

Enlightened

News and Views for the Light Electorate

Edition #40 August 2020 FREE



RECOVERING FROM COVID-19
P 3



THE BUNYIP RETURNS
P 7



ANZAC DAY
P 9



NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK
P 10-11



Local residents (from left) Bernice O’Leary, Veronica Schiller and Pam Abbott protest against the Marshall Liberal Government’s proposed cuts to bus routes.

Community anger and a strong campaign by the State Labor Opposition has forced the Marshall Liberal Government into a humiliating backdown over its proposed cuts to public transport that would have seen 57 bus stops in the Light Electorate headed for the scrapheap with two bus routes axed.

News of the cuts generated growing anger in the local community as people

started to realise the full extent of the proposed cuts.

Local Member of Parliament, Mr Tony Piccolo said the proposed bus cuts would have affected students travelling to local schools, older people attending medical appointments and those just seeking to do their shopping or catch up with friends.

“The cuts would have had a devastating effect on people in the community

where public transport is their only travel option,” said Mr Piccolo.

“For many people, and these are often our most vulnerable, they don’t have any alternative, and cutting bus services would create greater social isolation in our community.”

After the Government originally announced the planned removal of 500 bus stops across the state, SA Labor revealed that the actual number is 1,069,

which is more than double the number of stops the Government initially promised to cut.

Local residents had expressed their deep frustration with the Government’s proposals to change the current bus service, with Pam Abbott one such angry regular bus user.

“I’m 86 years old and I can’t walk to the shops, so I have to use the bus,” Ms Abbott explained.

Continued on Page 2

FROM THE
EDITOR



COPING WITH COVID-19

Well, the year started off nicely... then we were hit with the COVID-19 monster.

It has affected every aspect of our lives, with some people hurting a great deal more than others.

The health response by governments has generally been good, and for that they need to be congratulated.

Our State Co-ordinator, Commissioner Grant Stevens, and Chief Medical Officer, Prof. Nicola Spurrier, have been the consummate public servants – compassionate, communicative and professional.

The State Opposition should also be recognised for their positive bipartisan approach to politics during this tough time.

In general, most people have put the interests of the community ahead of their own – and for this they should be applauded.

It is when we act in the interests of the “common good” that we strengthen our civil society and we all win.

Sure, a small number of people have behaved poorly and it would be easy to focus on those few.

It will be more productive to harness those good things we have done, which will help ensure that we come out of this crisis better and stronger as a community.

To achieve this, we must ensure that no one is left behind.

Our governments should not be

permitted to use the crisis to weaken our support and compassion for the more vulnerable in our society, nor should we allow the inequality gap to widen further.

My late father always said to judge a person’s wealth by the size of their family, friends and their connection to community, not by the size of their bank balance; it was true when he said it and remains so.

The pandemic has taken its toll on our volunteer effort, so we now need governments at all levels to step up and support our volunteers and volunteer run organisations.

Not only do they do great deeds but provide valuable opportunities for social interaction and connection.

COVID-19 has exposed the weaknesses in our economy and society, so when we rebuild both let us not be limited by the mentality of “going back to normal” but create a new normal which helps form a more prosperous and fair society.

If we are unable to manage this, the trauma and pain many have experienced will be in vain.

It has also shown the important role public services play in the overall wellbeing of our community.

This edition of Enlightened highlights some of the wonderful things that occur in our community, despite the challenges COVID-19 has presented.

Your feedback, as usual, is always welcome.

FREE SHOWBAG ON OFFER FOR KIDS

Every child (and some adults) look forward to purchasing a show bag or two when they attend the Gawler Show.

With the Show going digital (see the back page) this year, local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo didn’t want to see kids miss out.

Because of this, he has come up with his own showbag which he intends to give away to children at the Gawler Produce Market on Show Day – Saturday 29th August, 2020.

Mr Piccolo said that kids will be able to collect their free showbag at the market, which is held in the carpark of the Gawler Visitor Centre from 8am until 12pm.

“There will only be a limited number of free showbags available, so it is first in, best dressed,” Mr Piccolo said.

“Only one showbag per child, to be fair to others, and it must be collected in person.

“The show bags will be of greater interest to children of primary school age.”

The show bags contain a number of educational materials, some fun stuff and an entry for a colouring competition where the winning prize is a family ticket to the 2021 Gawler Show.



Mr Piccolo said that while his show bag is no substitute for the real thing or holding a great show, it is his small contribution to keeping the spirit of the show alive during 2020.

Parents are welcome to contact Tony’s office if their child has any special needs and is not able to attend to collect their showbag on the day.

Enlightened

Enlightened is published and distributed by Tony Piccolo MP, Member for Light. For further information on any of the articles in this edition, please contact the Light Electoral Office on (08) 8522 2878 or email light@parliament.sa.gov.au

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BUS-TED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

“I need the bus service.”

Another elderly resident, Veronica Schiller, explained that she and so many others her age required the bus service as it was the only alternative to walking great distances.

“I still drive but it won’t be for much longer and then I’ll be relying on the bus to get to my medical and my shopping,” she said.

“I’m 78 and Gawler’s geography is hilly; I don’t think Mr Knoll realises that.”

Bernice O’Leary chose her unit specifically due to its proximity to a bus stop, allowing her to more easily visit her son in Hewett.

“There was a whole three months when I broke bones in my hand when I couldn’t drive, so there are times when I rely on the

bus,” Ms O’Leary explained.

“It’s been ever so convenient knowing that the bus was there.”

When it came to the behaviour of the Marshall Liberal Government and its embattled Transport Minister, Mr Stephan Knoll, there was a clear consensus amongst the residents that they were unhappy with their conduct.

“I’d tell Mr Knoll that I’ll use his chauffeur-driven car to get around Gawler if that’s his attitude about taking our buses away,” Ms Abbott said.

“Minister Knoll: ditch your car and use public transport for a month all over Gawler, Adelaide and the Barossa and see how you get on,” Ms Schiller added.

Mr Piccolo was clear in his support of local residents and backed their opposition to the extreme and misguided proposal.

“We must hold them accountable for



(From left) Bernice O’Leary, Tony Piccolo MP, Veronica Schiller and Pam Abbott opposing the bus cuts at a local stop.

their their absurd decision and let them know that we will not stand for our gov-

ernment stripping the public of one of its most crucial services,” he said.

ROAD TO RECOVERY

A local community recovery committee (CRC) has been established to help lead the Light electorate through the COVID-19 crisis by developing an economic and social recovery strategy and acting as an advocate to governments at all levels.

The Light Electorate Community Recovery Committee (CRC) will bring together a cross-section of leaders from local government, business, education, health and community groups all at the one table to be chaired by local Member of Parliament, Mr Tony Piccolo.

Mr Piccolo said the idea is in response to calls from local community leaders and businesses to convene an economic recovery taskforce to develop a local economic strategy beyond COVID-19.

"I want to work with local community leaders, at the table together to re-charge the local economic drivers of the Light area, to re-set our local economy," Mr Piccolo said.

"There can be no daylight between what community groups and business know what must occur, and the critically important decisions that will need to be made to support economic and social recovery.

"These groups need to be at the same table empowered to act together," stressed Mr Piccolo.

"We need to discuss and provide ideas on how local businesses and organisations can operate post COVID-19 to thrive."

"In some cases, it cannot be business as usual, and where possible we need to show how we can all operate in the new



Members of the Gawler CRC conducting a recent meeting over Zoom.

digital economy and society."

"We need to ensure we understand our local strengths and how we can make them work for us."

"The economic recovery to COVID-19 must be locally led," Mr Piccolo said.

"While South Australia appears to have significantly reduced the spread of COVID-19 this is not the case in many other parts of Australia and the world. The Light Electorate CRC must factor this into its thinking in preparing a local

economic recovery roadmap."

"We need to be innovative and agile and include the genuine local expertise we have in decision making and not simply consult later which will create delays we cannot afford."

With a strong local team, we will be better placed to take advantage of Local, State Commonwealth Government support.

"Local GP, and mental health practitioner, Dr Naomi Rutten has

agreed to be a member of the committee to provide expertise on health matters, and in particular, mental health."

The first meeting was held at 10:00am on Saturday 27 June 2020, which is United Nations Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Day.

The Light Electorate CRC will meet monthly on Zoom while social distancing rules remain in place.

RATES RELIEF? NOT SO SWEET

Local small businesses forced to close their doors because of the impact of the COVID 19 crisis have backed moves by local Member of Parliament, Mr Tony Piccolo to introduce laws to force councils to provide them with rate relief.

Mr Piccolo put forward the Local Government (Public Health Emergency) (Rate Relief) Amendment Bill 2020 in State Parliament which would see council rates waived for local businesses and not-for-profit organisations forced to close in the wake of the health crisis.

Mr Piccolo said the purpose of the Bill is to give small businesses that have closed down the best opportunity to get back on their feet and reopen their doors once the crisis is over.

"Rate deferrals, the waiving of late payment fines and the like, are helpful but not enough, as they will have other debts, and they will need the money to restart their businesses.

The move to introduce the Bill was blocked by all members of the Marshall

Liberal Government, as it was considered "not urgent" enough to warrant its introduction and debate on the day.

A frustrated Mr Piccolo said that small businesses are hurting now, as are their workers and local communities, so relief is urgently needed.

"It is no secret that small businesses in our state are hurting," Mr Piccolo stated in Parliament when discussing the Bill.

"As a result, people are losing their jobs and incomes. Local communities are hurting as well."

State Opposition Leader Peter Malinauskas stressed that consistency across local councils with regard to the enforcement of rates is required.

"If we can ensure more businesses survive and more jobs are protected, we will emerge out of this downturn in stronger shape," Mr Malinauskas said.

Gawler Sweets on Murray Street is one such small business in turmoil.

Potential high sales from the Easter weekend and the 2020 Gawler Show have melted away due to the virus outbreak.



Gawler Sweets Owner Mr Mario Caruana, with local MP Tony Piccolo, is seeking support from the Gawler Council to help him get back on his feet.

Owner Mario Caruana has contacted Gawler Council seeking rate relief during the crisis.

He would also like to see a post COVID-19 strategy from the Council to help revive local business.

Mr Caruana said the Federal and State Governments have stepped in with some real assistance, so it is now up

to Council to do their bit if they don't want a main street full of empty shops.

The Bill is the latest in a series of initiatives by the State Opposition to relieve the burden placed on South Australians due to the outbreak of COVID-19, such as establishing support funds for impacted businesses and supporting those who do not qualify for JobKeeper payments.

TRAFFIC TO MORROW NEVER DIES

Furious residents living on Morrow Avenue have vented their frustrations at the new traffic lights installed at the end of their street, calling for immediate action to fix broken wait times and address safety risks.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo has received a wave of complaints regarding the intersection since it was opened by Marshall Liberal Government Transport Minister Stephan Knoll.

