

HEARTBEAT

FREE



MILDURA
BASE PUBLIC HOSPITAL

PUBLIC FERTILITY SERVICE

GREATER ACCESS
TO IVF TREATMENT

LAKE BOGA FLYING BOAT MUSEUM

THE HOME OF THE
FAMOUS CATALINA

THE IMPORTANCE OF BOOKS

GOOD READING HABITS
BEGIN IN THE HOME SAYS
AUTHOR PHIL KETTLE

INCREASE IN LOCALLY TRAINED MIDWIFERY GRADUATES

SHORTAGES OF MIDWIVES HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCED IN RURAL
AREAS BUT THINGS ARE TURNING AROUND IN MILDURA



AUTUMN
EDITION
2024

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DR. DEB NEAL



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CONTENTS



EDITORIAL

ENHANCING HEALTHCARE
ACCESSIBILITY

MARY BETH SAYS
MAKE IT MEDICINE

MIDWIVES TRAINING LOCALLY

HEALTH AT SUNITAFE
IN THE SPOTLIGHT

ROCCO'S LOVE OF
HARNESS RACING

A VISIT TO OUYEN &...

ROBINVALE-EUSTON

MILDURA WRITERS FESTIVAL

GREYHOUND OWNER'S
WALKING GROUP

6 MONASH RURAL HEALTH
2024 STUDENTS **47**

10 MILDURA CARDIOLOGY **50**

14 'TECC' PROGRAM SUCCESS **53**

18 ANOTHER HEART-FELT DONATION **57**

18 MILDURA'S PUBLIC
FERTILITY SERVICE **60**

23 HOME OF THE CATALINA **63**

28 CONNECTING THE DOCS **69**

34 GOOD READING HABITS **71**

40 NICOLAS CHEN EXHIBITION **74**

42 MILDURA AIR SHOW **78**



DR MARY BETH'S MEDICAL MESSAGE.



IT'S A FAST-PACED WORLD FOR ROCCO BEING A BUTCHER AND A HARNESS RACING TRAINER AT THE SAME TIME.



MONASH UNIVERSITY'S SCHOOL OF RURAL HEALTH IN MILDURA IS HOSTING 55 MEDICAL STUDENTS FOR CLINICAL PLACEMENTS, JACK KIRBY, TARSHA HAWLEY AND ROHULLHA ATAYE ARE AMONG THEM.

YOUR FEEDBACK IS WELCOME!

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FROM OUR FOUNDATION CHAIR

JOIN US IN BUILDING A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR HEALTHCARE: FOUNDATION HOUSE DEVELOPMENT

Dear Supporters,

I am thrilled to share with you the exciting news that the Mildura Base Public Hospital Foundation is taking a significant step forward in our mission to provide exemplary healthcare services to our community. We have recently announced plans for the development of Foundation House, a pivotal project that will enhance the support and resources available to patients and their families.

While construction on Foundation House has yet to commence, we are pleased to announce that things are progressing well. This marks the beginning of an important journey towards our vision of a compassionate and comprehensive healthcare environment that meets the diverse needs of our community.

As we embark on this transformative endeavour, we are deeply grateful for the continued support of our community members, whose generosity and dedication drive our efforts forward. Together, we are laying the foundation for a brighter future, where individuals facing health challenges can find solace, strength, and support within the walls of Foundation House.

In the spirit of collaboration and celebration, I am delighted to extend an invitation to our upcoming Foundation events this year that bring together supporters, stakeholders, and advocates for a common cause. Your presence at these events will not only showcase your commitment to our mission but also provide an opportunity to connect with like-minded individuals who share a passion for making a difference. Details can be seen on page 58 of the magazine.

As we move forward with the development of Foundation House, I invite you to explore the various sponsorship opportunities available. Your support will play a crucial role in bringing our vision to life and ensuring that Foundation House becomes a beacon of hope and healing for generations to come. Whether through financial contributions, in-kind donations, or corporate partnerships, your involvement will leave a lasting legacy of compassion and care within our community.

Together, let us continue to build a future where healthcare is not just a service but a source of comfort, dignity, and hope for all.

Warm regards,

Ross Lake OAM
Chairman
Mildura Base Public Hospital





ENHANCING HEALTHCARE ACCESSIBILITY

IN A GROUND-BREAKING MOVE FOR RURAL HEALTHCARE ACCESSIBILITY, JULIE MITCHELL OF OUYEN PROUDLY HOLDS THE TITLE OF BEING THE FIRST PATIENT ADMITTED UNDER THE INNOVATIVE NORTHERN MALLEE HEALTH PROJECT.



Spearheaded by the Northern Mallee Integrated Partnership (NMIP), a collaborative effort between Mildura Base Public Hospital (MBPH), Mallee Track Health and Community Services (MTHCS) and Robinvale District Health Services, this initiative marks a significant milestone in the region's healthcare landscape.

Launched in April 2024, the Northern Mallee Health project aims to revolutionise healthcare delivery across the Northern Mallee catchment area.

Mrs Mitchell, expressing her gratitude for the program, emphasised the profound impact it would have on patient outcomes and community well-being.

"It is amazing to be able to come home," she remarked, highlighting the comfort of receiving care in her hometown surrounded

by loved ones. To have my family five minutes down the road and to just know you are in your own home town, I just feel so grateful.

"This is just a great program and will really have a big impact for this community and allowing people to return to Ouyen to recover.

"I can't thank all the wonderful people who have made this happen, it is simply amazing."

At the heart of this initiative lies the Northern Mallee Health Connect project, designed to leverage virtual care platforms to bridge the gap in healthcare accessibility.

Recognising the challenges faced by rural communities, including shortages in healthcare workforce and logistical

constraints, NMIP identified virtual care as a pivotal solution. By extending the reach of health services, the project aims to facilitate remote admissions to local health facilities, with MTHCS leading the charge. The primary objective is to streamline patient transfers, alleviating pressure on regional healthcare facilities like the MBPH, while ensuring efficient allocation of resources.

Through innovative admission options, patients can now receive care closer to their homes, provided their medical condition meets predefined parameters and consent is obtained.

MBPH CEO, Terry Welch, expressed optimism about the project's potential to enhance healthcare accessibility and quality in the region.



MEMBERS OF THE MBPH BOARD & ADMINISTRATIVE
TEAM WATCH THE NMH PROJECT GO LIVE.

“Every individual in our community deserves timely and comprehensive healthcare services, regardless of their location,” he said.

“By harnessing the potential of virtual care platforms and optimising patient transfer processes, we aim to ensure that every individual in our community receives timely and comprehensive healthcare services, regardless of their location.”

CEO of MTHCS, Dr Frances Peart, echoed this sentiment, emphasising the collaborative effort to deliver specialised medical services alongside expert nursing

and allied health care at Ouyen Hospital. “We are delighted to be working with MBPH to deliver care closer to home for people who live in the Mallee Track catchment. The staff at MTHCS are highly skilled and able to provide care for our community,” Dr Peart said. “This arrangement will allow members of the community to receive specialist medical services from MBPH in conjunction with MTHCS expert nursing and allied health care at Ouyen Hospital. We will be using the latest technology to enable the community to receive safe, high quality care.”

This partnership not only signifies a significant advancement in healthcare delivery, but also underscores the power of collaboration in addressing the unique needs of rural communities.

As technology continues to evolve, the Northern Mallee Health project stands to enhance patient care, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of quality healthcare.

With Mrs Mitchell’s journey marking the beginning of a new era, Ouyen’s community and others in the region can look forward to a future where healthcare is truly accessible to all.

TRAINING TOMORROW'S DOCTORS HERE IN MILDURA

 monash.edu/rural-health

Monash Rural Health Mildura
231–237 Thirteenth Street, Mildura
E: mrh-mildura.enquiries@monash.edu



DR MARY BETH HAS THREE WORDS OF ADVICE...

**GET INTO
MEDICINE**

IDIDN'T come from a medical family. I think that is part of why I am keen to encourage people from our community who are not from a medical family to go into medicine. That's Mildura Base Public Hospital (MBPH) Director of Medical Education, Dr Mary Beth MacIsaac, speaking.

The Canadian-born doctor's road to medicine certainly wasn't a straight one, and neither was her journey to Mildura.

But she owes a lot to the importance her forebears placed on a good education.

"My father was a probation officer and my mother a teacher and I am the first doctor in the family," she told Heartbeat.

"I think growing up it took me a long time to figure out that medicine was what I wanted to do.

"Even though my parents had told me that it was something that I could do, I think if you don't know any doctors, or you don't know anybody who has gone through that pathway before you, it is very difficult to consider a medical career."

Mary Beth's mother was something of an educational trailblazer.

"My mother studied science at a time when women didn't as a rule, and she would often be the only woman in her university lecture theatre," Mary Beth said.

"There were a lot of people in my family line who were intelligent enough and who probably could have made it into medical school, but never had the opportunity for even a rudimentary education.

"My maternal grandfather, for instance, ended up working in a coal mine from age 11 because his father had died in a mining accident in his early 30s.

"That was in the days before there was any form of social security, so my grandfather had to work to support his mother and siblings.

"He always wanted an education, but while it was impossible for him, he made sure that my mother went to university, and she was the first in her family to do so."

After spending some years as a teacher and giving birth to Mary Beth and her brother, their mother transitioned from teaching to become a guidance counsellor.

"That meant she had to move about 400 kilometres away from home to go to university.

I was six and my brother was 18-months-old at the time and my Dad looked after me, but mum would drive back and forth every weekend with my brother to see us," Mary Beth recalls.



"That was a really difficult way to get an education, but it showed my mother's determination to achieve her goal – and how incredibly supportive my father was"

No doubt her mum's steely determination left a lasting impression on Mary Beth and spurred her on to pursue a tertiary education.

Mary Beth grew up in a semi-rural town on Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia, where mining and fishing were the mainstay industries.

"I left the island to go to Dalhousie University in Halifax, the provincial capital of Nova Scotia, to undertake an undergraduate degree in neuroscience," she explained.

Several years into her neuroscience degree Mary Beth decided she wanted to pursue medicine.

"At the last possible minute, I signed up to sit the Medical College admission test - the test that you sit in Canada to apply for medical school," Mary Beth recalls.

"I passed the test and started my medicine studies at the same university and the rest (as they say) is history."

It was during her medical studies Mary Beth chose to focus on general practice and during her medical school training she undertook a rural rotation.

"I loved that," she recalls.

"I could see the difference that GPs made in their communities.

"That's why I chose to pursue medicine. I wanted to make a difference in the

community I lived in. It was what drew me to general practice.

"Today I feel privileged to be a member of the medical profession."

So how does a Canadian doctor come to be living and working in Mildura?

Mary Beth attributes that to her somewhat adventurous spirit.

"I worked for a few years in a rural emergency department before deciding to move to Australia in 2010," she explained.

"I chose to live in Sydney where I worked as a GP in a few different practices."

That's where she met her husband, a community service-based lawyer.

Fast forward a few years, and in 2020 her husband was offered a position in Broken Hill.

"So, we moved west," she said.

"My husband continued working in legal aid, and at the same time a job opportunity came up with the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) as the Senior Medical Officer in Primary Care - overseeing the outlying GP medical clinics across the 300,000 square kilometres that the RFDS services.

"I decided that's what I wanted to do."

Three years later her husband took up a new law position in Mildura and the couple moved again with Mary Beth commencing her role at the MBPH as Director of Medical Education (DME) in February 2023.

Her role is crucial in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of medical education within the hospital organisation.



DR MARY BETH MACISAAC IN A STUDENT TRAINING SESSION

The DME provides strategic direction and vision for post-graduate medical education and sets the tone for educational programs ensuring alignment with the organisation's goals and standards.

The DME also oversees the assurance, management and delivery of medical education and curriculum development.

"My role sees me involved in setting up the junior doctor or pre-vocational teacher training program with two session days a week.

"I plan the lessons that will help them, and they will be taught these throughout the year.

"I also oversee some of the orientation programs to ensure they are well acquainted with the hospital and their units.

"In addition, I support the Supervisor Education Program. If there are issues with assessments or the learning and remediation is needed, I support that process."

Mary Beth is also responsible for the hospital's monthly 'grand rounds' where she identifies the topics to be addressed and finds the speakers to participate.

She is an enthusiastic supporter of young

people carving out a career in the medical field.

"What I would say is that the medical profession needs you. We need people who are from rural areas and who understand rural medicine and rural lifestyles to go to medical school and bring that knowledge back with them to serve their community," she says with feeling.

"Even if you're in your 30s, and you haven't thought about medicine so far, it's not too late.

"I have a colleague that I worked with at RFDS who is absolutely inspirational. She worked as a nurse in rural communities and she's now in her second year of medicine at the University of Wollongong.

"She decided in her 30s that was what she wanted to do, and she went for it. It's not something you have to think about when you are 18 or 19.

"And it's not just doctors that we need. We need other health professionals as well - nurses, physiotherapists, dieticians... the whole range of allied health professions.

"And so, if you were thinking 'Oh gosh, I have always wanted to be a physiotherapist', then make the appropriate inquiries and advance yourself along that pathway.

"Seize the opportunity, and don't think you're too old. Just do it."

Turning to her life away from the hospital corridors, Mary Beth recalls growing up living in a very cold part of the world, quite the reverse of Mildura's much warmer climate.

But she loves it here.

"I think Mildura is my forever place," she told Heartbeat enthusiastically.

"I have lived in a lot of places and what I like about living here is the gorgeous scenery - the river is beautiful, and everything is very green.

"I love being able to go for a walk and be somewhere peaceful.

"I also love the fact that there is no traffic. I went back to Sydney recently and there was track work on the railway system and trains were replaced with unairconditioned buses which is enough to make anyone want to move... let alone the traffic congestion.

"You can get places so easily here, and I particularly love the wonderful produce we have... the beautiful farmer's market, wonderful restaurants, and a variety of lovely places to go.

"There are so many nice things to do here.

"I think the lifestyle here is amazing."



SunraysiaFarmers market

There's nothing better than brekkie at the Farmers Market!

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May 18	July 6th
June 1st	July 20
June 8th*	



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MBPH CELEBRATES AN INCREASE

IN LOCALLY TRAINED MIDWIFERY GRADUATES

THE noble practice of midwifery had its origins centuries ago and in today's modern clinical world the role is still considered in high esteem for the dedication shown by those who choose to take this career path.

In recent years, shortages of midwives have been experienced in the health system, including at the Mildura Base Public Hospital (MBPH).

This situation however, has taken a turn for the better, with the MBPH Midwifery Unit seeing improved staffing but importantly, an increase is being seen in graduate numbers and undergraduates in training which is cause for celebration.

The great news is that many of the midwives who have either graduated recently or are soon to be graduates, have completed the majority of their training here in Mildura.

MBPH Student Midwife Ashley Bath, recently graduated and at the time of speaking to Heartbeat, she was expecting her registration as a fully qualified midwife to be confirmed any day.

Ashley studied her nursing in Mildura and worked in the wards, including the Emergency Department, for a period of time prior to undertaking the Midwifery Postgraduate Program.

"Before I decided to do midwifery, I was a registered nurse in the MBPH Emergency Department and while I loved my job there, I wanted to do some other training to expand my options," Ashley said. "Since I was a young girl, I always admired maternity and midwifery care and had an interest in women's health.

"I thought I would take the opportunity to apply for the course and was fortunate enough to get into the Postgraduate Program. The good thing about this

pathway is that you only have to undertake a 12-month training period."

Ashley said she enjoys being a midwife for a number of reasons.

