



01 Newsletter

January 2026

Welcome to the January Newsletter

Here we are in 2026 with another great year of orienteering to look forward to. This newsletter includes a brief round-up of the final events in 2025, as well as upcoming competitions leading into the main 2026 season. With 26 events listed it is our busiest season for some time – helpers are always appreciated! In particular, Neil Barr is arranging a familiarisation day for computer operators – and would be computer operators – some time in late February. See Neil about this after your Fowl and Fizz run.

Dianne and Peter

Presidents Report

I would like to thank members for their support during 2025. It was a busy year with lots of events taking place in our region. Planning has already taken place for this year 2026 and the calendar is on page 6 of this newsletter as well as on the club website. My full report will be presented at the AGM and published in the minutes for that meeting. I would like to thank members of the committee especially Prue Dobbin (Secretary), Craig Feuerherdt (Treasurer), Neil Barr (Vice President), Nola Juniper (membership) and Julie Flynn (who helps with everything) for their assistance throughout the year. Our club appreciates your continued support. There are of course others who provide valuable help such as Peter and Dianne Searle (newsletter), Jim Russell (experience) and Peter Forbes (permits).

The Peter Creely Memorial Fowl and Fizz event will be run on Sunday morning 8th February at Crusoe Heights reserve Kangaroo Flat off Morrison St. This will be a one-hour score event in which you have to visit as many controls as you can in one hour. Start time is between 8 am and 8.30 am. Entry fee is FREE to members. Food will be supplied at the end of the event (bring a cup, plate, cutlery and drink). Following the event, the club's AGM will be held (this won't take long). If the day is a total fire ban the event will be cancelled.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting

This event will be held on Sunday morning Feb 8th after the Fowl and Fizz social event.

Please give thought to helping on the committee as we need new people to keep the club going. The annual financial report will be sent out to members prior to the meeting.

Committee meeting

The first committee meeting for the 2026 year will be a "committee only" meeting held online on Monday 2nd February at 7.30 pm. Details will be sent to the committee.

Membership for 2026

Membership fees are due now for 2026 and can be paid through Eventor. There has been a rise in fees due to the VOA increasing their fees. Our club has to pass this on but note that the club does not add any additional fee to the VOA one. We are cheap !

John Wilkinson

A roundup of 2025

End of Year club social night

Awards for 2025

The awards/trophies for 2025 events were announced. The awards have now been engraved and will be presented at the Fowl and Fizz event on Feb 8th. Please ensure your attendance to collect your award and see others get their award.

Course 1. Ben Goonan

Course 2. Tony Radford / Julie Flynn

Course 3. John Chellew / Prue Dobbin

Course 4. Patrick Symes. (Junior award)

Course 5. Andrew Crosson / Kylie Crosson

Noodle award Coel May

Best Leg award ... Neil Barr

Club Person of the Year Award.

At the club's social/breakup in November 2025 it was announced that Neil Barr was named as the inaugural Club Person of the Year 2025. This annual award replaces the Vera Sheldon award and is presented by the President. The new award is named in honour of Peter Creely – a long-time active member of the club who is no longer with us.

Neil has been very busy during 2025 mapping new areas for the Easter Australian carnival events. He has also nearly single handedly run the scoring for our events (computer) often at the expense of missing out on his own run. He has also regularly helped organise events, prepared our events calendar, collected controls and represented our club on the VOA committee. He has been ably assisted by his wife Julie and she deserves a special mention here as well. Both are life members of the club. Thank you, Neil and Julie.



Neil Barr

2025 Xmas 5-Days Carnival report

Each year between Christmas and New Year, Orienteering Australia holds a 5-day orienteering carnival somewhere in Australia. The Xmas 5-Days is a low-key event providing an excellent opportunity for some extended practice over a series of days, without the pressure of a championship event.

This year's event was run by the Newcastle Orienteering Club in the Newcastle-Cessnock area of NSW. 185 competitors attended.