"It is no secret that the opening of the intersection by Mr Knoll and the Marshall Liberal Government was bungled, to put it lightly," Mr Piccolo said.

"To get to the nub of the issue, I contacted the residents of Morrow Ave to find out from those directly affected what they perceived as the greatest hurdles to overcome and the areas that are in dire need of addressing."

The Light Electorate Office received a

number of responses to its inquiry, all of which mentioned the time available to drivers to turn onto Main North Road as being vastly inadequate.

Russell and Emma Wotton were one amongst a number of respondents who focused their attention on the inevitable and constant gridlocking of traffic, stating that only two or three cars per rotation can turn left at a time.

"Even when traffic is light and merging would be safe, one looking to enter Main North Rd is prevented from doing so by a red arrow," they said.

"Rotations are quite drawn out and if you miss the green arrow you can expect to wait quite some time for the next opportunity."

Sandy Maynard explained that she is forced to drive through four separate sets of lights to reach Tulloch Rd from Morrow Ave, while Wendy Weaver stated that she

is now avoiding trips to the shops on weekends due to the bedlam.

Dale Perin is another local resident who echoed the sentiments of Mr and Mrs Wotton in her response.

"Traffic became gridlocked during school peak times and also throughout the weekends because the lights at Potts Road were not in sequence with the Tulloch Road lights, hence creating long traffic queues on Tulloch Road, Main North Road and Morrow Avenue," she said.

Ms Perin raised the possibility of a 'turn left at any time with care' signal (outside of red lights) with the Gawler East Project Team but was told that such a signal was not legal at signalised junctions.

"The lights are also too high and cannot be seen easily by the driver in the first vehicle waiting at the lights, [which is] a problem that mainly affects the normal

size vehicle."

Mr and Mrs Wotton also referred to the arrows being "set too high on the pole" on Morrow Ave and that they cannot be readily seen whilst in a vehicle.

Mr Piccolo said some respondents complained about the dust being kicked up by the construction work affecting their homes.

"During the last 12 months we have been continuously cleaning inside and outside, only to see the dust return the next day," Ms Perin said.

In much the same vein, Mr and Mrs Wotton claimed that despite being located some way from the roadworks, "almost every morning [their] outdoor area is covered in dust."

Mr Piccolo stated that something had to be done about this issue urgently, as it was proving a significant disruption to people's lives.



Tony Piccolo (centre) with local residents (from left) Russell and Emma Wotton, Sandy Maynard and Wendy Weaver at the controversial Morrow Ave intersection.

REID STANDS WITH PATERNOSTER ROAD

A majority of Reid residents support the reopening and revamping of Paternoster Road, according to a survey conducted by local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo and the Light Electorate Office.

Earlier this year, Light Regional Council wrote to the Surveyor-General advising of its intention to commence the process of road closure which resulted in Mr Piccolo receiving notification of the Council's plans.

In response to the notification, Mr Piccolo wrote to Reid residents and held numerous street corner meetings seeking their views with many not supporting the closure move.

63.5% of respondents to Mr Piccolo's enquiry expressed their preference for the opening of the road, subject to it being properly sealed, footpaths constructed and access to the now disused railway corridor to be removed until it is properly redeveloped.

28.8% of respondents supported the Council's proposed action, specifically noting that non-vehicular access would be maintained up to the end of the road, while 7.7% suggested alternative measures.

Some of those suggestions included opening Paternoster Rd to Two Wells Rd, as well as installing bollards and sealing footpaths to discourage any form of access.

Mr Piccolo said the Council had taken action to close the road at the area near the rail corridor due to its becoming a haven for rubbish dumping and other anti-social behaviour.

"Residents have complained about the noise associated with illegal motorcycle and motor vehicle use," said Mr Piccolo.

"Local people have also experienced vandalism to their properties which about the rail corridor."

Mr Piccolo said Light Regional Council have been very co-operative and helpful and prepared background information which helped residents gain a better understanding of the issues and possible solutions.

"A satisfactory long-term solution will require a great deal of goodwill from many parties in addition to residents, as the locality is under the care and control of the Light Regional Council, the Town of Gawler and the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure," he explained.

"It is an odd and unfair situation as Light Regional Council have control of that part of the road under consideration yet gain no benefit as all affected residents live within the Town of Gawler."

Mr Piccolo said that now community engagement has taken place, he will be writing to the Minister for Transport, as the disused rail corridor is owned by the State Government.



Local MP Tony Piccolo with Reid residents Leon Wieckowski and Greta Haarsma, who both support the opening of the road.

TULLOCH RD CHAOS CONTINUES

What should have been a good news story for the Marshall Liberal Government has turned to chaos as motorists vented their anger on social media at the traffic bedlam at Tulloch Road.

The Hon Stephan Knoll visited Gawler in April to great fanfare to switch the lights on at Potts and Main North Road, declaring mission accomplished.

Local Member of Parliament, Tony Piccolo said since the lights were switched on, motorists have been seeing red.

"I think the Minister believed it was his veni, vidi, vici moment, but in reality, it has become a complete disaster."

"Had the Minister given the matter more time, and the respect it deserves, we wouldn't be in this mess at the moment."

"The system went into meltdown and local motorists experienced absolute gridlock for about an hour."

"In addition to poor sequencing, which has been improved but not completely resolved, I have had complaints about the visibility of the traffic lights by residents entering

Main North Road from Morrow Ave."

Mr Piccolo wrote to Mr Knoll following the opening, citing the "considerable negative feedback" in relation to the sequencing of the lights.

Numerous comments echoing Mr Piccolo's concern on behalf of the community were left on his Facebook page, which serves as a regular platform for discussion between residents on local issues.

One of the most consistent complaints online was the congestion caused by the short green light sequence, which attracted considerable ire from local residents.

"Trying to turn right is so frustrating, the lights go green then [two] seconds later they are yellow and if you have an inattentive driver you are stuck," said Sarah Somerville from Gawler East.

"The lights at Morrow St turning left onto Main North Rd [are] a nightmare, only two to three cars at a time can turn left, [depending] on how fast the front car is turning, before the arrow turns orange," said Deborah Moffatt of Evanston Park.



Local MP Tony Piccolo at the controversial Tulloch Road intersection.

Mr Piccolo said temporary sensors will be put in place until road works are completed in two months' time.

"The unveiling of the lights at Main

North and Potts Roads have shown an embarrassing lack of foresight throughout the implementation of this plan, and the Minister must accept responsibility."

NORTHERN CONNECTOR ROAD OPENING WELCOMED



(From left) Local MP Tony Piccolo at the opening of the Northern Connector Road with SA Labor Leader Peter Malinauskas, Member for Ramsay Zoe Bettison and Federal Member for Spence Nick Champion.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo has welcomed the official opening of the Northern Connector Road, which commenced under the former State Labor Government.

Mr Piccolo said the connector will certainly improve travel times to those trying to get goods and services to and from the port.

"Reduced travelling time for transport operators helps keep costs down," said Mr Piccolo.

"People in the Light electorate will also generally benefit from the opening of the connector as it reduces congestion on Pt Wakefield Road.

"The reduced travelling times may spur more people to come and live in the electorate as it is often a key consideration.

"It is especially pleasing as it is a project that was initiated by the previous State Labor Government with a commitment

from the (then) Abbott Liberal Government.

"While the opening is good news, the key question for the Marshall Liberal Government is what's next?

"The Northern Connector project supported 480 jobs during the construction."

Mr Piccolo said there is a noticeable lack of infrastructure projects in the pipeline to fill the void left by this project.

"Just last week, Infrastructure Australia released its new priority list, which showed no new South Australian projects have been included on the list," he said.

"The list also revealed no South Australian projects are listed on the High Priority List and just one project (Eyre Infrastructure Project) is listed on the Priority list."

"The Federal Government is calling for shovel ready projects, but where's the Marshall Liberal Government?"

PETITION BACKS NEWTON BLVD EXTENSION

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo has joined forces with community advocate Shaun Reardon and numerous City of Playford councillors to lobby the State Government to extend Newton Boulevard immediately to improve road safety in the Munno Para and Munno Para West area.

Mr Reardon has organised a petition on behalf of residents living in the greater Munno Para area which will be tabled in State Parliament by Mr Piccolo when sittings resume.

Cr Gay Smallwood-Smith has backed the petition, stating that "people power" works.

The extension of Newton Boulevard from Mark Oliphant College and Peachey Rd to Stebonheath Rd is part

of the Playford Alive Master Plan and a responsibility of the State Government through Renewal SA.

Playford Alive is a joint project between Renewal SA, SA Housing Authority and the City of Playford.

"It appears that Renewal SA are scheduled to extend Newton Blvd for a portion (westerly direction towards Stebonheath Rd for approximately 250 metres) this financial year as part of their next stage 10 release," he explained.

"However, the remainder (i.e. connection to Stebonheath Rd) is not programmed within the next 5 years."

Cr Clint Marsh said that "the State Government need to start delivering basic infrastructure to growth areas in the City of Playford."



Shaun Reardon presents the petition to Tony Piccolo alongside members of the City of Playford Council at Newton Boulevard.

Cr Marsh's comments were echoed by Cr Akram Arifi who said that "the Newton Blvd extension will definitely help reduce congestion along Curtis Road and will provide much needed relief for local

residents, offering easier access to Mark Oliphant College and to other amenities."

Cr Marilyn Baker added that "this piece of infrastructure is long overdue to enable the completion of our connectivity in this area."

PLANNING CODE CHANGES ERODE CONSUMER RIGHTS

The new Planning and Design Code will continue to strip away consumer rights when dealing with real estate transactions unless urgent changes are made to the reporting and disclosure requirements under the Land and Business (Sale & Conveyancing) Act 1994.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo is calling on the Marshall Liberal Government to urgently review Form 1 for selling real property to protect consumers and consider the impacts of the Planning and Design Code.

“Given that the Planning and Design Code will replace development plans, which will be repealed, it is my understanding that the introduction of the Code will only further erode consumer rights when it comes to the purchasing of real estate,” said Mr Piccolo.

“The Form 1 has not been updated since introduction of the current format in 1994, becoming more onerous, less relevant and less understandable for both vendors and purchasers.”

Mr Piccolo has written to the Deputy Premier and Minister for Consumer Business Services to call for an independent review and to raise industry concerns regarding Form 1, which a vendor must provide to the purchaser when selling real property.

Many forms include inaccurate and potentially misleading information due to the complexity of Form 1, either directly or by omission, which creates problems in the property transaction process for all involved.

The review must work with industry and local government to support councils to meet their obligations [under Section 7



Local lawyer and conveyancer Leon Budden consults with Mr Tony Piccolo.

of the Land and Business (Sale and Conveyancing Act 1994)].

Partner at Gawler based law and conveyancing firm Budden Law, Mr Leon Budden, has described Form 1 as “an incredibly difficult and complex document.”

