

2021

24 carat LIVING



The Maryborough District
Advertiser

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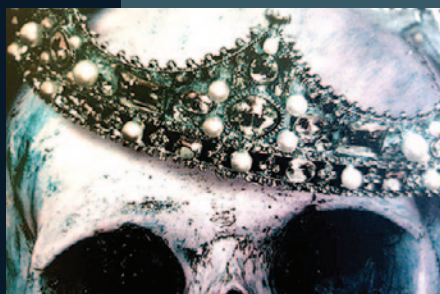
TO BE THE BEST AT WHAT WE DO

Like a favourite book, the McPherson's story continues to be shared by generations of employees from Maryborough and surrounding communities.

We take pride in our 75-year history and look forward to a future of new technology, secure employment options and the golden lifestyle our area offers.

The creative ability channelled by international and Australian authors comes to life in Maryborough...with paper and pages, glue and ink, quality and commitment.

At McPherson's we acknowledge our responsibility to clients, country and community; together, with our past, current and future teams, we can't wait for the next chapter.



As one of the largest local employers, McPherson's Printing has a responsibility to maintain a strong, ongoing business.

We offer job security to many full time, casual and part time employees covering the immediate township of

Maryborough and surrounding communities.

Some employees have worked with our company for 30 to 40 years! Not only is McPherson's a great place to work, it is a great place to build a lifelong career.

Throughout the past four

years, 17 people have started an Apprenticeship or Traineeship in Administration, Print, Bind & Embellishment with McPherson's Printing.

Of these, three were adult apprenticeships, highlighting opportunities for people with invaluable work/life experience.

As we expand, many job opportunities will arise for those genuinely seeking a locally-based long-term career.

If you are interested in joining our great team watch for future advertisements offering great opportunities or drop your resume into the office for consideration.



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What's inside



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ON THE COVER

As part of our feature on agriculture (Page 35), we spoke to Leah Haworth, who has moved across the country, with some chooks and a horse in tow, to work on the land.

Working as a local animal husbandry sales officer, Leah also helps run her partner's Dunluce farm, which is home to over 3000 ewes.

Photo: Christie Harrison

WELCOME to The Maryborough District Advertiser's 2021 edition of *24 Carat Living*.

While we were unable to publish in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, we, along with the rest of the local community, have returned with a bang.

Throughout this publication you'll uncover stories of how residents and businesses across the shire, and beyond, have not only adapted to the challenges of COVID-19, but thrived.

You'll also learn how locals have developed new technologies and techniques, become trailblazers in their own right, even spearheaded local movements and why tree changers are jumping at the chance to call this community home.

The past two years have been tough, from being unable to leave our homes, see family and friends, or even run businesses — so we're shining a light on the things that make our region golden.

—Angela Tucker, editor,
The Maryborough District Advertiser



A place to call home

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On the front foot



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Pea-sized success

For advertising and editorial inquiries for our 2022 edition, contact editor@maryaddy.com.au, advertising@maryaddy.com.au, phone our office on 5461-3866 or visit maryboroughadvertiser.com.au. This magazine is published by Maryborough Regional Newspapers. © November 2021.



Photo: Central Goldfields Shire Council

A growing shire

MARYBOROUGH and surrounding towns have experienced a noticeable growth in people looking to make the area home.

Ballarat and Bendigo are two of the fastest growing cities in Victoria. More than 10 years ago, the area between those cities was recognised as a growth corridor, with Maryborough right in the middle.

While population increase has been predicted in central Victoria for many years, pandemic restrictions experienced in metro centres over the past two years have undoubtedly contributed to the influx of new residents to the area.

Although housing affordability is often noted as a dominant driver of local growth, many new residents are reporting the domino effect; as family and friends visit, they too decide to make the move to a more relaxed lifestyle.

Georgia Davies lives on a farm just outside of Maryborough with her partner and young family. Originally from the inner suburbs of Melbourne, she said her friends were horrified when she decided to make the ‘farmer-wants-a-wife’ move.

“I had spent my whole life living within walking distance of everything – shops, pubs, schools and public transport,” she said.

“Suddenly I was in the middle of nowhere, not a street light in sight.”

The pandemic has seen attitudes change, with friends who were initially sceptical of the move now hoping to follow Georgia to the country.

“I think during lockdown in Melbourne, when even the playgrounds were closed, friends were suddenly jealous of what we have up here,” she said.

“While their kids were stuck inside glued to a computer screen, ours were out catching yabbies and playing on the farm. COVID has been horrible, but it has made people reassess



Lockdown life in the goldfields included yabbing for Georgia’s family, including Ari.

what is important in life.”

The knock-on effect of a growing population has increased business opportunities.

Central Goldfields Shire economic development officer Brian Gould said council was committed to making it as easy as possible for residents to access permits for business purposes.

“Last year we introduced the Better

Approvals Process – a new, streamlined permit application process making it quicker and easier for new and existing businesses to get the permits they need to operate,” he said.

“I work with our community to determine what permits, exemptions or prohibitions apply across our statutory planning, building, environmental health and local laws departments. Currently we are receiving around two to three new business enquiries each week.”

With new businesses come greater employment opportunities, which in turn makes the Maryborough region an attractive option for new residents.

Another area of growth in recent years is tourism.

A report produced by the Central Goldfields Shire Council, Tourism and Events Strategy 2020 – 2025, identifies tourism as one of the major economic strategies for the Central Goldfields. More than 225,500 annual visitors equate to over \$35.1 million in domestic visitor spending.

Although the strategy report was developed prior to the imposition of COVID-19 restrictions, tourism operators are optimistic the long-term goals identified in the report can be achieved, in spite of negative international tourism trends.

Lee Duffin is the team leader of Central Goldfields Visitor Information Centre. Lee said many domestic tourists coming to the centre are suddenly finding out what they have ‘in their own backyard’.

“We don’t rely on international travellers, they really only make up about 1.5 percent of our visitors,” Lee said.

“And we have actually seen an increase in tourists, particularly the ‘grey nomads’ who would normally travel to Queensland but couldn’t because of the border closures.

“Quite a few have never travelled to the goldfields before and say they love

what the area has to offer. It's not just the history or the beauty of the bush, but the 'authentic' country way of life and hospitality they get to experience. A lot of the more popular tourist spots have lost that authenticity."

While an increase in population has been welcomed by the business leaders, a sudden influx of people can bring challenges to any community. Central Goldfields Shire Council has recognised these challenges when designing its Council Plan 2021-2024.

Four priorities have been identified to inform the council's vision in the next three years and beyond. These are community well-being, a growing economy, our spaces and places and leading change.

Central Goldfields Shire Mayor Chris Meddows-Taylor said he is passionate about the possibilities as we make our way out of COVID.

"We expect this population growth to increase over the coming years as individuals and families realise the economic benefits of living and running a business in a regional and rural community," Chris said.

"There's no doubt that the opportunities to work remotely from a city office have also helped drive this trend.

"Recently we welcomed the announcement by the Victorian Government that \$630,000 will be invested in the Talbot Futures Structure Planning and Wastewater Upgrade project.

"This is a project that will not only benefit Talbot but the entire municipality. It will mean we can tap into opportunities from a rapidly growing Ballarat, through the passenger rail growth corridor, which is a key council priority.

"The future for our shire has never been brighter, but will require real leadership and partnership, to deliver our council plan and advance towards our community vision with its massive benefits.

"Working together we can make it happen — and we will."

Central Goldfields Shire Council Community Vision Statement:

"In 2031, we are an inspiring, thriving and prosperous community of choice, we've taken bold steps towards growing our economy and our community is full of optimism and opportunities.

"We are kind, connected and inclusive and we nurture creativity, leadership and innovation. We value and invest in our young people and our health and wellbeing is high.

"We live sustainably, cherish and protect our environment and heritage and we have access to outstanding jobs, education, health, community services, infrastructure, and affordable housing."

Setting up shop

FOR more than 100 years, Victoria's Golden Triangle has attracted people hoping to change their life.

In the mid-1800s, prospectors flocked to the area lured by the promise of 'streets paved with gold'. Tent cities sprung up overnight and fortunes were made and lost in central Victoria's harsh environment.

While gold continues to attract weekend prospectors and mining companies to central Victoria, the past few years has seen an influx of people enticed by the promise of leaving the 'rat race' and living a simpler life.

A recent study by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), found internal migration from cities to regional areas to be the highest on record.

As lockdowns and COVID restrictions continue to impact how people live and work, it would seem many are opting for a quieter life.

Newly-opened Wattle Tree



Country Retreat is an accommodation option in the Central Goldfields offering short-term respite care for adults with an intellectual disability, mental health issues or an acquired brain injury.

Since taking over the Amherst property at the start of the year, owner/operators Chelsea Thompson and Darron Reid have transformed their 20-acre farm to ensure guests enjoy a truly immersive country experience.

For Chelsea, opening the retreat is the culmination of a dream to combine her love of all things country with her passion and expertise developed throughout two decades of working in the disability sector.

"We are taking our love of country, nature, people, and

adventure and rolling them all into one," Chelsea said.

"The idea is to provide respite with a difference, an alternative to a traditional respite facility. While enjoying your stay, you will have a unique experience where you will get a chance to try new things, make friends, develop skills, and have fun."

The emotional and mental toll of pandemic restrictions, particularly on those already vulnerable and socially isolated, means care such as that offered by Wattle Tree Country retreat is more important than ever.

Offering 24-hour care and supervision, activities include caring for the farm animals, hiking, fishing, prospecting and camping.

Continued over page

As well as the experience of farm life and camping, guests can access nearly all of the activities available to tourists in the area. A highlight for both Chelsea and Darren is the support they have received from businesses and the general public.

Disability support and general understanding in the community is growing, not only for participants, but for those who work in the field. Chelsea and Darren have been impressed with the facilities available in Maryborough, and have worked closely with other agencies such as Rivergum Support.

“We have found this such a welcoming community, people are genuinely interested in what we are doing and are going out of their way to help,” Darren said.

Chelsea agrees that the community could not have been more supportive or welcoming of the guests, who have been on shopping trips, visited tourist attractions and markets and enjoyed meals at local cafes, restaurants and pubs.

“It has been lovely to see how welcoming people have been of our guests, our business and us,” Chelsea said.

One tree changer to recently set up shop in Maryborough’s High Street, is artist Peter Duffy who started tattoo parlour Pedro’s Ink, after moving to Bowenvale around a year ago.



Mr Duffy said coronavirus and subsequent lockdowns made the choice to move locally an easy one.

“I lived in Carisbrook when I was young and moved to Melbourne where I started my tattoo apprenticeship and worked at my craft for over 15 years,” he said.

“A year ago I decided to follow my dreams of moving back to the fantastic town of Maryborough to raise my children in the country and open a quality, clean, friendly and professional tattoo shop in the heart of town.

“I decided instead of letting COVID get us down, the family should stick together, grab a paintbrush and start renovating through these lockdown periods, making the glass half full and ending up with a shop we could all be proud of.”

The business is already



booked out for months in advance and Mr Duffy said the support he and his family have received from the community, as well as from the council in starting a new business, has been overwhelming.

“I really thank everyone in the community for being so supportive and I look forward to giving my 100 percent and spreading a little happiness in these difficult times,” he said.

“Most people get tattoos that represent something very

special and close to their heart, like loved ones who have passed or to represent their children or grandchildren.

“I am honoured to be a part of something so special and meaningful to the clients and I’m so grateful to be a part of something so important to them.

“I’d really like to thank Maryborough and the community for the local and support, it’s a real honour to be part of this community.”

New beginnings

From Hoi An to Maryborough

ANH Kim Thi Do and her son Khoa Anh were excited to become Australian citizens in August 2021.

Kim met her husband Graham Shard – a Maryborough local – when he was working in Vietnam.

The couple married and had two children before re-locating to Graham’s hometown seven years ago.

At first, Kim found the pace of life in a country town a little difficult to adjust to.

“My home town is Hoi An in Vietnam,” Kim said.

“For first couple of months, I really didn’t like it because it’s very quiet for me, but after a while I love it. It’s a very nice town and the people are very friendly.”



Khoa Anh and his mum Anh Kim Thi Do became Australian citizens after moving to the country around seven years ago.

Kim has worked as a chef at a number of venues in town. Daughter Yen-Nhi is currently studying psychology at Melbourne University and son, Khoa, is a student at Maryborough Education Centre.

Khoa said he and his sister have settled well into life in Australia, so much so that he has forgotten a lot of his native language, although he admits “I do understand when mum’s telling me off”.

Loving regional life

For Timothy Wear, the decision to become an Australian citizen was easy. Originally from Newcastle in the UK, the father of two has called Maryborough home for the past four years.

“I’ve been living in Australia since I was pretty young, about 23,” Timothy said.

“My wife is originally from Maryborough. When our first son was born we moved here from Queensland to be closer to her family, who have a farm at Wareek.”

Timothy said he loves living in Australia, and particularly



Timothy Wear and his family, Sheree, George and Theodore.

likes regional living.

“I’m a project manager in civil construction,” he said.

“I either work from home or from Ararat. I’ve found there’s plenty of work around and I love the lifestyle.”

While Timothy is used to the weather, when his family

visited from England they took a while to adjust to the heat of the long summers.

“They came over for seven weeks, in the summer of 2019/20, just before the COVID lockdown,” he said.

“They coped OK, just sat under the air-conditioning. In

England and Mediterranean summers there’s always a breeze so you can leave the windows open and it cools down the house. When he was here my dad kept opening the windows, I kept saying no, we have to keep everything shut with the blinds down.”

