



December 2017 Issue 18

Hi all readers

With the busy harvest period now upon us, I again ask all people to be aware. Whether we are driving a car or truck or are a pedestrian in town there is a lot of traffic on the roads now. As you may have noticed the trucks seem to be getting bigger, yes, they certainly are. There are even road trains allowed on our local roads which will lower the number of loads, but these are up to 30 meters long and carry more than b-doubles. It will mean these trucks take longer to stop but they are also required to go slower, so I wish all to have a safe and incident free harvest.

Several times the question of the fire siren and when it is used has been asked during the LCDTA meetings and the CFS have kindly put a few words of explanation together which you can read inside the newsletter. I know some people would like to hear it as an alert and others worry about what is happening if it is sounded until the story of the incident comes to light. I understand this siren should be able to be heard from at least 5km away when sounded so it is not done without due process.

This year we are holding the Christmas party on Friday 22nd December and I hope we have a balmy evening for all to gather and have a fun and enjoyable evening. All goods that people wish to donate to the raffle can be taken and dropped off at the Information Centre when volunteers are in attendance. Please take time to call in as you might even find local produce for sale that you didn't realise were on the shelves, there are also many small gift ideas with a Laura theme to pass on to those that may enjoy a little Laura memory.

With Christmas just around the corner, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a safe and blessed New Year.

All the best

Andrew Zanker

Co-Chair LCDTA



Your FREE bi-monthly newsletter of Information produced by the Laura Community Development & Tourism Association (LCDTA) Inc.

Donations needed

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS RAFFLE

The Laura Community Development and Tourism Association (LCDTA) are again conducting the Community Christmas Raffle.

If you are able to support us with items for Christmas Hampers, please leave your donations with volunteers in the Laura Information Centre — labeled “Christmas Raffle” by Friday 15th December. Please accept our thanks for your donation.

Raffle tickets to be sold from the start of December until drawn at the Party in the Park on Friday 22nd December 2017

TOWN PARTY IN THE NORTH PARK LAND

The Laura Soap & Gift Shoppe

22 Herbert St Laura
08 8663 2535
deargrace.com.au



Closed for Christmas Eve, Sunday 24th December.

Wishing everyone a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year



Laura Folk Fair updates:

Fundraising:

The Fashion Parade and High Tea was very well attended, with 11 of the 12 tables sold out and a great time had by all.

Our cake and coffee stall at the Twilight Market was very popular once again with all stock completely sold out by the end of the night.

A massive thank you to all those who have helped with these events, especially the ladies that toiled in the kitchen to provide the High Tea for the Fashion Parade and cakes for the Twilight Market. Without the aid of these generous people, these events would not have been the successes they were. Thank you also to all who supported us by attending or purchasing goods.

Fireworks:

The Committee has come to the decision that there will be no fireworks at Laura Folk Fair 2018. Fireworks are a significant financial burden, especially with a 10% price rise last year. Attendance for the fireworks is also not what it used to be.

In contrast, the revamped Saturday night entertainment has proven hugely successful over the last two years. For the upcoming Folk Fair, we will have two bands rather than one, with the bands playing and the bar open until 10pm.

We understand that the fireworks are a very sentimental and traditional part of Folk Fair but feedback seems to suggest that the benefits no longer outweigh the high costs involved. We are trialling this for 2018 and will consider all feedback when making a decision for 2019.

Stallholder Team Leader needed:

The position of Stallholder Team Leader is currently vacant and needs to be filled as a matter of priority to assist with organisation of LFF 2018.

The duties include; Data entry and maintenance of the Stallholder master spreadsheet, notification of acceptance/rejection to stallholders, involvement in the development of the site allocation plan, mail out of Stallholder Packages in March, availability on Friday 6th April to deal with any site changes, ideally, availability in the morning on Saturday 7th April to assist at LFF Admin Site to assist stallholders with finding their site.

This person will ideally be comfortable with Microsoft Office programs and email but if you don't have all these skills assistance is at hand.

If you are able to help, please contact Chairman **Sue Scaman on 0418 844 935.**

The Committee would also like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year.





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Closed after 22nd December, re-open 2nd January 2018



*Merry Christmas and a Happy
New Year from all the staff at
Blackmores*

20 Herbert St, Laura SA 5480
T. 08 8663 2284 F. 08 8663 2310
www.powerandwater.com.au



Find us on
Facebook



Christmas Closure:

Flinders Mobile Library will be closing for the Christmas/New Year holiday break at 4pm on Friday 16 December.