“It is now routine for errors to be

found in the Form 1, not as a result of deception or lack of professionalism, but often due to the complexity and the desire to keep the costs of production down to a minimum,” Mr Budden said.

“As a result, the Courts are often forced to preside over matters which stem from issues created by the

production and serving of the Form 1, increasing costs and exposing normal South Australians to the high costs and delay of the legal system.

“Having practised in the area for many years I don’t know of any conveyancer or solicitor who has not faced a legal issue arising from a Form 1.”

CONFUSION OVER THREATENING LAND TAX AUDIT LETTERS

Local investors have said that the Marshall Liberal Government’s decision to conduct a land tax audit during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been compounded by its poor execution, is adding insult to the injury caused by the draconian changes to land tax.

Letters were sent out by Revenue SA seeking to clarify land ownership information following the Government’s controversial moves to implement new tax reforms.

Eagle Foundry Bed and Breakfast co-owner Mr Gary Iremonger said “not only have they hit us hard with additional land tax, while giving shopping centre owners big tax cuts, now all this paper work is just adding more costs when COVID-19 has had a massive negative effect on our income.”

The sudden rush of respondents to the letters caused all operations to cease, with servers buckling under the pressure of limited bandwidth, leaving the

Government and its embattled Treasurer Rob Lucas red-faced.

Mr Lucas stated that extra computer servers and telephone operators would be added to help support the failed system but refused to entertain suggestions that the Government were wrong to send letters out to taxpayers during the health and economic crisis.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo said his office had received many calls from ordinary people confused and distressed after receiving the officious letters which appeared to have an underlying threatening tone.

“To compound the confusion caused by the faulty technology, it’s being done in the middle of a global pandemic when a large number of property and landowners are being urged by the Government to spend their time negotiating rental discounts with their tenants” Mr Piccolo said.

“It’s an outrage that these people, much

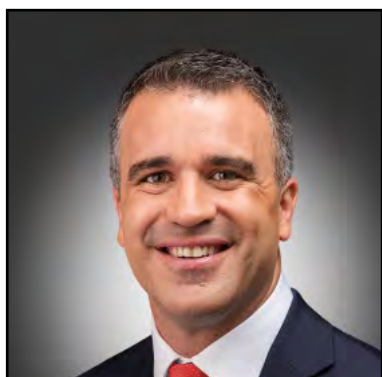


Tony Piccolo MP with Eagle Foundry Bed and Breakfast Owners Leonie and Gary Iremonger.

of whose time is already devoted to coping with the effects of the COVID-19 crisis, are now embroiled in a farce of the greatest proportion orchestrated by a Government who is out of touch with ordinary people.”

Under pressure from the Labor Shadow Treasurer, Mr Stephen Mullighan, the Government appear to have confirmed that the late lodgement of the forms will not incur penalties.

OPINION: COUNTRY COMMUNITIES STAY STRONG WITH LOCAL PAPERS



Peter Malinauskas
SA Labor Leader

In extraordinary times we seek comfort in familiarity, routine and the ordinary.

Phoning a friend or family member, going for a walk in the morning, and picking up the local paper at the shop.

Just weeks ago, these were the simplest of acts; now, in this new COVID-19 world, they might be the highlight of our day.

It's not surprising to hear our State's regional communities are feeling a little removed from the information flow around COVID-19.

South Australian country newspapers have taken up the challenge, continuing to deliver vital information through a local lens during this time.

Regional papers have always been fierce and vital advocates, and a significant employer, for their respective communities.

Their importance is only amplified during this global crisis.

Some regional newspapers have been forced to shut their doors at this time and it is likely more may follow.

We are calling on the State Government to do everything it can to ensure country papers remain afloat throughout this crisis and beyond.

Your local regional paper is your trusted source for delivering tough but necessary content, along with offering the familiarity of seeing local faces on the front page, the routine of reading the Letters to the Editor and the seemingly ordinary task of flicking through the weekend footy scores.

I've always admired the relationships regional communities have with their local paper: a physical representation of a strong community spirit.

Country South Australia is well-known for its resilience and ability to pull together through hardship.

Our State's regions may be far from the resources of metropolitan centres, but what they have in spades is community spirit.

COVID-19 is a hardship the likes of which none of us have seen before. Regardless of your postcode, we are all South Australians and I have absolutely no doubt we will get through this – and we will get through it together.

We give a heartfelt thank you to our regional papers who are able to continue serving their communities and stand ready to throw our support behind those that have closed upon their return.

THE BUNYIP: LIFE, DEATH AND RESURRECTION



Tony Piccolo MP poses with the first copy of *The Bunyip* since its forced closure and subsequent reopening alongside local papers *The Leader* and *The Plains Producer*.

Gawler's famous newspaper *The Bunyip* triumphantly returned to local newsagents in April after a short period out of circulation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, prompting a warm reception from the community.

First published in Gawler in 1863, *The Bunyip* has formed a crucial part of the country news cycle, alongside other papers falling under the Taylor Group, and kept local residents informed on matters relevant to their community.

All 12 employees at the paper, including journalists, salespeople and administration staff, were stood down as the publication closed "indefinitely" following an announcement by Taylor Group managing director Ben Taylor.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo said that the news of *The Bunyip's* closure had affected him and his community deeply during the pandemic.

"I was deeply saddened when I heard last week that my local newspaper, *The Bunyip*, closed its doors after publishing for 157 years," Mr Piccolo said.

"We need *The Bunyip* and other local newspapers to publish again as they provide an important oversight of democracy at the local level and to ensure that governments at all levels make transparent decisions and are accountable for them.

"Local papers reflect the views and values of local communities and ensure that government decisions and laws have social licence.

"Every local community, and particularly those in rural communities, understands that each community has its own culture and values that cannot be conveyed correctly or appropriately in a true sense from other papers.

"I am hopeful that local, state and federal decision-makers will stand up and support our local media in their hour of need so they will be there in our hour of need.

"This is central to our democracy."

However, just eight days later, *The Bunyip's* Facebook page announced that they would return to print on April

22 "following overwhelming support" led by local community leaders such as Mr Piccolo.

Following the news of its return, he praised *The Bunyip* and the community support that led to its revival and heralded the effort as a fantastic victory for the country news cycle.

"It was great to see *The Bunyip* return and play an important role in informing and educating our community and in holding our government to account," Mr Piccolo said.

"Democracy cannot function in our local areas without local media in place to hold them to account for their actions, whether good or bad.

"On behalf of *The Bunyip* and its staff, I would like to thank everyone who played their part in helping to resurrect our beloved local paper.

"In equal measure, I would like to thank *The Bunyip* itself for its high-quality coverage of community issues and hope that it will continue well into the future."

THE BUNYIP: WHAT YOU SAID

The news of *The Bunyip's* revival was music to the ears of Gawler's residents, who expressed their excitement on the Facebook page of local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo.

The constituents in the Light Electorate and long-time supporters of the local paper resoundingly echoed the sentiments of Mr Piccolo, hailing its return as crucial to upholding the local democratic process.

Robyn Cowdrey, of Cockatoo Valley, was one such supporter who stressed its relevance to its readers, stating that "it is important for us to stay connect-

ed as a community during these trying times and the *Bunyip* has been an integral part of ours for decades."

Gawler's Pamela Turner said that "ever since coming to Gawler we have enjoyed getting good local news, plus it builds up a pride in being part of the community."

Beverly Hodge, from Gawler West, explained that she has been a weekly buyer of *The Bunyip* for a long time and although she hadn't done so for quite a while, she "will make a point of buying it again."

Finally, Carol Pieterse, of Gawler Belt,

simply said that she was very "excited to hear our beloved Newspaper the *Bunyip* is back" and was "doing [her] Happy Dance."

Mr Piccolo explained that the outpouring of support by local residents was as good a display as any of the importance of *The Bunyip* to the local communities in which it circulates.

"We knew that *The Bunyip* served a crucial role in delivering local news to local people, so it is fantastic to see these people sharing their positive feelings and experiences to mark its return," Mr Piccolo said.

SERVICE WORKERS REMEMBERED ON ST FLORIAN'S DAY

An informal, impromptu ceremony was held on May 4 in Pioneer Park, Gawler, to mark St Florian's Day.

May 4 is one of the most important days on the calendar for our emergency services, as it marks the feast day of St. Florian, the patron saint of firefighters and other emergency services workers.

Representatives from the Concordia Country Fire Service Brigade (Brigade Captain Robert Borgo), Gawler Metropolitan Fire Service (Senior Firefighter Matthew Williamson), State Emergency Services (John Lawrence) and SA Police (Chief Inspector Shane Addison) laid wreathes alongside local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo.

The Gawler RSL allowed the service to take place at their memorial and they were represented by their Vice President Mr Pat Adams.

Mr Piccolo said only a very simple service was held to mark the occasion because of the COVID-19 health restrictions.

"The ceremony is both a thanksgiving and memorial event held to thank those emergency services workers who help keep our community safe and a memorial to those who have lost their lives in natural disasters, like fires and floods," Mr Piccolo said.

"While initially it was a day of commemoration for fire fighters, in more recent times it has included other emergency services workers as they work closely together during times of crisis.



(From left) Barossa LSA Chief Inspector Shane Addison, Gawler Unit SES Advocate John Lawrence, local MP Tony Piccolo, Concordia CFS Captain Robert Borgo and Senior Firefighter Matthew Williamson at the wreath-laying ceremony.

"Each service might play a different role but are all critical to maintaining community safety.

St. Florian's feast day is also celebrated as International Firefighters' Day, which was instituted in 1999 following the deaths of five firefighters in a wildfire in Linton, Victoria.

Mr Piccolo said that while commemoration services have been held at the national level for some years, no local ceremonies have taken place.

"Plans for a community-based event had commenced early in the year but had to be shelved, as the enormity of the corona virus had become evident."

"I look forward to working with all local emergency services soon to start planning for a bigger community-based event for 2021.

"With a bit more time, we are keen to involve all volunteers and career workers involved in emergency services, including the paramedics and volunteer ambulance officers."

"Services who would like to be involved in the planning and participation of the 2021 ceremony should contact my electorate office as soon as possible.

"This morning's service was an informal impromptu event, to ensure the day was commemorated in some

way."

Mr Piccolo said St. Florian was born around 250 CE in present-day Austria and was responsible for the organisation and training of elite soldiers for the sole purpose of fighting fires.

The day is marked by the adorning of a red and blue ribbon, symbolising the elements of fire and water that firefighters work with.

"On behalf of the community, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to our firefighters and other emergency service workers for all their efforts in protecting us from extreme weather and disasters."

RSL WOMEN'S AUXILIARY CELEBRATES 70 YEARS

The Gawler RSL Women's Auxiliary celebrated their 70th birthday recently with a modest party at the RSL Clubrooms.