"I think what I like most, is having the opportunity to work in all areas of the Maternity Unit," she said. "There are the birth suites for example, where you are able to help women who may be in very vulnerable situations and we try to make it the best possible experience for them. "We provide special care to look after those babies that may need that extra support.

"Working in the postnatal ward is really rewarding. To be there with the mums just after they have given birth and also helping with the breast feeding and all the other aspects that happen at that time, ensuring they are coping well, is so satisfying."

Ashley is also a great proponent of people becoming midwives.

"I can't recommend highly enough for someone to consider midwifery as a career option," she said.

MBPH Midwifery Educator, Rhianna Duncan said that for those people who are already registered nurses, like Ashley, the postgraduate pathway is an ideal way to become a midwife, particularly given the training required only takes 12 months.

"To be able to do your one-year postgraduate, as a paid position, is one of the easiest pathways to becoming a midwife in Australia if you are already a registered nurse," she said.

"Students undertake some study through Bendigo Health, while working in the Midwifery Unit at the MBPH, which provides excellent hospital-based learning and they complete their training with La Trobe University in Bendigo."

In contrast, MBPH Registered Midwife Darcie Berry's pathway to midwifery was through a three-year Direct Entry Midwifery course at Charles Darwin University in the Northern Territory, which she studied externally and was able to live in Mildura during that period and undertake her placements and clinical studies at MBPH.

Darcie has now completed her Graduate Midwifery year and this year will be her second year as a midwife.

"I was drawn toward midwifery firstly, because I like to help people and I am very maternal myself and that's why I liked the idea of midwifery specifically," she said.

"Helping mums in general, young mums and also mums who are vulnerable, is what I enjoy doing and we have a cross section of people who we care for in the Maternity Unit in a variety of situations. Every birth is different, which is what makes it so rewarding. And Darcie's advice for anyone thinking about a career in midwifery... "Do it! Just do it and you will get lots of support and you'll find it a very interesting and rewarding field of work – you'll never stop learning," she said.

Rhianna explained Heartbeat that she was relatively new to the Midwifery Education role. "Prior to taking up this position, I was in a clinical support midwifery role, which started about two years ago and in that role, the clinical support staff are on the floor to support students, graduates, junior staff and the entire midwifery team," she said.

Rhianna said she too encourages people to consider becoming a midwife.

"I always say that it is a wonderfully rewarding career path to take," she said.



L-R MBPH MIDWIFERY UNIT MANAGER SARAH BRADY, MBPH REGISTERED MIDWIFE DARCIE BERRY, MBPH STUDENT MIDWIFE ASHLEY BATH (RECENTLY GRADUATED), WITH MBPH MIDWIFERY EDUCATOR, RHIANNA DUNCAN.





"In many ways it's different to nursing, but it does of course have some similarity. "If someone is looking for a career that is completely different career and offers the opportunity to work in a variety of areas, midwifery certainly provides that."

Rhianna said that because the MBPH Maternity Unit Mildura is a "really good size" the staff are able to move between and work in all different areas.

"Whereas in a city hospital, you are employed in a particular ward, for example, as a birth suite midwife and you'll always be in birth suite.

"It is particularly rewarding in that you can 'follow' women on their journey to giving birth.

"Sometimes you can meet them in the Antenatal Clinic, teach them in childbirth classes and then you may also care for the same women in the birth suite, the postnatal ward and sometimes you may also get the opportunity to visit them at home with the domiciliary service.

"And so, you really get to support them along the entire journey, provide lots of education and see the results with a confident new family at home."

Rhianna explained what she thought had contributed to the shortages of midwives in regional and rural hospitals in recent years.

"Heavy workloads are driving senior midwives to reduce their hours or leave the profession altogether," she said.

"Therefore, it can be a challenge to



THE NOBLE PRACTICE OF MIDWIFERY
HAD ITS ORIGINS CENTURIES AGO.

ensure the junior midwives have the support, skills and knowledge around them on a daily basis to keep them in the profession. And we saw COVID 19 further exacerbating the situation.

"Added to that, unfortunately for a while you had to go to the city to study and my view is that people would go to the city, do their training and think it wasn't too bad and would want to stay in the city.

"When I finished my training five years ago, they had plenty of midwives in the city but no one in my cohort wanted to come to the country, despite their being shortages in the rural areas.

"Whereas now, hopefully we are starting to offer more local training such as through the undergraduate option at La Trobe and through the postgraduate course, which is a great way to get your midwifery qualification.

"If we have local people being able to train in our local unit, we will hopefully see those shortages ease.

"With the local course, we are very excited because next year we will have the first group of graduating, undergraduate midwives, who have studied the dual degree – Midwifery and Nursing over four years – at La Trobe in Mildura.

"This group has been able to do their placements here in Mildura at the MBPH in the wards as well as in the midwifery unit and so hopefully that will give us a boost in midwife numbers in the coming years as well. We are looking forward to them joining our team as they are a very positive and proactive group of students." In addition to this, the undergraduate midwives and undergraduate nurses have now started a new role within the hospital as a Registered Undergraduate Student of Nursing or Midwifery (RUSON/M), whereby they are able to be employed in the Midwifery Unit as RUSOMs, assisting the midwives on shifts helping with a variety of different tasks, which will build their skill levels within the maternity environment, at the same time as they are studying and it's a way to earn some income while being a student.

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HEALTH AT SUNITAFE

A SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH

SWAN HILL 2023 GRADUATES:
NATALIE HODGSON CELEBRATED
HER GRADUATION IN MARCH AT THE
SWAN HILL TOWN HALL.



NATALIE'S CHILDHOOD AMBITION TO BE A NURSE IS FULFILLED

EVEN at the tender age of six, Natalie Hodgson knew she wanted to be a nurse.

At that time, her mother Sharon Collyer was admitted to hospital after undergoing surgery and the impact the nurses had on a young Natalie was evident. It also influenced her mother to have a career change, shortly after she became a nurse.

"I remember watching the nurses over the years that she was in and out of hospital and thinking that was what I wanted to do," she said. "It was her experiences with the caring nurses that made her want to become one too."

Both turned to SuniTAFE to broaden their knowledge and further their education.

After spending seven years as a stay at home mother to her four children, Natalie felt it was the right time to chase her dreams and so she did and enrolled in a Diploma of Nursing (HTL54115) at SuniTAFE.

"I saw that it was free at the time to study, and I just thought if I don't just do it, then I am never going to, so I just bit the bullet and enrolled," she said.



NATALIE HODGSON IS A DIPLOMA OF NURSING GRADUATE,
HEALTH HIGH ACHIEVER AWARD WINNER AND DESTINATION
AUSTRALIA RECIPIENT FOR 2023.

"Returning to study was a bit of a shock to begin with and a big change but once I got into a routine it was really good.

"It was great to have supportive teachers who were willing to help in any way possible and to give you advice and lead you in the right direction.

"For anyone considering studying at SuniTAFE, my advice would be to just do it. Don't wait."

Sharon is currently "in charge of the Renal Dialysis Unit" at Swan Hill District Health, while Natalie has recently begun her Graduate Program in the Jacaranda Lodge.

"I am excited about all the new experiences and to make a difference to others," Natalie said.

Once Natalie finishes her round at Jacaranda Lodge, she will be working on her skills set in the Acute Ward.



SUNITAFE CEO BRETT MILLINGTON WITH ONE OF THE AED'S LOCATED IN THE STUDENT HUB ON CAMPUS.

SUNITAFE READY TO SAVE A LIFE

SuniTAFE CEO Brett Millington knows all too well the importance of having an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) available in a time of crisis.

Nine years ago, at just 38, Brett had a sudden cardiac arrest.

"At the time I was the fittest I had been in a decade," he said.

"I was completing a 10-week fitness challenge, had lost 10kgs and was finishing a 4km run when my heart just stopped.

"I didn't know it at the time, but I have a genetic condition that meant the fitter I got, the thicker my heart wall got."

After experiencing the sudden cardiac arrest, Brett was found lying in the middle of the road shortly after by two strangers.

"They performed CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) for 26 minutes and were able to keep me alive. Once the ambulance arrived, they were able to use their on-board device and it was three days later that I woke up in the ICU," Brett said.

"I am one of the lucky ones with statistics showing that only one out of 10 people who have a cardiac arrest outside of a hospital survive but the quicker that people can access an AED, the better the outcome."



SuniTAFE currently has six AED's available, four at the Mildura campus, one at the SMART Farm and one in Swan Hill.

"Now I have my own internal defibrillator, but it means I'm really conscious of making sure that people know where AED's are and that you shouldn't be scared to use one. Any action is better than no action," Brett said.

"You don't need first aid training as the AED will talk you through what you need to do, and by using it, you may just save a life.

"If it wasn't for the two strangers that stopped to help me, I wouldn't be here today."

To ensure all SuniTAFE staff feel confident using an AED, training is planned to be provided during an All Staff Forum later this year.



SARAH'S LOVE OF NURSING LEADS HER TO THE MBPH

SARAH Wadsworth still pinches herself when she puts on her scrubs and heads into the Mildura Base Public Hospital to begin another day working her dream job.

Becoming a nurse was something Sarah had her heart set on from a young age, but it didn't become a reality until last year, when she completed her Diploma of Nursing (HLT54115) at SuniTAFE.

The mother of four is currently working in Ward 6; paediatrics and surgical, having commenced in the Graduate Nursing Program in August 2023.

"I love my job, I love being able to look after people and help them get better," Sarah said.

"I couldn't pick just one thing that I love most about my job as I love being part of the whole healing journey."

Sarah knows first-hand just how important the role of a nurse is for a family with a sick child, which was another reason she was eager to become a nurse.

"Having a child that has a severe medical condition was my main push to enter the field," she said.

"When William, our youngest was in hospital, the nurses were our backbone with their role so crucial.

"I feel like things have come full circle and now I am doing for others what the nurses did for me."

It was once all four of her children were in kindergarten and school that Sarah felt it was "finally" the right time to study after spending several years as a stay-at-home mum and before that in property management.

"I really enjoyed my time at SuniTAFE, I loved it," Sarah said.

"I did get sick halfway through and took 12 months off where I underwent surgery but even when I left and was on that break, the support from the staff at SuniTAFE was still provided. On several occasions I had Education Delivery Manager and Head of Nursing



SARAH WADSWORTH IS A DIPLOMA OF NURSING GRADUATE, HEALTH HIGH ACHIEVER AND STUDENT OF THE YEAR - ACADEMIC (DIPLOMA/ADVANCED DIPLOMA) AWARD WINNER.

Julie Wilson and teacher Michelle Dent call to see how I was going, and I know without the support they provided I wouldn't be where I am now.

"The teachers make a huge difference. You need teachers like I had. "There was one day that I was struggling with William having a lot of seizures that week and I was late to class and instead of being questioned, Michelle asked me to get a cup of coffee with her and wanted to know if everything was okay and what they could do to help. That sort of mindset from the teachers makes all the difference.

"I am extremely grateful for that support that she provided."

Sarah couldn't be prouder to have completed her Diploma of Nursing (HLT54115) and is currently studying paramedical science and emergency health care through the Australian Paramedical College.

"I have no plans on leaving the hospital anytime soon. I love my job, but I would like to go and do my RN, so I want to continue my studies," she said.

Once she has soaked up as much knowledge as she can while working, Sarah does hope to one day make a return to SuniTAFE to pass on all her knowledge and wisdom to the next generation of nurses.

SUMMERTech LIVE: SUNITAFE ICT TEACHERS, CHRIS ZHONG AND DAVID CLEARY, TOGETHER WITH SUNITAFE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS ALANA SCALORA AND HARRISON MARLAIS AND MASP DIRECTOR OF PRACTICE HELENA MOORE AND BUSINESS SYSTEMS COORDINATOR BEN WILKINSON.



SUNITAFE STUDENTS KICK OFF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CAREERS

TWO SuniTAFE students have put their skills and knowledge to the test with the development of a mobile app for local not-for-profit Mallee Accommodation and Support Program (MASP).

Alana Scalora and Harrison (Harry) Marlais were chosen to participate in the SummerTech LIVE studentship through an interview process where their hard work and commitment to their studies and their interest in building a career in information technology shone through.

SuniTAFE ICT Studies teacher David Cleary said the program began in December and over 12 weeks, the SuniTAFE students have the opportunity to gain “work-ready” skills and kick start their careers.

“The SummerTech LIVE program is run jointly by the Victorian State Government and the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and it puts IT students and a business together to solve a real world digital technology issue,” Mr Cleary said. “During the three months of the STL program, Alana and Harry are designing, developing and implementing a mobile app for the program’s business client, MASP.

“The mobile app that Alana and Harry are developing will provide staff with access to MASP’s recently implemented Model of Care (MoC) via the staff members’ mobile phones. MASP staff will be able to search and access the MoC contents, store favourites and notes and provide feedback to the business via the app.”

Mr Cleary said the studentship provides Alana and Harry an opportunity to experience the full software development and delivery process.

“From gathering and analysing client requirements, through to designing, developing and testing a software application solution, and finally presenting the completed app to the client along with the training and documentation on how to use the app effectively,” he said.

“Because of the SummerTech Live program, Alana and Harry are developing new technical IT skills related to mobile app design and development using the Microsoft Power Platform and important IT soft skills including working collaboratively, client communication, project management and problem solving. The skills and knowledge gained via the program help to make Alana and Harry work-ready and can serve to really kickstart their IT careers.”

SuniTAFE’s Business Studies Education Delivery Manager Scott Hopkins has provided the oversight of the program in 2023 and while ICT teachers David Cleary and Chris Zhong are providing the technical support to Alana and Harry.

“SuniTAFE continues its involvement in the STL program because of the great opportunities it provides to our students,” Mr Cleary said.

MASP Director of Practice Helena Moore said MASP was “delighted to partner with SuniTAFE and the SummerTech Live scholarship program”.

“MASP provides a range of youth-focused services and supports to strengthen and empower young people to achieve their goals, and the ethos of SummerTech LIVE aligns perfectly with our purpose and values,” she said.

“SuniTAFE provided a great foundation for a successful project while David, Chris, and Scott have provided excellent information and support throughout the project development process.

“The students, Alana and Harry, have been well-prepared and enthusiastic. We immensely enjoyed the opportunity to get behind this fantastic initiative and see the potential of our Therapeutic Model of Care in the digital form.”

The SummerTech LIVE studentship concluded at the end of February, when Alana and Harry plan to continue their IT studies.

Alana and Harry completed the Certificate III in Information Technology (ICT30120) in 2023 and are now both enrolled in the Certificate IV in Information Technology (ICT40120) at SuniTAFE.

To find out more about studying health at SuniTAFE visit <https://www.sunitafe.edu.au/find-a-course/courses/health-and-community/>.



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IT'S A FAST-PACED WORLD

FOR YOUNG ROCCO VILLIVA

BEING A BUTCHER AND A HARNESS RACING TRAINER
AT THE SAME TIME IS QUITE AN ACHIEVEMENT FOR ANYONE,
LET ALONE A YOUNG MAN WHO IS YET TO TURN 19.



18-year-old Rocco Villiva works alongside his father Ronnie in the family business - 'The Butcher' - located in Langtree Avenue, Mildura.

Rocco left school at 15 to become an apprentice butcher, following in his father's footsteps and not long after, he developed an interest in harness racing after being invited to visit a local pacer training facility in early 2022.

Today, in addition to his role as a butcher, Rocco has his trainer's licence and helps train pacers on a property at Red Cliffs and he is also close to attaining his full harness racing driver's licence, undertaking his training on the Mildura Harness Racing Club circuit.

