



The icy plunge was all for a good cause, seeing some dive right in. (April Stevens)



Costumes exceeded expectations this year, some unrecognisable before their plunge. (April Stevens)



Batman greeted his greyhound friend. (April Stevens)



Batman putting on a show as he prepared to take to the slide. (April Stevens)



Badger Creek Fire Brigade volunteer Sal Wannet with fellow brigade members before she took the plunge. (April Stevens)



Children lined up for face painting. (April Stevens)

Braving the Freeze to beat the disease

By April Stevens

Local heroes slid steeply into an ice bath at Healesville Greyhound's annual Big Freeze at the 'Ville for MND fundraising and awareness on Sunday 7 June.

The initiative was expected to make a "bigger splash" than in 2025, with a goal of raising \$60,000 for Motor Neurone Disease (MND) research.

Largely inspired by the well known FightMND campaign led by the late AFL legend Neale Daniher, Healesville Greyhounds counted a generous \$55,000 in donations on Sunday with time to still donate and surpass the initiative from last year, which was a total of \$33,000. At the time of publication, the full amount was yet to be tallied.

Replacing the dunking machine from previous years, Healesville Greyhounds put the fun in fundraising with a 4.5 metre toboggan slide this time around.

Live music was played by former AFL player Russell Robertson in 'The Shed' space, adorned with 'Daniher Blue' decor, cascading blue materials weaved together along with white faux snow below dancer's feet.

Many children lined up for face painting with hot chippies and delight with families waving their lucky tickets as speedy greyhounds took the tracks.

Over 20 personalities and community favourites were seen at the event, many working their courage to slide in their heroes' costumes. Jason Adams the event's MC adamantly hosting and narrating the slider's adventures.

Local Liberal MP Aaron Violi was seen dressed as the Collingwood Star, Scott Pendlebury. Local families excitedly lined up for photos and to wish him luck for his turn.



Casey MP Aaron Violi, dressed as Collingwood star Scott Pendlebury. (April Stevens)

Digital creator Community Pete, was seen ready to take the icy plunge dressed as Deadpool the Marvel antihero.

A cause close to her heart, having lost her own grandfather to MND, the real life hero, Sal Wannet, representing the Badger Creek Fire Brigade, also took the cold leap in her uniform and was still smiling as she came back up from the cold.

With the AFL FightMND Campaign to still follow, the efforts at Healesville's Big Freeze rose up

tall to the fight. All funds raised through the Big Freeze at the 'Ville will go directly toward the crucial research, treatment and support for Australians living with MND.

The day was a huge success and the community effort from local businesses, former AFL players and every day stars was astounding. The very humble and determined Healesville Greyhounds team put on a spectacular event and made a large dent in the debilitating disease that is MND.



The High Tea took place at the Baptist Church in Millgrove. (Supplied)

Millgrove High Tea for a cause

By Oliver Winn

Two churches came together to raise funds for an international aid organisation on Saturday 23 May in an example of community at its best.

Around 40 people attended the High Tea at the Millgrove Baptist Church to mark a total of \$1200 raised for Mercy Ships, made up of two donations from the Millgrove church and a church in Yarra Junction.

Mercy Ships is an international development organisation that deploys hospital ships and volunteers to developing nations to provide crucial healthcare where it's needed.

Sarah Connor, who has been on a Mercy Ship, shared her story with the audience.

Millgrove local Janice Burney attended the event and she said everyone was moved by Ms Connor's experience.

"She shared with us the good work that they do, with an extensive PowerPoint presentation and many images of before and after operations.

"Everybody that attended was completely amazed and marvelled at the volunteer organisation's ability to change people's lives for the better," she said.

The event was organised by Dawn Doudney and Pastor Ray welcomed the attendees. Live music provided the soundtrack for the High Tea.



Live music was provided for the High Tea. (Supplied)