The Auxiliary raise valuable funds for charities that support Australian veterans and currently support the Andrew Russell Veteran and Peter Badcoe Centres.

Last year the hardworking group of local women raised about \$10,000 for these two important centres.

In its early days the Auxiliary helped the Gawler RSL with their events and functions and provided support to the families of local veterans but with an aging and declining membership they have focused on fundraising activities.

While in more recent years fundraising has been achieved by games mornings, such as bridge and other card games, held several times a year and attended by members and women from the general community, they still knit and sell poppies and for ANZAC and Remembrance Day to raise funds.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo said he was very proud to be one of the invited guests at the birthday celebration.

Mr Piccolo said the Auxiliary held its inaugural meeting at the R.S.L. Clubrooms on July 11, 1950, on the site where the Northern Market Shopping Centre now



Guests Tony Piccolo MP and Paul Little, President of the Gawler RSL, with members of the Gawler RSL Women's Auxiliary.

stands.

Records of the first minutes at that meeting state "Mrs Poole occupied the chair and told the ladies present that the object of the meeting was to form a Women's Auxiliary Committee to help the R.S.L. members with various functions they may hold in the future."

It goes on to say that "Mrs Poole then

told the ladies that the R.S.L. are holding their Annual Ball on August 8 and would like the ladies to help with the arrangements for supper."

The R.S.L. Ball was one of a number held at the Gawler Institute every winter for many years.

Mr Piccolo said that while the years, with the ageing of members, the

pattern of social activity has changed, but one thing has remained constant: "to do what they can to honour and support our veterans".

There is a strong sense of commitment and community by all the members of the Gawler Auxiliary, numbering 17 presently.

PROUD JEAN CONTINUES TO SALUTE ANZACS



Local resident Jean Evans, 97, displays a red ribbon on her letterbox on ANZAC Day with Tony Piccolo.

ANZAC Day is a time for those in our community to come together and commemorate the lives and efforts of those who fought for our country.

Despite the COVID-19 restrictions preventing the regular ANZAC Day service from being held in Gawler, Jean Evans was one of the many people to pay tribute in her own way.

At 97 years of age, Jean continues to take

pride in her country and celebrate the soldiers who fought for their country, many of whom lost their lives doing so.

Jean is a long-standing member of the Gawler community, having trained here as a nurse in 1942 after growing up in the mid-northern town of Riverton.

She transferred to Adelaide during the Second World War until 1947, assisting in the local hospitals to help wounded soldiers

recover and rehabilitate.

She has since lived here for the majority of her life, continuing to respect the legacy of the ANZACs through her continued commemoration and her membership at the RSL Women's Club branch.

Jean has a greater personal connection to the ANZACs than most, with both of her brothers and her husband serving in the Second World War; one of her brothers, a flight lieutenant, never returned home to Australia.

"[ANZAC Day] brings up a lot of sad memories for me, thinking about my brother who was killed and all the lads that died fighting," she said.

"My parents (and family) were devastated... he was a schoolteacher, but he wanted to be in Borneo to help out the troops. His plane crashed after the War had finished."

The day is very special to Jean, as it enables her to show respect as part of a community to people like her brother who laid down their lives to protect our country.

This ANZAC Day, she was unable to commemorate as she normally

does, with the COVID-19 outbreak forcing people to stay home over the weekend.

"The last two years have been the first that I have missed the dawn service," she expressed with disappointment.

"My husband and I (also) always went down to Adelaide for the Veterans' March."

However, this did not stop her from proudly waving her Australian flag and flying another outside her home.

She also attached a red ribbon to her letterbox to pay tribute to the women who waited for correspondence from their loved ones during wartime.

Jean was greeted by Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo on ANZAC Day, who helped her raise her flag.

"Even at 97 the ANZAC spirit is as strong in Jean as ever, and she remains an ever-present, welcoming fixture in our community," Mr Piccolo said.

"There is no doubt she, among all of us, will always have a special place in her heart for the soldiers, both returned and lost, who bravely

BISCUITS SUPPORT WWG

The War Widows' Guild of South Australia will be a beneficiary of new "Soldiers Oats Biscuits" that have been made in the Adelaide Hills.

The fundraising initiative is the result of research undertaken by Allison Reynolds for her book *Anzac Biscuits: The Power & Spirit of an Everyday National Icon*.

Ms Reynolds approached Lobethal-based Adelaide Hills Foods to see if they would partner with the Guild in a fundraising event.

Local Member of Parliament and Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs Tony Piccolo said the aim of the project was to make a biscuit like those made during World War I.

"There were many food shortages at the time because of the war effort, so many modern-day ANZAC biscuits do not include

the traditional ingredients of the biscuits of the day," said Mr Piccolo.

Mr Piccolo has been working with the War Widows' Guild to promote the sale of the biscuits as they require funds for their support programs for widows.

The War Widows Guild was founded by Jessie Vasey when her husband alerted her to the plight of World War I widows.

Mr Piccolo said when Jessie's own husband was killed during World War II, she came to understand the desperate situation of women widowed through war.

"There was no pension for War Widows at that time, and very little support at all," Mr Piccolo said.

According to current Guild President Jan Milham, Jessie almost single-handedly founded the War Widows' Guild in 1945, a



War Widows' Guild SA Committee Member Jan Grosvenor displays the "Soldiers Oat Biscuits" with local MP Tony Piccolo outside his Electorate Office.

self-help organisation that assisted women widowed through war to come to terms with their loss and sacrifice and to provide for themselves and their children.

Ms Milham said the Guild's motto, "We all belong to each other. We all need each other. It is in serving

each other and in sacrificing for our common good that we are finding our true life", exemplifies the spirit of Jessie Vasey.

"Jessie overcame her despair to become the inspiration that helped heal so many other widows," Ms Milham said.

GAWLER PAYS TRIBUTE

Despite the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, many members of the Gawler community commemorated the lives of the soldiers who have fought for our country in their own special way on ANZAC Day.

The usual annual service in Gawler, which typically attracts somewhere between 5,000 and 10,000 attendees, was not able to be held this year due to health concerns.

Residents who paid their respects at home included Janet Delaney, who stood under her flag with lanterns and candles alongside her neighbours (in their respective homes) listening to the Triple M broadcast.

Aaron McCulloch stood outside his parents' house, listening to the national dawn service, and about eight people in his street were doing the same.

Conor Roche, a member of the town band, stood with other members at the end of their driveways to pay their respects, with a number of them performing The Last Post.

Maurie McKenzie from Gawler West and her neighbours stood on their driveways at 5.55am, and she made the comment that it was wonderful to see the dotted candlelight down the road as The Last Post was played.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo expressed his gratitude to those who took the time out to pay respects in



RSL Member Kerry Barrett, RSL President Paul Little and Tony Piccolo at an ANZAC Day vigil at Pioneer Park.

their own way.

"I would like to thank all of the people who went to the effort of commemorating the lives of the ANZACs and other servicemen and women in their own home," Mr Piccolo said.

"The amount of people who did so made up for the unfortunate lack of a public service and it meant a great deal to veterans and their families in continuing their legacy."

A WAVE OF APPRECIATION FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS

The local community was urged to wave their appreciation to a volunteer in their neighbourhood during National Volunteer Week, which commenced on May 18.

With many volunteer-based events postponed or cancelled, communities are being encouraged to find new ways to thank volunteers through the use of social media or other ways that comply with social distancing rules.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo said there is no doubt that volunteers form the backbone of so many of our local organisations, so we should take any opportunity we get to celebrate their contributions to our community.

“Tragically, the restrictions imposed to cope with the COVID-19 pandemic have meant that many of these local organisations that utilise or rely on volunteers have been significantly negatively impacted by the outbreak,” said Mr Piccolo.

“While many volunteers are unable to provide their services to organisations, you can help recognise them by posing with a smiley face drawn on your hand to wave to our volunteers using the hashtags #NWW2020 and #waveforvolunteers.”

Local service club, Gawler Apex, has felt the full brunt of the COVID-19

quarantine restrictions, with most of their activity unable to go ahead.

Apex’s community work varies from fundraising for local causes, catering, assisting in home renovations and rubbish collections amongst many others. Fundraising is critical to covering the cost of these services.

“Much of the fundraising has stopped... most of the fundraising we do carries the club,” said Club Secretary Mr Leon Budden.

However, Mr Budden was optimistic for the future, stating that “the hope is (for the organisation) to return to usual” once restrictions are lifted.”

The Rotary Club of Gawler Light has managed to continue to meet via Zoom, but unfortunately many of their projects have been put on hold.

“Around three quarters of the club are involved in the Zoom meetings, which has been a relative success [and] we can still do administrative stuff,” Club Secretary David Cockshell said.

Mr Piccolo said the absence of activity has emphasised the immense importance of volunteers to those running these organisations, even more so than was already known.

Another casualty of the COVID-19 pandemic is the popular Sunday Gawler Railway Station market which plans to return once the restrictions are lifted.

The market is a major fundraiser for the Lions Club, which invests in a range of community projects.



Tony Piccolo shows his wave for volunteers during National Volunteer Week in May.

ERIN ON THE SIDE OF COMMUNITY SPIRIT



Erin Carpenter, Chair of the Volunteer Management Committee for the Gawler Community Childcare Centre and Pre School, receives her certificate from Tony Piccolo.

To celebrate National Volunteer Week, Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo has decided to shine a spotlight on those in our community who generously provide their time to support local businesses and organisations.

Erin Carpenter is the Chair of the Volunteer Management Committee for the Gawler Community Child Care Centre and Pre School, and was nominated for her continued contribution to the Centre and the families that it supports.

In her capacity as Chair of the Committee, Erin leads a team of fellow volunteers to help manage and guide the direction of the Centre, as well as being responsible for the financial viability of the centre.

Despite the extra responsibility placed on her, Erin manages to balance this with life as a

teacher at Kapunda High School and a mother to three kids, including young twin boys.

She is well respected and loved within the community for her great sense of humour at monthly Committee meetings and the compassion she has for local families.

“Erin is a wonderful servant of the Gawler community who helps brighten the day of those she comes in contact with,” Mr Piccolo said.

“Her work as Chair of the Volunteer Management Committee is no small feat, especially given her roles as teacher and mother, so for that she deserves immense respect.”

“On behalf of the Gawler Community Child Care Centre and its families, I would like to thank Erin, along with all the volunteers who help her manage the Centre, for her continued outstanding contribution to the community.”

JOSIE TAKES THE WHEEL

Josie Scaffidi was nominated for recognition by the wider community for the volunteer work she continues to do for the Gawler Health Service (GHS).

Josie has been volunteering at the Health Service for two and a half years in a variety of capacities, with her current role seeing her help out elderly women in the community with their shopping.

She drives a bus around to each of their houses to pick them up for the shopping trip, before helping them home and transporting their groceries and other items inside.