Mildura has a rich harness racing history and some of our readers will no doubt recall the era many years ago, when people

would turn out in big numbers to go to the 'trots' at Number One Oval as it was known, usually on a Friday night, before television and the off-course TAB may not have covered all meetings.

The betting ring was a bustling place in those days, with many bookmakers fielding at the meeting. An on-course totalizator also operated. Mildura has always been renowned for attracting strong fields, with many pacers coming from Adelaide and other regions to compete in some of the big races.

On most occasions these days it's a quieter experience on track, with SKY Racing covering all of the race events around Australia and the TAB and other betting agencies allowing punters to bet on all races off-course.

The recent Mildura Pacing Cup Carnival

staged in April and conducted by the Mildura Harness Racing Club, was a great success as always, attracting good crowds, who saw some great pacers in action over three nights, culminating in the running of the \$50,000 Mildura Pacing Cup on Saturday, April 6 which was won by 'Dangerous' trained by Shane Sanderson and driven by Abby Sanderson.

Rocco's family currently have three pacers in work and have been enjoying some success on the track, particularly with 'Shireen', which is proving to be a smart horse with several recent appearances in the winner's circle at the Mildura Harness Racing Club.

Mildura Base Public Hospital CEO Terry Welch happens to have a share in Shireen, which he said came about unexpectedly.



THE WELCH FAMILY WITH ROCCO, SHIREEN AND DRIVER JORDAN LEEDHAM AFTER WINNING A RACE AT A RECENT MILDURA HARNESS RACING CLUB MEETING.



HAVELOCK GOES TO THE WINNING POST IN THE GATEWAY TAVERN PACE AT THIS YEAR'S MILDURA PACING CUP CARNIVAL.

ROCCO AT WORK IN THE BUTCHER SHOP.



ROCCO DETACHING THE SULKY FROM HAVELOCK.

"I got to know Ronnie at 'The Butcher' shop and jokingly one day he said we should buy a horse. I didn't realise I hadn't said no clearly enough. Then one Saturday morning a few weeks later I went in to pick-up some sausages and burgers for the barbeque as I often do, only on this occasion, Ronnie had something else for me to buy," Terry said.

"Ronnie said to me that he had a share in a great pacer named Shireen that I should take up! Knowing the Villiva's track record in harness racing and Ronnie's persuasiveness, I ended up walking out of the shop with more than the meat order. I had just bought a \$5000 share in Shireen! The dedication Rocco has for the pacing industry is illustrated by his daily afternoon attendance at the stables following an early morning start at the butcher shop, proving he is managing to juggle both of his jobs well.

Heartbeat met up with Rocco at the butcher shop and the next day visited him at Kate Attard Racing in Red Cliffs, which is owned and managed by well-known Mildura equine dentist and

harness racing trainer, Kate Attard. At the time, Rocco was putting another of the family's horses - the recently purchased 'Havelock' - through its paces on the training track.

"Today is my first serious workout with Havelock and he's worked really well and was very sharp and at the end of the session, his heart rate was very good - extremely good I reckon," Rocco said.

"He's come a long way since he came to us and he has a very quiet nature. You're halfway there when they're quiet."

"I enjoy working the horses and you get great satisfaction out of training a horse and preparing it for a race and seeing it racing is exciting and if it wins that is a real bonus.

"It's a team effort out here and Kate has a great team of horses and is one of the better trainers up here and our success would be possible without her.

"I'm looking forward to being able to drive in a major race and I have some more training to undertake before I get my full 'A-grade' licence, which will hopefully be soon."

There's a lot involved in looking after and training pacers and as Heartbeat observed, Rocco is mastering the skills associated with that.

The preparation before going out onto the track and then after the training session, removing all of the harness gear from the horse before giving it a cool, hosing down, takes a significant amount of time.

"The horses require a lot of attention and you need to prepare things properly ahead of their workout, just as you do before a race. I'm still learning a lot every day and although it involves a lot of work, it's something I love doing," Rocco said at the end of Havelock's training session.

And by the way... Havelock had success for Rocco and his family winning Race 4, the 2190 metre Gateway Tavern Pace at the April 6 Mildura Pacing Cup meeting.

Keep an eye out for the name Rocco Villiva in the years to come, he's sure to be a regular in the winner's circle as a harness racing trainer, driver or owner and most likely a combination of all three!



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SMALL TOWN IN THE HEART OF THE MALLEE

WITH A BIG COMMUNITY SPIRIT





THE farming community of Ouyen, an easy one-hour drive south of Mildura along the Calder Highway, is an iconic rural town.

The town has much to offer 'locals' playing tourist in their own backyard, as well as the many visitors to the friendly town, a highlight of which is the recreational lake - the pride and joy of the community.

Ouyen is at the centre of a vast area of wheat fields and sheep grazing land. Wheat loading facilities and massive grain silos are a feature of the town, located along the railway line that connects the town to Mildura and Melbourne. Meanwhile, the Big Mallee Root, located on the Calder Highway, is the largest Mallee stump in Australia and serves as a tribute to early settlers who cleared the land of drought-resistant eucalypt trees to make way for agricultural activities.

The tight-knit community of Ouyen, has a population of about 1000 and is the commercial, cultural and transport centre for the surrounding grain farming region. Trucks bring grain to the silos at harvest time to be railed to Portland or Adelaide, South Australia for shipping, or to flour mills for processing.

The commercial centre of Ouyen is located in Oke Street and includes the council offices and the Local History Research Centre, which houses a collection of books and historical records in the old court house. The centre is open most Friday's 9.30am - 4pm or by appointment. However, when planning to visit it is recommended you contact the centre to ensure volunteers are available to assist.

The town was established around the Ouyen railway station, built in 1906 on the Mildura Line. The Post Office opened on October 22, 1907. It is also the junction for a railway line west parallel to the Mallee Highway. Property became available for purchase in 1911, and much of it was cleared for sheep grazing, and crops of wheat and oats.

Located along the northern side of the golf course at 'Fairy Dell Hill', the former dry reservoir transformed into a 14-hectare recreational lake, is surrounded by native bushland and includes a boat ramp, a beach and picnic area.

A community-lead, government supported project spanning many years, the lake was built at a cost of \$3.8 million and officially opened in October 2018.

Today, it used for recreational boating, kayaking, swimming, fishing and people enjoy relaxing and having picnics on the grassy, green shores of the lake which has public amenities.

Ouyen's annual Mallee Root Festival, which attracts people from near and far, is held beside the lake, which provides the ideal backdrop for the town's premier event. Live music, a big variety of food and drinks, together with a myriad of stalls and arts and crafts make for a great day and night of fun-filled activities.

A must do when in Ouyen, is a visit to the historic Victoria Hotel located in Rowe Street. The hotel offers accommodation and meals served in the main bar and dining room. The town also has a licenced club and the shopping precinct has a Post Office and newsagent, a variety of shops including the Mallee Bakery, which always a great stop-over.

Education is well catered for in Ouyen with a pre-school and the Ouyen P-12 College, which was formed in January 2009, combining the former Ouyen Primary and Secondary schools. Both schools brought with them a proud history of achievement and pride in their academic results and extra curricula programs.

Mallee Track Health and Community Service provides a range of health services including community and district nursing, a broad range of community and allied health services, early childhood education and care and facilitates access to GPs.

There is a strong culture of community clubs within the town including a thriving football and netball club - Ouyen United, lawn bowls, lawn tennis courts, golf course and a swimming pool.

For those who like exploring the great outdoors and roaming the outback, Ouyen is in the heart of national parks country.

Situated south-west of Ouyen, Wyperfeld National Park is a huge 356,800 hectare park that features a chain of lake beds connected by Outlet Creek within a semi-arid landscape offering lookouts, picnic areas and camping grounds.

Murray-Sunset National Park, Victoria's second largest national park, is located between Mildura and Ouyen in a semi-arid environment with wide open landscapes in an isolated location. Visitors to the area can explore the picturesque Pink Lakes and enjoy bushwalking, camping and four-wheel driving.

Heartbeat visited Ouyen and met with well known, long-time resident, Tracey Lawson, who is the editor of the local weekly newspaper, the Northwest Express. Tracey also wears many other hats, serving on the committees of numerous community organisations in the town and the Mallee Track.

"I'm involved deeply within Ouyen, this is my local community and I was actually born along the Mallee Track and I come from a little town called Torrita and have been involved with the Underbool, Walpeup, Patchewollock and Ouyen communities for all of my life and I am deeply committed to those communities," Tracey said.

"I, along with many others community members, have worked to keep them as vital and vibrant as we believe they should be."

Despite some of the strong head winds that small country towns face, Tracey is an enthusiastic proponent of what the region has to offer and its future prospects.

"We have some wonderful things down here along the Mallee Track, particularly in terms of our history and where we are going in the future. We'd like to preserve them and keep rolling along," she said.

The Northwest Express is very much the voice of the community and gives Tracey the opportunity to deliver a real local newspaper, something she says is a rarity these days.

"We are lucky in the fact that it is still owned by a local family and is not part of another newspaper group," she said.

"Therefore, the news you read in the paper is about what particularly affects our community. There is very little in terms of state or national exposure, unless it actually pertains to us.

"And so we will keep telling those locals news and sports stories which the community enjoys reading."

The famous Roxy Theatre was the location for Heartbeat's chat with Tracey, an iconic landmark in Ouyen, which today still shows the occasional movies and also provides an ideal venue for a variety of community events.

"This is one of the few remaining semi-subtropical theatres on the Eastern seaboard and what that actually means is that inside the theatre itself the sides can actually fold up to allow for cross ventilation of the breeze on a summer evening," Tracey said.



TRACEY LAWSON STANDING IN FRONT OF A PICTURE OF THE ROXY THEATRE'S GALA REOPENING NIGHT.

OUYEN MEN'S SHED MEMBER LIONEL LOXTON.

"The difference with the Roxy compared with the open-air cinemas in the top-end, is that it has a ceiling."

The Roxy opened in 1936 and closed in 1971 for many years due to the advent of television, videos and at home and other entertainment options. For many years the theatre was home to a plumber's shop front and workshop.

"Around 2004, one of our committee members was participating in the Mallee Leaders Program and was required to undertake a community project," Tracey said.

"She loved old buildings and her 'pie-in-the-sky' project was to purchase the theatre back and return it to the community.

"Some years on, with help of some state funding and community support the building was able to be purchased from the plumbing family and work began to restore the theatre back to its former glory."

A volunteer committee spearheaded the project and today it is still run by a team of volunteers.

A gala opening was held in 2007, which featured special guest, iconic Australian actor Bill Hunter.

Getting in touch with Bill proved to be difficult, until one of the committee members said "let's ring the pub in his local town".

They googled number of the pub and rang it and said to the barman who answered, "Can I speak to Bill Hunter please?"

"Just a minute I'll just get him" was the reply. "Hey Bill there's a phone call for you".

"We then spoke to Bill and explained how we had restored the theatre and would like to have him join us for the gala re-opening and show one of his movies," Tracey said. The story goes that Bill said, "Buy me a slab and a bottle of red and I'll be there!" True to his word, Bill made the journey to Ouyen for the opening. After the formalities, his movie was set to roll and he said to one of the committee member's husband who he was sitting next to, "Look I've seen this movie how about joining me at the pub?"

With that, the two of them shot out the side door and spent the rest of the night at the pub!

Bill Hunter passed away in a Melbourne hospice in May 2011 aged 71.

At his funeral, a fax which had been sent



by the Roxy's committee to him while he was in care thanking him for his visit and telling him that he was still fondly remembered, was read out during the service.

"As much as we always considered him our Bill Hunter, it seems that in some ways we must have made a little dent in him as well," Tracey said.

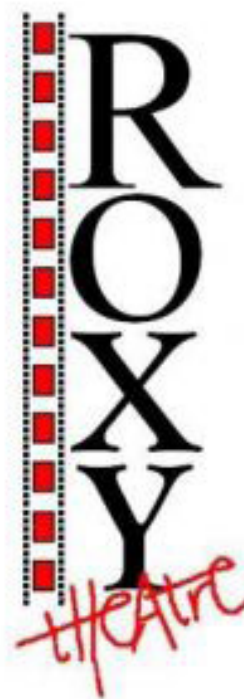
The foyer of the Roxy features an array of theatre memorabilia, including a picture board displaying a montage of great occasions, memories and history of the much-loved movie house.

Heartbeat also met with Lionel Loxton who was instrumental in having a Men's Shed established in Ouyen. A local indigenous man, Lionel was born in the original Ouyen Hospital in 1948.

Despite having spent many decades living in Speed, Lionel always considered Ouyen home and returned more than four years ago. It was while he was still living in Speed, that Lionel had the idea of a Men's Shed being set up in Ouyen.

"I was retired at Speed and a man has got to have something to do. Men's Sheds were popping up around the place and so I rang the Ouyen Mallee Track and told them that I would like to start up a Men's Shed in Ouyen," he said.

After having a temporary home at the Ouyen High School, eventually a building was purchased next door to the hotel, which provided the ideal place to have all



of their tools and machinery housed. The Lions Club also uses the front section of the building for its office.

Thirteen years on, the Ouyen Men's Shed continues to be a bustling organisation with 35 active members who enjoy meeting there several days a week making and repairing all manner of things in their well-equipped workshop.

Reference material sourced from: Travel Victoria.com.au; Ouyen.vic.au; visitvictoria.com; Parks Victoria and Ouyen P-12 College website.