The following events were held:

- Sat 27 Dec – 'Palmer's Creek' – Ryhope
- Sun 28 Dec – 'Honeyeater Hideout' - Richmond Vale
- Mon 29 Dec – 'Belford National Park' – Belford
- Tues 30 Dec – 'The Poppethead' – Kitchener
- Wed 31 Dec – 'Avondale University' (sprint) - Cooranbong

There were seven courses for men and women available, based on difficulty and distance, rather than on age groups, much like our Bendigo events. The organisation was low key, with results displayed on a hook board, where you added your own result after the event. The results were cumulative over the 5-days. The maps had all been used before, but the terrain was varied and quite different to our Victorian terrain. Often the controls were on termite mounds or root mounds, in subtle terrain that required good compass skills. Good practice!

Bendigo was represented by the following people: Jim Russell, Alison and Tony Radford, Margi Freemantle, Ted van Geldermalsen and me (a last-minute inclusion). Notable results were:

- Tony Radford – Men's E – 1st
- Ted van Geldermalsen – Men's B – 6th
- Prue Dobbin – Women's D – 8th
- Jim Russell – Men's B – 12th

You chose your own start time with the start window 8.00am to 9.30am. This gave plenty of time for further activities in the area. I chose a trip into the Hunter Valley, another into Newcastle and a lovely tour around Lake Macquarie. The beaches were beautiful at that time of year. The organisers also held a competitive Jigsaw night and a well-attended social dinner at a pub in Toronto (on the coast).

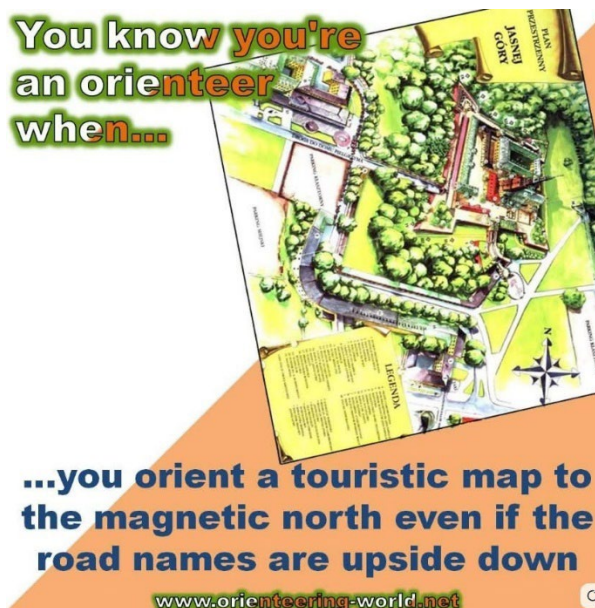


O Jigsaw night at Xmas 5 days

Many people stayed in nearby accommodation, but the organisers arranged some low-cost camping on a beautiful property owned by a Newcastle club member.

If you need to practice your orienteering and want an active Christmas holiday next year, the Xmas 5-days is the way to go!

Prue Dobbin



COMING EVENTS

Local Bendigo and nearby Victorian events coming up in February/March are listed below. For full details, including directions to each event go to the Eventor website.

Sunday February 8

Event type: Peter Creely Memorial Fowl & Fizz/AGM

Map: Dead Bullock Gully, 1 hour score event

Organizer: John Wilkinson

Mass start at 8.30am

Saturday February 21

Event type: Bendi-Go To-day, Day 1

Map: St Patricks PS, Kilmore

Organizer: Jim Russell

Start times: 6:30 pm – 7:30 pm

(see further information p5)

Sunday February 22

Event type: Bendi-Go To-day, Day 2

Map: Argyle, Heathcote

Organizer: Jim Russell

Mass start: 8:30 am

(see further information p5)

Saturday March 14

Event type: CATI

Map: Wildflower Drive

Organizer: Julie Flynn

Start: From 12:30 pm

(see further information p6)

Saturday March 21

Event type: Bendigo Bush #1

Map: Wildflower Drive

Organizer: Peter Searle

Start: From 12:30pm

MTBO Events

Sat 31 Jan Bike-O 75 #1 Sylvan Reservoir

Sat 14 Feb Bike-O 75 #2 You Yangs

Sat 28 Feb Bike-O 75 #3 Lysterfield

Secretary Report

First Aid training

The club is sponsoring people to attend a St John First Aid course. Several members recently attended and report the course was excellent! Members are to enrol themselves using the following link and then present their receipt and certificate to the club for a refund. .