You can find us back at Laura on 2nd January 2018.

Please check the timetable on our website for more information
www.flindersmobile.sa.gov.au

Remember, if you run out of reading material you can always borrow eBooks and eAudio items via our website. All you need is your library card number and PIN.

Flinders Mobile Library staff would like to wish all their borrowers celebrating the season a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year.





LAURA COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PARTY

FRIDAY 22ND DECEMBER 2017
NORTH PARKLANDS, LAURA
BYO CHAIRS

FREE CHILDRENS ACTIVITIES
BBQ, DRINKS, FRUIT & ICE CREAM 6:00PM
FATHER CHRISTMAS 7:45PM
RAFFLE DRAWN: 8:15PM
CAROLS & FAMILY MOVIE TO FOLLOW



LAURA COMMUNITY GYM

Providing an excellent opportunity for people of all ages to live a healthier lifestyle.

Join the Gym now as a casual or permanent member

Membership fees:

Casual visit - \$5.00, 3 months -\$70.00,

6 months - \$150.00, 12 months - \$200.00

Concessions available

Application forms are available at the Laura Post Office or call Deb Palmer: 0408 082 614.

*Not sure if the Gym is for you? You are welcome to go along with a Member and pay a casual fee of \$5.00 or alternatively, pick up an access button from the Post Office, and please remember that **Gym memberships make great Xmas gifts!***

Deb and all the Gym volunteers would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a wonderful Christmas and a safe & happy New Year



Find us on:
facebook®

Merry Christmas



Jacqueline, Dakota and staff wish all their lovely customers a wonderful Christmas and a safe & happy New Year.

Laura Hair Affair
29 Herbert Street Laura SA 5480 8663 2462





Laura and Districts Probud Club news:

At the October meeting held at the Laura Civic Centre, guest speaker Tony Ey from the RAA spoke of road safety awareness. An entertaining speaker, he spoke of safety tips, road rules and the impact of health and medications on driving etc.

The November meeting was at the Wirrabara Sporting Reserve and we heard from two Speakers – Julie Arthur the Director of Nursing at Booleroo and Laura and Jane McCallum the Co-ordinator of Home Care Packages, Country Health Connect.

Julie spoke of the 2 Hospitals – both have 12 residential beds and 6 acute beds. Both are losing a Medico – Booleroo a part-time doctor- Booleroo and Orroroo Practices will then relieve each other. At Laura, Dr Ananth will be replaced by a locum until the New Year.

Both Hospitals have had recent renovations.

The newly renovated kitchen at Laura Hospital was formally opened on Monday December 4th.

Jane spoke about My Aged Care and the Country Health Connect Home Care Packages and fielded a lot of questions.

December will be our Christmas Trip. The planned trip is by Hanley's Bus to Moonta.

There will be no meeting in January.

Christmas Greetings to all. . . and may Santa find us a Doctor!



Deadline dates for the Laura Standard Newsletter:

The Newsletter team, together with the LCDTA wish to thank all contributors for their newsletter articles and advertising over the past year.

The continued success of this publication relies on contributions from community/service groups, sporting clubs, and local residents and businesses.

In 2018 please continue to forward your articles, along with a logo to lcdta5480@gmail.com by 5pm on the following dates:

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|------------|
| • Jan 26th | • March 16th | • May 25th |
| • July 27th | • Sept 28th | • Nov 23rd |

Wishing you all a joyous Festive Season and Happy New year.

LAURA TWILIGHT MARKET

FRIDAY 16TH FEBRUARY 2018
5 PM TILL 8:30 PM

AT LAURA CIVIC CENTRE GROUNDS

GOOD FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT, LOTS OF STALLS: FOOD,
PLANTS, PRODUCE, CLOTHING, KITCHENWARE, AND A WHOLE
LOT MORE.....

ENQUIRES PLEASE CONTACT:

JOYCE : 0437345211—08 86632660

FIONA: 0448343550

EMAIL: lauraeventsinc.2011@yahoo.com

Northern Passenger Transport
Volunteer Transport

Phone: (08) 8666 2255
P.O. Box 169
Melrose S.A 5483



Christmas Closure:

Office:

Closing: 5pm Friday 22 December 2017
Reopen Monday 8 January 2018

Volunteer Transport:

Closing 5pm Friday 22 December 2017
Reopen Monday 8 January 2018

For further details contact Lyn Forster via:

Phone: 08 8666 2255 **Email:** lyn@mtr.sa.gov.au



...and a happy new year!