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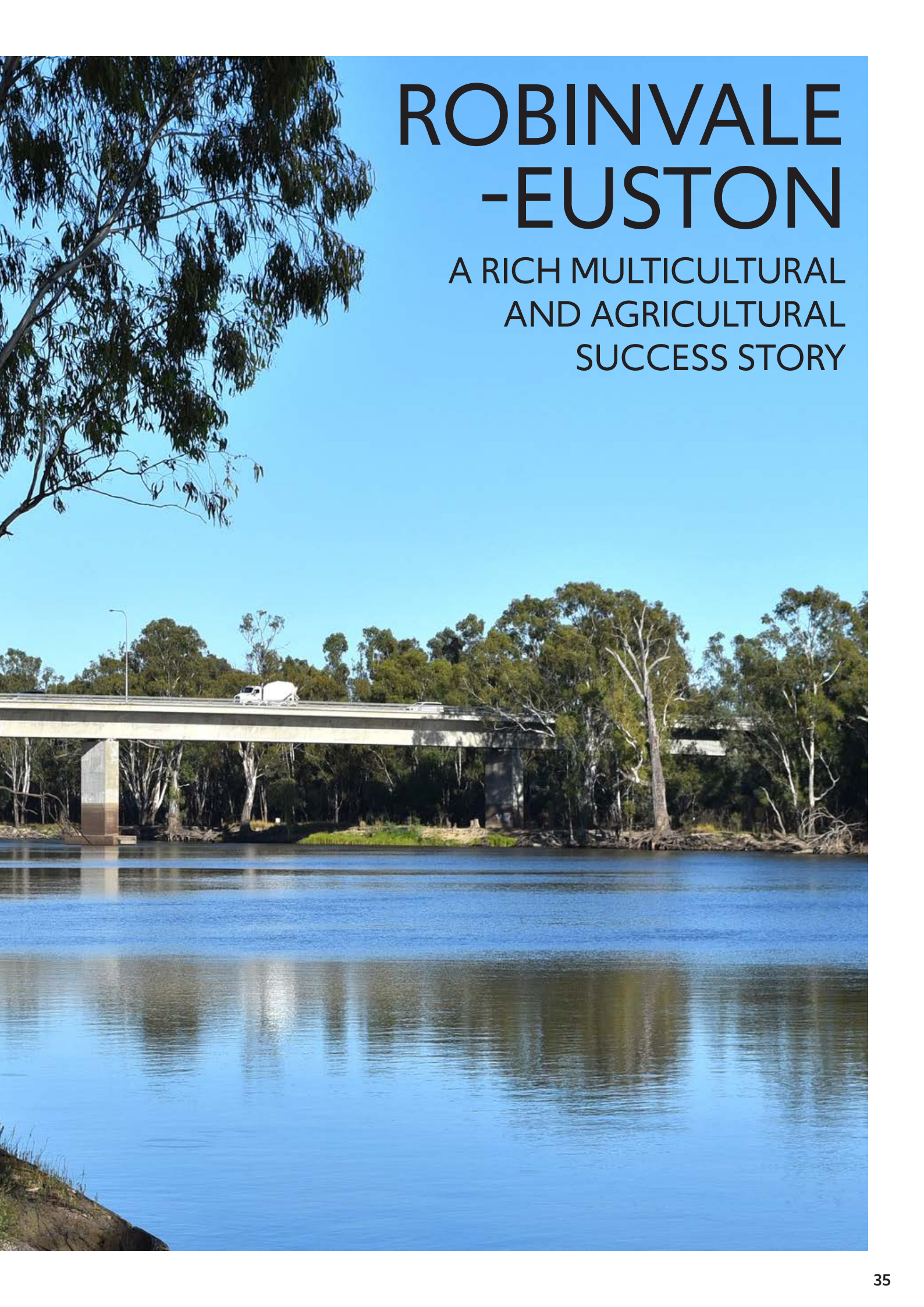


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IT SERVICES SCICT



A scenic view of a river with a bridge and trees. The river is calm, reflecting the blue sky and the surrounding greenery. A concrete bridge spans the river, with a white truck driving across it. The background is filled with lush trees and a clear blue sky. The text 'ROBINVALE -EUSTON' is overlaid on the top right of the image.

ROBINVALE -EUSTON

A RICH MULTICULTURAL
AND AGRICULTURAL
SUCCESS STORY

THE river towns of Euston, in New South Wales, and Robinvale on the other side of the mighty Murray River in Victoria, are a great 'two-for-one' destination in our region.

Approaching from New South Wales, Euston comes into view first and then, a few minutes later after crossing the bridge over the Murray that links the pair, you are in Robinvale and Victoria. The area is home to a vibrant, multicultural community and a thriving horticultural sector.

Both locations have attractions a plenty, the Euston Club Riverfront Resort being at the forefront of Euston's community. The natural beauty of the Murray with its towering gums serves as the ultimate enhancement for the club and township.

The club is nestled amongst the river red gums, on the banks of the mighty Murray. With about five acres of grounds and facilities, the Euston Club offers both visitors and locals alike, a whole host of great options for accommodation, entertainment and business, relaxation and recreation. The club offers great food and accommodation options range from riverfront cabins, caravan and RV sites to comfortable Euston Club 4-star motel overlooking the Murray. Great food is available at the club all day in their Station 46 bar and café.

Robinvale and Euston have a thriving horticultural sector, with rich soils, sunny Mediterranean climate, and a secure, abundant water supply. The contribution to the economy measures in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Tablegrapes are grown in abundance, almost as far as the eye can see, together with a variety of produce including olive groves, almonds and pistachios, carrots, broccoli, asparagus, apples, pumpkins and citrus fruit. When in season, much of the fresh produce can be purchased at the farm gate.

Livestock is also a part of the agricultural scene with goats, cattle and sheep raised and grazed in the region and there are also dryland crops of wheat, barley and other grain grown in the area.

The townships comprise more than 42 different nationalities creating a unique multicultural melting pot. Together the towns have a resident population of around 4,500. However, a more accurate figure is likely to be 8,000-10,000 people, due to the seasonal employment nature of the area.

While Robinvale is known for its horticultural production, what is not commonly known is that there are many attractions in and around the town. Most prominent amongst them is Robinswood Homestead, the Rural Life Museum, and the Robinvale-Euston Memorial Park.

Robinvale is a popular destination for holiday makers wanting to take advantage of all that the one of the widest stretches of the Murray River for many kilometres, has to offer and to enjoy the relaxed lifestyle. The Robinvale Golf Club Resort is a popular destination with on-course accommodation, a bistro, bars and entertainment.

The Robinvale Bridge Motel also provides an excellent accommodation option with every amenity. Located in town close the Murray River, it offers 4-star facilities, including comfortable rooms, a great bar and bistro and a beautiful pool to relax in.

Robinvale-Euston host a number of events throughout the year including the famous Mallee Almond Blossom Festival held in August, the Robinvale-Euston 80 Ski Race held in March and Great Murray Salami Festival in October.

Robinvale is famous for its connection to Villers-Bretonneux in France. Robinvale's proud link with France extends back to World War I, when the son of Robinvale's founding family Herbert and Margaret Cuttle, Lieutenant George Robin Cuttle MC, was killed in air combat over Caix, near the village of Villers-Bretonneux in 1918. In memory of their airman son, Lieutenant Cuttle's family renamed their new settlement on the Murray – Robinvale (vale Robin). The town centre pays further tribute, with its Caix Square. Lieutenant Cuttle was among many Australians who fought courageously to liberate Villers-Bretonneux from the Germans during the great war. Robinvale is the sister town with Villers-Bretonneux.

ROBINVALE-EUSTON MEMORIAL PARK

Further honouring this proud connection, is the Robinvale-Euston Memorial Park, which is Robinvale's most prominent landmark featuring a very large Rising Sun Badge, which comes into view on the right-hand side as you travel over the bridge into the town.

It was around 2008, when a group of local people, mainly sons and daughters of returned servicemen and women saw the

need for something visible to recognise and commemorate the strong military history of Robinvale and Euston.

This group formed themselves into a formal committee with a president, secretary and treasurer, supported by a band of enthusiastic members and other willing helpers. The group became incorporated with the following statement of purpose:

- To establish a park, designed to be a memorial to all who served in wars and conflicts;
- To provide a place where the special connection between Robinvale and Villers-Bretonneux is recognised and commemorated;
- To provide a quiet place of reflection; where everyone (locals and visitors) can pause and remember loved ones;
- To establish a fitting and aesthetically pleasing approach to Robinvale, a Soldier Settlement Town.

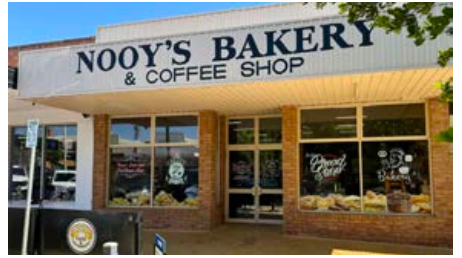
The Robinvale-Euston Memorial Park was officially opened by the Federal Member for Mallee, on April 24, 2018, the centenary of the Second Battle of Villers-Bretonneux.

For all men and women who served, no matter when, where or in what capacity, this is their memorial.

ROBINSWOOD HOMESTEAD

'Robinswood' was built in 1926 by Herbert and Margaret Cuttle and named in honour of their son. Surrounding the homestead are gardens which contain some of the shrubs and trees that were planted at the time the home was built. Memorabilia of the Cuttle family are on display in the home and there are regular open days. Robinswood is located within Riverside Park, just across the road from the Murray River. The rendered concrete walls, roof tiles, and leadlight windows and doors are all original. An immense mirror in the entrance was returned by the family in Melbourne, after having been removed in the 1940s.

Visitors to the 'Villers Bretonneux room' in Robinswood will see photos of Robinvale Councillor 'Red' McGinty signing the proclamation for the formal twinning of Villers-Bretonneux and Robinvale. One was taken in 1984 and the other 1985. France signed their proclamation first followed by Robinvale and April this year marks the 40th anniversary of the signing of the proclamation in France to be commemorated in Villers-Bretonneux.





ALISON BLACK IS A DIRECT DESCENDENT OF THE CUTTLE FAMILY.

ROBINSWOOD WAS BUILT IN 1926 BY HERBERT AND MARGARET CUTTLE AND NAMED IN HONOUR OF THEIR SON.

Heartbeat met with a direct descendent of the Cuttle family, Alison Black, at Robinswood.

"I am the daughter of George and Jeannette Black and Jeanette was a Cuttle," Alison said.

"My mother's father was Herbert 'Bert' Cuttle and he was one of the great pioneers of his time and many would say he founded Robinvale."

"But it was my great grandparents, Herbert Edwin and Margaret Ann Cuttle, who built Robinswood as their retirement home when they moved up from Ultima in 1926." Alison proudly pointed out the photos that are on display in the house which include grandparents great grandparents, her mother and Robin with his brothers and sisters.

"George Robin Cuttle MC went to England and initially joined the Royal Field Artillery and eventually he found a pathway into the Royal Flying Corps, which had always been his desire" Alison said.

"He was tragically shot down by the Germans while flying over France returning from a bombing mission over Peronne."

For Alison, Robin's gallantry, along with so many others who made the supreme

sacrifice, is no doubt something close to her heart, having been a former member of the armed forces herself.

"I was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Regular Army and also a Wing Commander in the Air Force, following which, I took the uniforms off and put on a suit and worked in the Defence Materiel Organisation in Land Systems Division in Melbourne for 10 years. I was born in the Bush Nursing Hospital in Robinvale in 1956 and when I retired, I came back." she said.

This important piece of Robinvale's history is a well worth the visit. Today, the home and gardens are maintained by a live-in caretaker and a group of dedicated volunteers, including committee members of the Robinswood Homestead Association - President Rhonda Avery, Vice-President Ellyn Crawford, Treasurer Bev Morgan and Secretary Alison Black.

Another attraction worth taking time out to visit is Robinvale's Rural Life Museum, which started from humble beginnings in 1991. A very small group of vintage machinery enthusiasts decided to band together so they could meet and share their passion.

They were concerned that too much of

the area's rural history had already been lost or destroyed, and decided to save and preserve as much as they could – so that future generations would appreciate what difficult conditions the original settlers in this region endured. The Rural Life Museum now has a wonderful collection of memorabilia from the early days of settlement in the region.

Robinvale is also home to the 'Big Windmill' that was originally owned by the State Rivers and Water Supply Commission and was used to supply water for the town of Robinvale. It is reportedly the largest windmill in the Southern Hemisphere. It was erected in 1948 and is built on a 60-foot (18.3 metres) stand and the 'wheel' is 30 feet (9.1 metres) in diameter.

As they say in Robinvale... "You're not far from where you might want to visit next, so slow down and take your time when you visit us. The lifestyle here in Robinvale-Euston is genuinely friendly and relaxed".

Reference material sourced from *Robinvale Euston.com*, *Visit the Murray.com.au*, and the collection of historical writings by the late Mrs Jenny Black (nee Cuttle).



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2024 FESTIVAL

PROMISES A STIMULATING PROGRAM
WITH AUSTRALIAN LITERARY STARS

mildura
writers
festival

MILDURA'S very own writers' festival promises to exceed expectations this year with a stellar line-up of some of the country's most accomplished authors heading to town for a weekend of literary immersion with the book-loving public to enjoy from July 18-21.

Held annually since 1995, this winter festival brings award-winning authors to Mildura to talk about their latest books and to engage with audiences about reading, writing, and ideas.

This year's guests include fiction author and film critic Christos Tsiolkas; Stella Prize-winner Charlotte Wood; poet, academic and author of *The Boat*, Nam Le; Miles Franklin award-winner, Melissa Lucashenko; theologian, journalist and author of *The Queen is Dead*, Stan Grant; First Nations historical fiction writer Julie Janson; poets Marjon Mossammaparast and Gareth Morgan; and cookbook author, Joseph Abboud.

It has become festival tradition to kick-off proceedings with a deep dive into contemporary issues. Stan Grant will headline this year in a conversation with former journalist and politician Maxine McKew on Thursday, July 18, at the Mildura Arts Centre.

A range of genres and topics will be explored over the weekend. Audiences will be treated to readings of contemporary and traditional poetry, interviews with authors on their most recent publications and panel discussions covering themes of identity, Australian history, mysticism and placemaking.

Farhan Shah and his six-piece group Sufi Oz have been invited to share their music with the festival audience on Friday, July 19, at the Mildura Arts Centre. Dubbed by the Adelaide Advertiser as the 'Pakistani Pavarotti', Farhan will perform ghazals and qawwalis, a solo genre usually accompanied by percussion and harmonium, using a repertoire of songs by Sufi poets. The performance will include



THE LATE HISTORIAN INGA CLENDINNEN HAD THIS TO SAY ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE AT THE FESTIVAL:

Writing is a solitary experience; so is reading. So, alas, are most writers' festivals. But not Mildura. The sequence of sessions work like a steadily intensifying workshop as participants get to know each other's minds and manners: a workshop punctuated by lovely periods of relaxation, recreation and the consolidation of new friendships. ... 'Mildura' is a unique experience for everyone who attends, not least because everyone who attends participates.

classics of the master singers as well as original compositions. The music is a blend of traditional and modern musical instruments and styles, merging Sufi music with world music sounds.

Good food and wine are essential to the festival experience. Whether it's a picnic by the river or a finale lunch of favourite comfort foods, the meals are memorable. Rumi's Feast on Saturday, July 10, at Stefano's Café will celebrate the food of Joseph Abboud whose cook book Rumi showcases many of the dishes that have made his Melbourne restaurant an institution. The meal will be accompanied by Chalmers Wines, a long-time supporter of the festival.

The Murray Talk is a noteworthy session

that was inaugurated in 2019. It is presented by an esteemed writer on any subject and was established in dedication to the memory of the festival patron, the late Les Murray, and the enduring vitality of the Murray River. This year's guest speaker will be Christos Tsiolkas.

Artistic director Donata Carrazza is keen for festival attendees to immerse themselves in the weekend and to find something of personal interest in the program:

"The emphasis for 2024 is to celebrate these artists who are at the top of their game, and who have been honing their craft for many years. They have strong opinions about the themes they explore in their work and they will have much to share about the creative process. If you love to



read, think deeply about things, or you are an aspiring writer yourself, there is going to be something in this festival for you."

The near-30-year-old event has been sustained by a group of enthusiastic volunteers who ensure that authors and audiences have an excellent time. At a time when events and festivals are being cancelled or postponed throughout the country, the support of local service providers and sponsors is fundamental to the festival's success and to its survival.

Carrazza is encouraging locals who have never attended the festival to get to at least one session that piques their interest," she said.

"If you are even remotely curious about what happens at this festival, I wholeheartedly welcome you to join us and to see for yourself. Without fail, the conversations go to places we could never have imagined and that's the magic of this gathering."

Early bird packages for the full suite of events which includes 13 sessions, three lunches, one concert and one dinner are available until May 31. Individual tickets will be on sale from June 1 through the Mildura Writers Festival website: www.mildurawritersfestival.com.



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THEY'RE OFF AND... WALKING!

GREYHOUNDS ARE MOST COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH THE RACETRACK, BUT INCREASINGLY THEY ARE BECOMING PETS.

INTERESTINGLY, in Mildura there is an active greyhound walking group, boasting more than 20 members, all owners of these low maintenance, gentle natured dogs. The walking group's founders — Chrissie and Brad Carey, connected with other greyhound owners via social media and also through meeting them while they were walking their greyhound Pablo.

