

# NEWSLETTER

## The Friends of St Brigid's Assoc Inc



*The St Brigid's precinct is the heart of a community established by Irish immigrants who settled at Crossley from the 1840s. The highest rate of Irish migration outside of the major cities has seen strong Irish influence in this part of South-west Victoria in terms of local politics, family, church and community life and the physical development of the district. The Friends of St Brigid's Assoc Inc (FoSB) are the caretakers of this community owned precinct in Sth West Victoria that celebrates a unique Australian Irish history.*

### NOV 2020

#### News



A message from the  
Chairperson

1



Fundraising & Catering  
Committee Report

3



Cultural Heritage Report

7

#### Friend Profiles



Don McDonald

4



Rob Farrar

5

## A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Hello Friends,  
Firstly, what a challenging year 2020 has proven to be. We at St Brigid's hope that you are managing ok.  
It has been especially tough for everyone in metropolitan Melbourne and those who live on their own, are isolated or who have been unable

to work, to support yourself and your family. A special mention must go out to those who have lost loved ones; hopefully soon we can give people the send off they deserve.  
Here at our St Brigid's community, which you are an important part of, it has been a very challenging time as well.

Aside from the financial pressure it has put us under, we have not been able to get together which has meant missing out on the fabric of life.

How great it will be when we can finally come together, sitting and talking, sharing food and experiences, and

maybe even hugging and shaking hands.

Hopefully this will be in the near future; until then we have to continue on living as best we can.

Thank you so much to everyone who has supported St Brigids, especially over the last six months.

What has been amazing this year has been the incredible support from our members and other community future members to enable us meet most of our financial commitments and to keep us viable in to the near

I also must give a special mention to 2 of our committee members Sue Elms and Don McDonald who have had surgery and are currently on the way to recovery. It is fair to say that a good proportion of our committee would fail to get through any security that featured metal detectors

**Dennis Bushell, on behalf of the St Brigids committee**



Sue Elms, our treasurer, with the assistance of Jose Farrar, continue to do a brilliant job for St Brigids.

Our ability to raise finances has taken a battering this year. Up until March we were tracking along well with our usual 15 minutes of fame, venue hire and other fundraising ventures and on track to paying extra off our mortgage.

Since then we have tried to be innovative whilst trying to find savings at the same time. South West Credit union has given us a 6 month respite from paying our mortgage but we have had no respite from our insurer.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Our insurance is now over 14 000 per annum and this amount of money we have to raise has caused much angst at a committee level. In the short term we will continue to pay our insurance premium but in the longer term hard decisions may need to be made.

We currently owe a little over \$165 000 on our mortgage and have begun paying the interest only. Fingers crossed we are able to resume activities at St Brigids soon.



## FUNDRAISING and CATERING Committee

Our catering committee was completing their usual brilliant work up until March this year, when we had to suspend all community, food and musical activities.

Since then, we have tried to be innovative to stay in touch and keep some funds rolling in.

We managed to hold a socially distancing beach walk from Killarney to Port Fairy which was a good success and it was held on a perfect winter's day.

Jose Farrar also organised a 50/50 raffle with \$5000 worth of tickets sold and \$2500 going to the winner. It was a mighty effort by Jose and Rob to also sell a large portion of the books and in the end, every ticket was sold.

Sue Elms also organised and worked hard to complete a mail out and email letter of appeal to our members and supporters and the response has been emotional and humbling.

St Brigid's may not exist right now if it was not for the amazing support of you, who are reading this newsletter right now.

Jose has also been very determined for us to survive and has organised a fortnightly BBQ stall for us at the local community market at Port Fairy when restrictions allow us.

We have also just started on the roster of picking up golf balls and mowing lawns at the Warrnambool Driving range as well as other fundraisers that we are planning, and have on the go.

We are also investigating the possibility of having a "drive in" movie night and a walk around Port Fairy in the near future.

If you have any fundraising ideas, please contact myself or any other committee member.