Nine locals, including from Vietnam, Cambodia, New Zealand and China became Australian citizens during a ceremony in August, 2020.





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Sonac Australia produces unique products for parent organisation, NYSE listed Darling Ingredients Inc, founded in 1882. Darling are the global leader in the production of the highest quality sustainable protein and nutrient-recovered ingredients, with over 200 factories world-wide.

Sonac Maryborough is the only specialist blood product company in Australia, producing protein-rich plasma powder and hemoglobin powder. These natural and functional ingredients are used in pet food manufacture as binding agents, for palatability and for gut health.

Sonac Maryborough products are also important nutrition sources in aquafeed and in the diets of non-ruminants like poultry and pigs in their formative first days to improve health and reduce the use of antibiotics.

“**Sonac Maryborough - Connecting global supply and demand across food and feed industries, contributing to a sustainable circular economy.**”

“**Our passion is for preserving the natural resources of our planet and improving the lives of those who live on it.**”

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Darling was named one of 50 Sustainability and Climate Leaders by Bloomberg and TBD Media Group in their 2020 assessment of global companies rising to meet the challenges our planet is facing today.

“**Sonac Maryborough - striving to be an employer of choice, educating and upskilling over 30 employees in a safe workplace.**”

With solid demand for unique sustainable nutrients, growth beckons.



CENTRAL Goldfields Shire continues to bat above its weight when it comes to businesses not only adapting to new technologies, but creating their own.

So many varied businesses operate throughout the region, and have all adjusted, adapted and become trail blazers in their own way through the strangest times of our generation.



Under pressure

HAVE you heard of lab grown diamonds? They are becoming increasingly popular for younger people and are a more eco-friendly and cost-effective choice.

To find out more, we sat down with one of J.M Leech Jeweller's four diamond graders, Cassie Argus.

What are lab grown diamonds?

Interestingly enough lab grown diamonds have been available since as early as the 1950s however, they were of a poor quality and used for industrial purposes only.

Today there are two types of lab grown diamonds available to the consumer, HPHT and CVD diamonds, which have now been perfected to a high standard suitable for the jewellery industry.

High Pressure High

Temperature (HPHT) lab grown diamonds are the least desirable of the two. Larger HPHT diamonds are grown from a metal catalyst such as graphite and are therefore 10-15 percent less expensive than CVD.

In some cases HPHT are colour treated to alter the cosmetic appearance of the stone making it whiter and enhancing other qualities.

These diamonds are mass produced and may not always register as a 'diamond' on some testers.

However, CVD diamonds formally referred to as Chemical Vapour Deposition are identical to mined diamonds. They have the same molecular and chemical composition as a natural mined diamond. CVD diamonds are grown from a Type IIA diamond seed, the purest of mined diamond. Less than two percent of the

world's mined diamonds are formed from the purest of carbon.

Scientists have been able to simulate what mother nature creates below the surface, which takes over 30 million years but in a laboratory takes just over 500 hours.

Just like mother nature, science and technology aren't able to control the growth process. Scientists are unable to have input on the diamond characteristics such as size, colour or clarity. Only with the correct machinery can a CVD diamond be distinguished from a natural diamond, it is impossible for a trained specialist to be able to distinguish mined from lab without this piece of technology. Because of these

attributes, we have fallen in love with CVD diamonds and why not when they look identical to a mined and are more cost effective!

How are they different to mined diamonds?

There is no visual difference between a mined and CVD lab grown diamond as they are a diamond. However, there are two major differences between lab grown and natural, and that is the origin of where the diamond has come from, as one comes from below and the other comes from above the earth's surface, and price.

What are the benefits of choosing lab grown? (For example, any environmental benefits?)

Continued over page

There are so many great benefits when selecting a CVD lab grown diamond and one of these benefits comes down to dollars and cents. A lab grown diamond is approximately 30-40 percent less expensive than a mined. This is because unlike mined diamonds there are no mining overheads. There is no hole in the earth!

Lab grown diamonds are economical and conflict free which is great for those cautious of their footprint on the earth. CVD are less expensive than a natural diamond therefore we are able to source and offer our clients a higher quality and larger stone within their budget without compromising on colour or clarity.

How has the diamond market evolved/ become innovative recently? Has the market for lab grown diamonds expanded?

The demand for lab grown diamonds has increased considerably within recent years. I personally believe this is due to various factors but primarily due to marketing and cost. Celebrities such as Meghan Markle, Lady Gaga

and J-Lo are all wearing these big beautiful rings, that are in fact lab grown diamonds.

It means that our clientele can now achieve this look, when choosing lab as they are affordable. I have personally found that lab grown diamonds are more accepted with our younger age demographic as they are more budget and eco-conscious. I believe as technology has evolved, they have perfected the growth process; they look identical to a natural stone, so the choice is easy.

Lab grown diamonds are still a 10 on the Mohs hardness scale just like a natural diamond, so it will last a life time when cared for correctly.

CVD diamonds, just like mined natural diamonds, have natural inclusions. What I find so fascinating is that just like our fingerprints, diamonds too have their own and it is unique, you will never find two identical diamonds.

They still go through the same grading process as natural diamonds and are still graded using the four C's (cut, colour, clarity and carat) method.

Australian first

PROCESSING blood may not be the most attractive concept for many, but in an

Australian first, local business Sonac Australia is

transforming the previously unusable waste product into a valuable commodity.

Taking animal blood from abattoirs across south-eastern Australia, Sonac splits the blood into plasma and

haemoglobin and through processing, turns this into protein powders for the pet food, animal production and aquaculture industries.

Through processing, some \$15 million litres of class B recycled water is also produced and used on local sporting fields and in the broader community.

Essentially creating its own market,



A nano filtration system installed at the Maryborough site earlier this year.

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Sonac Australia managing director Simon Cox said it's something the community can be proud of.

"At the end of the day we're getting rid of a waste that nobody else can handle and we're turning it into a product people can use," he said.

"I think we should be proud of that and Maryborough should be really proud of that, it's a unique technology and we're doing something that nobody else in Australia does.

"We're the only one in Australia producing the quality we do, we're exporting 50 percent of what we produce, we're growing and the demand is quite strong."

Business has been so strong for the company in recent years that it's currently operating at capacity and just weeks ago revealed its plans to invest \$15 million and expand production capabilities.

Hoped to begin next year, the upgrade would enable an increase in raw material processing, new spray drying technology and a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment plant to be installed.

The Maryborough facility currently processes an approximate 30 million kilograms of blood annually, with the upgrade to significantly increase output by up to 70 percent.

In addition to increasing the facility's output capabilities, it will also be a boost for its sustainable practices, something Mr Cox said Sonac prides itself on.

"As well as allowing for business expansion, the new dryer will improve our energy efficiency and the new wastewater treatment plant will significantly reduce our environmental footprint, sustainably processing animal by-products into valuable commodities and returning over 15 million litres of class B water to the community," he said.

Sonac is a subsidiary of Darling Ingredients Inc., which has a business presence in 17 countries, with Darling processing around 10 percent of the world's animal by-products and returns 11 billion gallons of recycled water to the environment.



Managing director Simon Cox and production manager Gerard Newbery say a \$15 million upgrade to the local business will significantly benefit the community.



The separator that splits blood into haemoglobin and plasma.

INNOVATION

Covering all bases

IS the old saying "Don't judge a book by its cover" actually true? McPherson's Printing would have to say yes.

"With the embellishments we are using today as a part of book manufacturing it is obvious that a cover is very much what attracts the consumer," McPherson's Printing general manager Robert Huismann said.

Embellishments appeal to

the senses of sight and touch, to see and feel an effect on a book is very much a part of the reading experience.

"McPherson's Printing has a variety of embellishments available for our clients. Lamination is regularly used with finishes being either gloss or matte," Robert said.

"Something a little more special is soft touch lamination which gives an almost felt touch finish. Foil stamping is

very popular across all genres of literature design and is available in an extensive range of colours; some even have additional effects such as holographic images or features.

"Emboss and Spot gloss UV are also available and are used to provide enhanced definition to certain parts of the cover image, heightening visual impact."

Continued on Page 11

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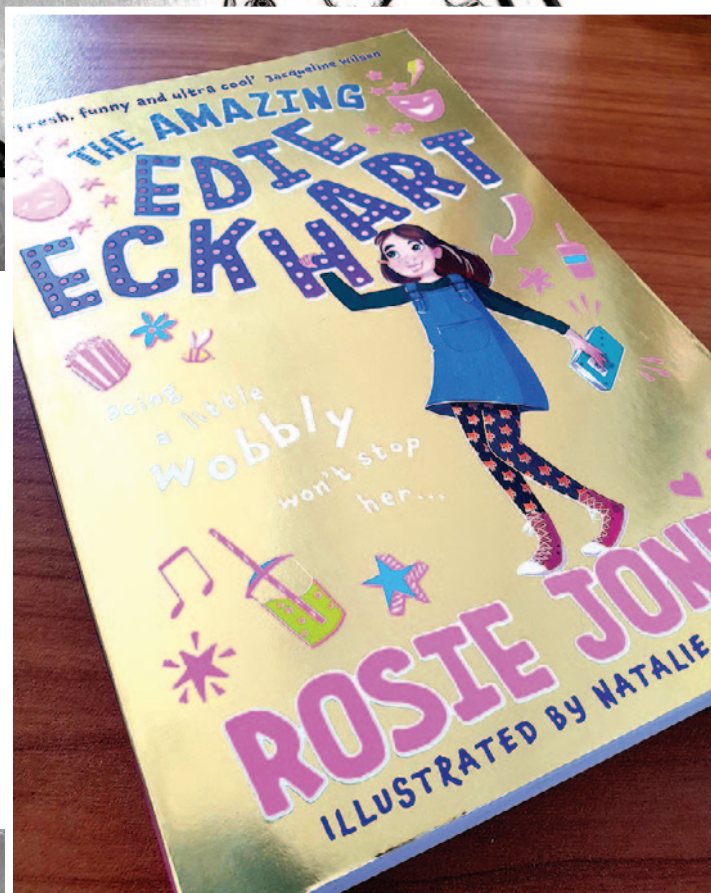
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McPherson's Printing is continuing to expand the embellishment aspect of the business with the intention of supporting the "one-stop shop" concept available to clients, increasing choices and options.

Employees' skills are also expanding; learning, understanding and applying these in-house embellishment processes confidently, keeping up with the ever-changing demands of the industry.

"Innovation allows the business to embrace new technology and offer skill expansion opportunities," Robert said.

"Developing a one-stop shop application in-house gives us the flexibility to manage changing industry demands."

Recently the business was able to purchase a second foiling/embossing machine along with a dye making machine. The dye making machine adds to the expansion of what McPherson's offer as a part of its one-stop shop in-house processes.

"The process now stays local, keeping jobs in Maryborough. It also gives the business more control over quality and delivery of product," Robert said.

Files containing the images are electronically transferred to the dye making machine where it is then programmed to chisel/etch the required image onto a magnesium plate using different size drill heads, the dye can then be used for embossing or foil stamping.

"The used dyes, water and magnesium shavings are all collected as a part of the process and are recycled, so there is minimal waste, which fulfils our ongoing environmental commitment," Robert said.

"Designs vary from simple large areas to small and intricate images and type; however with the machine we have, the application is so precise even the smallest font is clearly defined.

"These are exciting times for McPherson's Printing, moving into the future and being able to proudly offer clients varied design choices in-house.

"The skills required are very particular to this part of the industry and could almost be considered an art form.

"We are very fortunate at McPherson's to have staff in all areas of the business with the abilities and passion to make business expansions work and to maintain our standing as one of the largest and most successful book manufacturers in Australia."





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Testing times

WHILE the COVID-19 vaccination hub may be a temporary

fixture in Maryborough, it has been a vital one, and will go on to influence how the local health service operates into the future.

From setting up testing sites, introducing precautionary measures to limit risk of infection and adapting to overnight changes in advice, one of the biggest recent tasks for the Maryborough District Health Service has been the roll out of the COVID-19 vaccine which has been highly successful in the local area.

Initially running out of MDHS' Wellness Centre at the Maryborough Hospital, a new home was needed for the vaccination clinic and a true community collaboration soon saw it make the move to the Community Hub.

MDHS infection control coordinator Helen McAuley has played many roles in the set up, including administering some vaccines herself.

What was the process of finding and setting up in the Community Hub?

Collectively we worked with the shire and local GP clinics to find a suitable facility. We were keen to make it a collaborative approach because it's the whole community we're servicing.

The new site had to be something suitable, we had to ensure we met all the standards for a vaccination centre.

To set up the hub we had to submit documents to prove the requirements were met and our pharmacist Rendelle Wiseman came into play with that, it was very important she had input because she also had to control the cold chain for the vaccine being delivered from Ballarat so we're supplying vaccines which are to an acceptable standard.

We hadn't done anything like this before but it was easy to adapt to the space, council just removed everything they had in there and we came in.

We sectioned off the hub into our immunisation area, vaccine draw-up area and post-vax observation.



Registered nurse Leanne Robinson prepares to give a Pfizer vaccination.



MDHS infection control coordinator

Helen McAuley says the whole community has come together on all levels to support the vaccination hub which has been a rousing success.

What new practices or systems have you developed through the vaccination hub?

It's not every year you come across a pandemic, so living through one is probably something we'll all learn from and change how we manage things moving forward.