LIC *Christmas is coming to the Laura Information Centre!*

While all your favourite items are still available:

Amazing local produce Children's books Iced coffee holders

Coloured 'Golden North' and 'Laura' caps

Silk hand-printed scarves Cards and photographs

*there are also quite a few new 'Laura' souvenirs arriving in time
for Christmas presents:*

Key rings Eco note pads Canvas pencil case

Children's coloured pencils & notepad set

Stubby holders with Laura Brewery

So don't forget to call in!

We would like to thank everyone for their support this year and wish you all...

A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

***From all the enthusiastic volunteers at
the Laura Information Centre***



******Keep an eye open for our regular 'Theme' night...
coming up are:***

Friday December 8th Taste of Thailand Buffet

Friday January 19th Lamb Spit Buffet

Friday February 9th please see café for menu

make sure you call to book 8663 2657

New Opening Hours

Thursday - Monday 9am to 3pm

Tuesday and Wednesday - Closed

****evening meals available only with Chef****

see café for dates



Kerbside Waste Collection over Christmas and New Year:

Waste Collections continue over the Christmas New Year Period as per the waste and recycling calendar. The calendar can be viewed or downloaded from Council's website - www.nacouncil.sa.gov.au

There are no changes to the normal collection days for both waste and recycling during this period, however, the time of pick up may change.

All residents are reminded that the service is an overnight collection. Please remember to place your bins out for collection the night before to ensure pick up.

Gladstone Waste Transfer Station Hours:

- Sunday 24th December - 1pm to 4pm
- Wednesday 27th December - 11am to 1pm
- Sunday 31st December - 1pm to 4pm

Office Closures over Christmas:

Jamestown Administration Office

Closing: 3.00pm Friday 22nd December 2017

Reopen: 9.00am Tuesday 2nd January 2018

Normal business hours resume 2nd January 2018

Gladstone Administration Office

Closing: 2.00pm Friday 22nd December 2017

Reopen: 9.00am Monday 8th January 2018

Reduced business hours during January 2018 and part of February 2018 are outlined below:

Open 2 Days a Week during January 2018

Mon	8	Wed	10
Mon	15	Wed	17
Mon	22	Wed	24

Gladstone Office will resume normal business hours from **Monday 26th February 2018**.

Open 3 Days a Week during February 2018

Mon	29 Jan	Wed	31 Jan	Fri	2
Mon	5	Wed	7	Fri	9
Mon	12	Wed	14	Fri	16
Mon	19	Wed	21	Fri	23
Mon	26	Resumes to 5 days a week			

Council and staff would like to take this opportunity to wish all Laura Standard readers a wonderful Christmas and a safe & happy New Year



Dan VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN MP

Parliament of South Australia

MEMBER FOR STUART



*Wishing everyone in the
Laura and surrounding
districts a safe and happy
Christmas and New Year!*



Port Augusta: 8642 3633

Kapunda: 8566 2099

Website: www.danvhp.com.au

stuart.portaugusta@parliament.sa.gov.au

stuart.kapunda@parliament.sa.gov.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/danvhp



Stone Hut Bakery, selling quality pies and sausage rolls, including the famous crocodile pie.

With over 14 different types of pies, you will definitely find your favourite. Try our gourmet pie range: Wild boar, Crocodile or Seafood. We sell the best pies in the universe.

Enjoy a bottle of wine and your favourite pie in our tranquil setting in Stone Hut. Try our famous quandong and apple crumble and vanilla slice as you travel through, you will not be disappointed.

Opening Hours: 7:30am-5pm Daily including Public Holidays

1 Horrocks Hwy Stone Hut SA 5480 Phone (08) 8663 2165

Email: stonehutcottages@gmail.com

Website: www.stonehutcottages.com.au



SH ♥ P
LOCAL

*Remember to shop local this
Festive Season*



Then and Now:

What could have been a Dual Citizenship fracas:

Harry Colebatch, an early employee of the *Laura Standard*, would be in the news in 2017 when dual citizenship of the Commonwealth Parliament is an issue. From 1928 – 1933 he served as a Senator for WA. Born in Herefordshire, England, he migrated with his family to Australia in 1878, settling at Goolwa, so would have been a British citizen.