## Personal profiles of some of our 'Friends'



Don McDonald

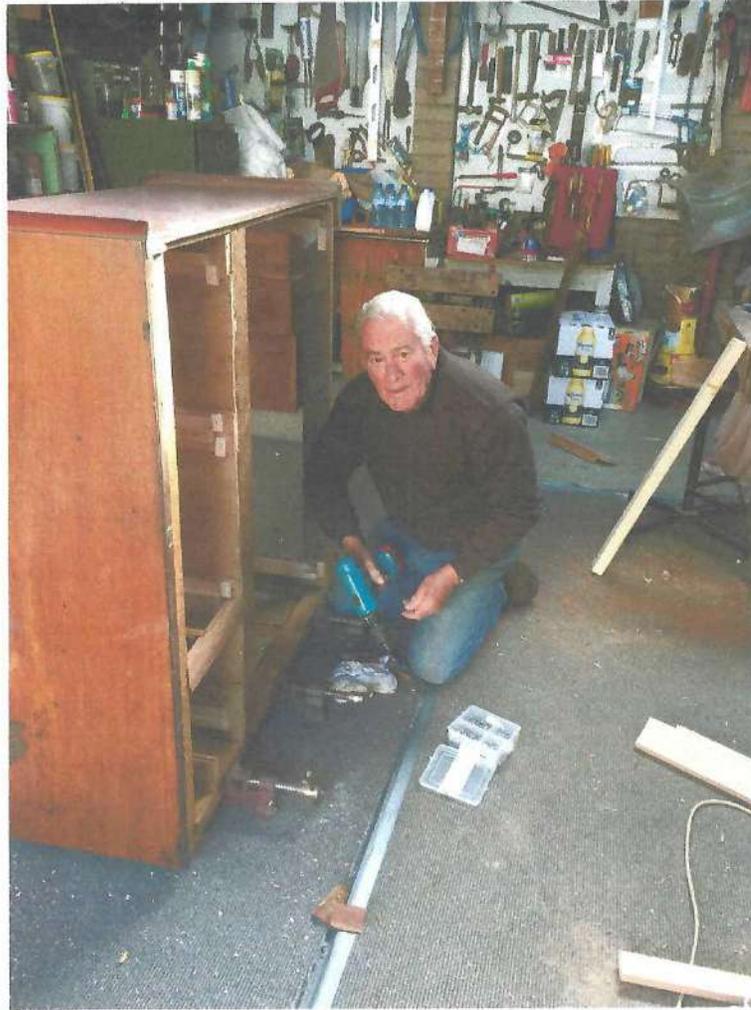
Together with my partner Kirsa, we moved to Crossley in October 2015.

At the invitation of neighbours, we attended our first 15 minutes of fame in November of that year and have since rarely missed a concert or activity at St Brigid's. Once stepping onto the precinct, there is a vibe that draws you to it and having discovered the effort to retain the precinct for the community one can see why.

An invitation to join the FOSB committee was accepted by us both. Having had a lifetime involvement in various community sporting, volunteer and community projects I have never experienced a more united and passionate group of people. With a can-do attitude and such respect for one another, we both look forward to our regular friendly interactions with the Friends of St Brigid's committee and volunteers.

The financial commitment to the purchase of the venue is ever present and there are no limits that volunteers won't go to! They accept any challenge and their ability to provide income is incredible. Regrettably the impact of Covid 19 this year has eliminated the normal source of income. Lateral thinking has provided some resources that have assisted in helping the financial shortfall, but it's tight. It is a pleasure to be involved with such a united group of focussed people and I trust that future generations will take up the gauntlet to ensure the security of St Brigid's.

*Don McDonald*



My name is Robert Farrar. I was born in Port Fairy in May 1942. I attended Port Fairy Consolidated School and my secondary education was at the Warrnambool High School which at the time was in Hyland Street. After leaving high school I did primary teacher training at the Geelong Teachers College and taught at many schools in the district with my last school being at Jamieson Street Warrnambool.

I first became involved with St Brigids at Crossley in early 2014, the year of the centenary celebrations. José, my wife, was a student at the school during the 1950s and was asked to help out on the centenary committee in preparation for the celebrations in June of that year. This involved a number of meetings and I used to accompany her. Not long after that I realised that I could use the time spent out there in helping to get the grounds of the precinct in a much neater and tidier state as it was very overgrown.