She sought a voluntary position at the GHS out of a desire to give back to the community, and despite the lack of vacancies in the bus service and wards, she was more than happy to assist in meal preparation for local Aboriginal

families.

“What’s important about what volunteers do (in this capacity) is that there are a lot of older people who don’t really have anyone else that we are able to help out,” Josie said.

“I enjoy meeting all the ladies, they’re great to talk to and spend time with.”

Mr Piccolo praised the work of Josie and other volunteers within local health services, calling their contribution to the community “essential.”

“People like Josie are amongst the most valuable assets that our community boasts: those that generously give their time to people who are less fortunate,” Mr Piccolo said.

“In the case of Josie, she takes pride in her volunteer work and enjoys the opportunity to help out where she can.”



GHS volunteer Josie Scaffidi is presented her certificate by Tony Piccolo.

BRAVES SHOOTING COMMUNITY GOALS

A group of volunteers for Special Olympics SA were nominated for recognition by one of their members, Gill Taylor, for their ongoing commitment to supporting athletes with intellectual disabilities, Down syndrome and autism.

Gill met Bec Shoumack and Lynda Fulwood through their children's participation in the program and quickly became very close friends.

They have since devoted six years to volunteering with the athletes as part of the Northern Braves, which has grown considerably from the six members it contained when Gill started.

Three or four years ago, Wendy Lockyer joined the ranks at Special Olympics SA, originally as a guest netball coach but soon decided to stay on.

Now, with a greater number of athletes in the program from Barossa, Gawler and the Northern Suburbs, the team

helps conduct tenpin bowling, athletics, swimming, basketball and other mixed sports.

Special Olympics SA continues to foster an inclusive environment despite the restrictions placed on them by the COVID-19 outbreak, as everyone has kept in touch and plans to resume training as soon as it is safe to do so.

The Braves have also involved themselves with other community causes, donating backpacks filled with school supplies earlier in the year to support families affected by the bushfires throughout summer.

"I am truly grateful to have met these three awesome women; we are all the best of friends and I would love to see them recognised for what they do," Gill said.

Mr Piccolo said that it was important to recognise Gill, Bec, Lynda and Wendy for their continued efforts in supporting athletes with disabilities and their families.

"Creating an inclusive environment that serves as a community family is no easy task, but the Northern Braves have used their various skills to work as a team and ensure the best possible club for its members," he said.

"Providing members of our community who have an intellectual disability with a space where they can express themselves both socially and through exercise is a fantastic local service that does not go unnoticed."

"On behalf of the members of the Northern Braves and their families, as well as those in Barossa, Gawler and the Northern Suburbs, I would like to thank Gill, Bec, Lynda and Wendy for their wonderful contribution to our community."



(From left) Bec Shoumack, Wendy Lockyer, Gill Taylor and Lynda Fulwood stand with their certificate alongside Tony Piccolo.

GAWLER TRUSTS IN JEFF



Gawler National Trust Museum volunteer Jeff Turner displays his NVW certificate with Tony Piccolo.

Jeff Turner was nominated by his daughter, Michelle Shippen, for his long-standing commitment to volunteering at the Gawler National Trust Museum.

Jeff has been lending a hand

at the National Trust for ten years, performing a wide variety of roles at the Museum in his time there, although he has been volunteering for far longer than just the past decade.

He has volunteered as a

tennis coach, teaching younger children, and was a participant in the local neighbourhood watch program.

His primary role at the National Trust is as a tour host for groups of schoolchildren, where he has played a role in shaping the curriculum and has arranged for boxes of items from the National War Memorial to be sent to local schools as learning tools for its students.

Alongside preparing displays, Jeff is a researcher and now a published author thanks to his book *This'll do*, which explores the lives of post-Second World War migrants who lived at the Willaston Migrant Workers' Hostel.

Jeff was also the recipient of the Order of Australia

Medal in 2019 for service to community history, recognising his tremendous commitment to informing the Gawler community about its migrant past.

Due to the restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 crisis, Jeff has branched out to start a podcast on Gawler's migration at the age of 79, immortalising his research efforts on the internet and opening them up to a new audience.

The podcast, which focuses on the stories of some of Gawler's migrant families, is set to be released in the coming months.

"He's always had a love of history," Ms Shippen said.

"I can remember him reading things like books on Winston

Churchill when I was a kid, that was his light reading material."

"He's never asked for any recognition, he just does it to help people."

Mr Piccolo praised Jeff's community spirit and desire to help others learn, calling his work a "wonderful community service."

"We are greatly indebted to Jeff for his constant and meaningful contributions to the community, whether researching the town's history or imparting his wisdom to our children," Mr Piccolo said.

"On behalf of the Gawler National Trust Museum and the wider Gawler community, I would like to thank Jeff and recognise his efforts as a volunteer worker."

HEART AND SOUL OF THE COMMUNITY

Nominated by Melissa Good, Heart and Soul Group are a not-for-profit organisation who organise and provide weekly food for vulnerable families and those in need.

With free food market days in Hackham, Queenstown, Elizabeth and Two Wells, the volunteer group ensures the best selection of food is offered, from fresh fruit and vegetables to baked and pantry items.

Heart and Soul Group was established in 2015 by Eman Rahim, who sought to create welcoming, inclusive and safe

environments for those in the community seeking out help.

Eman experienced this in her early life when a series of unfortunate circumstances led her to shoplift in order to feed her young child, a moment which she credits for turning her life around.

Having grown the not-for-profit from its humble beginnings to now offer four different weekly free food markets, Heart and Soul Group is supported by both major supermarkets and other food suppliers.

The organisation's overall

objective, as stated on its website, is "redistributing complimentary or low-cost food to the community," which is achieved not only through the gracious donations of these food suppliers, but the efforts of Eman and her team of volunteers who work tirelessly to help better the community.

"Heart and Soul Group serves as a crucial part of the lives of many disadvantaged families and the work they do is so important to the community," Mr Piccolo said.

"We all need to support those



Heart and Soul Group COO Margaret Dixon and CEO/Founder Eman Rahim collect their certificate.

in need within our community and Eman and her team of volunteers continue to do so both

emotionally and with their generous food donations to foster better nutrition."

SOUTH EAST COUNCIL AIR CONCERNS

Councils on the Limestone Coast aired their concerns about the challenges facing the region to the State Labor Opposition during a three-day visit by the Shadow Cabinet.

Shadow Minister for Local Government Tony Piccolo explained that councils took the opportunity to brief the Shadow Cabinet about issues inhibiting the development of the region.

The Shadow Cabinet received presentations from the City of Mt Gambier, the District Council of Grant and Wattle Range Council in the City Council Chambers, while Tatiara, Robe, Kingston and Naracoorte Lucindale Councils presented in Naracoorte.

Mr Piccolo said the shortage of affordable housing was raised by several councils as holding back the region as local companies were finding it hard to recruit staff because they have appropriate accommodation in the region.

"With the region trying to grow their population base, the lack of housing options is a break on economic development in the area," said Mr Piccolo.

"It is sad that jobs exist but can't be filled as a growing population would make other businesses more viable in the

region."

Local government leaders in the region also expressed their concerns about the downgrading of TAFE in the region which is forcing young people to move away.

"The region provides many job opportunities in agriculture, forestry and associated industries yet lack the TAFE and University presence critical to the ongoing development of skills in the region," added Mr Piccolo.

"Forestry and associated industries play an important role in the region, yet I am advised that it is not possible to undertake forestry studies in the region, with jobs filled by people from interstate or overseas.

"Our young people deserve better than this."

Mr Piccolo stressed the Limestone Coast is making a very positive contribution to the economic wellbeing of the State but is being held back by the lack of critical social infrastructure required to underpin such development.

"Despite the rhetoric, the Marshall Liberal Government appears to have turned their back on this important region," said Mr Piccolo.



(From left) Naracoorte Lucindale Mayor Erika Vickey, Naracoorte Lucindale CEO Trevor Smart, Tony Piccolo MP, Tatiara Mayor Graham Excell, Robe CEO James Holyman, Robe Mayor Alison Nunan and Kingston CEO Nat Trager at Naracoorte Lucindale Council Chambers.

"There appears to be a lack of understanding or commitment of the needs of this region.

"Targeted investment by the State Government could make a significant difference to economic development in the area."

Mr Piccolo said the discussions with local government were very productive and provided valuable insights into the needs of the region, with coastal protection and waste management among the issues raised at the forums

held.

He said local councils were angered by the fact that cost shifting by the Marshall Liberal government was having a huge negative impact on council budgets while they struggle to address serious coastal and waste management issues.

"State Labor is committed to ensuring that our policies for the future will be grounded in the experience and aspirations of the local people," Mr Piccolo explained.

MUSEUM AN ODE TO PAST FIREFIGHTING VOLUNTEERS

The SA Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum in Naracoorte plays an important role in educating residents, particularly younger people, about the development of our volunteer-based firefighting service in South Australia.

Visiting the museum as part of the SA Labor Shadow Cabinet visit to the South East, Member of State Parliament Tony Piccolo said that the museum is instrumental in teaching future generations of the important role that volunteers have played in protecting our local rural communities.

In addition to inspecting the first stage of the museum, Mr Piccolo also viewed stage two plans for a second building for administration, reception, meeting rooms and further equipment displays freeing up room next door to showcase the further collection of vehicles, currently in storage.

"This was a project I was pleased to support as Minister for Emergency Services in the previous Labor Government, so it is great to see this museum now open to the

public and growing," he said.

The museum is home to a fascinating collection of historical vehicles and historical firefighting items from across the state, including a firefighting trailer donated by the Greenock CFS in May 2019 who are situated close to Gawler.

The museum site also includes a memorial to our fallen firefighters, providing a place for people to pay their respects.

"Whether fighting grass, scrub or forest fires, trying to save a home, attending motor accidents or providing support during extreme weather events, our CFS volunteers are there to help us," Mr Piccolo said.

"The opening of the SA Volunteer Fire Fighters Museum is a wonderful achievement, and provides a home to recognise, promote, conserve and showcase the unique history of the volunteer fire service in our state.

"The museum is a testament to the hard work and tenacity of a number



Tony Piccolo with Museum Chairman Mr Rex Hall AFSM, ESM in front of a Binnum 37 truck.

of volunteers under the leadership of Naracoorte volunteer firefighter Mr Rex Hall who, alongside his fellow volunteers, have done a great job in bringing the museum to life."

Mr Hall, the Museum Chairman,

presented Mr Piccolo with a copy of a book, published in February of this year, which delves into the history of the museum to commemorate the official opening of the Stage 1 building.

TONY TAKES IT TO THE SOUTH EAST

Enjoy some images of Tony's recent trip to the South East of the State, including Keith, Mt Gambier, Naracoorte and Robe



Tony at the Keith RSL with Members of the Keith Lions Club.



