From our Mayor

Celebrating our Identity

The Council Plan, *Making a Difference*, has three key objectives –employability, liveability and promotability. Promotability is explained "Council will celebrate our identity through internal and external promotion, enhancing the way we see ourselves and the way others see us."

Last month a key Promotability objective was achieved when our Local Member the Hon Joe Helper MP launched the Shire Tourism Strategy on the fourth birthday of the Talbot Farmers Market – a fitting occasion.

Just four years ago, a community group seeing the upside and possibilities proceeded with the concept and now the Talbot Farmers Market is recognised as one of the best in regional Australia and was recently short listed as a national finalist by *Vogue Magazine*.

On the same weekend I opened the Maryborough Flower Show. Gardens in our Shire and region, after many years of drought, are struggling. How easy it would be for the Garden Club to defer the Flower Show in such circumstances? Instead event organisers see the possibilities and battle on to create a wonderful exhibition each year for us and our visitors to enjoy.

After the opening of the Maryborough Flower Show I went to the very fine opening of the exhibition at the gallery, *Evidence of Past Things*, where three artists uniquely told the stories of our rich history in creative and evocative ways. I left thinking how fortunate we are to have this lovely gallery and enjoy the many exhibitions each year.

The following week was Easter weekend. The 20th Talbot Yabbie Festival was an opportunity to see many youngsters have real fun racing their yabbies in a relaxed community setting.

That afternoon there was a stylish, exciting wine tasting with fine music at Dunolly. It is really exciting to see the growth of so many quality events and activities in Dunolly since the 150th celebrations and the plans of the recently formed Northern Goldfields Tourism Association including Dunolly, Bealiba and Moliagul.

Dinner on Easter Saturday was at the Maryborough Highland Society with our long term friends the, Victorian Veteran Cyclists Club, who has been visiting us for a few days each Easter for the past eleven years and plan to continue.

Easter Sunday was an occasion to mark the 20th anniversary of the opening of the Talbot Museum which started with little more than some display boards and photos. It is now full of historical treasures and construction on the new Communications Museum next door is about to commence; another tribute to vision, optimism and perseverance.

More recently I was having dinner at our wonderful icon, the Maryborough Station with a wonderful Joni Mitchell tribute concert by incredibly talented local musicians. How exciting the restoration is and how good it will be when the Community Hub proposals

are finalised and funded so we can reopen the approach to the Station again so its wonder is visible from all around including the new shopping precinct.

There are so many other good things happening, including the plans for High Street and the retail developments which will enhance Maryborough as the key shopping centre in the Goldfields.

There is also our great recreation and sporting facilities including the indoor recreation centre. So often residents and visitors comment how lucky we are to have a facility like this. We also have our wonderful sporting events like the Energy Breakthrough and Highland Gathering, which is steeped in tradition.

So yes there are so many good things not only for our visitors to see and experience but for us to enjoy. It is part of what makes life in our community so good.

Chris

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