He worked for the *Norwood Free Press*, the *Petersburg Times*, *Laura Standard* and the *Silver Age*, in Broken Hill. In 1894 he moved to WA to the Coolgardie newspaper, *Golden Age*, then the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, and the *Morning Herald* in Perth, as mining editor and chess editor. In 1898 he was WA chess champion.

In 1904 he bought the *Northam Advertiser*, which he ran until 1923, when he gave it to his sons as a reward for their war service, but continued contributing to the paper for the rest of his life. From 1909 to 1912, Colebatch was the mayor of Northam.

Sir Harry Pateshall Colebatch CMG (1872 –1953), better known as **Sir Hal Colebatch**, was a long-serving figure in Western Australian politics. He was a member of the WA Legislative Council for nearly 20 years, the twelfth Premier of WA in 1919, agent-general in London (1923- 1927 and 1933 – 1939), and a federal Senator for four years.

His third son, also named Hal Colebatch, (born 1945) is a well-known poet, novelist, solicitor and writer on legal and political subjects.



SAND & METAL SUPPLIES

Free Delivery in Laura
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News from Rocky River Historic & Art Society:

CPR – *Collecting, Protecting and Recording the history of our district for the future.*

Fund My Neighbourhood:

Many thanks to those who supported our community by voting recently in the Fund My Neighbourhood campaign. If you found it a tricky process, then take comfort in the fact that you were not alone - but thanks for your perseverance.

Unfortunately, neither of the Laura projects, the caravan park project, or ours, were successful. But the positive aspect is that both projects have gained both public and political exposure and that both organisations have preliminary planning ready for any future grants that may be available.

Our proposal for a **CJ Dennis Interpretive and Research Centre**, in the Laura Archives is a long-held but perhaps ambitious dream for another attraction for tourists. It will also be a pivotal part of the proposed Literary Trail of Rural SA, which Greg Slattery outlined at the recent State History Conference.

Laura Racing Club Committee:

We are grateful to the Committee of the Laura Racing Club for being included in their donations to local organisations. This support has been especially valuable through the years in assisting projects such as the shed, compactus and other shelving come to fruition.

Friends of Rocky River:

We always appreciate support from residents and many others from outside the town, including former residents, who subscribe to be a Friend of Rocky River for \$15 annually. These donations enable us to maintain our buildings, pay the power bill for the lights in Hughes Street which add to the ambience of the town, as well as our general activity of **CPR** – **Collecting, Protecting and Recording** the history of our district for the future.

Our Annual Report and 'Friends forms' are available at the Laura Information Centre for anyone interested in supporting our goals.

Map Cabinets:

RRHAS will soon have the use of two new map cabinets to store maps and other large historically significant items. We gratefully acknowledge support from the Hornsdale Neoen Windfarm Grants for providing us with \$4,000 which will cover about two-thirds of the cost of these new assets.





BLD: 254571

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0457 846 033 LAURA SA

Laura Senior Citizens Club news:

Laura Senior Citizens Club members celebrated their 50th Anniversary on 15th November with a lunch at the Wirrabara Hotel. We were pleased to welcome guests from Wirrabara and Gladstone Senior Citizens Clubs who made up a good crowd of long-time friends who have celebrated many a milestone in the past. This was a very special occasion and our new President, Jan Burgess, presided over the throng helped by Treasurer Jean Cobb who acted as M.C. for the occasion.

The Lunch commenced with the singing of the Senior Citizens Hymn in lieu of Grace. The meal was then served and pronounced delicious, particularly the salads and desserts. Jean entertained the gathering with a couple of comical readings during the interval and everyone thoroughly enjoyed the meal and especially the company of so many friends.

We received a beautiful bouquet of flowers from Mr Dan Van Holst Pellekaan. M.P. which was much admired; and because this gathering was to be our last until the New Year, we decided to hold a free raffle with the flowers as the prize. This was greeted with pleasure and the lucky winner went home with an unexpected armful of flowers.

We also received a lovely birthday cake baked and donated by Mrs Joyce Wode of Laura. This was cut by new member Gerda Biedenweg and distributed to all members and guests to take home. Altogether a day to remember.

At this time of the year, we would also like to take this opportunity of wishing a very Merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year to all the senior citizens in the Southern Flinders Ranges.