It will flow on into management within health facilities and how they're designed. Airflow has been highlighted by this and I think it'll become a priority.

That's relevant for us as we're currently in the process of designing the major Maryborough Hospital upgrade so that may change their tack.

Technology is one big thing we've gotten out of this that

we'll likely continue using at the health service.

We had training wheels on to a degree when we started off at the Wellness Centre — it was all paper based, there were physical copies of consent forms and it was a bit more arduous. Now we've moved over to an electronic system so registering, consent, administration and checking out is all on the one system. It's much more fluid, efficient, there's a lot less paper and it doesn't rely on so many resources to process.

What's a day of vaccinating like at the hub?

Usually we have six to eight staff at the clinic per day.

Each day we need a team leader, plus your vaccinators,

the staff who draw-up the vaccines and those who work in the post-vax area.

We have a minimum of two vaccinators on any one day and a maximum up to three.

We can deliver up to about 30 vaccinations per immuniser so if we were booked out over our morning and afternoon sessions with three vaccinators, we would do around 200 doses a day.

How has the vaccination hub changed the way you work with local GPs?

The collaboration we've had with the GP clinics and their input and support has been important, we haven't done this all on our own.

We're a state-run vaccine clinic whereas the GPs receive Commonwealth vaccine supplies, so we've been working with them to ensure we can maintain vaccine supply and access for the whole community.

Continued over page

Caring for our community

Message from CEO, Nickola Allan

At Maryborough District Health Service (MDHS), your health is important to us. We are committed to providing first-class care to our community in the Central Goldfields and Pyrenees Shires. Our dedicated team of specialists and caregivers are committed to providing you with quality care across our three campuses in Maryborough, Avoca and Dunolly.

We are excited to have a new \$100 million hospital and student accommodation project on the way, and are always working to ensure every patient receives the right treatment at the right time in a safe environment. We offer a range of services and clinics for people staying in hospital, and outpatients. Our expert doctors, nurses and allied health professionals work with our community to support consumers with a broad range of medical conditions, or help them to recover from or prevent health issues.

Our services range from acute and urgent care to antenatal, surgical, and allied health, right through to dental care and community services, across all life stages. We also offer excellent care to members of our residential community who need nursing and supportive care. Our patients and residents, their families, loved ones and carers are important to us. We strive to make any visit as comfortable as we can, and are always interested to hear your feedback as we continue to grow and develop our services to meet the needs of our growing population.



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- Women's health clinic
- Wellness and support centre
- Family violence support
- Nurse-led clinics
- Transition care & district nursing
- Community palliative care
- NEST supported parent drop-in space
- COVID-19 Clinic

Allied Health

- Dietetics
- Occupational therapy
- Counselling and social work
- Housing services
- Speech pathology
- Physiotherapy and exercise physiology

Residential Aged Care

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- Avoca Residential Community
- Dunolly Residential Community



Maryborough District Health Service

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They've also supported us with staffing resources that we've needed.

On the odd occasion they've had surplus staff available they've supplied us with some staff to help vaccinate.

We've always had a good relationship with the GPs but I think this has enhanced it and put us out there to say we're here to help and problem solve if there's an issue, we're happy to support and vice versa. We're trying to foster that relationship at all times.

How have MDHS staff and the community adapted to all the change over the past 18 months?

COVID has probably highlighted how everyone has worked together so well and if they're called to arms for resources, they will come. It's been very heartwarming to see the response, it's good for team bonding.

Running the vaccination hub is very satisfying and the community is very supportive. We haven't had any issues and we've had feedback about how wonderful it is to have access to this.

As a community we need to have each other's backs. Especially in a smaller, rural community. You can't afford not to.



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Tiny movement

C OVID-19 travel restrictions have meant more tourists are discovering what their own state has to offer. For some, like the traditional 'grey nomads' — who pre-COVID might have planned a months-long trek around the country — this has meant shorter trips to destinations within their own state.

Tourism operators in the Central Goldfields have noticed an influx of visitors, with many new to the area expressing surprise at what the region has to offer.

Whether it's a weekend away or a weeks-long adventure of discovery, travellers can choose from free camping in the state parks, the comforts of home in a B&B or the convenience of a roadside motel.

One option popular among those escaping from the city is the Tiny House. Initially started as a social movement attracting people permanently looking for a simpler, more sustainable life, the appeal of

tiny house vacations is the seclusion and privacy they offer.

Local farmers Laura and Kev Martin are the owner/operators of Pyrenees Tiny House B&B.

Set on 400 acres of grazing land and surrounded by the Bung Bong State Forest, the holiday accommodation offers visitors the ultimate in off-grid living just 10 minutes from Maryborough.

If the couple weren't busy enough running their farm and building business, Laura said they have been surprised at how popular the Tiny House has been.

"Whenever travel restrictions are lifted, we've had back-to-back bookings," she said.

"A lot of guests just want to escape for a few days, but we've also had quite a few who have come here to 'try out' tiny living and see if the lifestyle is really for them."

Proponents of tiny house living say it offers a lifestyle reset for those reassessing what is important for a fulfilling life.



Kev, Laura and their three girls.

Photo: Edan Coombs Photography

A Tiny House Facebook group with more than 25,000 members Australia-wide suggests an increasing number of people are questioning living with big mortgages and the accumulation of 'stuff' they don't really need.

With three small children, Tiny House living is not yet a lifestyle choice for the Martins. But Laura said she can see the appeal of a scaled-down life.

"I often say to Kev, once the kids are off our hands, we're moving here," she said.



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A place to call home

NOW that couple Steve Smith and Jenny Bleechmore are in the Central Goldfields — they don't ever want to leave.

Moving to Goldsbrough, around 10 minutes out of Dunolly, from Melbourne was a shock to the system for the pair, however, they said they have enjoyed the change in lifestyle pace that comes with a tree-change.

“When COVID hit we thought we’ve got a perfectly good house in the country, what are we still doing here?,” Jenny said.

“When we first saw the house, we thought it would make a great retreat, but we fell in love with it too much to share.”

“It is an adjustment and there are things you miss about



the city, but it's more than worth it to live in a beautiful house with 150 years of history, on three acres of land and be able to work in a space like this — it's wonderful,” Steve said.

“We absolutely love it here and have no plans of leaving at all, that's why we've moved everything down.”

While the goldfields have given the pair a new version of life, they in turn have given the

area access to a service usually only found in big cities, with Steve's business Sentient Automation setting up shop in the old flour mill in Maryborough.

Continued over page



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"We kind of closed down a bit in the first chunk of COVID, we just did the necessary stuff to keep the business ticking over," Steve said.

"Then business started to ramp up a bit more but travelling to and from the factory in Melbourne just wasn't working for me anymore.

"This place (the mill) came up for rent on Facebook in December of 2020 and that was it. I shut the factory and moved the business up here straight away.

"It's been a great move, it's worked really well and Jenny is being involved more and more.

"We haven't yet worked with any local businesses, but we would like to. There are definitely industries here that we could service and it would save them having to travel to bigger locations like Geelong or Melbourne."

Sentient Automation specialises in machine and

process automation, whether that be fixing broken machinery, modifying existing equipment to have it perform a different task or getting systems to work at their very highest level.

"Machine automation covers a plethora of machinery. I've worked with all kinds of machines over my lifetime so really, we deal with anything except mining equipment," Steve said.

"Usually somebody phones you up because they are in trouble, it's a Friday afternoon and their machine has stopped working. You're able to get in there and fix it and then have an on-going relationship with the business throughout the lifetime of that machinery.

"It might be improving the safety of the equipment, its speed or efficiency or sometimes equipment just doesn't do the right thing for that business anymore because that business has changed, instead of forking out a million dollars for a whole new



machine, we might be able to re-program it to do the thing they now want."

Along with Steve's business,

Jenny, a glass artist and teacher of the craft, also has the wheels in motion to set up her own business in the same building



to be named The Mill Glass Studio.

Jenny has worked with glass for around 20 years and formally taught in a glass studio in Melbourne before moving to Dunolly.

She currently runs classes through Ballarat Community Health, however plans to run private classes locally when restrictions allow.

Glass was a passion for Jenny early in life and something she returned to when she had the resources — it even eventually led her to meet Steve.

“I did it in year 12 at high school as part of my art studies and loved it, but it is an expensive hobby so I thought ‘I’ll pick this up again when

I’m older’,” Jenny said.

“When my youngest went to school I gave it a go. It started because I wanted to put some led-light in the house and it went from there.

“I went and did an interior design course when I was 40 and it’s really become a passion for me.

“Steve came to a glass class of mine and I was the teacher, that’s where we first met. We were friends from that and down the line here we are now.

“We’ve done a lot of glass work in the Goldsbrough house together, a lot of restoration of old led-light and I am hoping that the studio will be of interest to local people.

“It will probably start out as introduction weekends for people who aren’t sure and if they like it, they can then commit to bigger projects.”

Jenny and Steve were initially attracted to the area due to the house prices, however both admit the move has changed the course of their life together and created a dream they never would have come up with on their own.

“When the apartment next door to the one we were renting together sold for three quarters of a million dollars, we just threw that idea out the window, despite the fact that we liked our apartment and our life at that stage,” Jenny said.

“We fell in love with the history and the style of the house in Goldsbrough and that has then led us to where we are now, running Steve’s business but also in the position to start our own glass studio.

“In a way it was lucky that we were forced to look outside of Melbourne because we wouldn’t have even thought of this set up,” Steve said.

“This is a far better dream that we could have imagined.

“We’re enjoying exploring Maryborough and Dunolly and all the bits in between. It’s a really fantastic area and it’s got everything you need.

“We’re really happy to have found ourselves here.”

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MR Mobility, located in Maryborough's High Street, offers a range of products for sale and hire, as well as maintenance, so local clients can be assured they don't have to travel out of town.

As well as traditional aids such as wheelchairs and walkers, owner Craig Blanch is excited about the newer range of scooters on the market.

"The age-group we are aimed at have been through the 1960s and 70s," he said.

"They had the best fashion, the best music, they were considered cool.

"My aim is to make scooters – which were very cool in the 60s and 70s – cool for people who are now aged in their 60s and 70s!"



Craig Blanch and Jena Catlow recently opened their High Street business, Mr Mobility Maryborough.



AGED CARE

On the front foot

IT'S no secret the Central Goldfields Shire has an older population but this is far from a negative, with a strong local aged care sector providing the best care for older residents and employment for hundreds in the community.

Maryborough's Havilah Hostel was founded in 1995 and has continued to grow alongside the community since.

From humble beginnings, Havilah has now expanded to cover two sites in Maryborough and there are further

expansions underway to support the growing aged population, with the 2016 Census showing more than a quarter of the shire's population is aged over 65.

With the elderly most at risk of suffering severe effects of COVID-19, the aged care industry was on high alert as the pandemic began, with facilities closing their doors to the public, face shields introduced, along with personal protective equipment and of course, face masks.

Continued over page

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“ In the event there was an outbreak in facilities, it was all staff out for at least 14 days so residents were left with a skeleton staff to care for them until a surge workforce could be allocated. ”

Barb Duffin, Havilah CEO



Bob Hooper dons his Contact Harald card.



Havilah resident Joan Clarke and her son Rob, both with Contact Harald.





Havilah's Keely Hare, Alison Steicke and Shelby Farrell with the Contact Harald cards.

While Havilah followed in these footsteps, it also took a step further to ensure the safety of residents and staff, innovating the way people checked in to facilities long before QR code sign ins and the Service Victoria app were even introduced.

Havilah was one of the first aged care services in Victoria to adopt Contact Harald, a card-based, Bluetooth connected contact tracing system in August last year.

Developed by RMIT Health Transformation Lab in Melbourne and Safedome, a Bluetooth tracking company, Contact Harald logs interactions between staff, residents and visitors via Bluetooth so if someone is a positive COVID case, close contacts can be tracked quickly and simply.

Providing more than 140 residential aged care beds and independent living units, Havilah CEO Barb Duffin said it was important to provide the best protection for residents and staff.

"When we first introduced Harald there were no QR

codes, electronic sign ins, vaccinations or rapid antigen testing," she said.

"In the event there was an outbreak in facilities, it was all staff out for at least 14 days so residents were left with a skeleton staff to care for them until a surge workforce could be allocated.

"Contact Harald has been a massive protection for our residents."

Worn on a lanyard or clip, the devices record a close contact when two or more people using the cards come within two metres of each other for a minimum of two minutes, with the contact data downloaded from the cards and logged on the system database.

The system is designed for various settings and is currently being used in manufacturing, construction, aged care and packaging sectors, among others.

In the event a staff member, resident or visitor to Havilah is diagnosed with COVID-19, Contact Harald can be used to see who their close contacts were.



AGED CARE

The system has saved Havilah staff around five hours every day by removing the need to manually contact trace, as staff would have to write all contact they had with residents and other staff each day.

"Staff, residents and visitors are all very thankful to have Contact Harald and have been very accepting of wearing their cards," Ms Duffin said.

"We wanted something that if there was an outbreak that we could definitely say who those residents or staff had come into contact with and then only those staff would need to isolate.

"Hopefully soon we won't need Harald but we will be hanging onto him for a while longer as added protection while everything opens up."



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Time for change

COMMUNITIES are tackling climate change head on, rallying, quite literally, together to work towards reducing their carbon footprint.

In Maryborough this takes the form of the Maryborough Climate Action Group and the currently in progress, Community Climate Action Plan.