<https://www.stjohnvic.com.au/checkout/?course=18566&type=selectaclass>

Members are also reminded to not open the defibrillator unit **unless** it is an emergency.

Orienteering Australia Merit Badge award 2025

The recipients of Orienteering Australia (OA) merit badges in 2025 have been published on the Awards page of the OA website. Merit badges recognise the achievements of a consistent orienteering standard relative to one's age-group peers. The merit badges also provide members with encouragement through positive recognition of their achievement level.

Congratulations to the following Bendigo Orienteers merit badge recipients:

• Keely Williams	W16	Gold
• James Robertson	M21	Gold
• Jim Russell	M60	Gold
• Tony Radford	M75	Gold
• Evan Barr	M35	Silver
• Charlie Richardson	M35	Silver
• Ilka Barr	W40	Silver
• David Brownridge	M40	Silver
• Julie Flynn	W65	Silver
• Nigel McGuckian	M65	Bronze
• Prue Dobbin	W65	Bronze
• Alison Radford	W70	Bronze
• Charles Brownridge	M70	Bronze
• John Chellew	M80	Bronze
• Dianne Searle	W80	Bronze
• Peter Searle	M80	Bronze

Prue Dobbin

A Quick Visit to Mungo National Park

Having met people over the years who had spoken enthusiastically about having been to the Mungo World Heritage Site, Sue and Terry Davidson took a Sunset Tour package to go there during a recent visit to Mildura. Some of those earlier visitors there would have had more freedom to range far and wide but the area now has more restricted access.



Mungo sunset

However, the National Park has a first-class Visitor Centre where the anthropological significance of the 40,000 years old remains of what is known of 'Mungo Lady' and 'Mungo Man' is well told. The striking sand dune scenery speaks for itself and guided walks are available for those that leave their vehicle.



Mungo National Park

Fortunately, the dull clouded day cleared for Terry and Sue's visit just as the sun set. The flies did not clear at all but Sue happened to be carrying a veil which she put to good use for protection!

Terry Davidson

Bendi-Go To-Day 2026

February in Victoria means Bendi-Go To-Day, traditionally the Victorian season opener with a sprint on the Saturday and Hagaby on the Sunday.

This year the event heads east.

Saturday 21st – Sprint

St Patrick's PS / Assumption College, Kilmore

"This area has only been used once before for Melbourne Sprint Weekend, including a World Ranking Event."

Starts: 6.30 – 7pm, 1 min start interval, choose your own start time

Course closure: 7.30pm



Assumption College, Kilmore

Sunday 22nd – Bush Hagaby

Argyle, Heathcote

"A very runnable and detailed area. But beware, this map has confused some of Victoria's best navigators in the past."

Start: 8.30am, Mass Start

Course closure: 10.30am



Argyle, Heathcote

Courses Available

Course	Sprint	Hagaby	Navigation
A	3 km	10 km (55 mins), 2 Maps	Hard
B	2 km	6 km (40 mins), 2 Maps	Hard
C	1.5km	4km (30 mins), 1 Map	Moderate

Enter just one day or both – the choice is yours. Entry fees (members):

Course 1 & 2

Saturday or Sunday only \$11

Both days \$22

Course 3

Saturday or Sunday only \$6

Both days \$12

Late entry: add 25%

Casual entry (includes Casual members): add 50%

Entry is only via Eventor, get your entries in early. No entry on the day.

<https://eventor.orienteering.asn.au/Events/Show/23348>

Margi Freemantle

Bendi-Go To-Day – The History

The 1st Bendi-Go To-Day was in 2007 was local at Kangaroo Gully and Spring Gully Creek, so if it hadn't been for Covid, this year would've been the 20th Edition. But it looks like we will need to wait until next year to celebrate that milestone. It went to Castlemaine in 2009, but apart from that, the event stayed Bendigo bound. It wasn't until 2016 that it ventured away again, this time to Heathcote.

Organiser, Jim Russell, must have then got the travel bug, as the next 2 years were at Mt Tarrengower, then Castlemaine again. Then it was time to go west and in 2023 the event was held at Dunolly and Andersons Diggings. West must have been nice, as Jim tramped out that way again in 2024 to Kooyoorra State Park - Wehla Hill.