Tony with Members of the Mt Gambier RSL.



Tony speaks at the Mt Gambier Community Meeting alongside SA Labor Leader Peter Malinauskas.

RSL AND ROBE TO RECOVERY SUPPORT OUR VETERANS

RSL clubs in smaller communities in the South East region are combining with other community organisations to keep their clubs alive and viable.

Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs Mr Tony Piccolo met with RSL clubs and their members across the surrounding area as part of a visit to the region by the State Labor Shadow Ministry.

The Lions Club of Keith has joined forces with the local RSL Club to share facilities, a partnership which Mr Piccolo said has helped the Keith RSL to survive and provide social occasions for local veterans.

"It is great to see the greater community support our veterans who have put their lives on the line for the benefit of the nation," Mr Piccolo said.

Naracoorte's RSL has formed a strong relationship with the local Bowling Club and, in a similar fashion to Keith, the two also share facilities.

"The relationship with the Bowling Club helps the RSL to support local veterans through a range of activities," Mr Piccolo explained.

The RSL Club in Mt Gambier has gone from strength to strength, with the club supported by funds from the community club run by the local RSL.

"The Mt Gambier RSL is reasonably



Tony Piccolo meets with members of the Robe to Recovery Committee.

unique in South Australia, having a steady income stream from the community club they operate," Mr Piccolo said.

"They provide a range of advocacy services, which are critical to the wellbeing of local veterans, and their museum is one of the best I have seen in South Australia."

In addition to speaking with local RSL Club presidents, Mr Piccolo also met with members of the Robe to Recovery

(R2R) committee which provide unique holiday opportunities to veterans.

R2R serves as an opportunity for veterans and their partner or family to take time out from the pressures of day to day living in a supportive community that offers more than just a place to stay, with more than 30 different accommodation types in Robe available.

"The program hosts 30 to 35 Veterans and their families each year," Mr Piccolo

said.

"We thank Australia's serving men and women, past and present, for the selfless work they do to protect our borders and keep us safe.

"It is great to see our community acknowledge and support our veterans."

The program, which originated in Robe, is set to expand to a number of communities across Australia.

ROYAL COMMISSION INTO VETERANS' SUICIDE BACKED

A move by local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo and SA Labor to initiate a Royal Commission into the ongoing challenge and tragedy of veterans' suicide has been rejected by the Marshall Liberal Government.

The move was inspired by Julie-Ann Finney, whose petition to the Commonwealth Minister for Veterans Darren Chester to conduct a Royal Commission into the issue attracted over 313,000 signatures.

Ms Finney's son David, a former Australian Navy sailor, took his own life after a long and painful battle with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) following 20 years of service.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced in February that a permanent national commissioner would be appointed to investigate suicides among veterans and Defence Force personnel,

but this still falls short of the requirements to address the issue adequately.

As Shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Mr Piccolo passionately supports Ms Finney's calls for a Royal Commission, stating that the system is in dire need of improvement in a variety of areas.

"The veteran's support system is complicated and is urgently in need of a Royal Commission examination to drive much needed reform to simplify and improve services," Mr Piccolo said.

"In April SA Labor moved a motion to support Adelaide mother Julie-Anne Finney's calls for a Royal Commission into veteran's suicide, but unfortunately that motion failed to garner the support of the State Government.

"Greater support for ex service personnel is also urgently required for their transition into the aged-care system."

SA Labor's position is in line with a



Julie-Ann Finney stands with Tony Piccolo at the National War Memorial.

motion recently passed by The Senate, supported by Federal Labor and all the minor parties, calling on the Morrison

Government to establish a Royal Commission into veterans' suicide.



Tony visits the CFS Volunteers Museum at Naracoorte.



Tony with Naracoorte Lucindale Mayor Erika Vickey at the Naracoorte Community Meeting.



Tony with the President of the Naracoorte RSL, Rob Crow.

SCHOOL ZONE CONFUSION

The Marshall Liberal Government does not appear to have been upfront with their consultation process for the new Angle Vale B-12 school, raising concerns about how genuine they are about what students and their families think about zoning.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo led the calls for clarity on how the Government planned to implement the new school zones and the effect it would have on the local community, believing the zone proposal raised more questions than answers.

“Will the new zone split families up?”, he questioned.

“Will changes in transport routes have a negative impact on nearby schools, including the larger Mark Oliphant and Gawler and District Colleges?

“It appears that consultation with the community only formally commenced on 7 May and will close on 19 May.”

Despite The Advertiser revealing in early August of 2019 that the Government was moving to compulsorily acquire land near Angle Vale, no form of consultation process had begun by March of this year.

“We are soon to begin consultation on what the new zones will look like for the two new schools that are being built in Aldinga and Angle Vale,” Marshall Liberal Government Education Minister John Gardner said in Parliament on March 5.

However, a screenshot taken from the website on 24 April shows that no such offer was advertised at that time, instead stating that feedback would be provided by “education staff at neighbouring schools in Term 2, 2020.”



Local MP Tony Piccolo at the site of the new Angle Vale B-12 school, which has garnered controversy through its lack of community consultation.

This means that the Government has provided as little as 12 days for the wider school community to comment on the proposal.

Mr Piccolo said that what appears to be lacking is any plan or proposal to provide public transport to and from the new school.

“If the Minister expects parents to make decisions about which school to send their children to, you would think transport would be an important consideration,” he stated.

“What is the Marshall Liberal Government’s plan for public transport?

“Some local residents have stated they have not been consulted with and are concerned about potential risks to the school including dust storms and fires.

“You would think the Government would consult with local Members of Parliament, but both the Member for Taylor, Jon Gee, and myself have not been consulted on a \$260m plus long-term piece of critical infrastructure.

“The zone announcement appears to be a final decision rather than a draft inviting genuine community participation.

“During the turbulent time that is the COVID-19 pandemic, you would think that the Marshall Liberal Government would

have provided schools and families with more time to consider the proposal, given the shutdowns and restrictions already placed on schools.”

“If the Marshall Liberal Government is genuine about their proposed consultation they would have published their plan.

“This decision appears to lack transparency and appears to be based on the announce and defend philosophy.

“As the formal process has now ended, I would encourage concerned people to raise their views with the Member for Taylor’s office or my office.”

ST BRIGID’S TURNS 50

Local primary college St Brigid’s Catholic School celebrated its 50th anniversary in June of this year, whose spirits remain high despite the COVID-19 pandemic limiting the scope of their celebrations.

Originally opening in 1857 as St Joseph’s, St Brigid’s came under the leadership of both the Josephite Sisters, including St Mary MacKillop, and the Good Samaritan Sisters throughout its first century of existence, catering both to primary and secondary education at various points.

The school was closed in 1964 after Gawler’s population stagnated but reopened six years later after the construction of new classrooms and an administration building, with leadership being handed to those outside the religious orders, where it has stood for the past 50 years.

St Brigid’s Principal Paul Bennett explained that there is much to look forward to in the near future of the college, with a number of state-of-the-art facilities either currently or soon to be in construction.

“As we celebrate our 50th anniversary at Evanston, we look excitedly towards

the opening of our new dynamic Learning Pods with their flowing and Reggio Emilia-inspired interior environments,” Mr Bennett said.

“This will provide a variety of sub-divided, purposeful and inclusive spaces that include shared Imagination Makerspaces, shared Learning Neighbourhoods, Sensory Pods, Media Pods, a shared Conference Space as well as an Outdoor Learning Kitchen.

“These will bring the continuous opportunity for the students to further create, explore and discover as part of their new resource rich, student-centred and supportive environments.”

Despite the health restrictions imposed by the ongoing pandemic, St Brigid’s has found a way to celebrate its major milestone in the form of a podcast.

“It has been pleasing that we recently recorded a terrific podcast involving original pupils, former parents and staff who all shared their love of the community that is St Brigid’s Catholic School,” Mr Bennett said.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo praised the work of Mr Bennett and the wider St Brigid’s community for their efforts throughout COVID-19.



Tony Piccolo with St Brigid’s Catholic School Principal Paul Bennett and students outside the campus, who are celebrating 50 years this year.

“It is always positive to see the ways in which people come together to persevere through adversity, and that is exactly what has happened at St Brigid’s,” Mr Piccolo stated.

“The restrictions have not dampened the mood around the 50th anniversary of the school and there is plenty to look forward to in the near future with their many ongoing construction efforts.”

TRINITY TURN TO INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

The recent expansions to Trinity College have left a lasting impression on staff, students and their families as they look to embrace their strengths to ensure a valuable and unique experience through the Innovation and Creativity School.

The brand-new School, which opened earlier this year, boasts numerous state-of-the-art facilities including a sunken gallery, 360° projection room, virtual and augmented reality, podcast and radio studio and art and design studios.

Head of Trinity College Mr Nick Hatelly described the new building as the “academicStarplex,” as it is an environment that caters to students who may not fit into the typical academic mould and seek to gain practical experience in technology or design for future career prospects.

The building and its environment allow staff to encourage the notion of thinking creatively without being limited by surroundings, which Mr Hatelly believes is the reason the School can benefit anyone who uses it regardless of their preferred

career path. Trinity College’s facilities now set it apart considerably from most schools in the state, particularly those amongst the inner-city elite, and the expansion reflects its decision to embrace what makes it unique and special.

Mr Hatelly cites an alternative, high quality education with endless opportunities to develop complementary practical skills for students’ chosen career paths as the College’s standout quality that ensures it gets the best its staff and students have to offer.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo commended Trinity’s expansion to become more inclusive, calling the new facilities “breathtaking.”

“Trinity College is now indisputably one of the most unique schools in South Australia, with its facilities offering students the chance to gain invaluable insight into the working world from an early age,” Mr Piccolo said.

“Catering to those who are more design- or technology-inclined is a

brilliant decision, as practical experience at school can boost their enthusiasm and overall skill level by the time they graduate and beyond.”

“Parents and friends of the College would be extremely impressed by the strides it has taken, and I would like to thank them for their continued support of students in our local community.”



(Clockwise from right) Trinity College’s Sunken Gallery, Art Room and Podcast Studio.

GDC SET FOR \$10 MILLION UPGRADE



Looking forward to the \$10 million upgrade are (from left) reception students Alyssa Taylor and Taite Turner, Tony Piccolo MP, College Principal Angie Michael and Year 7 students Jack Perry and Skye Bradley.

Gawler and District College is set to undergo a major redevelopment as a result of a \$10 million commitment made by the previous State Labor Government.

The project recently received approval from the Public Works Committee of State Parliament with work expected to commence within the next few months.

College Principal Ms Angie Michael told the Committee that the College community is “extremely excited about the pending \$10 million build from a whole community perspective.”

“What we are looking at now are new builds that will predominantly focus around our secondary area but that will bring the whole site in line in terms of a new build,” Ms Michael said.