As Jose and I found the people involved with St Brigids such a dedicated and committed group we could not help but want to get more involved. This involvement has continued and with great interest and purpose I have seen St Brigids grow enormously in the short time we have been involved. The Mens Shed has been established and the members, although not large in numbers, all have varying practical skills which has allowed us to complete many projects that have enhanced the precinct. Much of the maintenance work on the Church and hall has also been carried out by the Mens Shed members. It is this willingness to give freely of time and skills and be part of a group working for a common purpose that helps keep the enthusiasm going.

I continue to look after the grounds and am at present trying to beautify the area even more by developing garden beds using plants that are reasonably drought tolerant because our water supply is rather limited.

I get great pleasure out of working at Crossley and being accepted as being part of this wonderful group of people. It is very unfortunate that COVID-19 has crippled the progress we were making but with such a determined group I feel sure we will find ways to keep St Brigids keeping on.

## Our Sub-Committees

### Grants

Mick Lane (with Loretta still keeping an eye on things) has completed another successful year in regards to obtaining grants.

Grants secured include securing finances for a stage extension and store room at the Church, a grant to complete the ceiling lining in the undercover area and also grants for our historian Dorothy Rooney to continue her work.

A grant that helps set us up for a sustainable future has been the installation of solar panels on the hall roof. A big thanks to Peter Keogh for his time and expertise in organising the smooth installation of our solar system.

Mick also has applied for some more grants, so fingers crossed we are successful.

### Cultural Heritage update

Unfortunately we have had to cancel all of our events this past 6 months including our Fr O'Toole's Melbourne Cup eve fundraiser, Irish dancing and music lessons and other community events.

Luckily though, our historian Dorothy Rooney has been able to continue to record St Brigids and local history that will be displayed in the Sacristy and also available in a digital form. Soon the Sacristy will be open at certain times and local people and others interested will be invited to submit their family history and other items of interest to be displayed for the public to see.

This is a large commitment from Dorothy and we are fortunate to have her expertise. Thank you Dorothy.

### Mens Shed - Building and grounds.

Mick's successful grants, ground and building maintenance and other projects continue to keep the Mens Shed members busy.

Unfortunately we have been stopped in our tracks at the moment but the grass keeps going and maintenance needs to be done. Rob Farrar has continued to keep the St Brigids looking neat and tidy and is steadily beautifying the precinct through the establishment of garden beds on the sloping ground and fence lines where it is difficult to mow and keep under control. We have also secured a large donation of mulch for the garden beds to cut down on the need for weeding and watering.

The Mens Shed have also cleaned bricks as a fundraiser and will be helping on the roster of collecting and cleaning balls at the driving range.

Our Mens Shed members still keep in touch and it will be a good day when we can finally meet again in person. There is a close bond between our members and we all enjoy sitting down to the sandwiches and slices on a Sunday morning after we have completed our work. We all come from a variety of backgrounds with life experiences from different parts of the world so there is always interesting conversations to be had.

There are plenty of projects to catch up on once restrictions ease but we have the will and know how to compete them.

Also, a special mention to Paul Smith who is now up and about after having a knee replacement.

Just remember, once restrictions ease, we meet on a Sunday at 10 am and you are welcome to come along and do as little or as much as you like.

## Cultural Heritage



If you were to visit the St Brigid's church sacristy, you would see that it has been transformed into the fledgling Australian Irish Cultural Heritage Centre.

The aim has always been to have an area -

- where items of interest related to the history of the area are stored and displayed.
- where there are facilities for people of Irish heritage to research their heritage.
- where the cultural heritage of the local community is preserved for following generations.
- 

*The Centre will rely on contributions from the community.*

We are looking for donations of items which have strong provenance to St Brigid's or the local community.

**Photographs** - Weddings, First Communions, Baptisms, school events, social events .

**Documents** - Mass books - funerals, Memorial cards, First Communion & Baptismal certificates.

**Items of interest and relevance:**

School awards e.g. inscribed books. Sporting awards with inscriptions.

Badges and medals e.g. Holy Name Society , Children of Mary ( Robes or veils)

Baptismal robes, First Communion attire (dresses, veils)

Please contact us email [stbrigidscrossley@outlook.com](mailto:stbrigidscrossley@outlook.com) or contact Dorothy 0418519152 if you have any of the above to donate, or anything that you think is of relevance.

