warmly welcome.

Games, craft, Bible story, tea provided.

Start time 4:30pm - 7pm

Date of 7th Feb not in concrete

as things to sort out etc. However

any queries can be made to me on 0439065914 or gillmas73@gmail.com.

We really need more children & families to come along to kids club as

it gets quite hard playing games with just 4-6 kids. We would encourage

families to come & check us out

and would appreciate people in the community spreading the word that

we are there.

(Note: Susan and Nick do a wonderful job with these young people. They have been providing for the children of our community for many years and we can recommend that you try Kids Club out for your young people.)

## HILLWOOD LADIES GROUP

commences again on the first Wednesday of February in 2020, the 5th.

Ladies Group meet every Wednesday morning from 10.00 a.m. til noon at the Hillwood Hall.

CONTACT: Muriel on 0438 414 798 or Gayle on 0418 590 564. Bingo on the second Wednesday, occasionally go out for lunch.

## HILLWOOD FOOTBALL CLUB

will continue to provide meals on Friday nights until the beginning of the season. These evenings have proven to be popular. It is a great way to catch up with friends and family. Hillwood's first game is on 4th February against George Town. There is a special rivalry and friendship between George Town and Hillwood and special events are held on the day of the game.

During the season, Players teas are provided on Thursday nights to which the community is also welcome. Meals for guests are served from 6.00 p.m. while the players are training. Guests are welcome to stay for the announcements of the teams for the next match.

## HILLWOOD GARDEN CLUB

The next meeting of the Hillwood Garden club will be on Monday Feb 17th, 7.30pm at the Hillwood Hall as usual. For several years the February meeting has been a joint meeting with the George Town and District Historical Society and we select a programme which will interest members of both groups. This year we are delighted to have Tony Walker, the author of Vintage Tasmania, who will speak on the History of the Wine Industry in Tasmania.

Tony, a resident of Dilston, has had a long involvement in the food and wine industry in northern Tasmania including 10 years as the Food and Wine correspondent for The Examiner. Everyone is welcome to what will be a fascinating evening.

## HILLWOOD FIRE BRIGADE NEWS from BRIGADE CHIEF, ELAINE BURNS

All members of the Fire Brigade have been busy already this season. As chief I would like to thank the team for responding to calls for deployment to New South Wales, Fingal Valley, Flinders Island and responding to neighbouring and local incidents.

Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer please feel free to contact one of the Officers for information

Brigade Chief	Elaine Burns	0417540665
2nd officer	Sharon Clarke	0417600571
3rd officer	Leon Hodges	0409169288
4th officer	Andy Kendall	0427818282

## BREAK-INS in Hillwood.

A couple of break-ins have occurred in Hillwood recently. One in Hillwood Jetty Road and one in Johnson's Road. It is believed that drones were involved.

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should I be able to  
assist with any  
issues.*

Phone: 03 6324 2005

Mobile: 0417 364 375

Email: [ivan.dean@parliament.tas.gov.au](mailto:ivan.dean@parliament.tas.gov.au)

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 **LJ Hooker**

**Justin Goebel**

 **LJ Hooker**

As a local and seeing the aftermath of recent fires in our country, it has become a very easy decision with the help of the community to contribute to "protect our patch". To do this, the next property listed and sold by LJ Hooker along the East Tamar region, the company commission will be donated to the Dilston Fire Brigade. The local fire brigade work tirelessly to keep us safe and returning the favour will in return, help us when needed. To find out more, contact Justin today!!

**Justin Goebel**

0458435062

[justin.goebel@ljhooker.com.au](mailto:justin.goebel@ljhooker.com.au)

**LJ Hooker Launceston**

[launceston.ljhooker.com.au](http://launceston.ljhooker.com.au)



# Thanks

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**Elders** Towns Shearing

58 Elizabeth Street, Launceston

### Community Contacts

FIRE:000

#### Dilston Fire Brigade

Raoul Stow 0417 351 423

#### Hillwood Fire Brigade

Elaine Burns 0417 540 665

#### Windermere Cafe

6328 1303

#### Dilston Hall

Lizzie Benstead: 0409 974 508

#### St Matthias Church

June: 0411 567 029

Jenny:0419 544 266

#### Playgroup

Amy: 0413 394 523

#### Dilston/Swan Bay/Windermere Garden Club

Kerri: 0407 447 344

#### East Tamar Mens Shed

John: 0431 151 766

Jon 0419 317 808

#### Book Discussion Group

Jess: 0428 658 988

[Jess.Panday@education.tas.gov.au](mailto:Jess.Panday@education.tas.gov.au)

#### Justice of The Peace

Darren Pullen: 0439 912 862

Copy For NEXT  
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Friday, 27th March

#### Email address:

[smokesignals@bigpond.com](mailto:smokesignals@bigpond.com)

Editorial decisions for publication will

be made by Tony Walker:

[tony.walker@y7mail.com](mailto:tony.walker@y7mail.com)

Smokesignals on the web:

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