“From a student perspective, we are looking at a whole range of new general learning areas.”

The College’s developments will include a special unit that accommodates modern learning, including greater facilities for students with disabilities, and a pavilion which will essentially serve as a covered outdoor learning area.

Speaking at the Committee, local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo said

he welcomed the parental portal and other developments, which he believes will foster more interactions between the school and the community, but also voiced concerns over the running of the operation.

“My understanding is that the cost of the removal of asbestos from the site and from the buildings, and also the removal of transportable buildings that have been removed and replaced, has been picked up by the school’s internal budget, not by the project cost,” Mr Piccolo said.

“We have a school here which is financially doing it tough and serves a broad community which has limited resources and those resources are now going to be used for part of this project, which is disappointing.

“Also, one of the concerns I have is that some of the money to accommodate the new additional classrooms has been redirected from some upgrades of some of the older buildings.

“I have also been made aware that some of the buildings which have been recently upgraded for STEM facilities are actually already showing cracks and decay, so one has to actually start asking at what point some of these buildings need to be demolished and actually rebuilt.”

ST. PAT’S CELEBRATES 1,000TH APPRENTICE SIGN-UP



Local MP Tony Piccolo celebrates St Patrick’s 1000th apprenticeship milestone with (from left) students Charlotte Simmons, Jordan Ranasinghe, Christopher Skelton and College Principal Danny Deptula.

St Patrick’s Technical College celebrated the remarkable milestone of 1000 apprenticeship and traineeship sign-ups in South Australia in March.

Three successful Year 12 Metals & Engineering students, Charlotte Simmons, Jordan Ranasinghe and Christopher Skelton, shared the title of 1000th Apprentice milestone.

The students, who have since commenced their trade in welding with employer Century Engineering, were introduced to the College community and several guests at a special ceremony held at the college in March.

Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo, who attended the ceremony, said he had been advised that as part of their school-based apprenticeships, the students will study Year 12 with the College, while at the same time studying a Certificate III in Engineering – Fabrication.

“St Patrick’s has a very successful record in gaining apprenticeships and traineeships for their students,” Mr Piccolo said.

“Importantly, while the college focuses on skill development, they also invest in the student as a ‘whole person’ through their pastoral program.

Principal of St Patrick’s Technical College, Mr Danny Deptula, says this is a significant milestone for the Year 11 & 12 specialist trade training school.

“Our 1000th sign-up demonstrates the importance of vocational education, hands-on learning and flexible study options to skill and prepare secondary school students for jobs now and of the future,” Mr Deptula said.

“Through our partnerships and programs with industry, employers, government and training providers, we provide students with the opportunities to develop the skills and capabilities required for current and future workplaces.”

“This approach has been crucial to the successful outcomes of apprentice and trainee sign-ups.”

The Edinburgh North-based College opened in 2007 and Century Engineering is an Australian owned business providing a range of end-to-end engineering solutions and services in the same suburb.

For more information on programs centred around VET for secondary schooling, contact St Patrick’s Technical College on 8209 3700 or visit www.stpatstech.sa.edu.au and register for a tour or open event.

NEW LAW FIRM SEEKS TO COLLABORATE

Local lawyers Lauren de Vries van Leeuwen and Megan McFarlane have established a new firm in Kin Lawyers Pty Ltd, based in offices at Gawler South and Glenelg South.

The firm specialises in family and relationship law, offering services relating to family law, separation and divorce, wills and estate planning, deceased estate administration and family enterprise arrangements.

“Megan and I have both been practising at local firms for a number of years and have taken the leap to establish our own firm with a focus on providing specialised services with a modern approach, and to provide greater flexibility in our work arrangements as we care for our own young families,” Ms de Vries van Leeuwen explained.

One aspect of the duo’s business that sets them apart from other firms is their adoption of a modern style of legal practice referred to as collaborative law, which aims to resolve disputes out of court using a collaborative approach as opposed to the typical adversarial style.

“We hope that with our two firms able to now offer this service locally this



Kin Lawyers Pty Ltd partners Megan McFarlane and Lauren de Vries van Leeuwen at the firm’s Gawler South office.

may increase awareness of this option and we may be able to assist families through this process,” Ms de Vries van Leeuwen said.

Kin Lawyers have made a number of resources available to access free of charge, including their Separation

Checklist for streamlining the legal process and a free 15-minute phone consultation.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo praised the work of Ms de Vries and Ms McFarlane, citing their modern practice style as an important option for

those seeking legal help.

“Kin Lawyers is another example of local residents who have worked hard to build a successful business, in this case a law firm operating both locally and in Adelaide,” Mr Piccolo said.

GBDG LOOKS TO HELP LOCAL BUSINESS THROUGH PANDEMIC

The Gawler Business Development Group (GBDG) is offering advisors to business owners who are seeking a crisis management plan in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a statement released to advertise their service, GBDG outlined a general checklist that most crisis management plans would adhere to (although some of these points will likely differ from business to business).

These steps include:

- Assessing damage to the business and considering realistic courses of action
- Thinking about what the business will look like in a post-pandemic world
- Building a reliable support network

of people to consult with

- Considering what resources are available to you and how best to use them, as well as those you need but do not possess
- Thinking about the changing demands from customers in the current landscape and how your business can adapt
- Reflecting on the business model in place prior to the pandemic and consider whether it could have been improved at that time

- Knowing that we, as a society, will face a recession, thinking about the long-term ramifications for your business

GBDG are available to anyone seeking help or consultation and are offering free advice



to its members.

To arrange a consultation or find out more information, visit the

GBDG website (www.gawler.org.au), call **0488 440 588** or email car-en@gawler.org.au.

IMPORTANT INFO FOR LOCAL BUSINESS

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic that has drastically altered the financial landscape, a number of measures have been implemented to lessen the strain on local business.

The Boosting Cash Flow for Employers measure will provide up to \$25,000, with a minimum grant of \$2,000, to small and medium businesses who employ staff and have an annual turnover below \$50 million.

Eligible businesses that withhold tax to the ATO on their employees’ salary and wages will receive a payment equal to 50 per cent of the amount withheld, up to a maximum payment of \$25,000, with those not required to withhold tax still receiving a minimum \$2,000 payment.

Quarterly activity statement lodgers will be eligible to receive payment for the March and June 2020 quarters, while monthly lodgers can be paid for the March, April, May and June 2020 lodge-ments.

Eligible small businesses who employ apprentices and trainees are also able to apply for a wage subsidy equal to 50% of the apprentice’s or trainee’s wage between January 1 and September 30, 2020, with a maximum of \$21,000 per eligible wage.

For more information, visit www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au.

The instant asset write-off threshold has been increased to \$150,000 and expanding access to all businesses with ag-



Regional Development Australia
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gregated turnover of less than \$500 million.

The Backing Business Investment has also been introduced as a time limited 15-month investment incentive that offers a deduction of 50% of an eligible asset’s cost on installation.

Regional Development Australia

is also well poised to assist with any such concerns, offering consultants for those seeking advice regarding cash flow management and/or financial planning.

For any other information on what financial aid your business is eligible for, visit www.ato.gov.au.

SA PATHOLOGY STAYS IN PUBLIC HANDS

The Marshall Liberal Government has backed down from its attempt to privatise SA Pathology, a move which has been greeted by support from Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo.

The privatisation plans had been in place since the release of the September 2018 State Budget, during which time Labor had campaigned heavily in opposition to the proposal.

SA Pathology has been crucial in the fight against COVID-19, with more than 45,000 tests conducted across the state since the major breakout of the virus in February.

Mr Piccolo said the Marshall Liberal Government have been forced by political necessity into doing the right thing and ditching their privatisation plan.

"The reality is that SA Pathology have played such a critical and effective role in the control of the COVID 19 crisis that they have been embarrassed into backing down," Mr Piccolo explained.

The Government has, however, maintained its position in implementing \$53 million in cuts to the health service, with the Opposition calling on them to abandon these plans to ensure no further job or collection centre losses.

SA Labor Leader Peter Malinauskas said SA Pathology's efforts throughout the COVID-19 pandemic have proven the value of keeping vital public services in public hands.

"While [the privatisation backdown] news is welcome, we're now calling on the Government to abandon its future cuts to this vital service, allowing SA Pathology to continue their important work and keep saving lives," Mr Malinauskas said.

The number of cases of COVID-19 reported in South Australia currently stands at 459, with ten active cases and four total deaths in the state.

Australia's death toll now stands at 295 across the country.



Tony Piccolo stands outside the Gawler Health Service after it was announced that the Marshall Liberal Government would back down from their proposed privatisation of SA Pathology.



Myles Schmidtke with his father after winning the ANZAC Day colouring in competition.



Oliver Avery with his winning picture in the Light Electorate Easter colouring in competition

LIGHT EO COLOURED PINK

The month of April was a colourful one for the Light Electorate Office, with two colouring in competitions held to mark Easter and ANZAC Day respectively.

Eight-year-old Oliver Avery was the first competition winner, claiming first place in the Easter competition held in conjunction with Drakes Supermarkets, who kindly donated his prize.

Oliver's piece depicted various native flora and fauna celebrating Easter, including a kangaroo, emu, bilby and bunny.

Myles Schmidtke, 11, of Trinity College won the ANZAC Day colouring in competition with his impressive work, displaying excellent attention to detail in bringing the scene to life.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo congratulated everyone who participated in the competitions.

"Colouring in is a great way to encourage kids to express themselves artistically, so it is fantastic to be able to hold these competitions," Mr Piccolo said.

"Well done to all the kids who submitted their artwork, as well as Drakes Supermarkets for providing prizes; it was very enjoyable to look through all the fantastic work!"

MARIE BRINGS HERITAGE TO THE CAFÉ

Of all the places in the world to end up calling home, Gawler probably would not have been high on the list for Marie San Gabriel.

Born and raised in the town of Pantabangan, in the Nueva Ecija province of the Philippines, Marie's life centred around politics from an early age as the daughter of the town's long-standing Mayor.

She became the Youth President of Pantabangan, representing people of various age groups and fighting for the health concerns of the community given the country's lack of universal health care insurance scheme.

Eventually, Marie ran for council and was elected, serving for six years before resigning after getting married and becoming burnt out being surrounded by politics for her whole life.

She made the move to Australia in 2008 with her children to be with her husband, who had relocated from the Philippines several months earlier for work.

When asked why she packed up belongings and moved almost 6,000km away from the town she had called home for her whole life, Marie's answer was simple.

"To get a better life," she said.

"It's safer, especially for our children, and there are a lot of opportunities for them in our country."

Marie can be found running the Gawler Heritage Café at the Railway Station nowadays, which was inspired by her four-year stint working at a café on Murray St.

"We love it here, it's quiet and the people are nice," she said of life in Gawler.