"Our first walk was in May 2023, which was attended by six greyhounds and two 'ring-ins'," Chrissie said.

"At our most recent walk, we had our top attendance of 17 greyhounds and five whippets - a few of our regulars were away so it was a great turn-out.

"We have also welcomed people passing through Mildura and it's been so lovely to meet out-of-town folk."

Chrissie said that she and Brad often get stopped when they are walking Pablo on non-walking Sundays by non-greyhound owners, asking them if they know about the greyhound walk.

"It's so lovely to hear others talking about it when they don't even have a greyhound," Chrissie said.

"We have had a few ladies who don't own greyhounds join us for a walk because they were interested to meet the dogs and so the walk is also helping to spread the awareness of greyhound adoption.

"Brad and I adopted Pablo in September 2021, when he was nine months old, he had never raced due to a hip injury."

Prior to that, the couple previously had two senior dogs who passed away within a few months of each other and had just postponed their wedding due to COVID.

"Life was feeling like a bit of a dark place, our house felt so lonely without furry friends and so we started to look for a small to medium dog," Chrissie said.

"Then Brad stumbled upon Pablo's profile with a local re-housing group. I was very hesitant due to the fact we wanted a small to medium dog but as soon as we met Pablo I think we were both in awe of his size for a nine-month-old. I'll never forget how long his tail seemed especially as it flapped around with excitement!"

"He's very easy going and low maintenance and only needs one walk of a morning and he is a very 'chilled out', self-sufficient dog," Brad said.

"Because he's not very demanding, it works well for us because we have Mia to look after as well. He is very placid and very good with Mia," Chrissie added.



"Everyone who meets Pablo always comments on how good natured he is and so we are very lucky I think to have such a lovely dog."

The walking group has a diverse mix of people, from an older retired couple to singles and young families.

"We all get along well and there is no pressure to be there every month," Chrissie said.

"The group has very much become a social gathering and an occasion to meet new friends.

"For myself and Brad it has been such a lovely way to connect with other people. We do take Pablo down the riverfront most weekends but the walk gives us that extra bit of purpose.

"The first people we met were a lovely older retired couple Bob and Carol and their greyhound Jet. We would see them most weekends and then we met another lady, Katrina.

"She was in the process of relocating from Melbourne and didn't yet have her greyhound Amy in Mildura and she wandered up for a chat and a pat, we are now good friends.

"I know from speaking with other people from the group, they love the connections they make with others - it's such a fantastic

way to meet new people."

Another of those good friends from the walking group is Rick Tomkins, owner of Ryder.

"I have had Ryder since November 2022, and he's been one of the best things that's happened to me in life. He's a great companion, nice and gentle and we are just good buddies," Rick said.

"I was living on my own and it's really good to come home and have a wagging tail to greet you."

Rick said greyhounds make wonderful pets because they are good natured and are "not overly hard work".

"And as you can tell, people just love them for their gentleness and quietness," he said.

Ryder, who has just turned six, was originally owned and raced by a local trainer, who they catch up with occasionally.

"Ryder has made the transition from the racetrack to being a pet without any issues," Rick said.

"I was fortunate, because when his trainer retired Ryder, she took him inside and house trained him and made him a family pet and then he was fostered out. That made my job easy and he's the only dog I have had that I haven't had to put any work into.



"He walks beautifully, he's got manners and he 'asks' to go outside if he needs to and so I owe that all to his trainer who is a lovely lady."

Ryder is actually one of Chrissie and Brad's previous 'fosters' and they said his owner Rick will be a friend for life through their connection.

"We see them most weekends or every other weekend and Ryder often has sleepovers with us and so it's so lovely to still be a part of his life, as they make a huge impact on you when fostering," Chrissie said.

Chrissie previously referred to Katrina Wheaton whose greyhound is Amy.

"I have had her for six years now and she was two when I adopted her. I am an art teacher and she gives me inspiration for creating my artwork, an exhibition of which was recently on display in the Mildura Arts Centre," Katrina said.

When Heartbeat met Katrina, she was about to adopt another greyhound called Lara, who is the sister of Rick's dog, Ryder. Katrina said the decision to adopt a greyhound started with her son asking for a dog.

"My son wanted a dog and I had said no for many years and then I heard someone mention something about greyhounds and how sweet they were and that stayed with me," Katrina said.

"I was at the Melbourne Show with my son and there was a stall set up where



people could meet and greet greyhounds and so I had a look and saw how sweet and lovely they were.

"I started researching them and after that I adopted Amy - my first ever pet and she was perfect. They are so easy to keep as pets and they are lovely with children."

Katrina moved to Mildura two years ago and met Chrissie and Brad with Pablo at the farmer's market.

"Greyhound people attract greyhound people and we discussed starting a group and eventually Chrissie and Brad established the walking group, which has been wonderful," Katrina said.

"I was one of the first people in the group

along with Rick and now we meet nearly every week, as well as at the monthly gatherings."

Chrissie sums it up with these well chosen words: "We are so lucky to live in a place like Mildura and to be able to enjoy the riverfront with the great company of hounds and humans," she said.

"The feeling of 'community' is strong within the group, and we welcome anyone to join us on the first Sunday of the month."

If people would like to contact the Mildura Greyhound Walking Group, they can do so by visiting: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/mildura.greyhounds/>



GIVING THE DOGS A DRINK AT
THE MILDURA BOAT RAMP



REGIONAL PLACEMENT

IN 2018 a study by Monash Rural Health researchers found that medical students who completed two-to-three years of rural placement were up to four times more likely to pursue rural work as a doctor upon completion of their training.

A more recent study from last year published in the British Medical Journal which surveyed more than 2800 University of Queensland medical students between 2011 and 2021 found that those who did two years of training in a regional area were seven times more likely to choose to work in regional Australia, compared to their colleagues who neither had extended clinical placements nor any post-degree training in a rural area. Even those medical students who completed a 12-week rural placement were three times more likely to choose to live outside a major city.

This year Monash University's School of Rural Health in Mildura will host 55 Monash medical students for clinical placements, all spending at least 18 weeks in the region. Among them are three from the Sunraysia region - Jack Kirby, Rohulla Ataye and Tarsha Hawley - who are taking the opportunity to study close to home this year.

Jack, who grew up in Cardross, was excited to return to Mildura for his first clinical placement this year, after spending the past two years at the Clayton campus in Melbourne.

"I'm really looking forward to seeing how a hospital operates, learning new skills and meeting a heap of new people. Having been away for the past few years, I am also excited to be home and being surrounded by family and friends."

The incoming medical students are completing the clinical years of their degrees and will complete a series of rotations at Mildura Base Public Hospital, including general medicine and surgery or speciality rotations in psychiatry, women's health, and paediatrics.

Associate Professor Fiona Wright, Director of Monash Rural Health Mildura, welcomed the students to the region and encouraged the community to give them a taste of Mildura's hospitality.

"We are very excited to have this group with us here in Mildura - and wonderful to see some familiar faces with students returning for a second placement. I hope our community will show our students all the rewards of a rural lifestyle. If you see our students at the hospital, please be sure to say hello and share your local knowledge."

Tarsha and Rohulla are currently completing their clinical placements in Mildura as a part of the Monash End-to-End Rural Cohort, a group of domestic graduate entry students



A WIN FOR STUDENTS

within the Bachelor of Medical Science and Doctor of Medicine (MD). These students have the opportunity to undertake their medical degree in rural and regional Victoria, primarily in the state's north west, through Monash Rural Health.

Rohullha came to Mildura from Afghanistan in 2007, where he went to primary and secondary school and became a member of the Three Colours Soccer Club. He has returned to Mildura, which he says was an easy decision.

"The end-to-end program has been advantageous to me in many ways – allowing me to study in my hometown while pursuing my passion. The exposure to diverse clinical cases has been invaluable – allowing me to contribute both as an observer and as an integral part of the healthcare team," he said.

"Looking ahead I want to practice rurally with plans to return to Mildura to give back to my community."

Tarsha also grew up in Mildura and agrees with her colleague, Rohullha. The end-to-end program "gives me ample experience and understanding of what it's like to practise rurally...and I hope to practise rurally once I graduate."

Dr Akhil Sahni is an example of someone who came to do a clinical placement in Mildura and loved it so much he decided to stay. Despite growing up in some of the world's busiest cities -

Singapore, Jakarta and Dubai - it's Mildura, that holds a special place in his heart.

Akhil chose to go to Mildura for his first year of clinical placements as a medical student at Monash University. The people - including the team at Monash Rural Health Mildura - made such an impression on him that he remained for another two years while completing his degree.

As a student, Akhil mentored local secondary students to explore health careers through Monash Rural Health's Med-Toring program, volunteered as a trainer at Irymple Football Netball Club and was part of the medical team at the Hattah Desert Race last year.

Akhil started his two-year internship at Mildura Base Public Hospital in January 2024 and hopes the exposure to a range of specialties will help him cement his future career pathway.

"What makes Mildura Base Public Hospital special is the people and the opportunities available for junior doctors. As an intern, you're a key part of the medical team and undergo specialty rotations, unlike elsewhere in Victoria," he said.

"I love teaching so whatever I end up doing, I'll probably teach alongside. I'm hoping to just learn as much as I can and absorb all the experiences this year."



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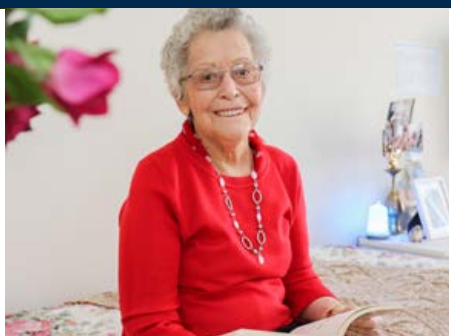


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GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

MILDURA CARDIOLOGY IS WELL INTO ITS THIRD DECADE OF SERVICE

GETTING to the heart of cardiac health is the primary goal at Mildura Cardiology.

With its fourth decade of service to the Sunraysia community on the horizon, the private medical practice is justifiably proud of its continued growth during the past three decades and its ongoing commitment to the heart health of our community.

The practice now known as Mildura Cardiology was founded by Dr Alan Soward, a name that may well be familiar to Heartbeat readers.

Now, almost 30 years on, the Mildura Cardiology practice continues to grow, and is proud of its committed and dedicated team.

Located next door to Mildura Private Hospital on Thirteenth Street, Mildura Cardiology sits at the heart of Mildura's medical precinct and offers a full range of consultative and diagnostic services for a variety of cardiac conditions.

Foremost among its diagnostic services are:

- Electrocardiograph (ECG)
- Echocardiogram (ECHO)
- Transoesophageal Echocardiogram (TOE)
- DCR Cardioversion
- Exercise Stress Testing

- Stress ECHO
- 24-hour Holter monitoring
- 3 to 5-day Holter monitoring
- Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring
- Pacemaker/ICD/Reveal follow-up

Technology is fine, but it is the people who make the difference and Mildura Cardiology is the centre for an ever-expanding range of specialist services including:

- One full-time cardiologist who resides in Mildura
- Nine visiting cardiologists who consult in Mildura regularly
- Royal Children's Hospital – Paediatric Cardiology Rural Outreach Service (quarterly)
- Six-monthly Cardiology Registrar rotation with The Alfred Hospital
- Third year and fifth medical student placement from Monash School of Rural Health
- Three visiting haematologists from The Alfred Hospital
- One visiting respiratory and sleep physician

That's a lot of people working to keep Sunraysia residents healthy.

One of those people is recently appointed resident cardiologist



Dr Ozge Guzelburc, a newcomer to our area, arriving in mid-January and starting work almost immediately.

Dr Guzelburc was born in Turkey and undertook medical training at the Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty at Istanbul University before completing her cardiology course at the Siyaniersek Hospital Tertiary Cardio-Vascular Centre in Istanbul.

"In Turkey Cardiology is a five-and-a-half-year course and a separate discipline to internal medicine.

"I went directly into cardiology training, but it also included training in branches of general medicine."

Following the completion of her training, Dr Guzelburc worked at the Siyaniersek Hospital as a cardiology consultant.

"I also had a short stint of work experience at the Koc University Hospital's Cardiology Department in Istanbul."

So, what brought Dr Guzelburc and her family to Australia, and more specifically Mildura?

"We had been considering a move for a long time. I was in contact with Mildura Cardiology as far back as 2017 to explore possible opportunities to work with them," she recalls.

"The plan was that I was going to come to Mildura in 2019 but, for a variety family reasons, and then the pandemic, the move to Australia was delayed.

"I think Mildura is a beautiful city. Coming from Istanbul, I have really fallen in love with the quiet here, the calmness and the clean air.

"I also like the nice weather and love the heat!

"It is a well-organised, beautiful city and a good place to raise a child."

Dr Guzelburc's husband is a urologist, and the couple have an 11-year-old son. They too are now living in Mildura.

Dr Guzelburc says she is enjoying being part of the team at Mildura Cardiology.

"It's a busy practice, and the staff are very friendly and helpful.



"Mildura Cardiology helped me enormously with the transition to Australia in so many ways including accommodation in Mildura and settling into the practice.

"I love the relationship between the physicians and my colleagues because there is a harmony... and good communication so it is a nice place to work."





**MILDURA
CARDIOLOGY**

CONSULTATIONS

- One full-time Cardiologist that resides in Mildura
- Nine visiting Cardiologists that consult in Mildura on a regular basis
- Royal Children's Hospital - Paediatric Cardiology Rural Out Reach Service (quarterly)
- Three visiting Haematologists from The Alfred Hospital
- Cardiology Registrar from The Alfred Hospital - rotating on a six monthly placement
- 3rd year and 5th year Medical Student placement from Monash School of Rural Health
- One visiting Respiratory & Sleep Physician

DIAGNOSTIC TESTING

- Electrocardiograph (ECG)
- Echocardiogram (ECHO)
- Transoesophageal Echocardiogram (TOE)
- DCR Cardioversion
- Exercise Stress Testing
- Stress ECHO
- 24Hr Holter monitoring
- 3-5 day Holter monitoring
- Ambulatory Blood Pressure Monitoring
- Pacemaker/ICD/Reveal follow up
- Pacemaker/ICD/Reveal Implantation arrangements



**MILDURA
CARDIOLOGY**

Mildura Cardiology
230 Thirteenth Street, Mildura
P: 5023 8111
E: milduracardiology.com.au



MBPH RECOGNISED WITH SIGNIFICANT AWARD

MILDURA Base Public Hospital was earlier this year the recipient of a prestigious award recognising the success of a fledgling efficiency program that has already delivered a raft of positives.

Bestowed by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement and the Victorian Department of Health, the award recognises MBPH's significant and sustained improvement as part of the Timely Emergency Care Collaborative (TECC).

The MBPH was the first health service in the state to achieve the overall aim of the project, well ahead of the time frame set under the program.

In 2022, MBPH made an application to be a part of the TECC program, a state-wide initiative involving 13 other health services and Ambulance Victoria.

The primary focus of TECC is to identify systemic opportunities to improve access to emergency care and clinical services across the hospital organisation.

TECC was launched at the MBPH in mid-2023 and in the relatively short time since the program was introduced, significant improvements in efficiency have been made.

"Since implementing the TECC guidelines, we have since some significant statistical shifts and it has made a difference at the MBPH and across the whole state with the health services that have been engaged," MBPH Executive Director Clinical Operations Katrina Allen said.

"When we were successful in our application to join the TECC program, it was at a time when the MBPH knew that before expanding our capacity, we had to do something about our efficiencies.