In January 2020, the Maryborough Climate Action Rally was held — spearheaded by local resident and former teacher, Tony Macer — calling on the Central Goldfields Shire Council to declare a climate emergency.

More than 200 residents rocked up to the rally in a massive show of support — resulting in the formation of the Maryborough Climate Action Group.

What drove Tony to action? His grandkids.

“I was really concerned about the climate and what sort of world we’re leaving for our grandkids,” he said.

“That absolutely sparked me into action. I’m a bit of an impulsive person so pretty much overnight I decided I was going to do all I could, as a commitment to my grandchildren and all the young



Renewable Newstead’s 2021 steering group.

people I’ve taught in the community, that I would devote a large part of my retirement to doing something about climate action instead of just complaining about it.”

Mr Macer said work on the Community Climate Action Plan is progressing well.

“The group is really active and we’re in a really good position — we’ve got a great partnership with the council, Maryborough Education Centre and the Goldfields Sustainability Group, the plan’s travelling along really well,” he said.

“With the momentum we’ve had this year, we’re forging ahead and will be

working long-term with the community in getting a whole lot of climate projects up — this (community action plan) is the most exciting thing at the moment.”

Tony said the climate action group is also in the process of conducting community conversations with various local groups — building to a week-long event, set to be held next year, the Climate Conversation Week.

“We ask the groups to tell us what they value within the community and what’s at risk due to climate change and then ask what the community could do to fix it,” he said.

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“It can be any group, it could be a sporting group, such as a cricket club and they can let us know how climate change is impacting their operations and if they have any solutions.”

Tony said it’s important the community is driving the issue.

“Before the rally, it wasn’t really an issue in the community, at least not as big as it should have been,” he said.

“Together with the council, the sustainability group and the climate action group — it’s been so important to put the issue at the forefront — it’s the most important thing and if we can galvanise the community, we can really get some momentum happening.”

Tony said there are plenty of things people can do to reduce their footprint and that the council has already adopted a number of strategies to reduce the shire’s impact.

“Local businesses are noticeably getting on board and making changes — they’re being innovative and creative to try and reduce their impact which is amazing to see,” he said.

“There are a lot of people who are wanting to get on board our Climate Action Group, there’s been a lot of support.

“We want Maryborough and the Central Goldfields to be on the front foot and we have a lot of things to be happy about already — from our street lighting now being LEDs, businesses jumping on board, the huge uptake in solar panels, our recycling and green waste is fantastic and council’s green energy commitment — there’s a lot happening.”

Just down the road in Newstead, group Renewable Newstead has been hard at work to establish a small-scale solar farm to achieve its goal to develop, document and implement a plan for switching to 100 percent locally generated, renewable energy in a commercially viable way that would benefit everyone in the community.

The solar farm’s proposed plan is for a five megawatt (MW), beginning with a 2.5 MW, capacity, which is enough to generate energy for

Newstead and surrounds, located three kilometres west of Newstead at the corner of Captains Gully Road and Clarke Lane.

The model, advised by Energy for the People with funding grants from the Victorian Government, does not require initial community up-front investment and will allow any Newstead business and household the choice to purchase renewable energy from the Newstead solar farm by switching to the power retailer partner.

Member of the volunteer committee, Gen Barlow said the project suits the town’s energy needs.

“We want to make renewable energy, generated locally, available at a really competitive price.”

Gen said a key part of the project was understanding the needs of the community.

“We have renters, we have home owners, and some of the houses in town aren’t suitable for solar panels — they face the wrong direction to maximise energy generation, they might be old houses and could be shaded,” she said.

“It became really apparent that we needed to make renewable energy for everyone, not just those who could afford it or how accommodate solar panels on their houses.”

microgrids would help reduce their footprint,” she said.

Construction is expected to start and be completed in 2022.

Tarnagulla is one of those towns investigating microgrids, with its residents having the chance to take part in the three-year feasibility study being conducted in the town to examine whether it would be suited to going “off grid”.

Tarnagulla was chosen, along with Donald, for a three-year study into the technical, cultural and social elements of powering the two towns via microgrids.

The study will look at the benefits and risks of separating



“Renewable Newstead was formed following a community summit we had where our community said they would like to address where we get our energy from,” she said.

“Over the years, a changing group of people, with some staying consistent, have worked on this.

“We’re coming up with a solution that works for our community, something that meets the needs of the people who live here, so we understand the demographic, we know what people are facing.

“We’ve understood that people have turned their heating off because they can’t afford their bills, so price is a really major factor for us as well.



Gen said small-scale near the source of use is more efficient than having solar panels on individual homes.

She also said the project has received a planning permit for the farm and is finalising an agreement with retail partner, Flow Power, to build, own and operate and also retail the electricity.

Gen said other small towns could follow suit, but that they would create plans which best suit their needs.

“Other towns may find that

the towns from the main electricity grid and potentially using renewable generation, energy storage and backup generation to power the new microgrids.

Microgrids are a local energy grid that can disconnect from the traditional grid and operate on its own using technologies like solar panels or batteries, meaning it can continue to generate energy during emergencies like storms, bushfires or power outages.

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY



Customer Service Centre

Our Customer Service Centre is located at 22 Nolan Street, Maryborough and is open for cashier payments, Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm. You can also speak to a friendly member of the team by calling 5461 0610 or emailing mail@cgoldshire.vic.gov.au

Did you know that Council provides over 40 services in our Shire?

Here's a snapshot of some of the services we provide and details on how you can connect with us.



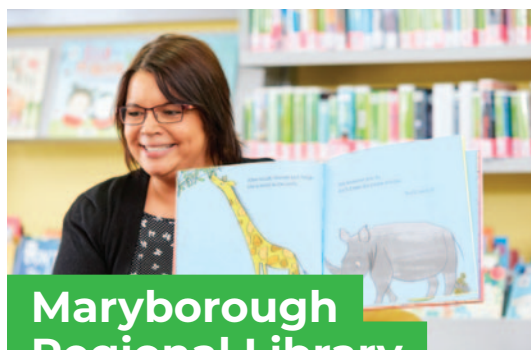
Goldfields Family Centre

Located at 100 Napier Street, Maryborough, the Goldfields Family Centre is an integrated service offering local families a range of services including Maternal and Child Health, Immunisation, Long Day Care, Family Day Care, Kindergarten and Supported Playgroup.



Central Goldfields Art Gallery

Whilst our Gallery is currently closed to make way for an exciting \$1.9 million redevelopment project, locals and visitors can continue to connect with and enjoy Gallery programs in other ways and at alternative locations.



Maryborough Regional Library

Library lovers in the Central Goldfields are spoilt for choice with library services available across Maryborough and Dunolly, children's programming, school holiday program and online resources.



Community Care

In-home maintenance, social support groups and meals on wheels are just some of the services our Community Care team provides for eligible older people, young people with disabilities, carers and families.

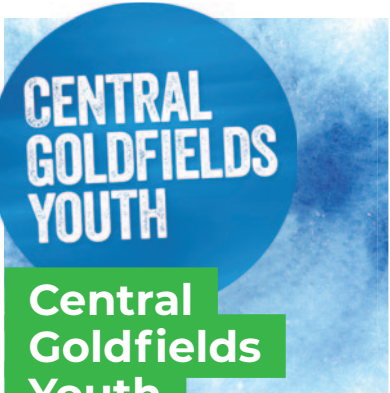


The Go Goldfields team are working to ensure our local children have every chance to grow up healthy, safe and confident. To find out more you can visit the Go Goldfields HQ at the Maryborough Resource Centre.



Central Goldfields Visitor Information Centre

Located at the iconic Maryborough Railway Station, our friendly Visitor Information team have extensive local knowledge to help welcome visitors to our region. The Visit Maryborough and Surrounds Facebook page also offers fantastic updates about our region.



Central Goldfields Youth

Our Central Goldfields youth team are making it easier for young people aged between 12 and 25 years to connect, meet new people and learn new skills.



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Plus, keep an eye out for a copy of our **Community Update** publication in your letterbox seasonally.

Art at the heart

CENTRAL Goldfields Art Gallery has been described as the artistic jewel in the crown of the Central Goldfields Shire. Established in 1996 in an 1861 fire station, the gallery is just a two minute-walk from the main Maryborough shopping precinct.

The gallery will be given a new lease on life as it undergoes a \$1.9 million redevelopment throughout summer and autumn. Currently closed to the public, the gallery will re-open in winter 2022 with an exciting program of new exhibitions and improved visitor services associated with a dynamic, contemporary public art gallery.

Gallery curator and education officer Helen Kaptein said the redevelopment was symbolic of the way in which the arts are being supported and embraced in the shire.

“The project will see Central Goldfields Art Gallery upgraded to meet the requirements of a contemporary public art gallery and ensure it meets national standards in the presentation of artworks for both touring exhibitions and local content,” she said.

THE ARTS

“People often dismiss art as being not important, but they don’t realise that movies and theatre and music are all art as well.”

Jacki Irwin, artist



Helen Kaptein, Central Goldfields Art Gallery curator and education officer.

Mellita Joy has been able to connect with the local community through art, including through an exhibition she held at the Maryborough Resource Centre.



“The permanent collection will be properly stored and displayed and visitor facilities will be extended and improved to ensure all ages and abilities are welcomed to the gallery.”

“A new entrance will be introduced, designed in a way that local people and visitors are encouraged to come on in and enjoy their public art gallery.”

Local artist Jacki Irwin has no doubt about the importance of community art.

She is excited about the possibility of creating public art spaces, and hopes that the council’s emphasis on the gallery will extend to the wider community.

“People often dismiss art as being not important but they don’t realise that movies and theatre and music are all art as well; people would hate to live without their art,” Jacki said.

Specialising in what she calls ‘industrial art’ Jacki has recently been sculpting objects from recycled garden products. She has been pleasantly surprised at the public response to her work, which she sells at the Pickers Market in Maryborough and online.

“When you buy something original it’s a talking point,” Jacki said.



Artist Jacki Irwin said she is eager to see the local art scene grow.

“No one is going to talk about your mass-produced picture of a leaf from Kmart.”

With a background in community service and mental health, Mellita Joy knows how important art can be for community connection.

After falling in love with Maryborough nearly four years ago, she moved here with her growing family and reached out to her new community through art.

“I did portraits of local people and displayed them at the resource centre,” Mellita said.

“Through the exhibition I met Jacki, who is very creative and has a passion for art.”

Jacki and Mellita are keen to work together with like-minded people once ‘COVID normal’ is established.

Both women believe art is a vital resource for healthy communities.

“Not all kids play sport, they need something too,” Mellita said.

“For a lot of kids, art is their saviour. Art is such a good way of dealing with things that are going badly or a release or expression.

“It holds such a higher importance than it is often given credit for.”



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LIFE on the land can be tough. There's the unpredictability of weather, impacts of wildlife and pests, the financial pressures and the overwhelming amount of time needed to run a successful business.

Throughout the Central Goldfields Shire, businesses, families and tree changers are not only adapting to the constantly changing variables of working within the agricultural industry, but thriving.

Whether they are adapting to climate change by altering what crops or products are grown, developing new techniques to reduce their footprint or even finding new technologies to reach a wider audience — the region is bursting with innovative and interesting businesses within the agriculture industry and beyond.



Pea-sized success

CREATING crops of capers wasn't what Heather and Robert Cooper intended when they made plans to move to the small town of Bealiba, but 22 years on they're now one of three Victorian producers with some truly unique practices.

Robert first stumbled across a caper bush back in 2006 at a bush nursery in South Australia, and said bringing a cutting home was where it all began.

"I don't know anyone else who has persisted with the capers as a commercial product like we have," he said.

"We have a little block of land we initially planted olive trees on, but over a period of about seven years we had continual drought. You need rain for the trees to flower during the winter, we had no winter rain so the olives were a bit of a flop.



"When I brought home the caper cutting, I started growing them as a hobby. I kept propagating them into about 30 bushes. That's when other people became interested in buying them."

The capers were soon so popular that the Coopers removed some of their olive trees to make room for what is

now a 350-plant commercial crop of capers and small business — Cooper Capers.

Thanks to Heather's green thumb and help from their son, the Coopers have created innovative practices to make the most of the crop from how the plant is grown down to specific hours for harvesting.

Unlike many plants, capers

don't tolerate being in a pot due to their deep root system, which descend vertically.

"Most people grow the bushes in the ground and you have to employ people to pick the capers on their knees because they're so low," Heather said.



Continued over page

“Robert’s secret is once we realised we had to hand pick the capers, he planted them up high in tubs with the bottoms cut out so although they appear to be in pots, the roots can go into the ground, which no other grower seems to have done.

“I cannot fathom how people haven’t thought of that before.”

The tub system also eliminates the need for extensive weeding which Robert said is a big problem, and combined with a unique irrigation system seriously cuts down on manual labour.

“Capers don’t need much water because they’re a desert plant,” he said.

“I’ve set up a removable irrigation system, which means when it comes to pruning it’s much easier.

“The original plants had the irrigation pipe running through it. To avoid cutting the pipe I could only prune a few a day by hand. The new system runs along the top of the plants and can easily be taken off.”

Capers are the green, unripened flower buds of the



caper bush and weigh a little more than a pea. Each harvest produces around 400 kilograms and the picking process starts in mid November and runs right through to March.

“The picking is the absolute key,” Heather said.






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"If we didn't have our picking system, designed to maximise produce, there would be no profit.

"You're picking a bud, it's like picking tea, it's very delicate. We start picking at 6 am until about 10 am. That's when the plant's stalk starts drooping."