Unfortunately for Marie and the Heritage Café, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a considerable impact on the business thanks to the rapid decline in people eating out and using public transport.

"Business has gone down a lot since COVID-19; people are scared to go out," she explained.

"I was about to give up last month, but I love working here.

"It's the locals that always come here that keep me going, because they love coming here."

Fortunately, business has begun to pick up for the Heritage Café once again with people more health conscious and able to use public transport.



Marie San Gabriel at the Gawler Heritage Café.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo praised the spirit shown by Marie and her family for persevering through great adversity.

"Marie is an excellent example of dedication to helping her community, whether that be in the Philippines or right here in Gawler," Mr Piccolo said.

"Gawler is a town with an incredibly rich and diverse history, and Marie is one person who continues to contribute to that history alongside her family.

"I am looking forward to seeing the Café thrive once more when the dust settles from the pandemic."

HILLIER PARK GETS CREATIVE



Despite the recent COVID-19 pandemic suspending many day to day and recreational activities, residents at Hillier Park Residential Village are still able to embrace their creative side.

Glenda Gorton has run an art class at the village for the last four years teaching her fellow residents about the basics of painting and artwork in the Hillier Park Community Hall, surrounded by a beautiful green landscape

Ms Gorton has worked across the country throughout her life, including directing, curating and owning galleries in Canberra, Gin Gin and Attunga.

After many years spent travelling, Ms Gorton has settled into life in Hillier and embraced her teaching roots with a new



Glenda Gorton teaches students of her art class at Hillier Park Residential Village.



demographic.

"What I find with people in this age group that we are in now is that they've been busy all their lives," she explained.

"They're running around with kids to basketball, football or whatever, and now they're here, they're sitting back and saying 'hey, what about me?'"

"And so they now have the opportunity to do something they couldn't all their life... they've had that basic instinct, just not the time."

For students, it is a freeing and therapeutic experience, as the opportunity to express themselves through the brush onto the canvas is a unique and valuable one.

"I've always wanted to paint, but what



was I, 76, 77 (when I started painting)?" said Betty, a long-time participant in the class.

"You're never too old to paint."

Fortunately for those involved in the class, activity was largely undisturbed thanks to the socially distant nature of the painting setup in the hall.

The class will be holding their annual on-site exhibition on November 7 this year as part of the Arts on the Plains festival, co-ordinated by a steering committee chaired by local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo, in conjunction with the 2020 SALA Festival.

Artworks by the Hillier Park residents will be available for purchase on the day.

OH, YOU BEAUTIFUL DOLL!

A beautiful handmade doll created by a Gawler Community Gallery committee member has been successfully raffled off to raise funds during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Shirley Shaw, who passed away a few years ago, was a beloved member of the Gallery community. Her work sold nationally and internationally and she was described as highly multi-talented.

"She could knit, sew, embroider and create artistic masterpieces from fabric," Gawler Community Gallery President Judy Ferguson said.

"Her handmade cloth doll which is 48cm high is a special creation, sculpted onto a specially designed frame from various fibres and materials."

"Its facial features and hands are incredibly lifelike, while her clothing is unique, from her beautifully hand embroidered satin dress right down to her dainty porcelain shoes."

The doll is known as "Elfin Girl" and was raffled off alongside a basket of goodies, with the winners drawn by Local Member of Parliament Mr Tony Piccolo.

As it turned out, the eventual winner of the basket said that she had known Shirley from many years ago when they enjoyed clog dancing together.

"Because the Gallery was forced to close due to the COVID-19 restrictions, Tony kindly displayed the doll and basket of goodies in his office window for a few weeks and sold tickets from his office," Ms Ferguson said.

"The Gallery is very grateful to Tony and his Office Manager, Janet Done, for their generous support of the Gallery at a difficult time."

Mr Piccolo said that it was an honour to display Shirley's doll in his office and draw the winners of the raffle.

"Shirley was a wonderful servant of the Gawler Community Gallery, so it is great to see her creations live on and continue to bring joy to those in the community," Mr Piccolo said.

"The winner of the doll said she was going to give it to her granddaughter, which exemplifies this love being passed on across many generations."



"Elfin Girl", the doll made by Shirley Shaw.

GALLERY SEEKS NEW FACES

The Gawler Community Gallery's Committee has been depleted and its Gawler Art Award cancelled in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, forcing its extended closure into the foreseeable future.

Despite this, however, its President Judy Ferguson is optimistic for the future of the Gallery beyond 2020, with the planned relocation to the Visitor Information Centre set to take place with refurbishment in the latter half of the year.

"The present Gallery Committee has struggled with problems of advancing age and illness and so we hope that the promise of this new home and format for the Gallery will entice some slightly more energetic volunteers onto our Management Committee," Ms Ferguson said.

The role of the Committee and its members is set to be substantially reduced into the future, with many of its former roles to now be conducted in conjunction with the Information Centre.

The situation shouldn't affect artists, however, with the same processes regarding pricing and commissions available to those wishing to display their work at the Gallery.

Fortunately, given that the Information Centre is open seven days a week, the Gallery is now able to be open during that time and remain open even if no volunteers are available for a given time.

However, the Committee is still looking for new volunteers to help the town's Gallery stay alive, with any and all support welcomed by Ms Ferguson.

"The Gawler Community Gallery is a fantastic initiative that allows our community to see, and purchase, local and international art in a professional display," local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo said.

"We can't afford to see the efforts of the Gallery Committee over all these years fall by the wayside in the face of adversity."

"As such, it is crucial that we rally around organisations like the Gallery that contribute so much to our community."

"I encourage anyone who is interested in art or supporting an important local cause to volunteer their time, whether that be a big or small commitment, to ensure our Gallery can stay open well into the future."

Those who are interested in helping out can contact Judy Ferguson at 8522 1385 or dfe44720@bigpond.net.au.

DIAMOND JUBILEE

We asked these four couples celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary for the secret to a long and happy marriage...



"Love each other, share common interests and be friends as well as partners."
- Ophie and Ruth Renner



"Take the good with the bad, love one another no matter what and make it work."
- Triantafillos (Ross) and Rosa Panagiotou



"Stay married! Stick with it whether good or bad and expect some highs and lows."
- Rex and Janet Langford



"It is very important to share core values."
- Christine and Bob Hams

HUGH CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

Local resident and Royal Australian Air Force veteran Hugh Bower will celebrate his 100th birthday at the end of August, continuing a fascinating life that is closing in on a century long.

Hugh was born in Largs Bay on August 30, 1920, and was just 20 when he enlisted for national service as Serviceman #39132 to defend his country in the fight to protect its livelihood.

He served in No. 36 Squadron, becoming one of the first two personnel on strength upon its formation at Laverton in 1942, where he primarily stocked cargo and other supplies onto planes.

Throughout his time in the Squadron, Hugh was based at various locations, including Laverton, Essendon and Townsville.

Hugh recalled witnessing the galling sight of an aircraft, which was likely an

ex-Dutch Dornier DO24, crashing into the Squadron's accommodation quarters in Essendon, just a short distance away from where he and another serviceman were standing; it was a close call.

He was eventually discharged in 1946, just three weeks short of five years with the RAAF, as Sergeant Hugh David Bower.

His statement of service and discharge shows that his character assessment produced a result of "very good" and his trade proficiency was considered "superior", qualifying him for a Returned from Active Service Badge, a War Medal (1939-45) and Australian Service Medal (1939-45).

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo praised Hugh for his service to the country and continuing contribution to local life.

"Hugh has lived a remarkable life, and I



RAAF Veteran Hugh Bower, who celebrates his 100th birthday this month, next to the propeller at the Gawler RSL.

would like to thank him for bravely serving Australia across various parts of the country," Mr Piccolo said.


"He has also been involved with the Gawler RSL for many years, an association which continues to this day even as he nears the amazing 100-year mile-

stone birthday.

"Hugh is a fantastic member of the Gawler community and it is heart-warming to see his efforts throughout his life continually recognised by those around him."

About to celebrate an anniversary or milestone? Let us know at the Light Electoral Office and get your photo featured on this page!

 light@parliament.sa.gov.au

 (08) 8522 2878

GAWLER SHOW GOES DIGITAL

Despite the cancellation of the annual Gawler Show due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the event's organisers are keeping its spirit alive online in 2020.

It was announced in a statement back in April that the 164th iteration of the Show, due to be held on the 29th and 30th of August, would not be taking place.

"It is distressing and disappointing to cancel our show as it supports so many in our community," Secretary Kate Cowell said.

"We appreciate that the cancellation of the Gawler Show has a huge impact on our show community, particularly exhibitors and visitors who love attending the show as an annual tradition."

The announcement marked the third time in its history that the Gawler Show had been cancelled, with 2020 following the Spanish Flu epidemic of 1919 and the Second World War in 1942.

However, organisers have worked very hard to ensure that not all Show activity is lost and have pledged to conduct and announce many of their competitions over the internet this year.

182 competition entries have been received by the Show's organisers up to this point, with the winners to be announced on its Facebook page over the weekend of the 29th and 30th of August, its originally intended date.

Local Member of Parliament Tony Piccolo praised the leadership and or-



Tony Piccolo helps out at the 2019 Gawler Show, whose competitions will be primarily conducted online this year.

ganisation of the show, expressing how important it is for the community to still have something to turn to during the trying times of the pandemic.

"Even though we're unable to hold the Show in person, it's a wonderful morale boost for the community to make the best out of a bad situation and still hold

some of its famous competitions," Mr Piccolo said.

The Gawler Show are currently offering free membership for 2021 with any purchase of a 2020 Membership by 28 August 2020. Memberships cost \$45 and puts buyers into the draw to win a family pass (up to 6 guests) to watch the

Fireworks from the Taylor & Forgie VIP viewing area at the 2021 Show, as well as coming with a free Gawler Show stubby holder.

Visit <https://gawlershow.org.au/member-application/> or call 8523 1477 to sign up.

OUR AMBASSADORS: WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



Jade Smith, the 2014 Young Rural Ambassador and 2018 Rural Ambassador winner, has had many years of involvement with the Gawler Show, from being part of the Gawler Show Youth Team to holding the position of Entertainment Chair for several years.

Jade has gone on to complete her Bachelor of Psychological Science in 2018, Bachelor of Music this year and is one semester away from finishing her Bachelor of Laws Graduate Certificate in Applied Forensic Psychology.



Franke Agenbag, who has completed her studies in Electrical and Mechatronic Engineering, was named Gawler's Young Citizen of the Year and won Gawler's Young Rural Ambassador in 2017.

She went on to win the Northern Young Rural Ambassador in April 2018 and became the State Runner Up Young Rural Ambassador in the September of the same year.

Franke was also the 2018 winner of the University of Adelaide STEM Award which formed part of the Channel 9 Young Achiever Awards.

With special thanks and appreciation from the Gawler Show Society to all our partners and prize sponsors.

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