Southern Flinders Health Advisory Council (SFHAC) Report:

Annual General Meeting:

The SFHAC AGM was held on October 26th. Previous members who renominated and accepted positions on HAC are Brian Higgins (Presiding Member) and Lorraine Griffin (Laura), Colin Raison (Gladstone), John Slattery and Catherine Klingner (Crystal Brook).

Community Network - Have your say on local Health Services:

Yorke and Northern residents are being urged to become involved in a community engagement initiative that will improve local health services.

Regional Director Yorke and Northern Region – Roger Kirchner said the Yorke and Northern Region (YNR) Community Network is a register of people in the community who would like to help from time to time. Thirty people have joined the YNR Community Network since it started in 2015.

Mr Kirchner said there are four ways for residents to get involved:

- Be *informed* and receive information about what's happening across the region's hospitals and health units
- Be *consulted* and provide feedback through surveys, focus groups and forums
- Be *involved* and take part in workshops, focus groups and forums or
- Be a *consumer advisor* and be a member of a health service committee or planning group, or share personal experiences for training and development purposes.

Mr Kirchner said the YNR Community network complements the more formal structure of the existing Health Advisory Councils.

For more information, please contact:

Community Health Administration

The Terrace / PO Box 546

Port Pirie SA 5540

Ph. 08 8638 1100

Email: HealthCHSAPtPirieRegionalHealthService@sa.gov.au





Laura Community Caravan Park news:



Another year is coming to an end rapidly, this will see us moving on at the end of the year and another couple will take over from us in 2018. We have enjoyed our time in Laura and we look forward to coming for visits in the future.

The Park has been busy with a lot passing through on their way home and looking for a couple of days' rest somewhere quiet. Many have stayed longer not wanting to head home.

The committee has been busy erecting a shed and fencing around the chicken house, this is just to neaten up the rear of the park.

2018 is already looking very busy. We only have a few powered sites remaining for the Easter Long weekend, only unpowered sites left for Folk Fair and I am taking bookings for June and October Long weekend.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2018.

Stephen and Sharon Pool





Wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

NETTLE

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Country Fire Service update:

There has been recent discussion in town as to why CFS don't ring the fire siren whenever there is a fire locally.

Pre-1990's, along with a 'fire-phone' system, the ringing of the fire siren was the way to raise a crew for the truck to attend a fire, but during the 1990's, the paging system was rolled out to CFS brigades. This system equipped each member with a pager, on which a message would be sent when a crew for the truck would be required, be it for a fire, road crash, assisting ambulance and many other call outs. These call outs occur at all hours of the day and night, and by not needing to operate the siren, means that the whole town does not need to be woken up at '3am' for a small task such as a tree fallen over the road.

These days if the siren is operated, it usually means that we need more people to crew the truck, but if we get enough members show up quickly, we leave the siren alone.

If locals would like to be better informed about local incidents, it is recommended that they download the **Alert SA app** onto their mobile phone. This app also can alert people to more than just fires, power outages, road closures and other alerts.

Please be assured though that if there is a major incident developing (such as the Bangor fire in 2014), messages will be sent out to both mobile and landline phones within the area determined 'at risk', to alert people about the potential risk.

If you would like to discuss this further, or even better, come and be a member of the Laura brigade, please contact Laura Captain **Brett Woolford** on **0408 803 083**, or Admin officer **Darren Pech** **0429 705 520**.



Contacts:

- **Council Office** Jamestown 8664 1139, 1300 664 108
(**Please Note:** The 1300 number listed in Laura Community Calendar is only available for landlines)
- **Council Office Gladstone** 8662 2018
- **Dog Control** Garry Harris 0419 858 375
- **NAC Fire Prevention Officer** Jennie Window, 8664 1139
- **Manger, Regulatory Services** Alan Thomson 0409 286 542
- **Councillor Sue Scarman** can be seen personally at Laura Visitor Information Centre (check the LIC roster for times when she is there) or 0418 844 935 or Sue.Scarman@NACouncil.sa.gov.au
- **Councillor Geoff Lange** 0427 632 334

**New Australian Food Labelling laws
will come into effect from 1st July, 2018.**



Do you want to know more?