The capers are then taken down to Bealiba's church hall which the Cooper's rent to sort the capers into sizes, salt and pickle them. The capers are then sealed into light weight bags, another of Robert's clever ideas.

"Capers are sold in supermarkets in a little glass jar, but we experimented with that and the jar and lids were about a \$1 each and had to be sterilised," Heather said.

"Robert came up with the idea of soft packs, so he got a sealer and that's how we started doing it.

"It makes them easier to transport because there's no risk of breaking jars and

they're very light to move."

The capers are shipped off to local wineries and markets where Heather has taken the opportunity to showcase the many culinary uses of the caper.

"As a cookery teacher, I love holding a demonstration to show people how to use capers," she said.

"Whatever stage you're at with your cooking, you can use them.

"With the pandemic, the culinary arts at home is about all we've got left to do so people have been far more interested in home cooking and finding different ingredients."

While many of the Cooper's practices are, from what they can see, a first when it comes to Australia's caper industry, Heather said it really all comes down to common sense.

"I think country people do find the sensible solutions to things, because we have to live with nature and you have to work around it," she said.



AGRICULTURE

Country charm

HONEY has been a passion project for Andrew LeFevre for a few years now, but moving to Maryborough has increased this passion 10-fold with the family now operating a contact-free unfiltered honey business right out of their letter box.

Andrew, mum Peri and brother Brendan made their tree change to the Central Goldfields Shire from the surf coast just a few years ago and now live in Maryborough and also own property near Talbot.

Much like the traditional honesty system set-ups that can be seen for produce along country roads, the LeFevre family have honey for sale out of their letter box, located on Dundas Road, but instead of a cash box, there is a QR code which takes customers to an online store.

Andrew said the contact free and online set-up makes sense particularly in the context of last 18 months and as we move



even closer to a cash-less society.

"Having the QR code means you don't have to worry about having cash. People know how to use them at the moment and it means it's contact free," he said.

"The QR is from a free generation site, I set up the site through Square Payments and Weebly and it's simple to use. It wasn't too hard to do.

"We have two hives here in Maryborough and four on our property in Talbot.

"Out the front we've had a couple of sales, we've had a lot of our neighbours get some honey.

"Whatever we put out at Talbot seems to disappear very quickly."

Peri said it's not just the people that are nicer in the country — the bees are too.

"I wanted to move here because of the great disability services for Brendan and it's been a really good move. Andrew bought this house up here in Maryborough and we love it," she said.

"We used to live in Winchelsea, Andrew had bee hives down there and we ended up getting rid of them because they were wild.

Continued over page

“They were on canola and there’s something about it that makes them angry. It’s like a drug to them. While there is canola here, it’s not as close and there are plenty of other plants to choose from.

“When we got these new flow hives we noticed that the bees were a lot different here.

“The good thing about bees is they look after themselves. You don’t have to look after them, you don’t have to feed them and when the time comes you can collect the honey without disturbing them too much.”

As the main beekeeper for their small-scale operation, Andrew said the bees here are less of a threat. He also said the flow hives he uses allow him to take the honey without disrupting the bees at all.

“With the flow hives you just turn the tap and the honey flows straight out into a tub or a jar, rather than having to smoke them and remove the frames to extract the honey,” he said.

“I did about two hours of learning with the person I bought the first two set ups from. How to take care of



them, how to use the set up, what to look for, how to replace the queen if she needs to be replaced and that’s about it.

“Bees are fun to be around and they are worth looking after.

“You don’t even need a suit here, they’re very friendly. I’ve been stung multiple times, but not really here.”

Andrew said the move to the country has also changed the flavour of honey the family produces.

“Down at Winchelsea our honey was more bland, up here it’s very sweet,” he said.

“The bees here like the gazania flowers, they like our neighbour’s willow and palm trees. Anything light coloured

in flowers they like really.

“We have a lot of variety in our garden and we try and pick what they like.

“They seem to have preferences in lavender, they like the more modern brighter type with the petals on the top rather than the traditional sort.”

Andrew is also working on an app which collects information about other off-road stalls and puts them on a map, however this is still a little way off.

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A passion for animals, farming and the rural lifestyle has led 24-year-old Leah Haworth all the way from the UK to Dunluce where she's proving to be a jack of all trades, combining her knowledge of animal health products with on-farm practises.

Leah started life in England before her family made the move to Margaret River in Western Australia when she was 10.

The rural lifestyle caught Leah's attention and she was soon spending her school holidays working on a local dairy farm and breaking in horses, eventually completing her final two years of high school at an agricultural college.

Working in the Wheatbelt as a roustabout, Leah met her partner Ben Weir and made the bold decision to pack up 25-odd chooks, a dog and a horse, truck them across the Nullabor and join Ben on his Dunluce sheep and crop farm four years ago.

"I love the lifestyle and I think it all comes from being taken around to animal farms as a kid," she said.

"We were an outdoors family which is why we moved to WA.

"It's funny the path you end up on. As soon as you get your foot in the door with agriculture, the possibilities are endless."

Outside of working on the farm, Leah is Cramer's CRT's animal husbandry sales officer, travelling around the region supporting and advising farmers on livestock nutrition and animal health.

"We have about 100 farms locally that I help who have everything from sheep, cattle, horses and pigs," she said.

"It's usually about improving vaccination programs, we can do worm testing to help with drench recommendations, when to join them, it's all to enhance the animal's health.

"It's all about how they can

streamline their production system and what products to use to get a better output and look after their stock really well.

"It's great to go out on the farms and see how other people operate, there's such a diverse range of farmers here and they all have a unique way of doing things."

Having a foot on the farm and at Cramer's gives Leah a unique insight into the products she's recommending.

"New products come out all the time," she said.

"If companies come into the shop and say 'we've got this new product' and tell me how good it is, I'll often bring it home and do a trial on the farm, collect some data, and then I've got some proof of how good it actually is and can advise farmers.

"It's great to see what works for other people, because then I can always bring it home and implement it on the farm."

Bringing the knowledge of top rate products home along with the practises she's seen at other farms also helps Leah and Ben's approximately 3000 ewes.

Producing lambs for meat, the farm is focusing on ewes producing triplets and creating a shedding herd.

"A lot of our ewes will have triplets. We're breeding for high fertility sheep that'll eventually have no wool," she said.

Continued over page



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“We bought some rams with the booroola gene, which is for high fertility. They pass that onto the ewe and when she has twos and threes, we separate them, they get lambed into mobs of no more than 100 in good sheltered paddocks and lots of feed.

“Management is the key with triplet bearing ewes. They get two vaccines prior to lambing, a booster injection for trace minerals, extra grain and are frequently monitored.

“To raise three lambs is a big ask so that’s why we need to look after them the best we can. Now a couple of years in we are getting some really good lamb marking percentages which makes the extra effort all worth it.

“Shearing is a really hard few weeks for us due to the large ewe size, so the five-year goal is to breed the wool off all our ewes so they naturally shed.

“Not many farms around this area run a large shedding herd but we are hoping this will be a game changer for us.”



The GOAT

CHANGES in climate conditions as well as consumer demand have led

to an increase in goat farming throughout Australia.

Once considered an afterthought meat, or a pest, the last few years has seen demand

for goat meat grow as people recognise the health benefits of a leaner, protein rich meat.

Farmer Drew Symons began developing his Boer goat stud five years ago, when considering the best stock for his 400-acre property at Carisbrook.

“Originally I bought the place to run cattle, but it was full of artichoke thistle and rocks,” Drew said.

“I sprayed the weeds at the start and realised how costly it was to do that. I found a goat producer, spoke to them and took some thistle with me to their place and the goats ate it.”

Although Drew stumbled across Boer goats out of necessity, he has been pleasantly surprised at how successful the goats have been. From a small herd of 20, he currently has approximately 300 and plans to phase out cattle over time to exclusively raise goats.

According to Meat and

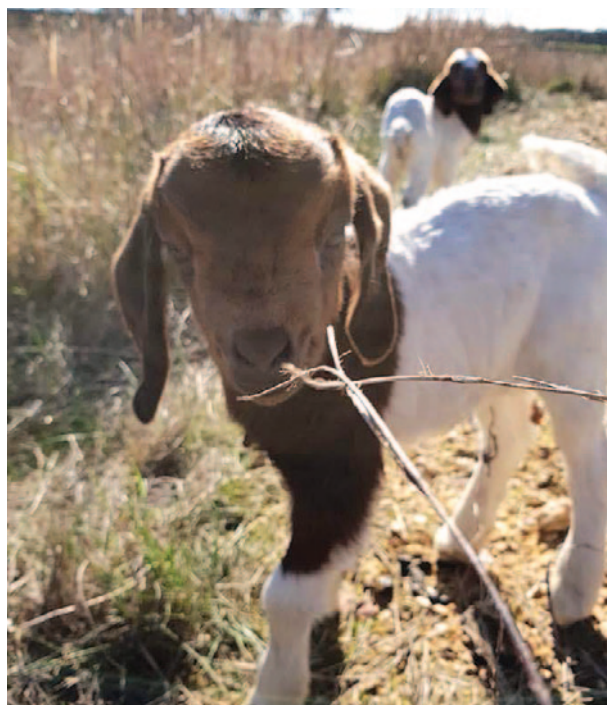
Livestock Australia (MLA) the value of Australian goat meat exports rose 29 percent in 2019. Prior to the pandemic, Australia was one of the largest exporters of goat meat. While exports have slowed down with COVID restrictions, the domestic market is embracing goat meat in record numbers.

“Sydney and Melbourne are great markets for the meat, people can’t get enough of it at the moment,” Drew said. “There is a growing export market for live goats, but I’m not interested in that.”

While Drew said it would be great to have more breeders and producers in the market, he doesn’t want people to rush out and buy goats thinking they will make easy money. The past five years has been a steep learning curve as he has adapted farming methods to the needs of the goats.

“One thing that makes them hard to breed is that Boers are terrible mothers,” Drew said.

“If you just threw a herd in



a paddock and didn't supervise them when they are kidding, you would lose a lot of kids because the mothers often wander off and leave them as soon as they have given birth.

"The first few years we lost a lot of kids to the cold and to foxes."

Goats have a reputation for eating anything, but they do need a diet that includes lots of fibre, particularly through the winter months. The kids don't have a layer of fat like lambs, so breeding should be planned for the warmer months.

"My advice to anyone considering goats is to get set up properly before investing in a herd," Drew said.

"I had someone ring the other day wanting to buy 20 goats. I told him to buy a maramba first and get it trained properly before investing any money."

In spite of the pitfalls, Drew is happy he ignored the advice of others and invested in goats rather than sheep. While good meat prices have justified his investment in goats, there is something about goats that makes them fun to raise.

"Sheep don't have a lot of personality, they all seem like clones of each other," Drew said.

"Goats are easy to work, have a good temperament and they're all a bit different."



Change of pace

S EVEN years ago, Melbourne couple Drew Black and Rosemary Pamic moved to a 10-acre property on the outskirts of Dunolly to start living their dream of an off-grid life.

As Rosemary explains,

buying the property was the culmination of several years of planning and research.

"Drew trained at the Royal Australian Navy in electrical engineering and has always had an interest in alternative energy," Rosemary said.

"I am a qualified chef and

have worked in restaurants in Melbourne and on the Mornington Peninsula. I knew I wanted to do something food related and there was that limitation of what would suit the climate."

While Drew set to work installing solar energy and batteries, Rosemary researched the climate and farming conditions required for different types of crops.

"I was conscious that I wanted to grow something that didn't need a lot of water, didn't need to be refrigerated, so something that has quite a long shelf life," Rosemary said.

"Also, we have really hot summers out here in central Victoria but we also have really frosty winters. Not all plants are suited to that environment unless you set up a hot house.

"Saffron is quite hardy, doesn't need to be refrigerated and ticks all the boxes."

By planting saffron in raised garden beds, Rosemary said they are able to monitor their water usage and soil quality, which ensures the product is organically grown and customers can be confident that the product they buy is freshly picked from the farm with no pesticides or herbicides.

Like many throughout the world, the COVID-19 pandemic brought new challenges to the burgeoning saffron business. Initially, most of Rosemary's clients were restaurants and cafes.

As lockdowns and travel

restrictions began, Rosemary identified a niche in the market.

"I've developed some new products for people who are making their own food at home," Rosemary said.

"I'm moving into more easy-to-use products to make it more accessible so home cooks are not scared of using saffron. I've recently released a new Spanish-inspired sofrito salt that's a mix of pyramid salt from Boort blended with saffron, smoked paprika, garlic, lemon zest and a few other bits and pieces.

"I'm also working on a French-inspired bouillabaisse salt with fennel and garlic through it. The salts are a ready-to-go product made to be very easy for the home cook and can be sprinkled on salads, roast veg, marinate chicken or fish."

Rosemary has also developed saffron-infused cultured butter kits, saffron infused honey and ready-to-cook paella kits.

As the business continues to grow and the couple meet new challenges, Rosemary encourages anyone contemplating a change of lifestyle to do their research, take a deep breath and make the move.

"As a general rule I am so glad I have come out from the city, I think it has been the best move. I am very encouraging of others to make the move if that's what they want to do," she said.



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Family ties

WALKING around the Davies' family property,

just outside of Talbot, it is clear that Lisa Coates is proud of her family's history.

An old miner's cottage surrounded by decades-old flowers and fruit trees is a living reminder of Lisa's great-grandmother – a young mother raising her children in the time before washing machines and microwaves.