"Therefore, any 'tools' that we could apply to our processes to improve our efficiencies, we wanted to learn about and implement.

"Throughout this, we were still having to manage the volume of patients coming through the system on a daily basis, particularly in winter when it is at its busiest and so things needed to improve."

Ms Allen said that the first thing that became apparent, was that all of the health services across the state, despite their size, were experiencing similar issues in regard to efficiency.

"A fresh assessment of the current status of all areas of the hospital's clinical operations from the Emergency Department to the wards and across the organisation, was undertaken," she said.

"That measurement of our current state

stood us in good stead, because it meant that we were able to make some solid plans on how to move forward with the program."

From the outset, the MBPH employed a project manager to run the TECC program, a role which the MBPH's employee Debbie Cole was appointed to undertake.

"Since implementing the TECC program, we have reconfigured our daily operating systems to make them more responsive, action based and accountable," MBPH TECC Project Manager Debbie Cole said.

"Greater collaboration between departments and more consultation with staff in regard to issues is 'bearing fruit' with this enhanced engagement.

"We have had amazing feedback from our staff, which has been taken onboard and many of the initiatives raised adopted.

"We are delighted to receive the award that recognises that we were the first health service in the state to achieve the overall aim of the project.

"We had to achieve a 15 per cent improvement in the Emergency Department's non-admitted patient's length of stay and 20 per cent for admitted.

"And so we are getting our admitted patients to the wards sooner and our non-admitted patients are not waiting as long to be seen and back home sooner from the Emergency Department.

"Our in-patient length of stay has been reduced significantly, freeing up beds on the wards for other patients, which is very pleasing."



TECC AWARD CERTIFICATE

The MBPH is the first to admit that it's not hitting-the-mark with everything. The fact is, it is an ongoing challenge to meet the increased demand for medical services across the board.

The TECC program is just one element being used in the pathway to excellence that the hospital and its staff strive for every day.

"This is just part of the journey and we have done extremely well and that's the celebration point," Ms Allen said.

"We have improved the access to emergency care and that is in the setting of us seeing something like 300 additional admissions every month.

"We are experiencing an increase in the presentations to the Emergency Department and people needing to be admitted and so there will be some people with less acute conditions, who may not be attended to in a timely fashion and we are aware of that."

Ms Allen said that the collaborative approach at the heart of the TECC program has meant that every single person at the hospital has put into this project striving to achieve better outcomes for their patients.

"In taking this approach, we brought a lot of people on the journey in regard to the communication about what's right and what's wrong," she said.

"The output from this project has been brilliant and, in that regard, we have hit-the-mark and I think that is something to be proud of."



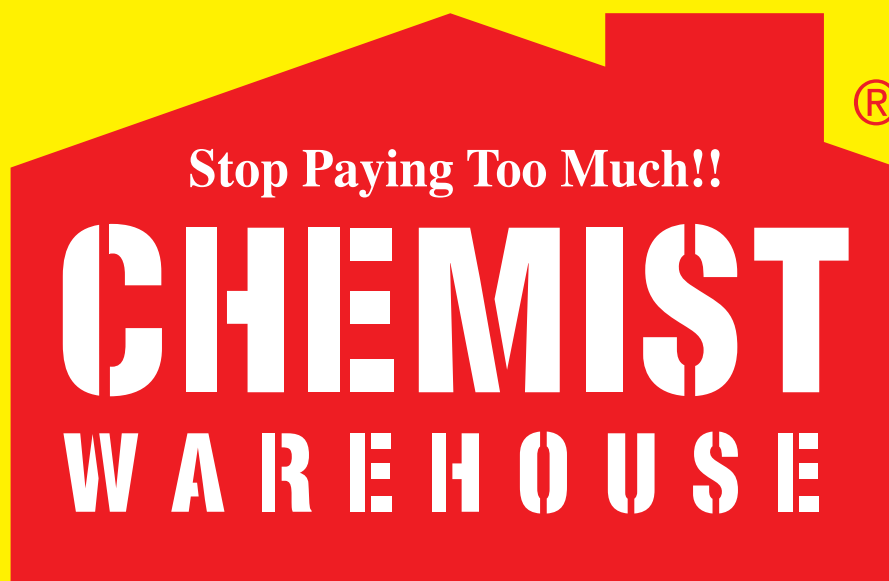
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ANOTHER HEART-FELT DONATION



HEARTBEAT SUNRAYSIA'S SECRETARY ELAINE GREGORY, PRESIDENT JEFF GREGORY WITH MBPH CLINICAL NURSE CONSULTANTS GREG PLUMMER AND JOHN KANE.

PATIENT care at Mildura Base Public Hospital received a welcome boost recently with another donation from the Heartbeat Victoria Sunraysia branch.

For nearly 40 years, the volunteer group has been fund-raising and purchasing vital medical equipment for our hospital, and many other medical and community groups across Sunraysia and the Mallee.

The organisation's latest donation is a venous (vein) probe for the Outpatient Department, valued at \$8000.

It is the second such probe the group has donated. The first found a home in the Children's Ward.

"Having two probes provides the hospital with an increased capacity and options," Heartbeat Victoria Sunraysia branch president, Jeff Gregory, said, explaining that the probe cleaning process can take some time and having two meant that if one was out of circulation for cleaning, the other could be used in its place.

The probe is the 'business end' of a machine that costs upwards of \$50,000.

"Medical equipment is generally expensive," Jeff said, a fact he and his group of fellow volunteers are keenly aware of.

Their fund-raising efforts during the past four decades have funded the purchase of a wide range of vital equipment for an

equally wide range of recipients. From Pooncarie in the north to the southern Mallee townships of Walpeup and Patchewollock, the branch has left a legacy of help.

Other recipients have included Wentworth's Murray House, volunteer ambulance groups at Patchewollock, Murrayville, Manangatang and Nangiloc, and more recently \$10,000 to the Berri Hospital in South Australia's Riverland.

Fund-raising activities over the years have, and still include, raffles, fashion parades and sausage sizzles.

The COVID pandemic put a real dent in fund-raising efforts, but as group secretary Elaine Gregory explained the organisation was lucky enough to have reserves.

Heartbeat Victoria Sunraysia's latest fund-raising initiative sees it involved with the annual Murray to Moyne Cycle Relay -- a charity event it is hoping will replenish the coffers somewhat.

"All the money we raise locally, stays locally," Elaine said proudly. "None of it leaves the region."

With an ageing membership of about a dozen, the group is keen for some 'new blood'.

"Most of our members are in their 80s," Elaine said.

"We would like to see some younger people come on board for sure."

Like to know more? Ring Jeff or Elaine on 0417 058 175.

2024 MBPH FOUNDATION EVENTS

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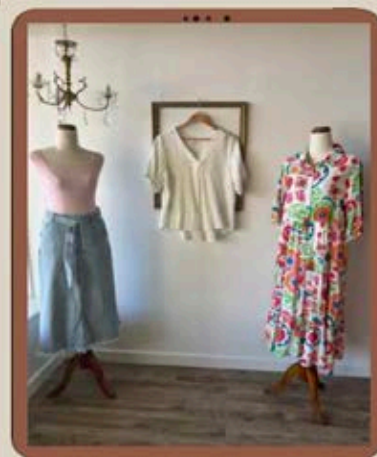


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PUBLIC FERTILITY SERVICE

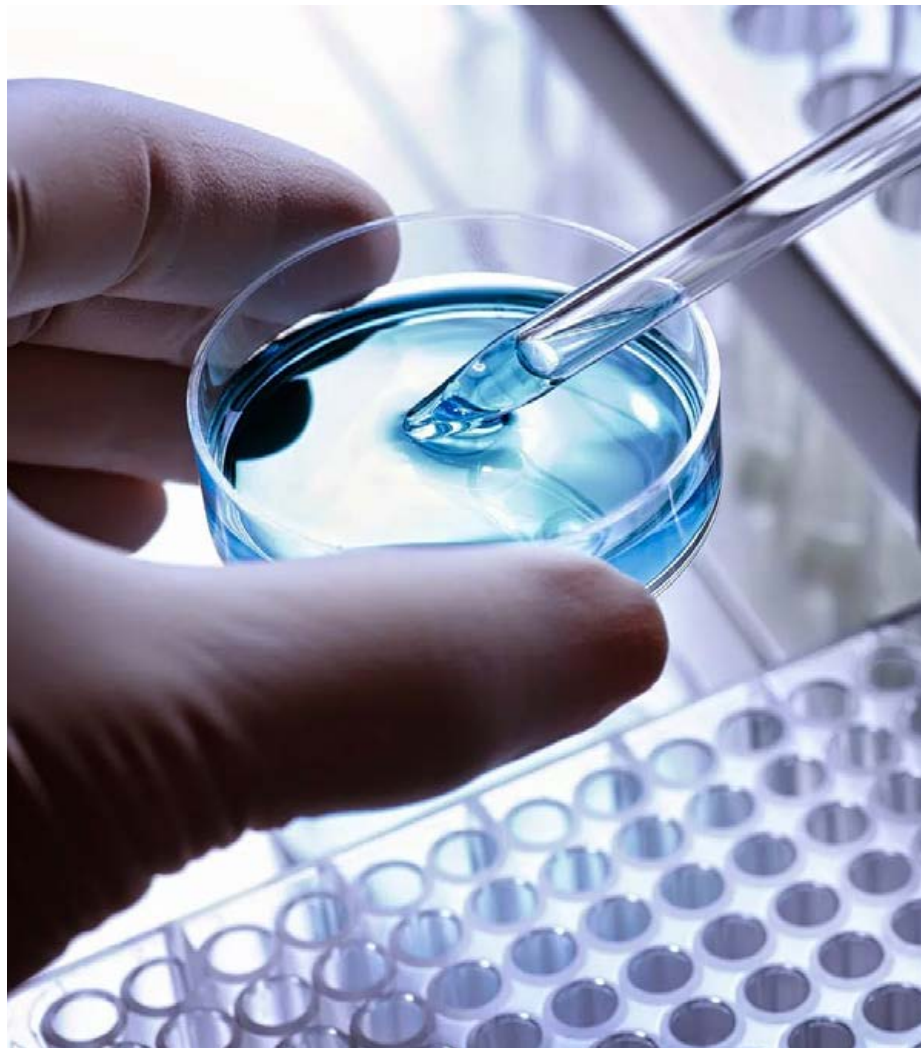
OFFERS GREATER ACCESS TO IVF TREATMENT

IN an exciting development for the Mildura community, residents now have greater access to fertility treatments, thanks to Public Fertility Care which launched a partner site at the Mildura Base Public Hospital (MBPH) in 2023. Funded by the Victorian Government this innovative program is available for all eligible Victorians. Mildura Base Public Hospital and eight other Victorian health services have partnered with the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne to deliver fertility care closer to patients' homes, reducing the need for extensive travel. Most patients only need to travel to Melbourne for procedures involving the embryology lab which is based at the Women's.

This opportunity marks a significant milestone in public health services for the region, offering eligible individuals access to state-of-the-art fertility options which include IVF treatment, counselling, fertility assessment and fertility preservation for patients with medical needs. For most patients Public Fertility Care is free however, there may be minimal out-of-pocket costs incurred outside of the service for some medications, tests, and investigations.

Victoria's Public Fertility Care is available to all people wishing to start a family whose situation or health may prevent or impair fertility or safe conception and/or who have been trying to conceive naturally but have been unsuccessful. It aims to make quality fertility services more accessible and affordable for people who may have previously been unable to afford them.

This partnership aims to assist Sunraysia residents in their journey towards parenthood, addressing a critical gap in fertility services. Currently, the Mildura Base Public Hospital reports that many eligible members of the community are not taking advantage of this service, which means more patients are welcome. The process to access the service is straightforward. Potential patients are encouraged to consult their General Practitioners (GPs) or specialists about the program. Public Fertility Care operates through a centralised referral process managed by the Women's, so it's important that tests and investigations are completed prior to the hospital referral being sent to the Women's for processing. The current waitlist time for a



first appointment is less than four weeks, and for those who need it, up to two IVF cycles can be accessed. While some travel to the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne is required, financial assistance for travel expenses may be available through local agencies.

Public Fertility Care also includes a public egg and sperm program which is currently accepting expressions of interest and screening new potential donors from the community. While donations continue to grow, the current waitlist to access egg and sperm for use in treatment is approximately 18 months. To find out more about the donor program please visit the Women's website.

Katrina Allen, MBPH's Executive Director of Clinical Operations, is keen to dispel any concerns regarding extensive wait times often associated with public services, highlighting the swift four-week turnaround from GP referral to the initial consultation. She was quick to point out that the program leverages the world-renowned expertise and 30-plus years of proven IVF experience of the Royal Women's Hospital.

"I believe access to fertility care should be a right available to all, irrespective of privilege. It's about providing every individual, regardless of their financial standing or geographical location, the chance to access cutting-edge treatment to fulfill their dreams of starting a family," she said.

Public Fertility Care represents a promise of hope for many, providing not just state-of-the-art treatments but a commitment to compassionate, comprehensive care. As the community anticipates the joy of the first baby born through this initiative, Ms Allen shares her excitement for the success stories that will come.

For more details including eligibility criteria for the program, potential patients are directed to the MBPH website. This initiative not only enhances the range of healthcare services available at MBPH but also embodies a significant leap forward in supporting families and individuals on their path to parenthood. People wishing to find information about the program and the referral process can visit the MBPH website: www.mbp.org.au/public-fertility-service.



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LAKE BOGA FLYING BOAT MUSEUM,
IT'S WELL WORTH MAKING THE TRIP TO
VISIT THIS MAGNIFICENT INSTALLATION.





CATALINA PBV-5 DURING ITS TAKE OFF RUN 1942.



VOUGHT OS2U KINGFISHER.

SITUATED between Swan Hill and Kerang on the shores of Lake Boga, the museum has become one of the major tourist attractions of the area.

The Lions Club of Lake Boga restored Catalina A24-30 and the original secret communication bunker as a commemoration to the service men and women who served at No. 1 Flying Boat Repair Depot Lake Boga, Victoria from 1942 to 1947.

The museum houses more than 500 artefacts relating to Lake Boga's proud history associated with WWII, including the historic Catalina Flying Boat and a range of wartime treasures that have been preserved for future generations.

The idea of building a memorial to the service men and women who had been stationed at the No.1 Flying Boat Repair Depot at Lake Boga during World War II was first discussed by a few local Lake Boga Lions Club members over a few beers at the local pub in 1983.

From this humble beginning, countless volunteer hours, 'blood, sweat and tears' and many more beers, the 'dream' was finally realised when the modern hangar

which houses a restored Catalina and other exhibits was officially opened on April 21, 2012.

The aircraft on display is a Catalina PBV5, A24-30. It depicts the type and size of aircraft that were used as patrol bombers during World War II and was built in the USA by the Consolidated Aircraft Company. It was originally a Netherlands aircraft that was adopted by the Royal Australian Air Force in 1942 and given the registered number A24-30. After the war it was sold to Kingsford Smith Airlines, who used it for spare parts.

The body was sent to Lake Boga for scrap, but it was purchased by a local farmer and taken to Nyah. The farmer used some parts but left the rest lying under a tree for forty years. His family donated it to the Lake Boga Lions Club who has painstakingly assembled and semi-restored it to something resembling its former glory.