**The Laura Information Centre Committee
invites you to an information night**

***On: Friday, 19th January, 2018
Time: 7.30 p.m.***

***Venue: Laura Courthouse Gallery
Hughes Street, Laura***

Workshop facilitator: Alan Thomson

**RSVP: Laura Information Centre 8663 2260
By Thursday, 18th January**



Lions Club of Rocky River news:

You may have noticed, or even used, the new park bench located in Laura's North Parklands. Going by the ornate laser-cut inscription, the seat commemorates the centenary of Lions International in 2017. However, our local Lions club was chartered in Rocky River in September 1970, covering the area north and south from Stone Hut to Yacka. A special thank you to Malcolm, Joyce and Brian from the Laura Community Development and Tourism Association for positioning and stabilising the seat and to Lions Club members for the part they played in creating this valuable community asset.

Christmas is coming, it seems quicker each year, and Lions are again selling their ever-popular Lions Traditional Cakes at various businesses in town. There are two sizes, 1.5kg at \$17 and 1kg for \$13. The cakes contain 50% mixed fruit. All proceeds from your purchase fund children's cancer research, mobility aids for kids with a disability, blindness prevention and emergency relief for people in need. You will notice a brand new package design from the familiar red model of recent years.



Finding a Justice of the Peace:

Barry Harvie	8663 2187 or 0409 698 009
Geoff Lange	0427 632 334
Jon Hawkins-Clarke	8663 2172
John Stevens	8663 2303

Laura Community Development & Tourism Association Inc. PO Box 149 Laura SA 5480 www.laurasa.com.au

Co-Chairmen: Andrew Zanker 0438 118 227 &
 Denise Higgins 0428 222 610

Secretary: Darren Pech 0429 705 520

Newsletter Editor: Newsletter Committee

Reports, articles and advertising for the February Newsletter can be submitted by email to lcdta5480@gmail.com or delivered to The Laura Soap & Gift Shoppe no later than 5pm Friday 26th January 2018. Receiving articles, photos & logos electronically assists in the production of the newsletter.

Advertising:

Contact Hans Simons 8663 2170 or 0439 093 100 for details.

*As an incentive for supporting the Laura Standard with your advertisements you will receive your 6th advertisement **free of charge.***

Please Note:

If you know of someone who unfortunately hasn't received a copy of the Laura Standard, extra copies are available from the Laura Information Centre. Newsletters in colour can also be emailed to you by providing us with your email address.

This edition as well as all previous editions can be viewed, downloaded & printed in colour by visiting www.laurasa.com.au and clicking 'News'

This is a community publication. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Association. The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse articles.

Laura Standard Advertising Fees:

Full page	-	\$40.00
Half page	-	\$25.00
Third page	-	\$15.00

Latest time to submit articles

for inclusion in the February
edition of The Laura Standard is
5 pm Friday 26th Jan 2018



**LUTHERAN
CHURCH**
OF AUSTRALIA

where love comes to life

When does Christmas start...?

Christmas is a pretty exciting time if you are a child, and maybe even as an adult. There is so much food and festivities and celebrations – and then there are the presents! All this takes a lot of time and effort to organise (even if we are not the one doing it). It becomes very mind absorbing to have everything covered for that one special moment on one day when everyone gets together.

So when is Christmas? We have a common agreed upon date, that's simple – 25th December, every year. In reality though, we are already into the mode far before the date. Schools finish off the year with a final concert and last day of school. The businesses in the community go into a shutdown for the Christmas break. Shops have their timeframe to make the most out of it commercially. Families for practical purposes have pre-Christmas gatherings because it is impossible for everyone to be present on the day.

If you were to take out of Christmas all the hustle and bustle, all the planning and organising, all the materialism and commercialism – I wonder if in the silence you would still hear the sound of Christmas. Is it possible we would hear the cry of a baby two thousand years ago? Would we hear the sounds of the angels out in the open spaces? Would we be able to see the star standing out from all the others? Would we be able to hear the shepherds telling the Good News of all that they had seen and heard?

The story begins, "This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: ..." (Matthew 1:18). You will have to go deeper to hear the story, into the realm of your heart and mind. This is a spiritual journey to meet the Christ-child born so long ago, and yet is present with us still.

So when does Christmas start? When we listen to the story and take it to heart – that baby was born for me! (and you, and you, and you,...!)

Blessings in gathering as family and friends as we celebrate events that happened 2000 years ago that still have relevance for today, and in the year 2018 and all that it holds before you.

Robin Zadow (Pastor) Southern Flinders Lutheran Parish. 0427 881 5480

