

## From the Committee

The following resolutions were passed at our AGM.

Next years fee structure will be \$30 per full member and \$25 per associate member with a once off joining fee in both cases of \$5.

This was the first time since formation that the full membership has been increased. The changes will take effect on January 1st 2025. It is important to note that unlike some others we do not restrict the activities of our associate members they are welcome to attend any of our activities whether or not they are available through their principle membership. The only limitation is voting rights as set out in the model rules 14 [2].

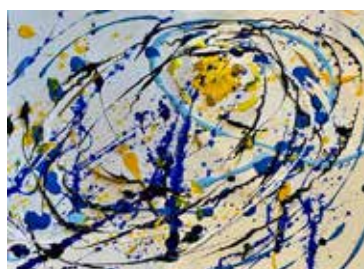
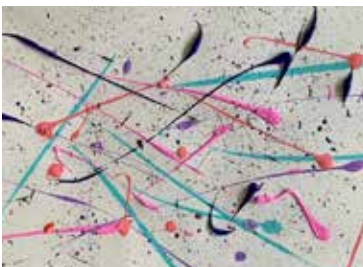
The committee is: Doug McCallum President, Bill Morrison Vice President, Anne Chamberlain Secretary, John Pigott Treasurer.

Ordinary members are: Elaine Clarke, Colleen Dooley, Geoff McQueen, Kevan Pitcher and Paula Duncan.

We welcome Paula to the committee and thank outgoing member Meg Ford for her very valuable contribution over the last few years. Meg has been our minute secretary and her advice has always been considered and extremely valuable. Thanks again, Meg.

Where has the year gone? It hardly seems any time since we were having Christmas dinner, as we age the time certainly does seem to go quicker. It makes it more important to fill your time with things that give you pleasure and be more selective about things that don't. Our calendar gives a great selection of worthwhile activities and the opportunity to mix with like minded people.

In term 3 Chris Dobson offered an abstract painting course and below are some of the great works by our members it is amazing how much talent we have and how well Chris brings it out. This is a sample of the talent .



## Six Peaks Speak

Unsettling Legacies in Southern Dja Dja Wurrung Country

**BARRY GOLDING**

WITH CLIVE WILLMAN

Those of you lucky enough to hear our guest speaker Professor Barry Golding (a couple of people have said it is the best talk they have ever heard) at our AGM have been wanting the information on the walks and book launch. Full itinerary is available on the Great Dividing Trail website under events and membership [www.gdt.org.au](http://www.gdt.org.au)

Below is the slide giving the details from Barry's presentation.

How under appreciated these hills are and how lucky we are to have them on our doorstep.

### *Six Peaks Speak & International Mountain Day events, Dec 2024*

- 6 Dec: 9.30am Mt Kooroocheang Cultural Landscape Tour & 8.00 pm presentation *Gurujanga Speaks*, Commercial Hotel, Kingston
- 7 Dec: Mt Franklin / *Lalkambuk Speaks* 8.00 presentation, Daylesford Neighbourhood Centre.
- 8 Dec: 9.30am Mt Tarrengower tour & *Dharrang Gauwa Speaks* 2pm presentation, Maldon Community House
- 9 Dec: 9.30am Mt Greenock tour & *Mt Greenock Speaks* 8.00pm presentation in Maryborough.
- 10 Dec: 9.30am Mt Beckworth tour & *Nyaninuk Speaks* evening presentation 8pm in Clunes.
- 11 Dec: International Mountain Day: DJAARA *Lalkambuk* (Mt Franklin) morning walk & 2pm book *Six Peaks Speak* book launch, Castlemaine Visitor Information Centre.



