



The ORacle

Oxley Resident's Association

Welcome to *Your* edition of the ORacle.

It is By the Oxley Residents For the Oxley Residents so please feel free to contribute. Send to ORA3678@gmail.com or go to our Facebook Page

**Oxley Hall
Meeting Tuesday
14th 7.30pm**

What's On for 2026:-

"Oxley OK Wednesdays" and Oxley PS "Breakfast Club" on Wednesdays

April

- ⇒ Oxley OK Wednesdays ongoing each Wednesday
- ⇒ Oxley Garden Group—Thursday 8th at Libby and Ron Jones—see below
- ⇒ Oxley Meet and Greet—Friday 10th at King River Café gardens 5pm—dinner following if required.
- ⇒ Oxley Table Tennis Resumes for 2026—Monday 13th 7.00pm. Cost \$2.00 p/p BYO bat Supper Included
- ⇒ Oxley Hall Meeting 7.30pm—Tuesday 14th
- ⇒ Term Two Commences—Monday 20th

MAY

- ⇒ Oxley Ladies who Lunch Thursday 7th 12.00pm at the King River Café
- ⇒ Oxley Garden Group Thursday 7th—venue TBA
- ⇒ Oxley Residents Association Meeting—Tuesday 12th 7.30pm

Oxley Garden Group

Its Free, Friendly and For You.

A great article in *The Chronicle* (shown below) on the meet at Merriwa Park.. Our next meet is on Thursday 9th April from 10.00am at a Libby and Ron Jones' place at 9 Pin Oak Drive Wangaratta. . If you have any queries please contact June Uebergang **by text** on 0497 860 785.

Remember please BYO cups, chairs and a plate to share and we all love the bulbs, plants or cuttings we share.

THE CHRONICLE, Friday, March 20, 2026



OXLEY GROUP GATHERS IN WANGARATTA

By SIMONE KERWIN

Oxley Garden Group held its first 2026 gathering at Merriwa Park on Thursday morning.

Members enjoyed the cooler temperatures of the day, as they shared morning tea as well as plant cuttings.

For more information about the group, which holds regular meetings at gardens in the district, contact June Uebergang on 0497 860 785 (text only).

OUT AND ABOUT: Oxley Garden Group members Helen Brock, Neil Brock, June Uebergang, Debbie Brunken and Libby Jones checked out the Merriwa Park fernery on Thursday. INSET: GARDEN FOCUS: Lorna Nankervis and Eileen Conroy with some of the plant cuttings shared at Thursday's meeting. PHOTO: Simone Kerwin

ORA BREAKFAST CLUB

The Oxley Residents continue to provide a weekly Breakfast Club held at Oxley Primary School Wednesday mornings from 8.15-9.15 during each term.

For more information, or to offer assistance, ring or message Janet Heath on 0427273389 or email heathoxley@bigpond.com

The next "Oxley Meet & Greet" is **Friday 10th April, 5pm** at the King River Cafe garden. Those that would like to stay on for dinner please let Maurie know.

Bring along a new neighbour or friend!

Unveiling of the busts to commemorate our local WW2 nurses.

wangarattachronicle.com.au

THE CHRONICLE, Thursday, April 2, 2026 - Page 7

World War II nurses, Bud and Carrie, immortalised by community spirit

More than 300 people turned out on a sunny Saturday morning to witness the unveiling of the bronze busts to honour slain local World War II nurses Dorothy Gwendoline 'Bud' Elmes and Caroline Mary 'Carrie' Ennis.

The busts by statue makers Evalon Bronze stand either side of a park bench near the cenotaph at Oxley where the nurses are named alongside soldiers of the shire who also died in World War II.

The latest memorial was made possible thanks to the generous support of local individuals and businesses.

Sister Elmes and Sister Ennis (commissioned posthumously as Lieutenants) were among the last 65 nurses to be evacuated from Singapore on 12 February, 1942 aboard the Vyner Brooke.

The small vessel was bombed by the Japanese and sunk within half an hour.

Sister Elmes made it to Radji beach on Bangka Island where she and 21 other Australian nurses were massacred - the only survivor being Sister Vivian Bullwinkle - while Sister Ennis was one of 12 nurses who were lost at sea following the bombing.

The unveiling was hosted



BY SHANE DOUTHIE
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by Georgina Banks, great niece of Dorothy 'Bud' Elmes and author of 'Back to Bangka' based on her investigation into the death of her great aunt.

Along with Georgina there were more than 100 descendants of the two nurses who travelled from near and far to attend the historic event.

The busts themselves were unveiled by respective descendants of the two nurses with Valerie Bodger, youngest sister and only surviving sibling of Caroline 'Carrie' Ennis unveiling her memorial, while Rowland Banks (Bud's nephew) and Sally Alsop (Bud's niece) unveiled the bust of their aunt.

In one of the most moving moments of the memorable event, Shelley West, great niece of Caroline Ennis, guided the almost blind Valerie's hands to the bust of her sister to enable the 94-year-old to feel the face and inscription.

Guest speakers included Independent MP for Indi Helen Haines, Rural City of



NEVER FORGOTTEN: Valerie Bodger feels the inscription on her sister's memorial with the guidance of Shelley West, great niece of Caroline Ennis.

PHOTOS: Shane Douthie

Wangaratta Mayor Cr Irene Grant, and Kath Stein, former director of Defence Force Nursing and current president of the Australian College of Nursing.

"I am incredibly grateful

to the local community for embracing these two local nursing heroes; for the fundraising efforts and personal donations, for the involvement from the Oxley Hall and Remembrance Committee,

those who set up and packed down, the Wangaratta cadets, the incredible bakers and sandwich makers, for the people of Cheshunt who kept their memory alive with memorial trees and plaques all

these years," Georgina said.

"Please go and visit these bronze busts, sit on the bench between them and spend some time with Bud (my great aunt) and Carrie.

"As nurses they were always there to care for and tend to others.

"I love the idea that they are there to watch over and care for you too.

"The story of how these memorial busts came to being is a story of passionate local women coming together to memorialise local women of the past.

"As Helen Haines said, a contribution to breaking the bronze bust ceiling!

"Australia now has another two statues of significant women; nurses, who, in wartime and peace deserve to be elevated."

The busts are in addition to other local memorials to the nurses including a plaque at Northeast Health Wangaratta, a plaque and memorial tree at Cheshunt Hall, and a memorial for Bud at the Corowa Hospital where she trained.

Following the ceremony all and sundry were invited to the Oxley hall for a large range of delicious homemade treats for lunch.

What an incredible day this was!! Full credit to the very hard work of Jan Vincent and her committee. Her persistence and belief in this project never wavered. All the speakers gave an inspiring talk but when Carrie's surviving sister stroked the face of the bust there weren't too many dry eyes in the audience. The luncheon was also a real credit to our community. Wonderful!