It is hard to plan for future events but we are remaining positive at St Brigids.  
We have 2 dates locked in:

**Sunday Oct 25**  
**FOSB AGM**

2pm in the Crossley Hall - (Restrictions Permitting - otherwise via Zoom )

**Sunday Dec 20**  
**Community Christmas Carols**

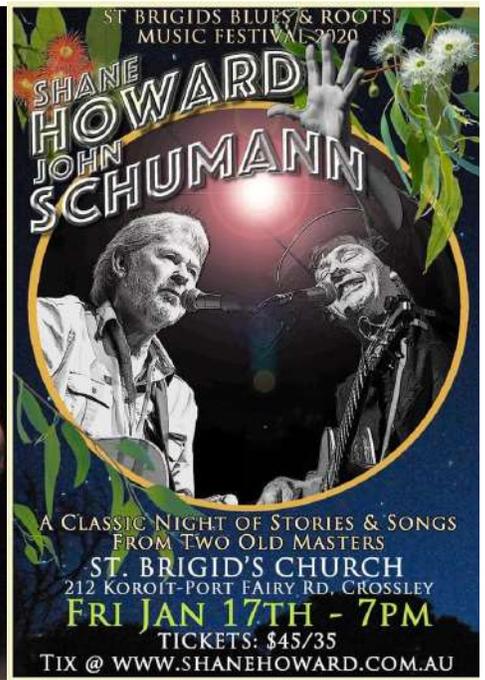
fingers crossed, our traditional community Christmas Carols, to be held outside - if possible.



Please stay tuned via website or Facebook page for all our upcoming events.

@stbrigidscrossley

www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au



\*2020 Events @ St Brigids: SBBRMF, BlazeAid Concert, Howard/Schumman Concert



***The Friends of St Brigid's Association are the caretakers of a community owned precinct in South West Victoria that celebrates a unique Australian Irish history.***

#### **OUR STORY:**

*The Friends of St Brigid's Association Inc formed in 2006 when the local community were informed that the local church and hall were being sold. The community has raised funds and taken out a community mortgage to buy the precinct on behalf of the community to keep the precinct as the 'St Brigid's Australian-Irish Cultural Heritage and Community Centre'*

#### **WHAT DO WE DO:**

The St Brigid's community works to provide a cultural and community heart for our rural community. Events are run monthly, dance and music classes held weekly and the Church and Hall are lovingly maintained for our community to hold their weddings, funerals and celebrations in our community, a place that has such a long history with our families, friends and community members.

#### **OUR VISION**

- To preserve and restore the buildings of St. Brigid's and their surrounds.*
- To create an accessible community gathering space suitable for meetings and events.*
- To assist in the preservation and restoration of the unique cultural history of Crossley, Killarney and Koroit.*
- To provide a forum for the discussion of local community needs.*

#### **WHAT CAN YOU DO ?**

##### ***Become a Member***

For just \$30 a year or \$50 a group or family - you can become a member  
Forms are in our Newsletter or on the website - [www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au/support](http://www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au/support)

##### ***Become a Volunteer:***

Join the catering team and help cook meals, prepare food, wash dishes or set tables, etc  
Please contact us on 0497 352 001 to become one of our team of 'Friends'.

##### ***Join The Men's Shed:***

Add your hands and knowledge to the team of helpers at St B's  
Please contact us on 0497 352 001 to become one of our team of 'Friends'.

##### ***Make A Donation:***

Forms are in our Newsletter or on the website - [www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au/support](http://www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au/support)

##### ***Buy the Merchandise:***

T-shirts, CD's , Books and more.. Forms are in our Newsletter and on the website.

##### ***Book the Precinct for events:***

Please contact us on 0497 352 001 to book the Hall or Church.

**Please go to the website for all other information: [www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au](http://www.stbrigidscrossley.org.au)**



## Donation Form



### St Brigid's Australian Irish Cultural,

The Friends of St Brigid's Association Inc. (ABN 47 199 549 104) are developing the Hall and Church in Crossley, Victoria, into the St Brigid's Australian Irish Cultural, Heritage & Community Centre. The Friends of St Brigid's are the caretakers of the five-acre community owned and operated precinct which celebrates 150 years of unique Australian Irish history in south-west Victoria. Their vision is to preserve and restore the buildings of St Brigid's and surrounds. Donations will support property repayments, upgrades to allow people of all abilities to access and participate in activities at the site, and development of the History Display & Information Centre.