## Beware of thunderstorm asthma

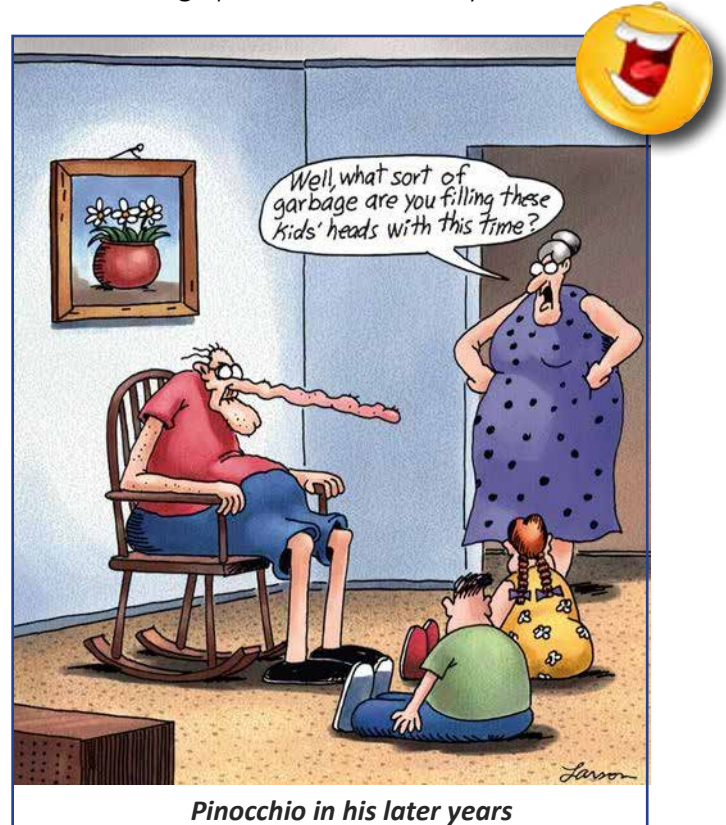
During grass pollen season (1 October - 31 December) people may experience an increase in asthma and/or hay fever symptoms. Grass pollen season

also brings the chance of epidemic [thunderstorm asthma](#).

Epidemic thunderstorm asthma is thought to be triggered by a unique combination of high amounts of grass pollen in the air and a certain type of thunderstorm.

For people with asthma or hay fever, especially those who experience wheezing or coughing with their hay fever, thunderstorm asthma can be sudden, serious and even life threatening.

The epidemic thunderstorm asthma risk forecast will be issued throughout the grass pollen season from 1 October to 31 December. You can access the risk forecast via the [VicEmergency website](#) or app, the [Health.Vic website](#) or the [Melbourne Pollen website](#) or app. To receive up-to-date epidemic thunderstorm asthma advice and warnings during the season, access the [VicEmergency website](#) or app and consider setting up a 'watch zone' for your area.



## James William Esmond (1822–1890)

by Louis R. Cranfield

Source: *Australian Dictionary of Biography*.

James William Esmond (1822-1890), gold discoverer, was born on 11 April 1822 at Enniscorthy, County Wexford, Ireland, son of Michael Esmond, merchant, and his wife Mary, née Moran.

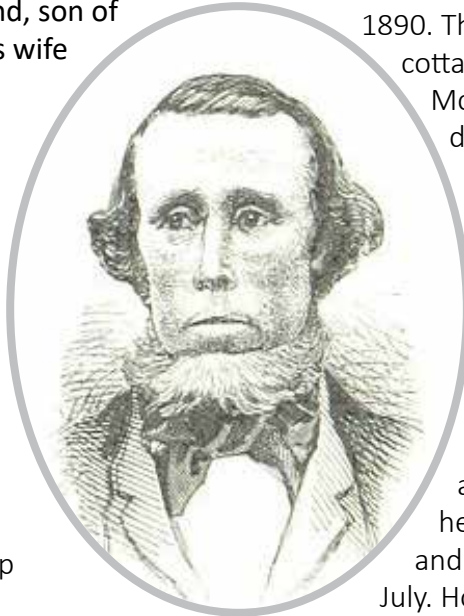
He migrated to Port Phillip in 1840, worked on Westernport stations and then drove a weekly mail coach between Buninyong and the Horsham region. In 1849 he was stirred by news of gold in California and decided to try his luck there. He arrived too late to prospect much on his own as the best claims were occupied, so he worked as an overseer. In 1850 he sailed for Sydney in the same ship as Edward Hargraves.