And what about the 20th Edition coming up in 2027? Planning is already underway. It will be local, on an area that means a lot to Jim. But you are going to have to wait for that one!



Jim Russell

March. Please consider volunteering as a 'beginners' guide' to bush orienteering, and mark the date in your calendar now.

The location is the Wildflower Drive map, near Strathfieldsaye, at the new Dja Dja Wurrung shelter. We will have only 2 courses: 4 (moderate) and 5 (easy).

Please let all your friends who have told you they want to learn how to orienteer about this, and if you are available to help on the day please send me an email, so I know how many to expect.

Julie Flynn

Email: julieflynn@fastmail.fm

Phone: 0429 496 422



Julie Flynn

Year	Sprint	Hagaby
2007	Spring Gully Creek	Kangaroo Gully
2008	Strathdale Parklands	Diamond Hill South
2009	Castlemaine Botanic Gardens	Smiths Reef
2010	Diamond Hill North	Diamond Hill North
2011	Salomon Links	Brown's Reef
2012	Koolamurt Scout camp	Mandurang
2013	Norfolk Hero	Kangaroo Gully
2014	Latrobe Uni Bendigo	One Tree Hill
2015	Gateway Park	Upper Crusoe
2016	Heathcote	Heathcote
2017	Mt Tarrengower	Mt Tarrengower
2018	Castlemaine Secondary College	Kalimna Park
2019	BSE College	Lockwood Range
2020	No permit- Covid :(No permit- Covid :(
2021	Fiddlers Green	Fiddlers Green
2022	Rosalind Park	Sedgwick
2023	Andersons Diggings	Andersons Diggings
2024	Wehla Hill	Wehla Hill
2025	McAuley College	Wildflower Drive
2026	St Patrick's PS / Assumption C	Argyle

Margi Freemantle

CATI Saturday, March 14

Come and Try It needs you!

This orienteering season we are hosting a Come and Try event for beginners on Saturday 14

The 2026 Season

It doesn't seem that long ago that the 2025 season ended. Here we are starting to wind up again.

The 2026 fixture was built on members' responses to the fixture survey sent out late last season. A serious effort was made to match the preferences of volunteer organisers with maps and dates with lots of phone calls and emails following the survey. There are 26 events in this season's fixture, a significant increase on the number of events in 2025. The 2026 events include:

- 18 Bendigo Bush events (5 courses)
- Four score or bush sprint events, including the end-of-season twilight score event.
- The two events that are part of the Bendigo To-Day festival.
- An informal Victorian Short Course Championship

- A Come and Try It event at the start of the season. Helpers needed – more elsewhere in this issue.

The main season is between mid-March and the end of November. Within this timespan there are 10 weekends when Bendigo is not organising an event. This doesn't mean there is no orienteering. The following events fill these spaces:

- Australian Championships over Easter in Tasmania
- Anzac weekend National League and spectator races near Ballarat
- A July double-header weekend in the great terrain around Beechworth.
- An August event at Fryerstown
- In early September a double-header in Daylesford terrain
- Between late September and late October the Oceania Champs in Canberra, the Victorian Rogaining Championships, The Australian MTBO Champs, a city race in Geelong (maybe), a 6/12 hour rogaine and a bush/urban event at Daylesford.

One aspect of the 2026 fixture that will excite some is the inclusion of four events on new terrain. These are events at:

- One Eye East
- One Eye West
- Old Tom
- The Whipstick

These events are all later in the season. This wasn't by design but just worked out that way because of the common preference from organisers to have a date earlier in the season. Apologies to those who will be orienteering overseas, but perhaps the locals deserve some consolation.

With the increase in the number of events comes an increase in the volunteer workload. The club hopes that each event has a setter/organiser, an assistant, a couple of people able to share the computer desk (so everyone gets a run) and helpers to collect controls at the end of the event.

The draft fixture has 14 organisers listed and 8 assistants. Two organising spots have been taken by Melbourne orienteering clubs! Less work for us.