The skeleton of a four-wheel cart takes you back even further, to when the farm was first established in the middle of the bustling goldfields of central Victoria.

"It's amazing to think about what they faced back in those days," Lisa said.

"And now, my children are the sixth generation here. We have a real connection to the farm."



Thirty years ago, the farm was given a new lease of life as Stoney Creek Oil Products. Lisa's parents, Coral and Fred Davies, saw a niche in the market for locally produced flaxseed oil, meal and flour. Today, the thriving business, which includes hemp oil among its products, is finding it hard to keep up with demand.

As Lisa explains, more people have become aware of the health benefits of the flaxseed which is used in products as diverse as make-up, paint and lactation foods.

"We have a lot of bakeries all over Australia screaming

out for our products, they absolutely love it," she said.

"In the past few years, one of the most popular uses for Stoney Creek's products is in foods that aid lactation such as boobie bikkies and boobie muesli.

"We are also finding increasing demand with dog food companies, for use in cosmetics and protein supplements."

With growers throughout Australia, Lisa said the quality of the produce can vary according to factors such as rainfall, soil conditions and insect damage.

Having a variety of customers means Stoney Creek can support its farmers no matter the quality of their crop.

"Every raw batch of material that goes through is sent away to a lab," Lisa said.

"They do a microanalysis so we know exactly what quality it is. If it doesn't come up to human-line grade we will put it into our animal lines, that way we can still support those farmers. We also have a raw-line for paints. So we have three choices that it can go into."

Although the business has expanded considerably, Lisa said they still enjoy meeting individual clients who come to the farm.

"It gives us a chance to discuss face-to-face the products and their benefits, as well as suggest recipes and ideas for including them in their daily diet," she said.

"The hemp oil, for example, is great for inflammation from sports injuries and arthritis. And the flour is terrific for people with gluten intolerance."

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Like the rest of the Driscoll Ag team, Lewis Cain grew up in the area. After completing his education at Maryborough Education Centre, Lewis spent four years in the US on a track and field scholarship where he studied Agricultural Business.

"When the pandemic first hit, I moved back home and finished my studies online then got offered a job at Driscoll Ag," Lewis said.

Since starting with Driscoll Ag, Lewis has become

something of an expert in two machines, the Veris U3 and EM38. The Veris measures pH and EC (electrical conductivity), while the EM38 measures soil electrical conductivity (EC) at designated depths.

"I started off just driving the machines but now I manage all the data and process it all to create the maps as well," he said.

"We'll drive across the paddock and collect live data, this data is then processed and ground truthed for accuracy.

"From that Veris data, we present the client with a pH map, electrical conductivity map, a zone map, an elevation map and then depending on results a variable rate lime and or gypsum map.

"There is then potential to go back and further soil test in

each zone to get a variable rate Nitrogen and Sulphur map also.

"It's a great investment for farmers, as it takes all the guess work out and allows the farmer to have greater knowledge of their soils and have complete confidence of their inputs.

"Precision agriculture is the way of the future, it's a pretty exciting time to be in the industry."



Lewis Cain and Cameron Morrison analysing crop growth

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Below are the most common reasons why people decide to up-size.

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This is the most common motivation to up-size. You can get away with a smaller home with young children, but teenagers need their own space for everyone's sake. When searching for a larger home, focus on what will work with teenagers and young adults in the house.

It's a good investment.

With the market powering ahead right now, it's a great idea to think about a larger home as a long-term, stable investment.

Need the room to stretch out.

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Privacy is a priority.

Many people will up-size to have some privacy in their lives. A room dedicated to a hobby, or a double garage where you can tinker with engines on the weekend, is many people's idea of heaven

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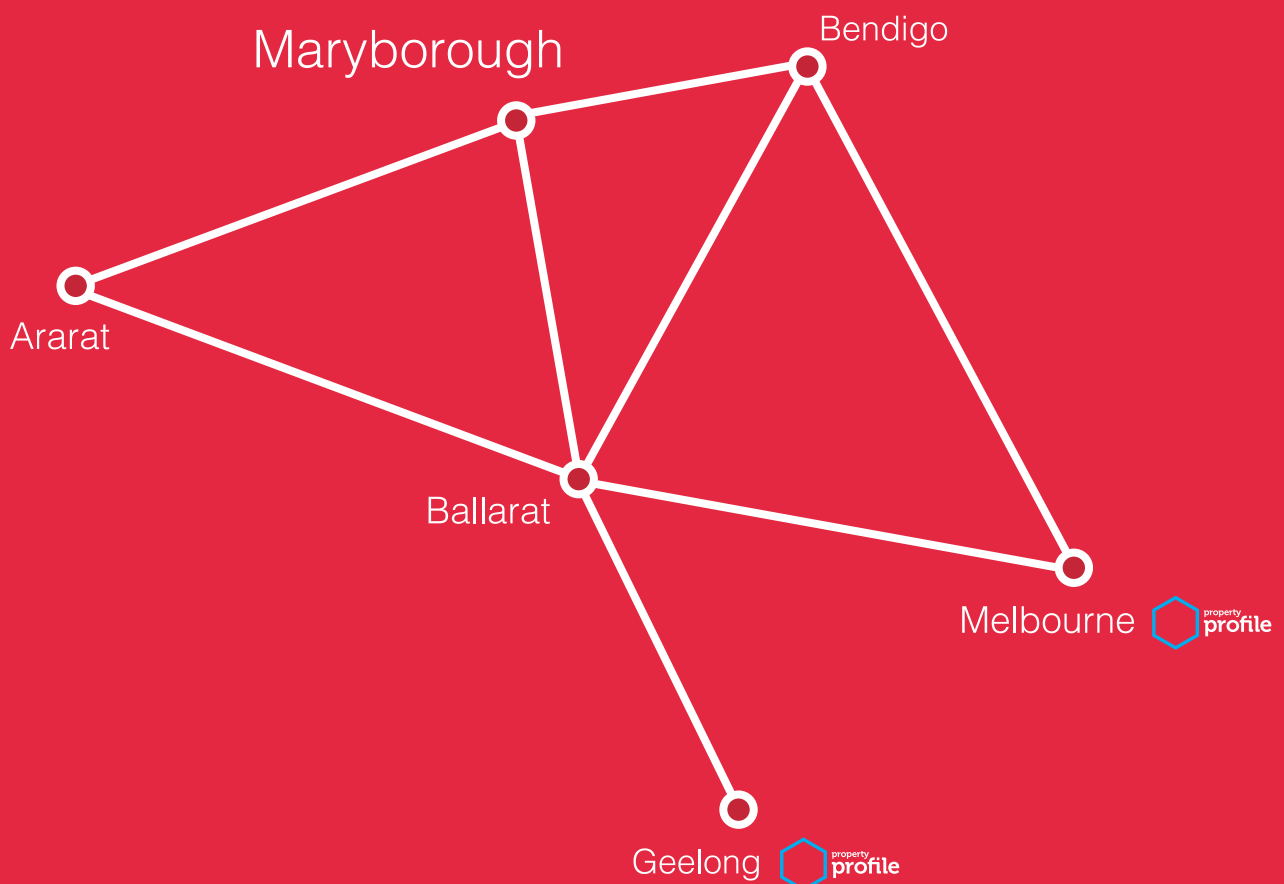
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The country lifestyle has drawn people into regional areas in mass numbers.
Photo: Jason Rogers Photography

Hot property

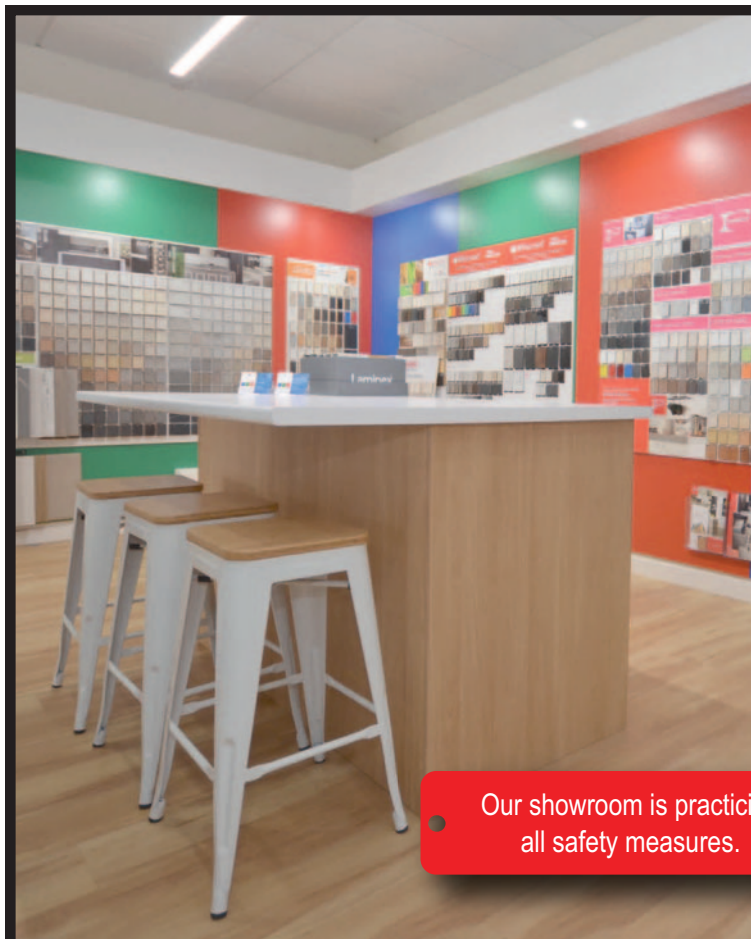
A recent study by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), found internal migration from cities to regional areas to be the highest on record.

Unlike other years, where population flow between cities and regions was fairly stable (the number of people leaving cities was equal to the number arriving), in the 2020 calendar year, Greater Melbourne experienced a net loss of 26,000 people, with more than half of those moving to regional Victoria.

This has had a huge flow on effect in the regions, with the housing market and building industry running at break-neck speed in an attempt to keep up with demand.

Thanks to government incentives introduced as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, including the First Home Owners Grant, coupled with the First Home Buyers Grant, the building industry has gone mad, with local companies busier than ever.

Continued over page



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In Maryborough's housing estate Whirrakee Rise, zero lots are left for stages 10, 11 and 12 and blocks have already been snapped up at the currently being constructed, Waratah Place Estate.

Maffescioni Homes is one company which has experienced an increase in demand that "exceeded expectations" over the past 15 months, owner Aaron Maffescioni said.

"The last 15 months we've experienced an increased demand for new homes, extensions and renovations," he said.

"Demand has increased so much that we've had to turn away or refer to other local builders in some instances."

The increase in business has even seen Maffescioni's expand.

"We have increased our staff with two new employees to help cater for the higher demand," Aaron said.

"Many of our sub-contractors have also been busier and have employed apprentices."

Aaron said people are jumping at the chance to purchase locally, whether that's for existing homes, building a new one or renovating.

"Investors are buying both older homes and renovating, and purchasing land and building new homes, basically whatever they can purchase really," he said.

"The demand has exceeded our expectations."

This demand is echoed by the Real Estate Institute of Victoria's September quarter report which revealed an annual growth rate in regional Victoria of 22.8 percent for houses and 18.8 percent for units. In the last year alone, 165 three-bedroom homes



Maryborough, along with the rest of the Central Goldfields is seeing a sea of people making a move to the area.

Photo: Jason Rogers Photography

have sold in the Maryborough area.

Coby Perry from Professionals Maryborough said metropolitan COVID restrictions have driven a noticeable increase in demand for properties in the area.

"Since the pandemic began, we have seen a strong demand for both sales and leasing, with people looking to escape the metro area for a tree change and more affordable living," he said.

"There is extensive demand for buyers wanting new homes, however the scarcity of vacant land has driven a strong interest for existing homes."

Barry Plant Ballarat, which services the Maryborough area, has also experienced increased interest in the region. Although the demand for new homes is high, sales agent Adam Henderson said older-style homes with the potential to renovate are appealing to buyers new to the area.

"The Californian Bungalow style homes and traditional

residences have proven be extremely popular," Adam said.

"A great example would be an historical sandstone homestead in Maryborough. The property attracted strong interest from locals and buyers from Melbourne, interstate and even the United States. The home was snapped up after its first open-house inspection."

First National owner/principal Craig Bell said in his 37 years as a real estate agent, he has never seen demand so high.

"It's been extraordinary, at the moment prices are at an all-time high and they've increased exponentially over the last 12 months," he said.

Craig said interest has been coming from right across the state.

"That demand hasn't just come from Melbourne either, it's also been from regional parts of the state and locally as well," he said.