#### NOT-FOR-PROFIT FUNDRAISING ACCOUNT

The Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal (FRRR) (ABN 27 091 810 589) is a charitable foundation based on partnerships between philanthropy, community, government and business. FRRR partners with the Friends of St Brigid's Association Inc. to assist in the fundraising for this project as a charitable project in line with FRRR's purposes, through a Not-for-Profit Fundraising Account. Donations made into the FRRR Public Fund towards the St Brigid's Australian Irish Cultural, Community & Heritage Centre project are tax deductible because of FRRR's tax status. [www.frrr.org.au](http://www.frrr.org.au)

### Heritage & Community Centre

#### Your Details

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- I am happy for my donation to be publicly acknowledged by FRRR and Friends of St Brigid's Association Inc.  
 Please add me to FRRR's mailing list, as I would like to stay informed about the Foundation's work.

#### Your Donation

*All amounts over \$2.00 are tax deductible in Australia. A tax receipt will be forwarded to the address above.*

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Numerical) \_\_\_\_\_ (In Words)

Method of payment (please tick payment option):

- Online via FRRR's secure website: [https://www.frrr.org.au/online\\_donations.php](https://www.frrr.org.au/online_donations.php) (select from the drop-down list)  
 EFT to the Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal Public Fund BSB: 633 000 Account Number: 144 419 736  
*Use ref FOSB and the first 4 letters of your surname*

Credit Card:  Mastercard  Visa

Card number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of card holder: \_\_\_\_\_ CSV: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Cheque payable to "Foundation for Rural & Regional Renewal" (FRRR)

*Please note: The donor makes the above donation to FRRR with a request it is applied for the above purpose. The donor acknowledges that all donations made to FRRR are used for FRRR's purposes and at FRRR's discretion. FRRR will always endeavour to meet a donor's preferences for causes, populations or geographies in line with FRRR's charitable purposes and objects. However, if a donor's preferences cannot be met, such as when a project cannot proceed or an organisation is no longer viable, FRRR will direct funds toward charitable activities which FRRR considers to reflect as closely as possible the charitable purposes the donor wished to support.*

#### Next Steps

Please return this form either via email to: [info@frrr.org.au](mailto:info@frrr.org.au) or post to: FRRR Donations  
 PO Box 41  
 BENDIGO VIC 3552

# Merchandise

- St Brigid's T-Shirts** – Black TShirt with design by local artist Donna Dixon. Avail M, L, XL, (mens/womens) \$25 each Qty : ..... Size ..... M/F .....
- St Brigid's Session CD** feat. tunes played by Tommy Carty, Adrian Barker, Kate Burke, Jack Brennan and many more. Recorded by Shane Howard in 'The Shed' , Killarney - CD-\$20
- The Church on The Hill (Book)** – By Helen Doyle – The 100 year history of St Brigids Church. \$40
- Saving St Brigids (Book)** – By Regina Lane – The story of Saving St Brigid's - \$35
- St Brigids Paver** : Immortalise your family, your family name or a loved one with an engraved paver to be placed in the St Brigids peace and memorial garden - \$40 single paver/ \$80 double.
- The St Brigid's Booklet** - reproduction of the booklet collated when the school closed in 1971. \$10



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## Text for St Brigids Peace & Memorial Garden Paver

*14 digits per line, 3 lines per paver*

Line 1    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Line 2    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

Line 3    \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

# Merchandise Payment Form

**NAME:** .....

**ADDRESS:** .....

**PHONE:** .....

**EMAIL:** .....

***\*\*Please include this form with payment***

**Total Amount \$.....**

I would like to pay by:

**Cheque:** Payable to The Friends of St Brigid’s Assoc Inc. PO BOX 102, Koroit.Victoria. 3282

**Direct Deposit :**

Account Name: Friends of St Brigid’s Assoc Inc.  
Bank: South West Credit Union  
BSB: 803-073 Acc: 100 016 491  
(Make sure your name is part of the reference)

**Credit Card:**

Debit my: Visa/Master Card / Other

Name on card : .....

Card Number: .....

Expiry Date :     /     CCV: ..... Signature : .....