- There are six vacant assistant spots. The assistant helps with setup, parking, maybe computing, control collection and other tasks that might arise. It's a good way to learn the ropes of Bendigo event organising. Please contact a committee member if you can help as an assistant.
- The fixture does not list computer desk people at this stage. The aim is to use the Fowl and Fizz to arrange a familiarisation day for computer operators some time later in February. Be ready to chat about this after your Fowl and Fizz run. See Neil Barr.
- Organisers: The Bendigo fixture events have been added to Eventor. In the next few weeks you will receive an invitation to share a dropbox folder for your event. This has the map, a condes file set up to read the map, and a text file. Please read the text file. It describes the assembly area for the event (required to make the permit application), gives links to information about the assembly area and another about the map, including areas that are and are not available for orienteering.

Finally, we have upped our game and created a series scoring system for the Bendigo Bush Series. This will be explained in the next newsletter, post-committee approval. As well as points based upon your position in each race, the current proposal also includes bonus points for organising an event or being an assistant at an event. The aspiration is to have regular updates of standings throughout the season.

Neil Barr

(Editors note: Thank you Neil for your comprehensive outline of the 2026 season.)

2026 Event Schedule (a more detailed spreadsheet is available on the website)

Date	Confirmed	Bendigo Events			Organiser	Assistant	Assembly
		Fixture	Map	Dead			
Feb 7	Sun 8th	Fowl & Fizz	Gully	Bullock	J Wilkinson	J Ball	Crusoe Ris
14							

	21	Y	2-Day	Argyle	Jim Russell		?
	28						
March	7						
	14	Y	CATI	Wildflower Drive	Julie Flynn	Club	Selter/toilet
	21	Y	BB 1	Wildflower Drive	Peter Searle	Dianne Searle	Selter/toilet
	28	Y	BB 2	Myers Creek	Jenny Ball	John Wilkinson	Collins St-o crossing
April	4			EASTER			
	11	Y	BB 3	Diamond Hill Sth	John Wilkinson	Jenny Ball Nola	Apeline Tra
	18	Y	BB 4	Smiths Reef	Lorraine Leversha	Juniper	Gower Sch
	25			National League and spectator races at Ballarat			
May	2	Y	BB 5	Kalimna	MFR	MFR	Clay target
	9	Y	BB 6	Mt Egbert	Nigel McGuckian		Cemetery e
	16	E	Bush Sprint	Black Jack Gully?	?	Neil Barr?	Old Harcou
	23	Y	BB 7	Sedgwick NTH	Colin Walker		Meyer Rd D
	30	Y	BB 8	Crusoe Sth	CHOC	CHOC	Tackaberry
June	6	Y	BB 9	Mosquito Creek	Neil Barr	Julie Flynn	Godfreys R
	13	Y	BB 10	Peter The Great	Charles Brownridge		Neilborough
	20	Y	BB 11	Lockwood Range	David Jones	Heather Jones	Brigg Rd to
	27	Y	Score/Scatter	Coolibah	Michael Tolhurst *	Daryl Fleay	Mandurang
July	4			Double header weekend at Beechworth			
	11	Y	BB 12	One Eye East	Louise Hall	Tim Turnbull	O'Keefe Tra Trck
	18	Y	BB 13	Old Tom One Eye West	Neil Barr	Julie Flynn	Neilborough
	25	Y	BB 14	Diamond Hill Nth	Colin Walker		Hookes Lar
August	1	Y	BB 15	Hill Nth	Heather Jones	David Jones	Bendigo Mi area
	8			Sunday event at Fryerstown			
	15	Y	BB 16	Sydenham Hill	Julie Flynn	Neil Barr	Timor-Brom
	22			Vic Relays on the Sunday. Lets get some teams together again.			
	29	Y	BB 17	Andersons Diggings	Michael Loughnan		Low Slung
Sep	5			Events on Saturday and Sunday at Daylesford			
	12	Y	BB 18	One Tree Hill	Peter Forbes	Alicia Martin?	Guys Hill R
	19	Y	VIC SHORT	Tappit Hen	Ted van Geldermalsen	Jim Russell	Tarnagulla

Oct	26	Contingency	Score	<i>Lyell Forest</i>			
	3	Contingency	Score	<i>Birds Reef</i>			
	10	Social event	Evening	Botanic gardens			
	17						
	24						
31	Y	Twilight 3hr	Whipstick	Prue Dobbin	Neil Barr	Woodvale P	