"If people are moving here or starting families here, that

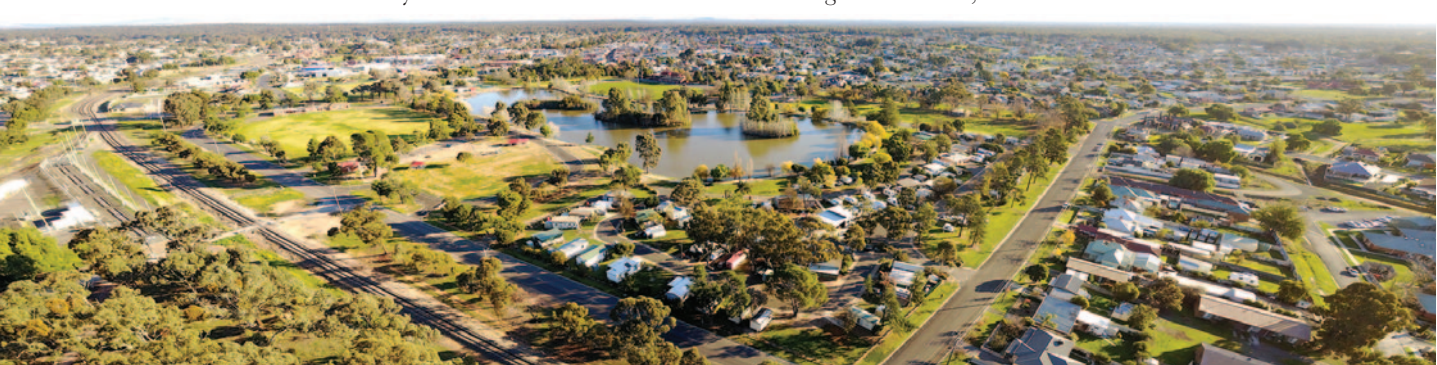
has flow on effects for the town, it's a great thing."

While astronomical house prices and COVID-restrictions have undoubtedly influenced many people to consider a 'tree-change', Kate Ashton, from Maryborough/Ballarat Real Estate, believes many buyers are surprised at the unexpected benefits of relocating to the country.

"Our secret hiding place has now been discovered," Kate said.

"Current residents and people who have lived here forever know how amazing it is with our community support and our facilities, and now we're sharing it with even more people."

Kate's obvious passion for Maryborough has been reflected in the feedback she receives from residents who have recently made the area their home. As she explains, many who move here for affordable real estate discover the hidden rewards of country life.



The Central Goldfields Shire's property market has boomed during the pandemic, with the relaxed lifestyle and affordable houses drawing people from metropolitan areas. *Photo: Central Goldfields Shire Council*

“The lifestyle, the community, the fresh air, people saying hello and being friendly. It’s safe, it’s neat and tidy and we don’t need to leave town because most services are already here,” Kate said.

“We can go for a walk around the lake or the res or up to Bristol Hill or go out to Dunolly and go for a ride. We have so much in our local community that is great to be involved in.”

The continuing migration of people from metro to regional areas has seen property prices in once-affordable cities like Ballarat and Bendigo align with the inner-suburbs of Melbourne. Those looking to downsize their mortgage while up-sizing their property are looking further afield for their ‘tree-change’ dream.

Driscoll Douglas East Rural Real Estate services all rural regions from Maryborough to Birchip and surrounds. Since establishing around 18 months ago, Brett Douglas has been pleasantly surprised at the success of the business.

As well as large, broad acre farms, interest in residential properties has increased and, according to Brett, hobby farms are selling within days of being listed.

“In my time in real estate I’ve never seen anything like

this before, it’s unbelievable,” Brett said.

“In the past, interest was usually from local people based in the area. It’s incredible the amount of interest from people from everywhere. Buyers are coming from far and wide to purchase, some aren’t even viewing the property. We recently sold a rural property to people from Toowoomba, sight unseen.

“COVID has certainly changed the demographics of real estate, there’s no doubt

about that. People are wanting to exodus the cities and come to the rural areas, that’s pretty evident from the buyers we are getting from the city areas.”

Driscoll Douglas East Rural Real Estate was formed when Brett, his son Tristan, Troy Driscoll (of Driscoll Ag) and Zac East realised they had something unique to offer the local market.

As well as many years working in real estate, all four are from rural backgrounds and are experienced agronomists.

“Our motto is ‘We wear boots not ties,’” Brett said.

“This lets people know we are rural people, all from rural backgrounds servicing the rural community. We are well qualified to comment when it comes to selling farmland, which probably sets us apart from other companies.”

While feedback from agents across the board is that although many new residents love the authenticity of older

homes when making the shift locally, they still want modern conveniences.

Gavin Nash from Evolution Kitchens said companies such as his have noticed a marked increase in demand for their services since the start of the pandemic.

“We are actually advertising for more staff to keep up with demand,” Gavin said

“One reason for the increase in business is that people are spending more time at home, so home improvement takes priority over the holidays.

“As well as new builds, we are doing intricate work for people who have bought older homes.

“Because we are local, we have an intricate understanding of customising kitchens to suit the style of the home. We have always valued our relationships with local builders and tradespeople. We work in with them to make the process of a new kitchen or bathroom a seamless one for our customers.”



Tree changers are chasing country charm with modern convenience, meaning businesses like Evolution Kitchens have been kept busy.



Waratah Place Estate, Maryborough’s newest housing estate is proving popular for both locals and those wanting to move to the area.



Maffescioni Homes have been so busy over the past year and a bit that they’ve employed more staff members in order to keep up with demand.

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Keeping locals moving

NPM is a family buisness with Campbell, Nathan, Baxter and Samantha Porter all pitching in.

WITH more than 20 years' experience as a diesel mechanic, there's not much Nathan Porter doesn't know about all things diesel.

Since building a state-of-the-art workshop and showroom, and opening NPM Diesel seven years ago, the family-owned business has offered mechanical repairs and service for heavy vehicles, tractors, trucks and trailers, earthmoving equipment and buses throughout the local district.

Nathan's wife Samantha said word-of-mouth and great customer service has meant the business has grown throughout the years.

"We've definitely been busy so there is plenty of work," she said.

While not yet ready to start full time work, the Porter's sons, Campbell and Baxter, have no doubt that one day they will work alongside their father in the family business.

"Both of the boys love putting on the overalls and working with their dad," Samantha said.

While many businesses rely on NPM to keep them running, Samantha said they also try to support the local community through sporting clubs and events.

"We regularly donate to local



fundraisers like the Maryborough Hospital, and try to attend community events as a team," she said.

"We also sponsored the St Augustine's footy team jumpers and are sponsors of Natte Bealiba Football Netball Club where the boys play football and I play netball."

Like most family-owned businesses in

regional areas, strong community ties mean that whether it's a fleet of busses or heavy farm machinery, the service provided at NPM means customers keep coming back.

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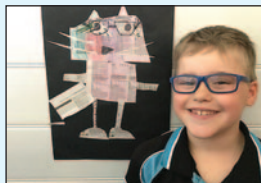
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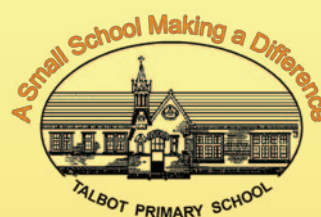


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Home learning

E DUCATION and schooling has its ups and downs at the best of times, but for students, parents and teaching staff, the past two years have thrown some new and often unexpected challenges into the mix.

The Central Goldfields Shire has seven kindergartens in A.G. Leech, Californian Gully, Dunolly, Goldfields Family Centre, Roseberry House (formerly Paisley Park Early Learning Centre), Talbot Back Creek and T.L Stone Memorial.

It also has six primary schools in Talbot, Carisbrook, Dunolly, Timor, Bealiba and Maryborough as well as two secondary schools, Highview College and the P-12 Maryborough Education Centre, in Maryborough.

Education during the pandemic presented unique challenges for each of these schools and kinders, with changing restrictions seeing the



doors closed for some students, to them being in the classroom one day and learning from home the next.

Exams and assignments have been postponed, camps cancelled, extracurricular

activities ground to a halt and students going without seeing their friends.

Learning and education across the whole sector has had to be reinvented.

While the challenges are

undeniable, through adversity comes strength and the Central Goldfields has repeatedly shown the strength of its resolve, character and ability in trying times.

Kate Balzan is one local

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who's used to being in the classroom environment and as a staff member at Maryborough's St Augustine's Primary School this is no surprise.

What did come as a surprise for Kate and her seven-year-old daughter Sloane was the announcement of remote learning, meaning on top of her usual work and classroom duties as learning diversity leader, Kate would also be supporting her daughter to learn from home.

"I think after 2020, this year has been especially hard because we didn't think it would happen again — I think everyone was in that boat," she said.

"The quick changes were hard, one week we'd be home and the next we'd be back at school, I think that was really daunting and especially for anyone with learning needs, that creates an extra challenge.

"Remote learning was a juggling act, there were times where I was torn between helping Sloane with her learning and going to the next online meeting."

While undoubtedly challenging, remote learning



brought about some unique positives as well, with many families enjoying the opportunity to spend more time together and watch as their children developed.

"The best part has definitely been spending more time with Sloane and seeing the way she's progressing in her learning has been really special and something you wouldn't see like this at any other time," Kate said.

"Traditionally learning on a

computer isn't ideal but we tried really hard as a school to do some amazing things to keep students engaged and having fun."

A grade one student, Sloane said she enjoyed doing science projects during remote learning the most, getting hands on and messy with making volcanoes and also trying out different recipes in the kitchen.

"One of the bonuses of this is that children were able to do

things they may not normally do and the challenge for teachers was to make things interesting and keep students engaged and that's why the younger students did go down the path of experiments and cooking," Kate said.

All students across the state have now returned to the classroom full time as restrictions continue to ease and Kate said while remote learning had its moments, she's glad to be back at school.



St. Augustine's Primary School

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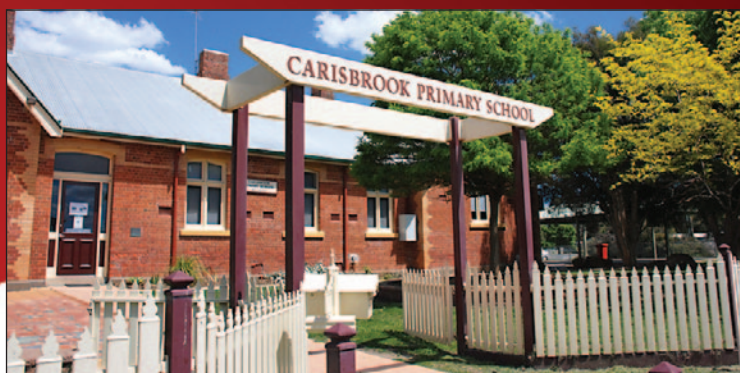
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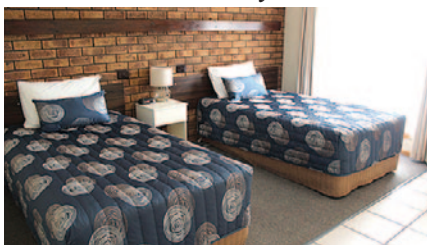
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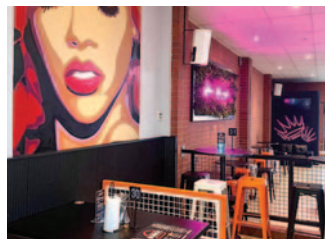


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Dinner Mon-Sat
101 Broadway, Dunolly
Ph: 5468-1013
railwaydunolly@gmail.com

KFC Maryborough



- Dine in and drive-thru
 - Order on the app
- Sun-Thurs 10am - 10pm
Fri-Sat 10am - 11pm
204-208 High St, Maryborough

Maryborough Golf Club



- Modern Fairways Bistro
 - Fabulous menu range
 - Your next function venue
- Lunch 12 noon - 2pm
Dinner 5.30pm - 8pm
Park Rd, Maryborough
Ph: 5460 4900
maryboroughgolfclub.com.au

Maryborough Seafood Bar



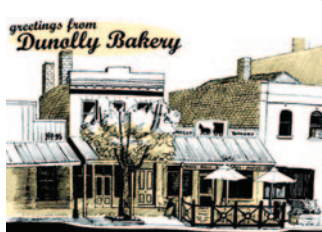
- Family packs
 - Hamburger deals
- Tues-Sun
10.30am - 8.30pm
174 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 1809
Find us on Facebook

McDonalds Maryborough



- Locally owned and operated
 - Providing quality sourced food
 - My Maccas App & delivery
- Sun-Thurs 5.30am - 11pm
Fri-Sat open 24 hours
5-7 Tuaggra St, Maryborough
Ph: 5460 5479
mcdonalds.com.au

Dunolly Bakery



- Award-winning bakery
 - Traditional country style
 - Bread, pies, cakes, coffee
- Mon-Fri 7am - 5pm
Sat-Sun 7am - 3pm
97 Broadway, Dunolly
Ph: 5468 1331
dunollybakery.com.au

Gold n Grain Café



- Breakfast & lunch
 - Licensed venue
 - Group bookings & functions
- Thurs, Fri & Sat
12 noon - 8pm
71 Broadway, Dunolly
Ph: 0447 796 303
Find us on Facebook

Madam Chi Chi



- Open for breakfast, lunch and takeaway
Mon-Sat 9am - 4pm
Dinner: Fri & Sat 6pm - 8pm
Private dining options available
Corner Nolan & Napier sts, Maryborough
Ph: 0478 596 071
Find us on Facebook

Maryborough Highland Society



- Beer garden
 - Sports bar
 - Download our App
- OPEN 7 DAYS
Lunch 12 noon - 2pm
Dinner 6pm - late
35 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 1480
highlandsociety.com.au

Maryland Diner



- BBQ chickens
 - Southern fried chicken
 - Fish & chips
- Tues-Sun
10.30am - 8pm
212 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 3724
themarylanddiner.com

My Pizza Pasta



- Gourmet pizzas
 - Pastas, sides & salads (available Thursday-Sunday)
 - Pizza deals
- Tues-Sun 5pm - 8pm
73 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461-2891
Find us on Facebook