From 1988 until 2010 the aircraft was displayed in the open parkland adjacent to the original secret underground communications bunker. In early 1997,

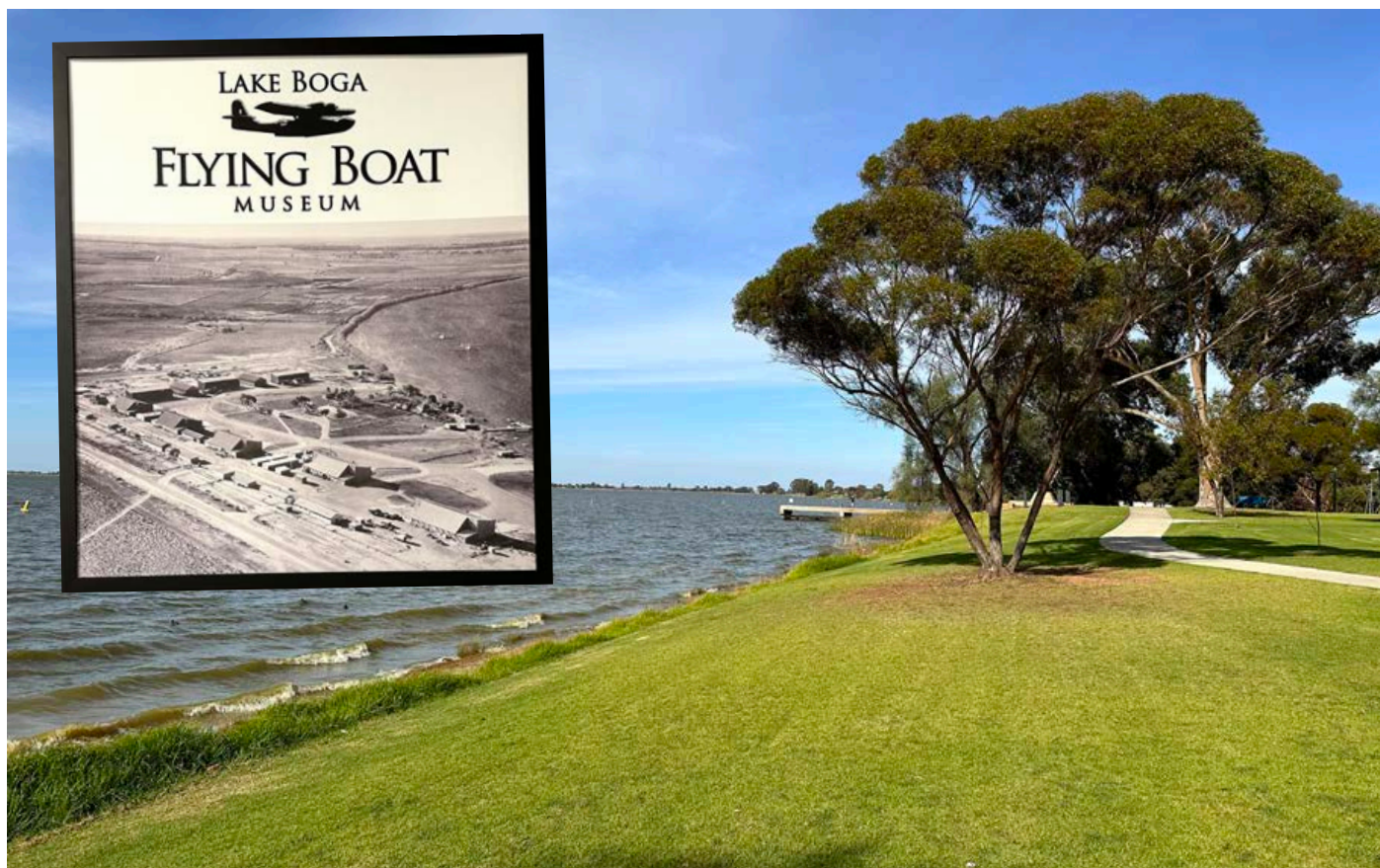
work began on developing the bunker into a museum to house the many exhibits and artefacts that had been collected and donated. The bunker museum was officially opened in November 1997.

Following its 24 years exposed to the elements and after a long and arduous process to procure funds to enable a hangar to be constructed over the plane, it was restored again in 2011. Late in 2011 the museum was relocated from the bunker into the hangar with the Catalina and the bunker was re-constructed using original plans and photographs to resemble its wartime state.

RECOGNITION OF THE GENEROUS SUPPORT FOR THE PROJECT

The Lions Club of Lake Boga acknowledged and greatly appreciated the generosity of the many individuals and business who contributed their time, expertise, materials and machinery to this project. They also gave a special thank you to the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society, based at Albion Park, NSW, for its assistance throughout the project.





Sincere thanks were also expressed to all the financial supporters who made this memorial a reality. They include, from the early days, the Lake Boga Water Ski Club and the Swan Hill Shire through to today for the funding from the Federal Government Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan, the Victorian Government Small Town Development Fund, the Swan Hill Rural City Council and the Lions Club of Lake Boga which enabled the construction of the hangar.

SAFE HAVEN FOR THE FLYING BOATS

As visitors to the museum learn, Lake Boga was an integral part of allied defence during World War II, with a facility that helped to keep Australia safe – the No.1 Flying Boat Repair Depot.

Following the Japanese attacks on Broome in 1942, resulting in the loss of 16 flying boats, the establishment of a safe haven for flying boats and amphibians was deemed “Essential to the defence of Australia.” - “south and inland” were prerequisites.

Inspections of Lake Boga and Kangaroo Lake were made, Lake Boga being the preferred site as it was an ideal stretch of water for the flying boats and amphibious aircraft because it was almost circular (offering unlimited choice of landing/take

off direction) and being free of obstructions. The required infrastructure was already in place, vacant land around its foreshore, an adjacent railhead and highway, electricity from Swan Hill and telecommunication.

A requisition of property, “Priority A1” was signed on April 1, 1942. It had been decided to “build Lake Boga”. Multiple sites were required. The repair depot itself with workshops and hangars (on the foreshore), a stores area (on railway land near the Depot), living quarters (west of the township), sick quarters (at Castle Donnington), first-aid and dental post (on the foreshore), a radio transmitting station (on the Depot site) and a VHF transmitting station (west of the township). Construction started immediately.

June 28, 1942 saw the arrival of the first RAAF personnel under the command of F/Lt. G.S. Moffatt and on July 12, 1942, the arrival of the first Catalina flying boat carrying a quantity of stores and equipment was flown in from Rathmines, N.S.W. Hangar construction had just begun. The design, an open-fronted, grandstand type hangar with a cantilevered canopy. Eight large steel-framed structures were erected, 120-feet wide by 58-feet deep.

These were to be followed by structures to house activities such as administration, signals and cypher, airframe repair, electroplating, engine/hydraulics repair,

drafting, metal work, photography, stores, armament repair, propeller testing, machining, crew rooms, control tower. The first Catalina to be serviced at Lake Boga was A24-17, which carried a crew of four, plus 12 personnel on posting from Rathmines in New South Wales, arriving August on 5, 1942.

During the depot’s wartime life personnel undertook large volumes of work. 416 aircraft were serviced, repaired, restored, rebuilt or overhauled. These aircraft included Catalina, Dornier, Sikorsky KingFisher, Sunderland, Walrus and Martin Mariner.

In the five years of depot life, there were more than 1050 aircraft arrivals/departures and an estimated 800 test flights (plus associated “unofficial aerobatics”). In addition to RAAF aircraft, many Allied flying boats used the Lake Boga Depot for repairs, including those of the United States of America and the Netherlands.

At peak operation 39 officers, 802 airmen and 102 WAAAF’s staffed the depot.

The facility at Lake Boga closed in November of 1947.

Source: *Lake Boga Flying Boat Museum*-www.flyingboat.org.au. Heartbeat thanks the organisation for allowing us to publish material from their website to produce this article.

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BRIDGING HEALTHCARE HORIZONS:

THE TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT OF CONNECTING THE DOCS IN REGIONAL AUSTRALIA



Nestled within the vast and stunning landscapes of Australia lies a challenge often overshadowed by its natural beauty: the struggle to sustain adequate medical care in regional areas. Amidst this challenge emerges hope – Connecting the Docs. This initiative, founded on the principles of tailored support and collaborative partnership, aims to revolutionise healthcare in regional Australia.

Connecting the Docs isn't just a program; it's a lifeline for doctors navigating the complexities of regional healthcare. With a commitment to individualised support, it caters to the diverse needs of doctors from various backgrounds, be it international, interstate, or local.

Powered by a collaborative partnership involving multiple health and community services in the Loddon Mallee Region, Connecting the Docs exemplifies synergy in action. It offers a comprehensive suite of resources and support systems, underpinned by a person-centred ethos and a deep understanding of the Australian medical landscape.

The necessity of such a program becomes evident in light of the ongoing medical workforce crisis in regional and rural Australia. By offering guidance and support to incoming physicians, Connecting the Docs plays a pivotal role in easing their transition into regional communities.

Dr Banka Donevska's experience underscores the program's significance in navigating the complexities of the Australian medical system. Testimonials from Dr Kshitij Thapa and Dr Grace Harmer further highlight the transformative impact of Connecting the Docs on clinical exposure, meaningful responsibilities, and ongoing employment opportunities.

A coalition of healthcare services comprising Echuca Regional Health, East Wimmera Health, Kerang District Health, Mallee District Aboriginal Health, Mildura Base Public Hospital, Northern District Health, and Swan Hill District Health stands at the helm of Connecting the Docs,



FRONT: GEMMA BILARDI, PROJECT LEAD, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR REX PRABHU, SWAN HILL DISTRICT HEALTH. **MIDDLE ROW:** DR ANNEMARIE NEWTH, CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MEDICAL SERVICES ECHUCA REGIONAL HEALTH, MANDY HUTCHINSON, PREVIOUS CEO NORTHERN DISTRICT COMMUNITY HEALTH, KELLIE BYRON - GRAY CEO, KERANG DISTRICT HEALTH. **BACK ROW:** DR NABREES SINNALEBBE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR MEDICAL SERVICES, MILDURA BASE HOSPITAL. **ABSENT:** TREVOR ADEM, CEO, EAST WIMMERA HEALTH, MARIE GRIFFITHS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SERVICES AND DELIVERY, MALLEE DISTRICT ABORIGINAL HEALTH AND MARGARET MACDONALD, INTERIM CEO, NORTHERN DISTRICT COMMUNITY HEALTH.

providing unwavering support to drive its success.

As Connecting the Docs moves forward, it beckons those eager to embrace a project of hope and solidarity. Beyond bridging gaps in medical recruitment and retention, it fosters a sustainable ecosystem where doctors flourish and communities thrive, illuminating the path toward a brighter, healthier future for all.

In healthcare, the connections forged by Connecting the Docs pave the way for transformative change in regional Australia. With its commitment to collaboration, empathy, and the common good, it stands poised to redefine healthcare horizons and empower communities across the vast expanse of the Australian landscape.



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THE IMPORTANCE OF B O O K S

THAT CREATE GOOD READING HABITS...

“WHILE I hope that everyone knows that good books can be a revelation in schools and in the family home, the question I am regularly asked is why?” author Phil Kettle told Heartbeat.

He continued: That said, an analysis of a good book series will actually provide many of the answers that people seek when trying to unpack the range of issues associated with younger students and reading.

“What can we do to get students interested in reading?”

Some may consider it a straight-forward question; my concern however, is that it makes an assumption that students aren’t interested in reading.

Even when attempting to answer the question for the groups of students whose reading skills are particularly limited, I find that a range of stereotypes and all manner of conflicting generalisations get in the way.

My response to the question “what can we do to get students interested in reading?” is to ask a question straight back. “Are we talking about students who can read – but won’t, or are we talking about students who because they struggle to read are considered reluctant readers?”

At this point I need to stress that I don’t actually consider the term ‘reluctant’ to be appropriate. Some students may struggle to read at the level of their peers, however the word ‘reluctant’ infers that there is a choice. In my experience as a teacher and author children don’t choose not to read. The term reluctant also results in children being ‘labelled’ and having heard trusted adults describe them as reluctant, to my horror I have heard children using the term to describe themselves.

I am also keen to point out that it is really important to acknowledge that there are many students with sound reading skills, who simply refuse to read what their parents and teachers want them to read. They will only read what interests them – surprise surprise! Sadly, many of these students are also labelled in a negative way.

My work with children has evidenced for me over and over again, that it’s the type of book that is presented to the students that will most often dictate the students response. When the response is rejection, be it by the student with sound reading skills, or the student who is struggling to read at the level of his peers – the negative stereotypes and labels emerge impeding

the progress we all desire.

Students – irrespective of their reading ability – enjoy pictures, comics, movies and books that place action and happenings ahead of emotion. Students – irrespective of their reading ability – enjoy situations where ‘what the characters do’ is initially more important than ‘what the characters think and feel’.

Mindful of this, I have always believed it essential to introduce students to books that present an environment where it is possible for their imaginations to run wild. More specifically, an environment where they can project themselves into the book, and consider themselves to be the main character!

Books like *Toocool*, *Clancy of the Outback* that are written in the first person allow the reader (student) to take ownership of the main character in the story. The teacher/educator/parent when reading with the student can allow the student to have ownership of the main character.

IN WRITING THE BOOKS I HAVE WRITTEN FOR CHILDREN THE MAIN AIM WAS TO CREATE SOMETHING THAT WOULD ENTICE READERS - NO MATTER WHAT THEIR READING ABILITY TO PICK UP AND THEN READ. THE FACT THAT THE CHARACTERS AND ADVENTURES HAVE SUCH AN IMMEDIATE AND STRONG APPEAL FOR CHILDREN HAS RESULTED IN THE BOOKS CONTRIBUTING GREATLY TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THOSE WITH BOTH SOUND AND LIMITED READING SKILLS.

When teaching students that are learning English these books are a very a very powerful tool.

It’s also my experience that students love books that reflect an image that matches the image that they want to project to others, and in many cases the image they really like to have of themselves. They seek to identify themselves in the book, living the adventure. Hence the book that then allows them via imagination to be what they would like to be, and to do what they would like to do, is the book that they’ll choose to read, or try to read; sometimes over and over again, which is just fine!

This explains in part the popularity of books with characters engaged in many

different physical activities. These books attract many students.

Children love to have fun. If reading is what we require them to do, and we do, then the book in question needs to be just as much fun as whatever else it is that they do that makes them laugh and jump around in an imaginary adventure, or create mischievous mayhem. It is important the characters in stories attract and lure students because the characters have fun in an uncomplicated and positive way.

Students are constantly told to behave, to be tidier, and to be quieter – none of which they really want to do, and none of which amount to the sort of fun they want to have. So, it’s important the characters in books are not contained or limited by the restrictions placed on children in real life.

In writing the books I have written for children the main aim was to create something that would entice readers – no matter what their reading ability to pick up and then read. The fact that the characters and adventures have such an immediate and strong appeal for children has resulted in the books contributing greatly to the development of those with both sound and limited reading skills.

Finally, the term ‘reluctant’ should only ever be used when it comes to describing how a child feels about putting a GOOD book down!

GOOD READING HABITS

Good reading habits don’t begin in the classroom. Good reading habits begin in the home. Parents and guardians are the example setters and must take responsibility for setting the reading example for their children... Not a hard thing to do.... 10 minutes a night, either sitting with or lying on the bed reading and discussing the book they are reading.... Sooner than you think the reading habit will be formed and books will become part of their everyday lives.

Literacy is the foundation of all good education.