Esmond returned to Buninyong and was contracting on stations when he met Dr George Hermann Bruhn, a German physician and geologist who was examining the area. He told Esmond of quartz reef he had seen at Burn Bank near Clunes. Esmond hurried there with his workmate, James Pugh; satisfied that the area was auriferous they enlisted the sawyers, Burns and Kelly, to work the claim. On 5 July 1851 Esmond went to Geelong and showed a few ounces of their gold to Alfred Clarke of the *Geelong Advertiser*. To questions about the locality of the find his reply was 'up among the mountains'. He went to Melbourne to buy iron for a cradle and returned through Geelong where on 15 July he told Clarke the locality of the find. Clarke published the news on 22 July and the rush started. On 22 August Esmond sent Clarke fourteen ounces (435 gm) of gold which were later sold in Melbourne, the first marketed in Victoria.

Esmond later moved to Ballarat where he became an influential miner. He fought as section commander under Peter Lalor at the Eureka Stockade. In 1865 he started a venture known as the New North Clunes Goldmining Co.; it was not

a success though he persevered and sank some deep shafts. He finally sold it in desperation, only to see the buyers strike it rich in a few months. In his last years Esmond suffered much from Bright's disease and had financial difficulties. Because of his service to the community in first discovering gold, government aid was sought for him, but without success. A public subscription for him at Ballarat had raised over £150 when he died on 3 December

1890. The money was used to build a cottage for his widow Margaret, née McAuliffe; they had three sons and six daughters.



Esmond's repute as the first to discover gold in Victoria is doubtful. William Campbell and others had found gold before him but kept it secret. In 1853-54 the Legislative Council select committee on claims for the discovery of gold in Victoria accepted Esmond's evidence that he had found gold on 28 June 1851 and that his site was revealed on 22 July. However, Louis John Michel had made his find and given full particulars of his site at Anderson Creek (Warrandyte) on 5 July. The committee recommended rewards of £1000 to Michel for discovering and publicizing an available goldfield, to Esmond 'as the first actual producer of alluvial gold for the market'; other rewards were recommended for Campbell, Thomas Hiscock and Bruhn but were not paid for ten years. In defence of Esmond's claim, his find was worthwhile and was later sold in Melbourne, while Michel's was very small and given to the mayor of Melbourne as a souvenir. Esmond's find also led to the development of one of the world's greatest gold-producing centres at Ballarat, whereas the goldfields of the Upper Yarra were never important.

*This article was inspired by a recent walk around Clunes and this plaque. After photographing the plaque I decided to look up James William Esmond.*

*Ballarat members will probably know Lake Esmond near Sovereign Hill. Originally a quarry for the local Eureka Tile Works until 1982, Lake Esmond was replanted and revived as a lake and reserve.*

*The lake was named after early gold discoverer and Eureka Stockade leader, James Esmond.*

# Mah Jong

This game was developed in Southern China in the mid 1800s, towards the end of the Qing Dynasty and is played with rectangular tiles that make a clicking sound when shuffled. It is a hugely popular game in China and over the years, has gained popularity around the world. As with many other cognitive activities/games one can enjoy, Mah Jong is right up there with great benefits to the player.

Here are some:

- **Keeps Dementia at bay**  
Playing Mah-jong is found to be a demanding cognitive activity and more effective than less demanding ones such as simple handicraft. Your brain is challenged! Studies have found that Mah Jong can help slow down or reverse the progression of cognitive decline in people with early dementia.
- **Improves hand-eye coordination**  
The game train's the player's reaction time as they decide which tiles to keep or discard. Speed and accuracy are important aspects.
- **Helps benefit short-term memory**  
Mah Jong is a strategic game that is not as simple as it looks. It forces you to remember which tiles your opponents discard, allowing you to understand which tiles they are wanting to gain a winning hand.

Our Mah Jong group meet at the old station on Monday afternoon. It is one of our longest running groups.



## U3A Membership Policy

When a member pays the required membership subscriptions they become a member of Creswick & District U3A and must follow the Terms and Conditions of membership.

Listed below are some of these conditions. The complete list of Conditions and Policies is available on the [website](#).

1. Always act in the best interests of the U3A and never do anything to bring the U3A into disrepute.
2. Abide by the terms and conditions of the constitution.
3. Treat fellow members with respect and courtesy at all times.
4. Comply with and support the decisions of the elected Committee.