DINING GUIDE

YOUR GUIDE FOR DINING ACROSS THE CENTRAL GOLDFIELDS SHIRE

Noodle Sushi King



- A range of Asian flavours
- Food to go or dine in
- Call to pick up

Mon-Sat
11am - 9pm

202 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 1298
Find us on Facebook

Ol' Pinky's Pizza & Kebabs



- Pizza & kebabs
- Fish & chips
- Home delivery

OPEN 7 DAYS
3.30pm - 10pm

83 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5460 4441
olpinkyonline.com

Park Hotel



- Beer garden
- Parma & steak nights
- Lunch specials

OPEN 7 DAYS

195 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 1272
Find us on Facebook

Parkview Bakery



- House-made cakes & pastries
- Gourmet focaccias & rolls
- Daily fresh baked goods

Mon-Fri 6am - 4pm
Sat 8am - 2pm
Sun 8.30am - 2pm

21 Tuaggra St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 4655
Find us on Facebook

Peppa's Restaurant



- Relaxed, quiet atmosphere
- Fabulous food to suit all palates
- Dinner only

Open Wed-Sat
from 6pm

1 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 3833
bristolhill.com.au

Railway Café & Tracks Bar



- Licensed Café
- Indoor and outdoor dining
- Functions

Cafe open Wed-Fri 10am - 3pm,
Sat-Sun 9am - 3pm

29 Station St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 1362
railwaycafe.com.au

Rammy Dessert Indian Restaurant



- Fully licensed & BYO
 - Authentic Indian cuisine
 - Function enquiries welcome
- Lunch Mon-Sat 11.30am - 2.30pm
Dinner Mon-Wed 5pm - 9pm
Thurs-Sat 5pm - 9.30pm
Order on menulog.com.au

169 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5460 5554 or 0433 350 097

Steve's Fish & Chips



- Fresh fish & chips
 - Serving since 1970
 - Great customer service
- OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK
11am - 8.30pm

110 High St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 3441
stevesfishshop.com.au

Storm Café



- Gourmet sandwiches
- Sushi rolls
- Breakfast & lunch

Mon-Fri 7am - 4pm
Closed Saturday & Sunday

111 Nolan St, Maryborough
Ph: 0490 837 223
Find us on Facebook

Supreme Court Bar & Bistro



- Indoor & outdoor dining
 - Local wines
 - Welcoming function enquiries
- OPEN 7 DAYS

1 Havelock St, Maryborough
Ph: 5461 3300
Find us on Facebook & Instagram

Talbot Provedore & Eatery

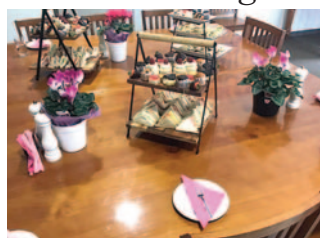


- Dine in & take-away
- Provedore & wine store
- Saturday night dinner a must

Visit our website for opening
hours and bookings
www.talbotprovedore.com.au

42 Scandinavian Cres, Talbot
Ph: 5463 2008
Find us on Facebook & Instagram

Tarnagulla Country Café



- Dine in or take-away
- Home-made pies, pastries & cakes
- Sunday roasts

Fri-Mon 10am - 4pm
Contact café for
summer opening times

8 Sandy Creek Lane, Tarnagulla
Ph: 0497 924 817
Find us on Facebook

CLUBS, SERVICES & CHARITIES

MARYBOROUGH LIONS CLUB

Est 1970



"We Serve"

The Maryborough Lions Club has been serving our community with pride for the past 49 years

Secretary 0456 040 823



Has been working with Local, National and International Communities since June 14, 1952

The Rotary Club of Maryborough meets each Thursday 6.00 pm for 6.30 pm

Check our Website for details: <https://rotarymaryboroughvic.org>

Visiting Rotarians and guests are welcome

Contact the Secretary: secretary@maryboroughrotaryvic.org.au



HOLY SPIRIT GOSPEL CHURCH INC.

Sundays 2 pm

Lions Club Hall
3 Golden Wattle Drive,
Maryborough

Venue maybe subject to change

For more information contact
0417 378 775 or 5461-3509



We're for girls!

We offer a girl-led program with opportunities to explore the outdoors, experience adventure, develop confidence in teamwork and leadership and learn lots of different skills.

Tuesdays 4.30-6.00 pm (ages 6-9)

Wednesdays 5.00-7.00 pm (ages 10-14)

Ranger Guides (ages 14-18)

90 Napier Street, Maryborough
District Manager
Vanessa Parker 0492 948 666

St Augustine's Catholic Church

Cnr Burke and Kars streets

MASS TIMES

Saturday:
6.00 pm

Sunday:
10.30 am



Contact 0466 451 984

Wattle City Church

10.30 am Sunday

Pastor
Stuart Rodgers

Ph: 5461 5005

19 Argyle Road,
Maryborough
(off Railway Street)



Anglican Parish of Maryborough with Avoca

Please join us, all are welcome
Contact Parish Office (03) 5460-5964

SERVICE TIMES

Maryborough: Christ the King
6 Nightingale Street, Maryborough
10 am Wednesday Holy Eucharist
9 am Sunday Holy Eucharist.

Avoca: St John the Divine
108 Barnett Street, Avoca
11 am 1st and 3rd Sundays
Holy Eucharist
Morning Prayer

Elmhurst: St Mark's
Green Street, Elmhurst
9 am 1st Sunday Morning Prayer
5 pm 3rd Sunday Holy Eucharist

St John's: Dunolly

Cnr Barkly & Thompson Streets Dunolly
10 am 4th Thursday of the month
Holy Eucharist
Morning Prayer

Talbot: St Michael's and All Angel's
Lansdowne Street, Talbot
11 am 2nd and 4th Sunday
Holy Eucharist

Moonambel: St Paul's
Church Street, Moonambel
1 pm 1st Sunday
Holy Eucharist

Maryborough Craft Shop

Local Handcrafts
Wool & Craft Supplies

NEW MEMBERS WANTED
Please enquire

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

48 Tuaggra St, Maryborough
(Woolworths Carpark)
maryboroughcraftshop@gmail.com

Ph 5461-5201



GENESIS CHURCH

Cnr of Neill & Palmerston streets

"A dynamic Christian church for the whole family"

Service time:

Sunday 10 am - Maryborough
Sunday 4 pm - 502 Walker St,
Ballarat North

Home Fellowship Groups

See website for more information

Enquiries: 0433 256 445

www.genesischurch.com.au



U3A is a world-wide movement which encourages retired and semi-retired people to take part in life-long learning.

Our U3A invites you to share in a pleasant and encouraging environment for the pursuit of stimulating activities, ideas and knowledge.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

mainrail2@yahoo.com.au

P: 03 5461-2121

Bible Study 9.30 am

Service 11.00 am

35 Raglan St,
Maryborough
0407 331 440

faith.FM

88.0 FM

Good News 24/7
www.faithfm.com.au

Jesus answered,
"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

John 14:6

Maryborough Church of Christ

Sunday 10.30 am

Phone 5461-2432 | Cnr Clarendon & Inkerman sts
www.mchurch.org.au



**Maryborough
MEN'S SHED
VICTORIA**

MISSION:
To encourage other men to
look after themselves and
to help others.

MARYBOROUGH MEN'S SHED:

- Repairs things for people within the community.
- Repairs things at people's homes or at "the shed"
- Develops friendships

Tuesday & Thursday – 9am-3pm
42 A Newton St, Maryborough
Call 0417 365 642

**CARISBROOK
LIONS CLUB**




***A club you want
to be a part of***

Meets second and fourth Monday
at Carisbrook Lions Club Hall,
Green Street from 7 pm

Visitors welcome

Contact
Secretary Julie Humphreys
0444 522 499
President Jefferson Hooper
0427 326 166

email: carisbrooklions@hotmail.com 



**Maryborough
Uniting Church**

Cnr Neill and Palmerston sts

Minister:
Rev Mike Esbensen
Sundays 10am

Church Office:
5460-5371



**Australian
Red Cross**
THE POWER OF HUMANITY

*Red Cross supports emergency
incidents, fundraising and
patient transport*

**Maryborough Branch meets
last Monday of the month at the
Uniting Church function room,
cnr Neill & Palmerston streets
at 7.30 pm**

Information:
Phone: 5464-2386
maryboroughredcross@mail.com

 A member of the International
Federation of Red Cross and
Red Crescent Societies



**Enquiries
Ken Calder**
03 5462-2331
0429 431 216

St George Lodge No. 18 (Dunolly)
Maryborough Lodge No. 22
Talbot Lodge No. 42
Carisbrook Lodge No. 405
Avoca Lodge No. 213

Formed 17/5/1858
Formed 21/12/1858
Formed 14/7/1863
Formed 20/4/1926
Formed 12/5/1911

Meets 3rd Monday
Meets 2nd Tuesday
Meets 4th Wednesday am
Meets 1st Monday
Meets 1st Wednesday



**Maryborough
Mark Lodge**
Formed 6/10/1858
Meets 3rd Tuesday
Even months



**Birdwood Royal
Arch Chapter**
Formed 4/6/1919
Meets 3rd Tuesday
Odd months



**Central Goldfields
Rose Croix Chapter**
Formed 30/8/1963
Meets 1st Saturday
Selected months



**Gladstone Royal Arch
Mariner Lodge**
Formed 27/10/1945
Meets 4th Tuesday
Even months

The Maryborough District Advertiser

The Maryborough District Advertiser has been the Central Goldfields Shire's trusted news source for 166 years. In that time we have adapted and grown to the community's needs to ensure we are doing our best to keep our readers informed and updated. We value all our readers and advertisers and are proud to be publishing this edition of 24 Carat Living.

**24
carat**
LIVING

GOLDFIELDS
Getaway

 **HEALTH SERVICES
DIRECTORY**

LOCAL BOOK
Maryborough and District

LOCAL NEWS EVERY TUESDAY & FRIDAY
SUBSCRIBE TODAY - ONLY \$3/week
FREE 28 day trial with every annual subscription
www.maryboroughadvertiser.com.au
94 Napier Street, Maryborough | 5461-3866

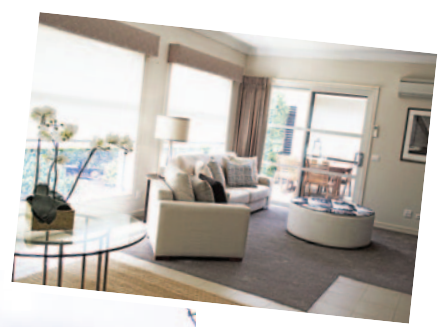
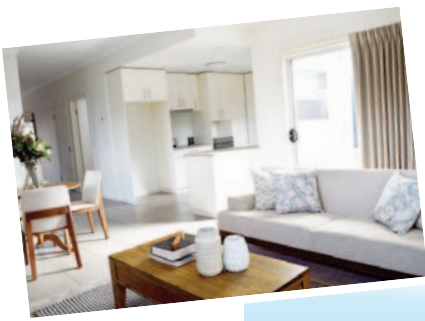


The Daisy Hill Community Centre is an ideal venue for local activities, meetings and presentations, and for special interest groups to utilise.

- Hall for Hire
- Fully equipped kitchen
- BBQ facility
- Tennis courts
- Basketball area
- Children's playground
- Large yard space

The regional community are encouraged to utilise the Centre at very reasonable rates.
All enquiries are most welcome.

HALL BOOKING OFFICER - MAREE BURNS
03 5461 4647 | mareeathol@bigpond.com
11 DEHNERTS ROAD, DAISY HILL



Retirement Living

HAVILAH ON PALMERSTON

At Havilah on Palmerston stylish architect-designed retirement living villas offer a convenient and vibrant lifestyle.

This is Maryborough real estate at it's finest.

All villas at Palmerston comprise two generously sized bedrooms, spacious, light-filled open plan living, dining and kitchen area, one or two bathrooms, laundry, garage and courtyard.

Retire to a fulfilling lifestyle with all of the modern conveniences. Our Palmerston Street development celebrates the glamour of a heritage building redesigned into The High School Centre, a light-filled community centre offering a recreation and media area, function room, hair and beauty salon and library. The centre is surrounded by green grounds, 44 architecturally-designed retirement units and 30 prestige aged-care apartments at Raglan House.

Activities and services available through our residential aged-care services are extended to retirement residents and in turn those residents are involved in volunteering with fundraising and activities. We support residents to stay independent for as long as possible.

We welcome your call to arrange a tour



Havilah is a not-for-profit, public benevolent institution.
www.havilah.org.au | T: 03 5461 7300



DRISCOLL DOUGLAS EAST

RURAL REAL ESTATE



“We wear boots,
not ties”.

Driscoll Douglas East Rural Real Estate is a passionate and hardworking team of agents with diverse expertise in residential, commercial and rural property. OIEC and licenced agent, Brett Douglas, has had well over a decade of experience in the Real Estate industry. This is complemented by over 30 years servicing the agricultural sector of Northern Victoria as a highly esteemed agronomist. Brett is joined in the director's role by Troy Driscoll, Tristain Douglas and Zac East, all experienced and respected Agronomists and Agent's Representatives. The team at Driscoll Douglas East share this expertise with the board of directors, proudly boasting a comprehensive list of agents, with all members heralding from local, rural backgrounds.



Bringing agriculture and real estate together.

5938 Sunraysia Highway, St Arnaud VIC 3478
03 5495 1166 / driscolldouglasteast.com.au