Mildura-based Phil Kettle is an Australian author best known for his extensive work in children’s literature. He has written numerous books aimed at encouraging children to read, including the popular ‘TooCool’ series and ‘Boyz Rule’ series, which he co-authored with Felice Arena. His writing often features relatable characters and humorous situations designed to engage young readers. Phil has written more than 200 books and continues to produce new works.



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NICOLAS
WORKING
ON ONE OF
HIS COLOURS
OF MILDURA
PAINTINGS.



NICOLAS
WITH HIS
WIFE SIMONE
AND GUESTS.

'COLOURS OF MILDURA' EXHIBITION

MELBOURNE artist Nicolas Chen has been living in Mildura with his wife, Mildura Base Public Hospital (MBPH) Psychiatrist, Dr Simone Zhang, for the past year and during this time he has been painting his new body of works titled 'Colours of Mildura'.

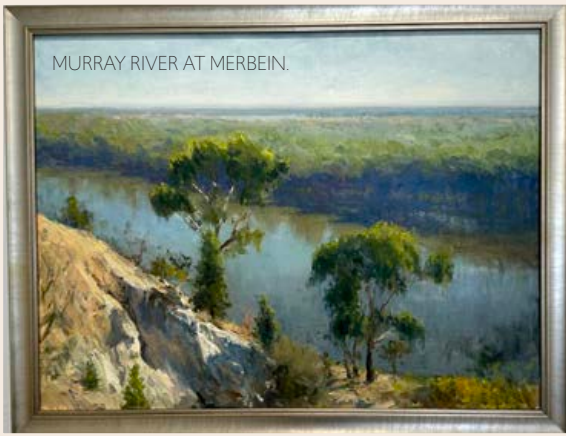
The oil painting collection was recently on display in an exhibition at Mildura's NAP Art & Design Shop in Langtree Avenue.

The MBPH Foundation, in association with NAP Contemporary Art Gallery Directors, Erica Tarquinio and Riley Davison and Nicolas Chen, hosted a cocktail party at gallery's shop, which was attended by more than 50 of Mildura's art loving fraternity.

Here are some photos of Nicolas' paintings and the event.

NICOLAS WITH MBPH
COMMUNICATIONS AND EVENTS
COORDINATOR JAKE ANSTEY.





MURRAY RIVER AT MERBEIN.



RIO VISTA.



NICOLAS
SPEAKING ABOUT
HIS EXPERIENCES
AND INSPIRATIONS
WHILE PAINTING
THE BODY
OF WORKS IN
MILDURA.



NICOLAS
DISCUSSING
HIS BODY OF
WORKS WITH
A GUEST.



INFRASTRUCTURE TRANSFORMATION SET FOR MBPH



A MUCH-NEEDED ACCOMMODATION FACILITY OFFERING RESPITE AND COMFORT TO THE HOSPITAL'S PATIENTS

Mildura Base Public Hospital (MBPH) is set to witness a transformative addition to its infrastructure with the introduction of Foundation House.

This much-needed accommodation facility will offer respite and comfort to the hospital's staff, patients, and their families. With a vision to enhance the overall experience for all stakeholders, Foundation House is poised to become a pivotal asset in the healthcare landscape of the Northern Mallee region.

Comprising 150 thoughtfully designed rooms, Foundation House will cater to diverse needs with a range of accommodation options. From single-room hotel-style lodgings to spacious two and three-bedroom apartments, every aspect of Foundation House has been meticulously planned to provide a supportive and homely environment during times of need.

The inception of Foundation House has been accompanied by a significant fundraising initiative aimed at facilitating its construction, fit-out, and ongoing management. Generous donors and community support have propelled the project forward, with construction slated to commence by the end of 2024 and completion expected by 2026.

MBPH CEO Terry Welch expressed enthusiasm about the project, emphasising its potential to revolutionise hospital's operational landscape.

"Foundation House is a game-changer for MBPH," Mr Welch said. "Not only will it provide much-needed accommodation, but it will also lead to substantial cost savings and generate revenue for the Foundation."

One of the standout features of Foundation House is its emphasis on communal spaces and outdoor areas, designed to capitalize on the region's favourable climate. Multiple common areas, including lounges, dining areas, and recreation spaces, will foster a sense of community among residents. Outdoor courtyards and gardens will provide tranquil retreats, offering opportunities for relaxation and reflection amidst nature.

Mr Welch highlighted the significance of these communal spaces. "Foundation House isn't just about accommodation; it's about fostering a supportive community environment where individuals and families can find solace and companionship during challenging times."

The integration of such amenities underscores Foundation House's commitment to holistic care, recognizing the importance of not only addressing physical health needs but also nurturing emotional

well-being. Additionally, facilities such as a gymnasium and wellness centre will promote overall wellness, empowering residents to prioritise self-care and rejuvenation.

Beyond its immediate benefits to MBPH and its stakeholders, Foundation House represents a beacon of hope and compassion for the wider community. By providing a sanctuary for those navigating the complexities of healthcare, it exemplifies the spirit of generosity and solidarity that defines the Northern Mallee region.

This much-anticipated accommodation facility will serve as a beacon of respite and comfort for the hospital's staff, patients, and their families. Against the backdrop of a region grappling with accommodation shortages and significant travel distances for healthcare, Foundation House emerges as a vital solution to address these pressing challenges.

The Northern Mallee region has long grappled with a shortage of accommodation options, particularly for individuals relocating to the area for work. For MBPH staff, this shortage often translates into logistical hurdles and added stress when seeking suitable living arrangements. Foundation House aims to alleviate this burden by providing 150 thoughtfully designed rooms, ranging from single-room hotel-style lodgings to spacious two and three-bedroom apartments. With this diverse range of options, Foundation House offers a welcoming haven for staff members embarking on new chapters in their careers, ensuring a seamless transition to life in the Northern Mallee.

Foundation House is poised to address another critical need in the region: the significant distances patients must travel for treatment. In rural and remote areas, access to healthcare services often necessitates lengthy journeys, placing strain on patients and their families. Foundation House seeks to ease this burden by offering a "home away from home" for those in need of care, providing a comfortable and supportive environment during their healthcare journey. Whether receiving treatment themselves or supporting a loved one, patients and families can find solace in the familiarity and warmth of Foundation House, knowing that they are not alone in their journey towards healing.

As Foundation House moves closer to fruition, anticipation mounts for the positive impact it will undoubtedly bring to Mildura Base Public Hospital and the community at large. With its promise of comfort, convenience, and camaraderie, Foundation House stands poised to become an enduring symbol of compassionate healthcare provision in the heart of the Northern Mallee.



SUPPORT FOUNDATION HOUSE!

Purchase a virtual brick today for only \$100 to help with the construction and know you are helping to improve healthcare for our Northern Mallee community.



Once you purchase a brick, you will receive a notification of your purchase and every person who purchases a brick will be acknowledged on a virtual wall on the building when it is completed.

**YOUR SUPPORT WILL HELP WITH THE
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Visit www.mbphfoundation.org.au or contact:

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MILDURA AIRSHOW RETURNS TO THE SKIES

Mildura's skies play host to an array of awe-inspiring aerobatics by some of Australia's top pilots in September this year when the Mildura Airshow returns to the region.

Following the success of previous airshows over two decades ago, Mildura Airport with the support and experience of Paul Bennet Airshows will host a full day of action-packed manoeuvres the whole family can enjoy on Sunday, September 8.

Paul Bennet's reputation for putting on a sensational show

extends across the country. His dynamic and aggressive aerobatic displays leave his spectators in awe as he defies gravity and physics, performing manoeuvres that are yet to be reproduced by any pilot. He thrives on the crowds and talks to them live through his headset while performing sequences that put a tremendous amount of force and stress on his body.

Mildura Airport CEO, Trevor Willcock said: "We're so excited to bring back the Mildura Airshow and with tickets now on sale, we're hopeful that the Mildura

community can support the event and I am sure we will see a lot of locals in attendance. We are also expecting thousands of visitors to the region for the event."

"Paul's experience and skills, along with his team, will be something you won't want to miss. It will be an experience to remember" He continued.

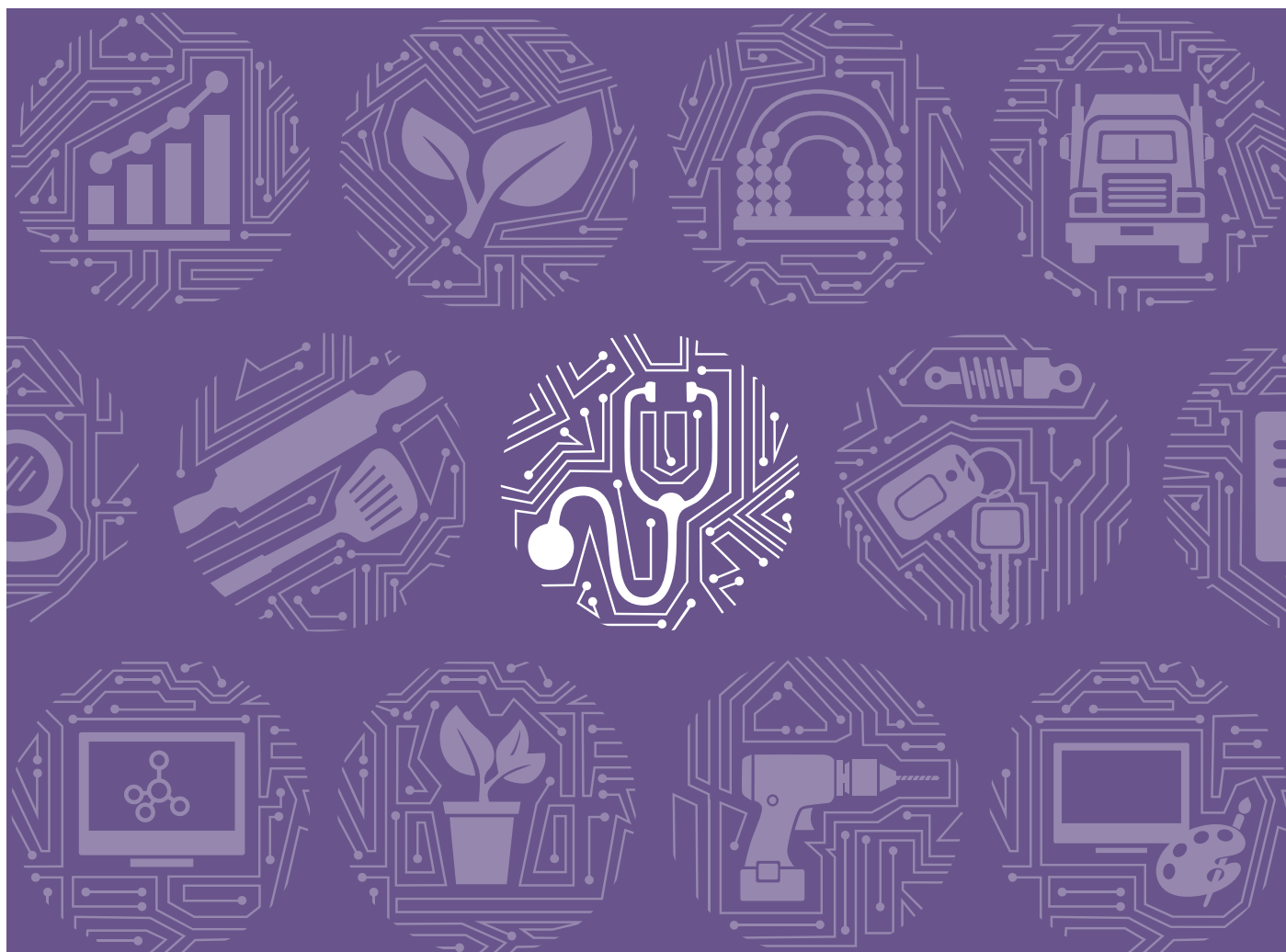
Paul Bennet added, "We're excited to bring our team to Mildura, we are pumped to hit the skies and show the Mildura community what we're about and hope that we can grow this event in years to come."

Complementing the aerial spectacle is a vibrant ground festival featuring a delicious array of street food, fun kid's entertainment, impressive car displays and some local community groups and stalls.

The airshow will also host a range of static aircraft displays, some of which were known and used by the Mildura 20TU, paying homage to the sacrifices some locals made for our country.



For further information and ticket sales for the airshow visit:
www.milduraairshow.com



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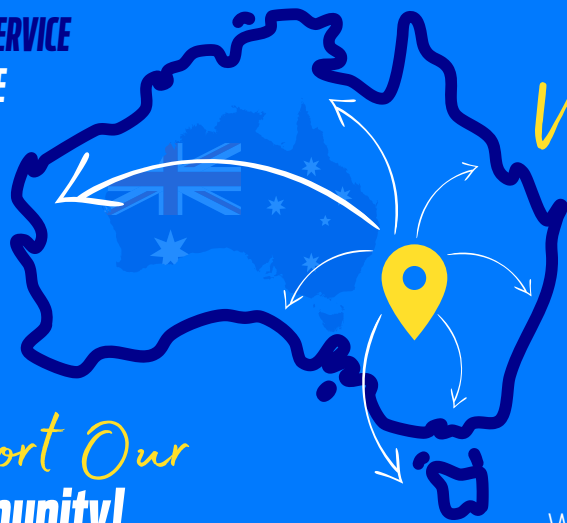
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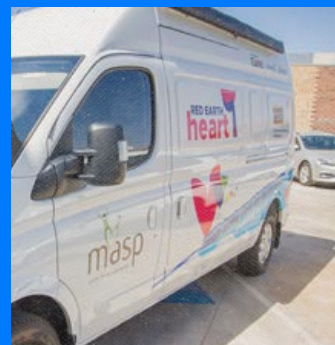
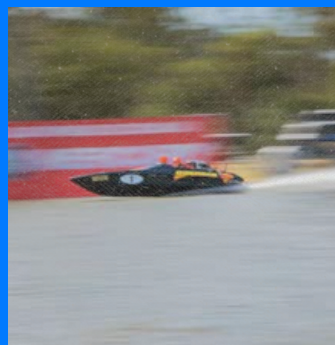
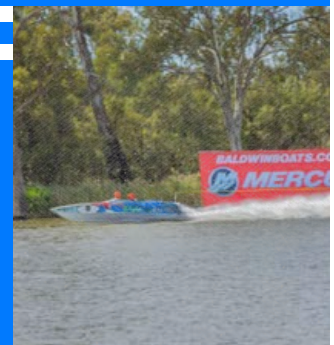
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Partnership Opportunities



There are a number of levels of involvement you may wish to consider in establishing a partnership with the MBPH Foundation.

Together, we can develop a tailored partnership or sponsorship to meet your expectations with opportunities including individual events, annual community or corporate partnerships and naming and recognition rights.

JOIN OUR GROWING LIST OF SPONSORS



A partnership with MBPH Foundation is an opportunity to enshrine your family's name and or business in an institution that has served the community which you love and have contributed so much to.

SPONSORSHIP LEVELS:

Virtual Brick	\$100
Room Sponsor	\$2k
Partner	\$5k
Official Partner	\$10k
Major Partner	\$25k
Premier Partner	\$50k

NAMING RIGHTS OPPORTUNITIES

Mobile Screening Vehicle

The mobile treatment and prevention vehicle will allow people living in remote areas access to treatment and screening.

Foundation House

A home away from home in Mildura for families and loved ones of patients undertaking extended treatment at the MBPH.

Foundation Gala Ball

An opportunity to showcase your business's branding at this prestigious gala event.

Corporate Golf Day

A great event that you and your business can be at the forefront of.

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